Westmorland and Furness Inclusive and Green Economic Strategy

Evidence Base – Final Report

27th March 2025

Insight WSP CLES the national organisation for local economies

Contents

Introduction

Insight

Introduction

GC Insight, in partnership with WSP and CLES, has been commissioned by Westmorland and Furness Council to develop an Inclusive and Green Economic Growth Strategy for the area. The strategy will cover a period up to 2050 (considering 5, 10 and 25 year phased delivery periods) and will outline key priorities and actions to drive local economic growth aligned to local, regional and national policy. In particular, the Westmorland and Furness Strategy will recognise and align with the locally relevant priorities and interventions identified within the new Cumbria Economic Strategy and will focus on outlining how Westmorland and Furness will contribute towards these activities, as well as identifying actions and priorities that are key to driving inclusive and green economic growth in the locality. The local strategy will also contribute towards delivery of the Council's Corporate Plan Delivery Framework and will align with and provide direction for the emerging Local Plan

This Evidence Base brings together data and insights gathered from desk research and a series of 1-1 scoping calls with local stakeholders, identifying the key opportunities and challenges for Westmorland and Furness. The evidence is grouped and presented by three key themes – People, Prosperity and Place – and two cross cutting themes – green growth and inclusive growth. The findings of the evidence base will be used to inform the development of the underpinning vision and strategic framework and will support the identification of strategic priorities and actions for inclusion in the final strategy.

Recognising that an extensive body of relevant evidence already exists for Westmorland and Furness and Cumbria, the preparation of the Evidence Base has focused upon collating and synthesising existing data and intelligence, drawing on key local data sources and dashboards such as the Cumbria Economy Tracker which brings together a wide range of government datasets. Innovative datasets such as Growth Flag and the Data City have been drawn upon to provide supplementary insight. Where there are potential limitations with the data, these have been set out alongside the data.

In line with the remit to produce a local strategy for Westmorland and Furness, data is presented for the district benchmarked against the regional and national position. Recognising the diversity of the areas within the District – from Barrow to Penrith – key differences by locality are highlighted in the commentary and where relevant analysis is spatially mapped. A snapshot of performance on key indicators within the three legacy districts is also provided to highlight important local considerations.

Evidence Base: Three Pillars and Two Cross Cutting Themes

People	Prosperity	Place
• Population and demography • Travel to work • Earnings • Occupations • Qualifications • NEETs • Economic activity	• GVA and productivity • Employment • Sectors and specialisms • Business base characteristics • Business base growth potential and risk • Skills demand	• Key assets • Place investments • Transport and connectivity • Digital connectivity • Deprivation • Housing stock and prices • Carbon emissions & carbon sequestration

Inclusive Growth

Green Growth

Policy Context

Policy Context Summary

National	**5 Missions** including "Kick Start Economic Growth" and the **Business Growth Strategy** which aims to ensure that businesses are at the forefront of driving the five national missions.
	Invest 2035 – Modern Industrial Strategy. To create conditions to capture a greater share of investment in strategic sectors and motivate domestic business to boost investment and scale up growth.
	Back to Work Plan introducing a major programme of reform to support more people into work and to deliver economic stability. The **Get Britain Working White Paper** sets out plans to get economically inactive people back into employment.
Regional	**Cumbria Economic Strategy –** high level strategic direction for Cumbria-wide economic growth, with a common set of objectives focused on pan – Cumbria challenges and opportunities which are best addressed together.
	Local Growth Plan (TBD) - to demonstrate how each MCA will contribute to the national missions. A long-term economic strategy, owned at a regional level
	Devolution – Cumbria has been selected as one of six areas to be brought onto the Devolution Priority Programme with a Mayor to be elected by May 2026.
Local	**Local Plans and Policies –** including Westmorland and Furness Council Plan and Delivery Framework and emerging Local Plan. **Local Inclusive and Green Economic Growth Strategy** to be Local Authority led and delivered

National Policy Context – Businesses and Sectors

Labour's Plan for Change, 2024 – 5 National Missions

The manifesto sets out 5 national missions for the new Government, including aims to: build and NHS fit for the future, kickstart economic growth, make Britain a clean energy superpower, reduce violent crime, and break down barriers to opportunities.

On economic growth the Labour Party commits itself to taking a sectoral approach, backing what makes Britain great with its excellent research institutions, professional services, advanced manufacturing and creative industries. Furthermore, Labour commits itself to getting Britain building again, with the promise of 1.5 million new homes over the next parliament. Such commitments include reforming the National Policy Planning Frameworks and resorting mandatory housing targets across the country.

The manifesto sets out a new statutory requirement for Growth Plans that cover towns and cities across the country, where local leaders will work with major employers, universities, colleges, and industry bodies to produce long-term plans that identify growth sectors and put in place the programmes and infrastructure they need to thrive.

A New Partnership with Business, 2024 – Labour's Business Growth Strategy

Labour's Business Growth Strategy focuses on deepening Labour's partnership with businesses, ensuring they have a strong voice in decision making. It aims to ensure that businesses are at the forefront of driving Labour's 5 national missions (outlined above), as well as playing a key part in day-to-day departmental consultations.

It sets out the role of government and business in ensuring this, identifying the role of government in providing stability, integrity and certainty; setting the strategic direction; removing the unnecessary barriers such as restrictive planning rules; and delivering growth everywhere; focusing on powering up all parts of the country

And the role of business in; investing in people, capital and ideas; providing working people with dignity and fulfilling work; and actively supporting growth in all parts of the country.

The Business Growth Strategy will help contribute to **Labour's 5-point plan for growth**, which was part of the Labour Government's election Manifesto. The 5 points include putting economic stability first, backing British business, getting Britain building again, kickstarting a skills revolution and growth everywhere and making work pay.

National Policy Context – Businesses and Sectors

Invest 2013: The UK's Modern Industrial Strategy, 2024

Growth is the number one mission of this government, and the new industrial strategy is designed to be central to that mission. The strategy aims to respond to rapid changes in the global economy and provide a launchpad for businesses.

The Strategy sets out the following objectives for the government:

- Drive growth
- Shape the economy to take advantage of the UK's strengths
- Achieve sustainable growth aligned with net zero targets
- Unlock the potential of the UK's cities and regions
- Achieve economic security and resilience

The strategy focuses on eight growth-driving sectors. The Government will design ambitious and targeted Sector Plans for each of these in partnership with business, devolved governments, regions, experts and other stakeholders through bespoke arrangements tailored to each sector.

Implications of National Business and Sectors Policy for Westmorland and Furness

National policy will have a significant influence on activity at the local level. There is a strong focus on economic growth, strong support for higher levels of housing, a recognition of the importance of working with the private sector to achieve growth and an emphasis on skills development and good levels of pay. A number of the national growth driving sectors have a strong presence and offer opportunities for growth and investment in Westmorland and Furness including advanced manufacturing, clen energy industries, defence, creative industries and digital and technology.

National Policy Context – Labour Market

Labour Back to Work Plan

As part of Labour's first step to deliver economic stability, a major programme of reform to support more people into work will be introduced, including. The rationale for the plan was the rising cost of worklessness, more people becoming economically inactive and excluded from the labour market as a result, the large proportion of young people NEET, and stagnant wages causing workplace insecurity and delaying employment support.

Labour aims to increase the employment rate from 75% to 80%, which would be the highest in the G7 and bring an additional 2 million people into the UK workforce.

The **Get Britain Working White Paper, 2024** sets out further details on the reforms to employment support that will bring together skills and health to get more people into work and to get on in work. This includes:

- Scaling up and deepening the contribution of the NHS and wider health system to improve employment outcomes
- Backing local areas to shape an effective work, health and skills offer for local people, with mayoral authorities leading the way in England
- Delivering a Youth Guarantee so that all 18–21-year-olds in England have access to education, training to help to find a job or apprenticeships
- Creating a new jobs and careers service to help people get into work and get on in work
- Launching an independent review into the tole of UK employer in promoting healthy and inclusive workplaces

Implications of National Labour Market Policy for Westmorland and Furness

The planned reforms aim to tackle key issues of inactivity (including inactivity due to illness) and worklessness which are prevalent in parts of Westmorland and Furness. The inclusion of locally designed and locally delivered services, such as Connect to Work (which is part of the plans to back local areas to shape an effective offer) provides an opportunity for local priorities and challenges identified in local plans and strategies to shape local solutions and outcomes. These opportunities will evolve as devolution progresses.

National Policy Context – Place

The National Planning Policy Framework, 2024

Proposed changes to the **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)** aim to increase levels of housing supply and address planning system inadequacies.

The NPPF provides strong support for economic growth. It includes a new standard method for assessing housing needs, which will support the Government's ambition to deliver 1.5 million homes over the next 5 years. This method will increase national housing targets, which will need to be reflected in targets at the Local Authority level.

The NPPF sets out the needs for planning policies to set out a clear economic vision and strategy which positively and proactively encourages sustainable economic growth. The 2024 update places further emphasis on the need for planning policies to identify sites for commercial developments which will meet the needs of a modern economy, such as giga factories or data centres.

Overall, updated policy emphasises the need for Local Planning Associations to provide for the expansion or modernisation of important local, regional, or national industries to bolster economic growth and resilience.

The proposed changes also sets out an enhanced presumption in favour of sustainable development. The documents supports the release of green belt land and identifies a new form of 'grey belt' land, areas on the urban fringe which may be suitable for residential. Finally, the strategy prioritises clean energy initiatives.

Three overarching objectives to achieve sustainable development

"The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development, including the provision of homes, commercial development, and supporting infrastructure in a sustainable manner."

An economic objective

A social objective

An environmental objective

Implications for Westmorland and Furness

Changes to the NPPF will see a boost in local housing targets with the adoption of a new methodology. This will bring significant opportunities but also challenges to ensure that housing growth is sustainable. The changes will support delivery of the new Local Plan once adopted.

Regional and Local Policy Context

- A wide range of range of regional and local policy documents exist covering Cumbria and/or Westmorland and Furness. This includes a range of local polices that have been revised and developed as part of the Council's transition to a Unitary Authority covering the three legacy districts (Barrow Borough, Eden and South Lakeland).
- All documents have been reviewed as part during the development of the Evidence Base and documents of relevance have been explored within the scoping calls.
- Key points of evidence and intelligence have been incorporated into the thematic sections which follow. The review has supported the interpretation of performance on key indicators and the identification of local challenges and opportunities.
- The priorities and polices within these documents will be considered when developing the strategy's underpinning visions and strategic framework to ensure alignment.
- The Cumbria Economic Strategy, Westmorland and Furness Council Plan and Delivery Framework and the emerging Local Plan are of relevance and covered in further detail in the following slides.

Regional Policy Context – Cumbria Economic Strategy

The new 2025-2045 Cumbria Economic Strategy "Going for Growth" sets out a new economic vision for Cumbria. Grounded in robust evidence and extensive engagement, it provides the direction for collective efforts to unlock the full potential of Cumbria's assets and address persistent barriers to growth. It will form the basis of the region's devolution ambitions.

The document sets out that *"Going for Growth is about showcasing our potential and contribution to national priorities, but it is first and foremost a Cumbria document, focused on the region-wide solutions whilst recognising the need for tailored approaches that reflect the diversity of our places"*. It also notes that this *"strategy is more than just a policy document—it's a renewed partnership approach and a call to action. It urges our local and national partners to leverage every available tool and take an active role in driving Cumbria's growth story."*

The vision presented in the strategy is:

Cumbria 2045: a modern and entrepreneurial economy where world-leading sector strengths and an outstanding natural environment drive shared prosperity for all people and places.

The strategy prioritises the sectors and clusters offering significant opportunities, including advanced manufacturing, robotics, defence, clean growth and visitor economy, and addresses the binding constraints on growth and the barriers to investment in Cumbria, including:

- **Infrastructure** to support and enable growth projects – with shorter journey times, improved grid connectivity, and to support major investment in nuclear decommissioning and in Cumbria's nuclear deterrent.
- **Faster productive growth** – building on sector strengths and growth opportunities and supporting all businesses to innovate and become more competitive.
- **Defence and energy security** – maintaining Cumbria's UK critical role, preparing for future investment, and increasing local spend in supply chains.
- **Enhancing nature** – building a growth plan that delivers 30x30, with increased investment, skills, and jobs in land-based industry.
- **Innovating in public service design and delivery** – to equip people to be ready for these opportunities and ensure businesses have access to the skills they need.
- **Accelerating major housing developments in thriving places** – supporting the two local authorities to deliver sites such as 10,000 new homes at St Cuthbert's Garden Village and 8,000 new homes at Barrow Marina Village, and create places that people want to live, work and study, with creativity and culture built into plans.

Regional Policy Context – Cumbria Economic Strategy

The strategy's framework for growth sets out the six evidence-led priorities for growth that are focused on the Cumbria-wide challenges and opportunities best addressed collaboratively and in alignment with the respective Local Authority economic strategies.

Underpinning these priorities are areas of focus which will guide early delivery of the strategy. These build on foundations already established by Cumberland and Westmorland & Furness Councils, Enterprising Cumbria, and other stakeholders, while introducing initiatives to accelerate growth and unlock opportunities across the region.

They draw on the levers Cumbria has to accelerate productive growth - notably skills, data, research and development, infrastructure technology adoption, access to finance, grid connections, trade – whilst making bold commitments to strengthening cross regional and national relationships to drive investment into Cumbria.

Regional Policy Context – Cumbria Economic Strategy

There is a focus on growing the economy with purpose, recognising that economic success depends on delivering transformational change that secures long-term vitality and resilience for businesses, communities, and the natural environment. Four strategic outcomes, have been identified, which provide the cornerstones of the strategic vision which will drive the sustainable, inclusive and productive growth Cumbria needs. These are:

- **Higher productivity to raise living standards**
- **Increased working age population to meet the needs of the growing economy**
- **Better population heath, supporting people back into work**
- **The UK's nature capital, where land and sea deliver biodiversity and productivity gains**

The strategy clearly sets out that it is not an action plan. It outlines ambitions and priorities, leaving the specific details of projects to be developed through delivery plans co-created with stakeholders, and co-ordinated through devolution. To guide the early implementation, priority focus areas for collective action have been identified (as shown opposite).

Cumbria's early focus areas

- Refresh the Cumbria Transport Infrastructure Plan
- Champion Cumbria's sector strengths and potential in the national Modern Industrial Strategy, including advanced manufacturing, clean growth, and defence
- Position Cumbria as the UK's leading region for robotics and AI in challenging environments, highlighting opportunities with the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology and the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero
- Accelerate housing delivery, working with Homes England to address viability gaps
- Deliver the Local Skills Improvement Plan and build the land and nature skills offer
- Implement the Local Nature Recovery Strategy
- Develop a bold new approach to investment and trade
- Build the new employment and health support offer, accelerating devolved powers around employment support
- Develop and maintain a Spatial Development Strategy
- Design the Cumbria Commitment

Regional Policy Context – Cumbria Economic Strategy

Westmorland and Furness is well represented in the Cumbria Economic Strategy Evidence Base and new Strategy document which note that:

- **W&F** became home to **the most productive jobs in Cumbria** in 2016 (although productivity gap remains)
- **Barrow, Kendal and Penrith** are within the five largest employment areas in Cumbria. **Windermere** and **Ambleside** are also recognised as smaller centres
- **Barrow is an area of strong economic growth,** with the highest productivity and economic complexity but also **high levels of deprivation and economic inactivity** (a long term sickness hot spot and with concentrations of workless households)
- **BAE Systems is identified as economic asset and major employer** – but also a factor which imbalances local economy through **dominance in the local labour market**
- **Westmorland and Furness is an important location for key sectors,** i.e: Barrow for manufacturing, ports and logistics, automation and robotics; Barrow and Kendal for energy; Kendal for professional, scientific and technical services; and the Lake District areas for visitor economy
- **Barrow is referenced as an opportunity area for developing visitor attraction assets in non-Lake District National Park areas** (although also recognised that limited higher quality accommodation offer in Barrow)
- Westmorland and Furness is home to **investment opportunities** and **key assets** e.g. BAE Systems & training academy, Port of Barrow (marine engineering), Barrow Waterfront Business Park, Ulverston Advanced Manufacturing Park, University of Cumbria (Ambleside, Barrow), Marina Village, Windermere Gateway, Towns Fund, parts of Lake District National Park
- The work of **Team Barrow in linking industrial growth and BAE Systems' ongoing investment to community projects, housing renewal and skills development** is highlighted as an illustrative example of the opportunities of a place-based approach across Cumbria

Regional Policy Context – Cumbria Economic Strategy

- The areas has a s**elf-contained labour market** due to typography and public transport links
- **Health and skills deprivation** is an issue for W&F and scores on the indoor living environment domain are particularly low
- While **Penrith has stronger IMD scores**, **Barrow stands out as the most deprived area in Cumbria** across several metrics including having lowest qualification levels
- **Barrow is highlighted as an example which demonstrates the need for inclusive growth** – the contrast of having some of the lowest IMD scores but also having major employment sites and opportunities
- The **working age population has contracted** and the population aged 65 + has increased significantly
- W&F is identified as an area in **particular need of more social rented housing stock**
- **Per capita carbon emissions are over double the regional and national average**

The Westmorland and Furness strategy will align with the Cumbria Economic Strategy and make appropriate links (for example, identifying regional priorities and interventions which Westmorland and Furness will contribute towards, but it will also be distinct, focusing on local challenges and opportunities, as opposed to macro issues that will be addressed in the Cumbria-wide strategy.

Local Policy Context – Council Plan

Westmorland and Furness Council Plan 2023-2028

The development of the Council Plan provided an opportunity for the newly formed Council to create a fresh vision for its communities and residents. The Plan sets out the Council's commitment to ensure that Westmorland and Furness is a great place to live, work and thrive.

A great place to live with:

- local and community leadership enabling a voice for all
- housing for all making best use of previously used land and existing buildings
- empowered places – towns and countryside
- welcoming, proud and resilient communities
- a green and biodiverse environment
- opportunities for children and young people to live healthy, happy lives
- support for those that need it, when they need it

A great place to work with:

- opportunities for jobs, learning, skills and enterprise
- a sustainable, inclusive, diverse, economy
- a growing work force and high quality jobs
- support to encourage business creation
- improved infrastructure and connectivity

A great place to thrive with:

- opportunities for education, health, and wellbeing
- excellent walking and cycling routes
- a great and diverse visitor offer in our towns and countryside
- thriving cultural economy
- support for all to start well, live well and age well
- holistic early intervention to support people in need

Local Policy Context – Council Plan and Delivery Framework

Westmorland and Furness Council Plan continued…

The council's priorities include:

For people

Supporting active, healthy happy lives for young and old
Supporting people in need and reducing inequality

For the climate

Providing leadership in the drive to become carbon net zero

For communities

Confident, empowered, resilient communities

For the economy and culture

Sustainable, inclusive, economic growth

For our workforce

Confident, empowered and inclusive workforce

Westmorland and Furness Council Plan Delivery Plan Framework 2024/25

The Framework sets out the actions the Council are working to deliver across 10 strategic themes to achieve the vision and priorities set out in the Plan.

It is underpinned by the recognition that sustainability needs to be at the centre of decision making and service delivery to balance environmental protection and recover, economic development and growth and to address inequality.

The sustainability principles are identified are:

Equity

We know that there is a need to address any inequalities, especially those resulting from poverty and rural sparsity. We will focus on the wider determinants that drive those inequalities in a way that is fair and equitable.

Economy

We know that we need to increase our productivity and improve educational outcomes and grow our workforce. We will support sustainable and inclusive growth which benefits our diverse population whilst protecting the environment.

Environment

We recognise our environmental responsibilities, including taking action on climate change and biodiversity loss. We will seek to redress damage and protect our environment for the long-term.

Local Policy Context – Council Plan Delivery Framework and Local Plan

Westmorland and Furness Council Plan Delivery Framework cont'd ….

Building on the vision, priorities and sustainability principles, the delivery framework breaks down into the ten service delivery themes shown opposite.

A missions led approach to delivering the vision has been adopted. Each theme has a bold mission, which requires a collective effort to make Westmorland and Furness a great place to live, work and thrive.

Westmorland and Furness Local Plan

A new Local Plan is being prepared for Westmorland and Furness (excluding the National Parks) following extensive rounds of consultation. When this is adopted, it will replace all of the existing Local Plans that were adopted by the former Councils.

The Local Plan will:

- set out how much new development (e.g. homes and employment sites) is needed to support our communities
- make sure new development is built in the right places and in a way which is best for people and the environment
- allocate sites for new housing and other development
- protect some areas and green spaces from development
- include policies that are used to decide planning applications
- plan for development relating to minerals and waste

1 Communities
2 Environment
3 Growth
4 Connections
5 Homes
6 Learning
7 Care
8 Health and wellbeing
9 Culture
10 Effective services

It will be important for the Westmorland and Furness Inclusive and Green Economic Growth Strategy to align with and contribute towards the Council's Plan and Delivery Framework. The Strategy will also help to make the case and provide direction for the delivery of local plan targets (housing and employment land / sites).

Green Growth Policy - National

National Context

The UK became the first country to declare *an "environment and climate emergency"* in May 2019. This was a symbolic declaration through a motion in the UK Parliament, though it marked a renewed sense of urgency in tackling climate change. It followed a range of demonstrations by environmental and protest groups in 2018. Previously, the UK has made commitments to respond to climate change – such as through the Climate Change Act of 2008 (as amended) which makes it *"the duty of the Secretary of State to ensure that the net UK carbon account for the year 2050 is at least 100% lower than the 1990 baseline."*

A range of policies to respond to climate change have been published by the UK Government over the last 5 years Some of the key policies include:

- **The Ten Point Plan for a Green Industrial Revolution** (2020) – a plan to support the UK's net zero ambitions, including through advancing offshore wind; driving growth in hydrogen, nuclear power; accelerating the shift to green transport; investing in carbon capture, usage and storage; and supporting finance and innovation.
- **Net Zero Strategy: Build Back Greener** (2021) – this set out a strategy for the UK to lead the world tackling climate change, while using the transition as the greatest opportunity since the industrial revolution for jobs and prosperity.
- **Green Finance Strategy** (2023) – plans to ensure the necessary finance reaches net zero, energy security and environmental industries, including through becoming the world's first 'Net Zero-aligned Financial Centre'.

Amid the cost-of-living crisis from 2021, some climate commitments by political parties were changed, though with the overall commitment to net-zero by 2050 remained. Following the change to a Labour Party Government in 2024, the current national policy is continuing to emerge. In their General Election manifesto, the Labour Party committed to setup 'Great British Energy', a publicly-owned clean power company to cut bills and boost energy security, as one of their 'first steps for change'. Making Britain a 'clean-energy superpower', to accelerate net zero and achieve zero-carbon electricity by 2030 is also one of the Party's five missions for Government. So far, the Government has published a Clean Power 2030 Action Plan, which sets out the government's view of the pathway to achieving zero-carbon electricity by 2030 and the steps needed to get there.

As the new Labour Government develops its climate policies, it will be important for Westmorland and Furness to engage with policy leaders regarding the role the local area can have in supporting their implementation. The Government has set ambitious targets for decarbonisation, and there will be potential for Westmorland and Furness to support in the delivery of targets and objectives through its existing energy specialisms, and future innovation, which should be considered through the development of the new local strategy.

Green Growth Policy – Regional

Regional Strategy

Beyond Cumbria, one of the key policy papers relating to green growth is the **Net Zero North Prospectus** by the NP11. The prospectus aims to position the North as a global leader in clean growth and highlights the region's strengths in clean growth, as well as potential areas for collaboration. In particular, the Prospectus highlights:

- The North generates over 40% of the UK's electricity and almost a fifth of the electricity produced is exported to the rest of the UK
- The Northern Powerhouse has a significant clean growth opportunity, with possible benefits including creating around 100,000 new green jobs by 2050; adding more than £2 billion per year of investment to energy economy in the region by 2050; increasing the GVA growth in the Northern Powerhouse by £2.3 billion by 2050; and reducing the carbon emissions of the region by 50% by 2032 against 2005 levels.
- Areas for collaboration include infrastructure, skills, supply chains, and trade and investment.

While the prospectus was created during the time of LEPs and under a previous Government, there is still significant scope to build on the ambitions, actions and areas for collaboration identified in the prospectus. Cumbria will have a key role to play in helping drive forward the success of the North in decarbonisation and achieving green growth, while also contributing to national growth. It will be important for the Westmorland and Furness Growth Strategy to focus on how the area can remain engaged in the green growth agenda at the regional level and to support with collaborative activities that help unlock green growth.

Green Growth Policy - Regional

Cumbria Clean Energy Strategy

The Cumbria Clean Energy Strategy sets out a vision for Cumbria as 'the UK's capital for clean energy generation'. It outlines that Cumbria is at the forefront of the UK's commitment to net zero and can make a significant contribution to clean growth, highlighting two strategic priorities of focus, including Clean Energy Generation and Business Decarbonisation.

Cumbria's clean energy credentials are recognised including a longstanding contribution to the UK's energy requirements; rich natural capital; a skilled and innovative talent pool; supply chain strengths; and the area having the enabling infrastructure to support growth and secure investment in clean energy generation. The strategy also outlines ambitions spanning a range of clean energy types, including:

- **Nuclear** – building on existing capabilities with opportunities for new nuclear developments through fission and fusion
- **Fusion and Innovation** - Moorside can be the first of a kind commercial fusion Spherical Tokamak for Energy Production (STEP) prototype to build on Cumbria's 'first of a kind' delivery capability
- **Offshore Wind** – opportunities to grow Cumbria's specialist capabilities supporting offshore wind from Cumbria's ports
- **Hydrogen and Carbon Capture** – opportunities to transition the Morecambe Bay gas industry to develop a hydrogen industrial cluster
- **Renewable Energy Technologies** – utilising natural assets locally to develop a range of renewable energy technologies
- **Energy Networks and Storage** – ambitions to collaborate and secure investment from Network Operators to deliver Cumbria's Clean Energy Ambition

It will be important for the Westmorland and Furness Inclusive and Green Economic Growth Strategy to align with and where possible build on the existing plans and activities relating to clean growth developments in Cumbria. There will be a significant role for Westmorland and Furness in helping to achieve the success of developments across the clean energy types identified through the strategy and subsequently driving clean growth locally.

Green Growth Policy - Regional

Cumbria Local Nature Recovery Strategy

The purpose of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy is to restore and connect habitats, supporting locally important species to thrive. The strategy agrees the best places to plant trees, improve grasslands, restore peatland, mitigate flood and fire risks, and create green spaces for local people to enjoy.

Describing Cumbria's local nature recovery, the strategy states:

"Cumbria's natural environment is in landscape scale recovery, with a mosaic of wildlife-rich habitats that are managed sustainably to create a network that is resilient to climate change, helps plants and animals thrive, and provides valuable services to local communities and the economy."

The strategy has been produced with input from a range of people and organisations in Cumbria, with the aim for collaborative working to help address biodiversity loss in the region. In addition, the strategy maps existing valuable habitats, and highlights proposals to improve habitats in the future.

It will be important for the Westmorland and Furness Inclusive and Green Economic Growth Strategy to align with the Cumbria Local Nature Recovery Strategy. Where possible, the strategy should also consider areas to help support the delivery of collaborative efforts set out in the strategy.

Green Growth Policy - Local

Westmorland and Furness Climate Change Action Plan

The Westmorland and Furness Climate Change Action Plan sets out the council's commitment to responding to climate change. In particular, the action plan outlines how the council aims to achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2037. The plan focuses on six key themes including:

- **The Way We Live:** actions around how sustainable living practices can be promoted and how the carbon footprints of households can be reduced, including through retrofitting homes
- **The Way We Work:** actions to encourage businesses to adopt low-carbon practices and support green job creation – such as carbon literacy training
- **The Way We Travel:** actions for the promotion of active travel, the use of public transportation, and reducing emissions from vehicles
- **The Way We Use Things:** actions for reducing waste and encouraging a circular economy with a focus on the three Rs – reduce, reuse and recycle
- **The Way We Produce Energy:** actions including investing in renewable energy sources and also improving existing usage of energy
- **The Way We Enhance and Protect Nature:** actions for investing in nature-based solutions and enhancing biodiversity, linking in to the Cumbria-wide Local Nature Recovery Strategy

It will be important to ensure that the Westmorland and Furness Inclusive and Green Economic Growth Strategy closely aligns with the Climate Change Action Plan. The strategy will also play an important role in helping to realise the economic benefits of responding to climate change and working towards net zero carbon emissions, as set out in the Action Plan. In particular, ensuring that the transition is fair for local communities in line with the strategic aims will be key.

Inclusive Growth Policy - National

- The need for inclusive growth is recognised in Labour's Plan for Change, 5-point plan for growth, and Business Partnership for Growth. The plans outline milestones aiming to deliver well being benefits and outcomes for Britain's residents. This includes raising living standards and household disposable income, building affordable housing, improving healthcare and early education and enhancing community safety. Priorities and interventions which will support inclusive growth are starting to materialise through plans such as the Get Britain Working White Paper.
- The Business Partnership for Growth document notes that securing inclusive growth will require more activity and strategic policy by national government, along with a new partnership with empowered mayors and local government. Specifically, it sets out that mayors and local government need to have greater powers and responsibilities for growing their economies and helping close the gap between the performance of many of our areas and their European and international equivalents.
- This is underpinned by a commitment to increased devolution – including advancing the devolution process in Cumbria – with a view that the right powers need to be in the right places with local leaders having the tools they need to develop credible, long term plans for growth. **This reinforces the tole that regional and local strategies – such as the Westmorland and Furness Inclusive and Green Economic Strategy - can play in supporting and delivering inclusive growth.**
- The Social Mobility Commission - an independent statutory body which aims to improve opportunities for all, and particularly for those who opportunities are most limited – recently published their 2024 State of the Nation report which draws upon their Social Mobility Index designed to measure mobility in the UK systematically over time. The Index comprises four composite indices: 'Promising Prospects' which covers immediate outcomes (early life mobility outcomes); 'Conditions of Childhood'; 'Labour Market Opportunities for Young People' and 'Innovation and Growth' which cover the drivers (or enables) of social mobility.
- The evidence suggests that a one-size-fits all national strategy for social mobility is too broad a brush to make any real difference. The report sets out that the Commission are keen to see place-based approaches, and a recognition of the close interplay between innovative economies, better opportunities and strong social mobility, rather than exclusively focusing on education in isolation from the need to solve fundamental economic problems. **This highlights the importance of considering inclusive growth within the local economic strategy, which will consider a wide range of challenges and opportunities relating to people, prosperity and place.**

Inclusive Growth Policy - Regional

- Cumbria is part of **the Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal** - a cross border agreement for investment into Borderlands local authorities: Cumberland, Westmorland and Furness and Northumberland in the North of England, and Dumfries and Galloway and Scottish Borders in the South of Scotland.
- Representing up to £452million of fresh investment to the Borderlands area, the Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal was formally signed in March 2021. The ambition for the deal – to create a sustainable and inclusive future for the Borderlands, and to ensure the Borderlands is a great place to live, work and visit - is built upon four strategic themes, which aim to deliver sustainable improvements to boost potential and opportunities for residents, visitors and businesses. These are: Improving places; Supporting business, innovation and skills; Enabling infrastructure; and Encouraging green growth.
- The Deal aims to benefit over 1 million residents who live in the Borderlands region and deliver an additional 5.5k job opportunities with scope to attract 4 million extra tourists to the region. It sets out that this will be done while simultaneously improving mobile and digital connectivity and unlocking investment across towns in the region generating around £1.1bn in additional GVA.
- A wide range of projects have been developed through the Deal – including projects in Westmorland and Furness. Recognising the importance of embedding inclusive and sustainable growth within these projects, a guide was developed in 2024 which aimed to enable those developing projects to identify and articulate clearly the Inclusive and Sustainable growth aspects of proposals and reflect on how the project can support Inclusive and sustainable growth outcomes, in addition to economic outcomes. The guide also helps those developing projects to consider how they can align with a Community Wealth Building (CWB) approach – considering *how* they deliver projects and adopting a place-based, people-centred economic development model - as a mechanism for enhancing inclusive and sustainable growth outcomes.
- The Borderlands three inclusive growth priorities are highlighted in the guide: tackling digital exclusion; reducing earnings gap and increasing access to quality jobs; improving access to education. Seven priority groups are also identified: residents who are out of work; in work, low earning individuals; individuals with low skills; residents living in areas of high deprivation; visitors; local businesses; and community groups and organisations.

The Westmorland and Furness Economic Strategy will take account of the investment delivered locally through the Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal. The inclusive and sustainable growth principles which underpin the Deal and the practical advice provided in the Sustainable and Inclusive Growth Guide highlight important considerations which will need to be taken into account when embedding inclusive and sustainable growth into the local economic strategy.

Inclusive Growth Policy – Local

- Inclusive Growth is widely recognised as a priority by Westmorland and Furness Council and (as noted in previous slides) directly referenced in the Council Plan vision and objectives. Recognising that the Council will not achieve its vision to make Westmorland and Furness 'a great place to live, work and thrive' in isolation and a firm belief that everyone should be able to shape and influence the things they want to happen to improve their lives, communities and neighbourhoods, the foundational **Community Power Strategy** has been developed.
- Titled ***'Together we are powered by communities'*** the document sets out ***'a strategic approach to community power'*** which will help the Council to create the conditions for communities to thrive. The shared vision and approach has been developed with the public sector, third sector and communities to ensure communities have greater influence over the places where they live and the services which affect their lives. The outcomes sought through the approach are that communities are:
    - Strong, vibrant and resilient with greater social connectedness
    - Happier and healthier with better long term health and wellbeing outcomes
- Community groups, local councils and the wider VCFSE sector are acknowledged as being key to decision making and service design, given that solutions to some of the biggest challenges can often be found out in the community, not just inside institutions.
- The approach is broken down into three key themes:
    - **For the community, by the community –** championing the strengths and 'we can do this' attitude of communities to improve their own lives and support each other.
    - **Getting alongside communities –** working together with communities and local organisations, as partners, to improve the places in which people live and the services they use.
    - **Everyone reaching out, everyone being reached –** enabling all communities to feel able to change things for the better.

Inclusive Growth Policy - Local

- The strategy includes a Delivery Plan which identifies seven priority areas, which will support the Council to make the changes required to transitions from a traditional council to a community powered council. These are:
  - Community- focused organisational culture
  - Clear, consistent brand and narrative
  - Community powered pathfinders
  - Partner mobilisation
  - Community focused skills, capabilities and mindsets
  - Testing, learning and evidencing
  - Resourcing plan for community power.

It will be important – from both an inclusive growth and wider economic growth perspective - to consider the role of community power, local communities and local organisations (inclusion the VCSFE sector) in shaping and taking forward interventions identified within the Westmorland and Furness Inclusive and Green Growth Strategy

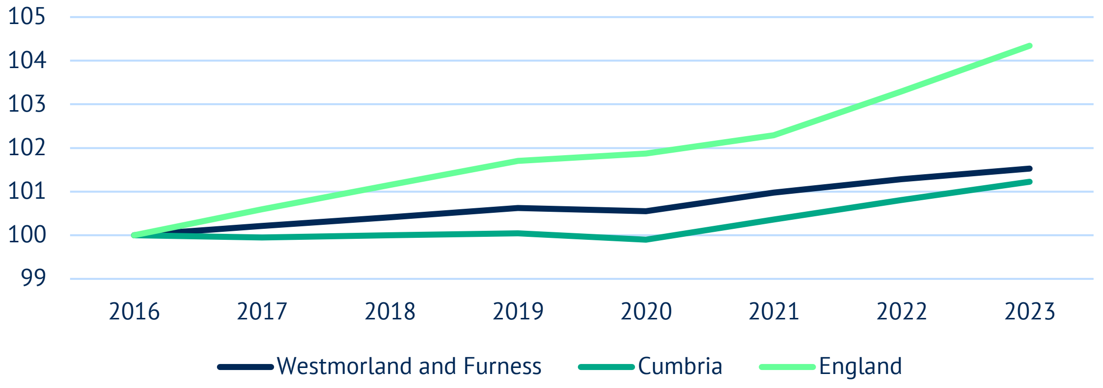
People

Insight

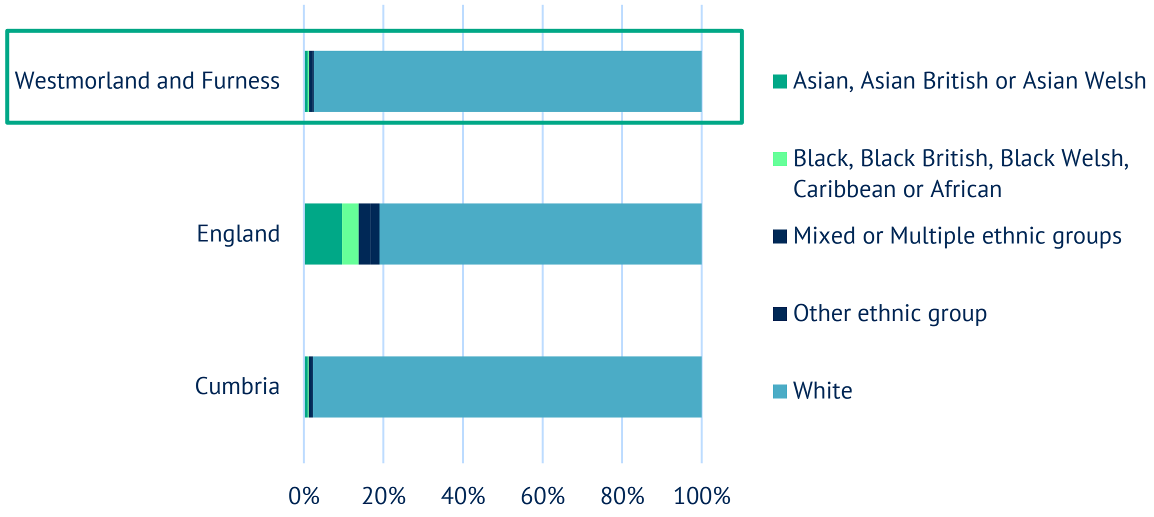
Population Characteristics

- Westmorland and Furness had a total population of 228,000 people in 2023, comprising approximately 45% of the population of Cumbria.
- Since 2016, the population of Westmorland and Furness has increased by 1.5% (+3,400 people), compared to a 1.1% increase in Cumbria overall and a 4.3% increase in England over the same period. The rate of change has been notably slower relative to the national average since 2021.
- 98% of the population in Westmorland and Furness are white (in line with Cumbria), compared with 81% in England. Around 1% of the population is Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh, and less than 1% of the population are from mixed or multiple ethnic groups.

Population Index Change 2016-2023



Population Profile, Ethnicity (Census, 2021)

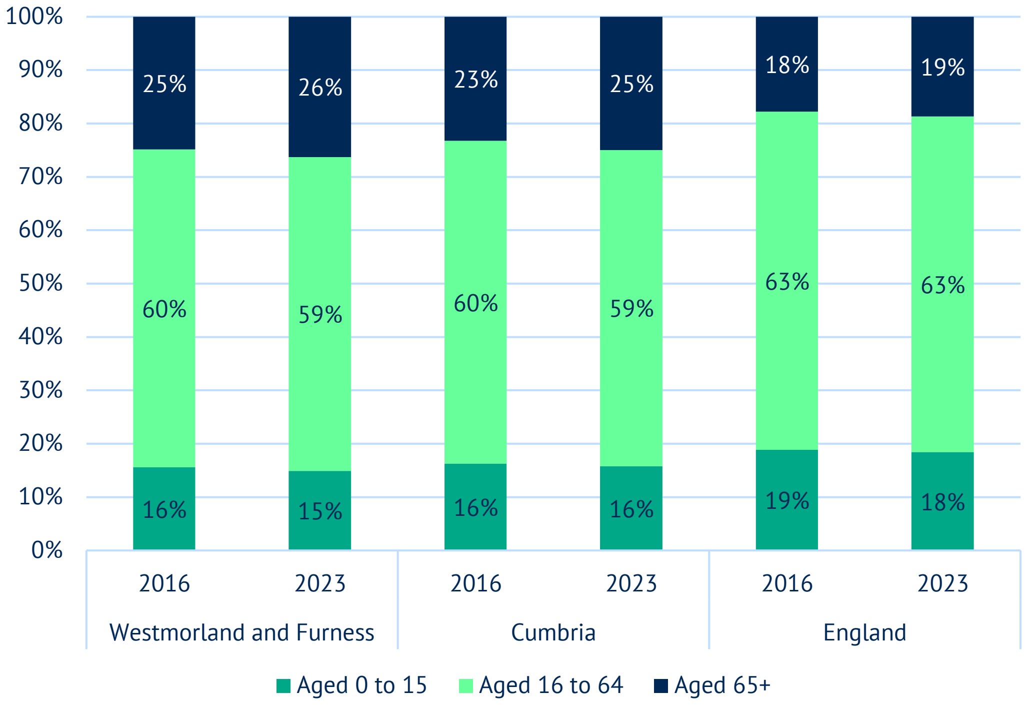


Source: Population Estimates, ONS, 2016-2023; Census, ONS, 2021

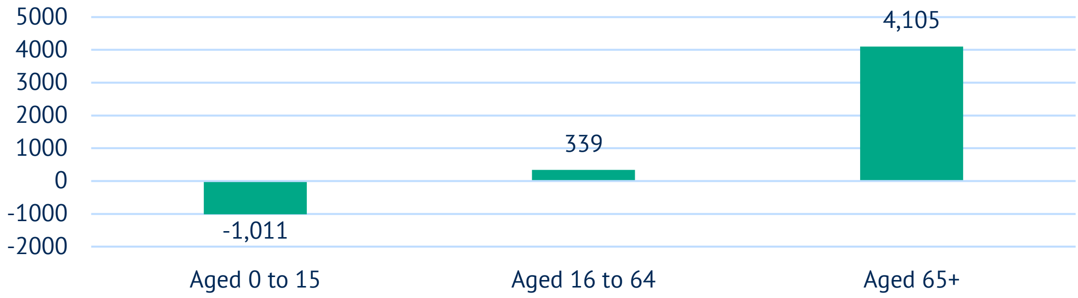
Age Profile of the Population

- 59% of the population in Westmorland and Furness (134,000 people) are of working age (16-64 years). The proportion of working age people is significantly lower than the national average (63%) and has declined since 2016. In absolute terms growth in the working age cohort has been sluggish, accounting for an additional 340 residents since 2016. This could hold significant implications for the size of the current and future workforce, and the retention and attraction of working age people is recognised as a key priority locally.
- Westmorland and Furness has an over-represented 65+ population at 26% of the total population compared to 19% nationally, and this is increasing in line with national trends (1pp over the 2016-2023 period). Since 2016, there are an additional 4,100 residents in the 65+ age group.
- There has been a significant decrease in the number of young residents aged 0-15 years of age, accounting for a reduction of some 1,000 children during this time period.
- The population age profile in Westmorland and Furness is similar to Cumbria as a whole, although the area has a slightly higher older cohort and lower representation of residents under the age of 16 compared to Cumbria.

Population Age Profile 2016 vs. 2023

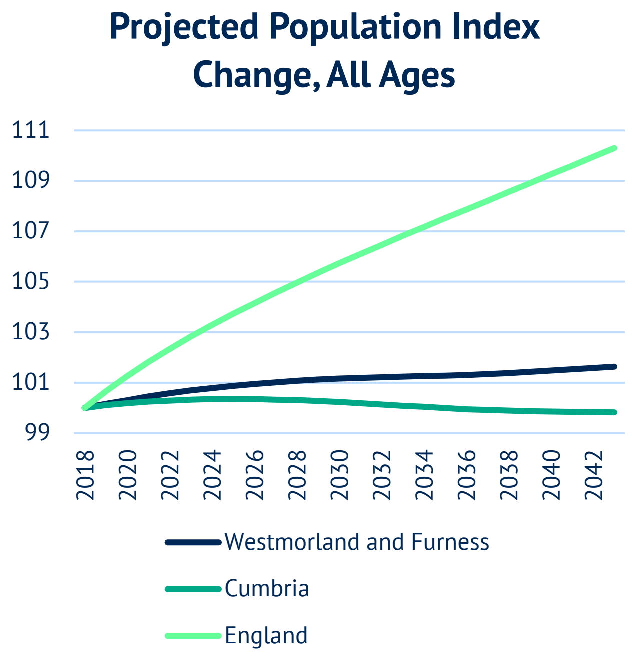


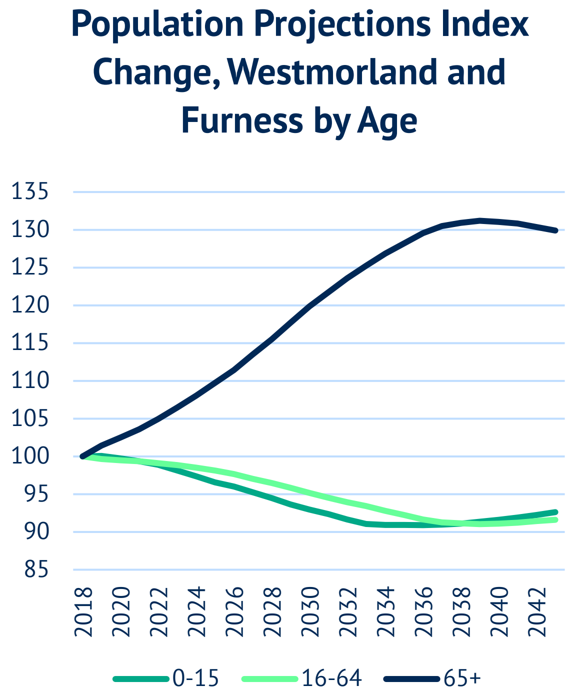
Population Estimates Net Change by Age Group, Westmorland and Furness 2016-2023

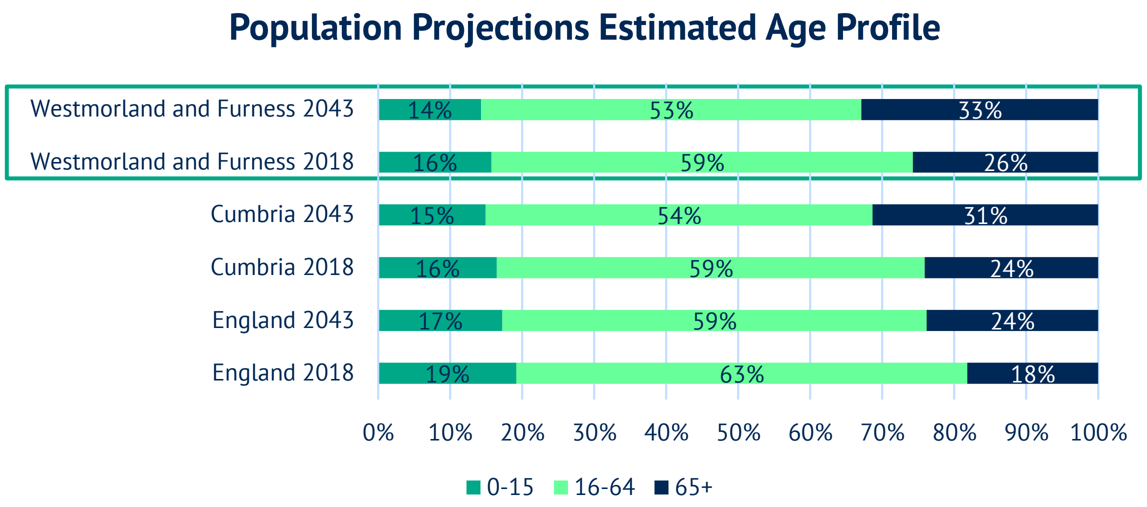


Population Projections

- According to population projections by the ONS, the population of Westmorland and Furness was expected to grow slightly by around 4,000 people between 2018 and 2043. However, the current population of Westmorland and Furness is estimated to be around 228,000 people, exceeding official population projections. As such, there are limitations with the use of this data.
- Ageing within the population profile is expected to continue in Westmorland and Furness at a faster than England, and at a similar rate to Cumbria.
- On the basis of the projected population for 2024, only 53% of Westmorland and Furness residents are expected to be of working age (compared to 54% in Cumbria and 59% in England). This represents a 5pp reduction in the size of the working age population from the 2023 position.





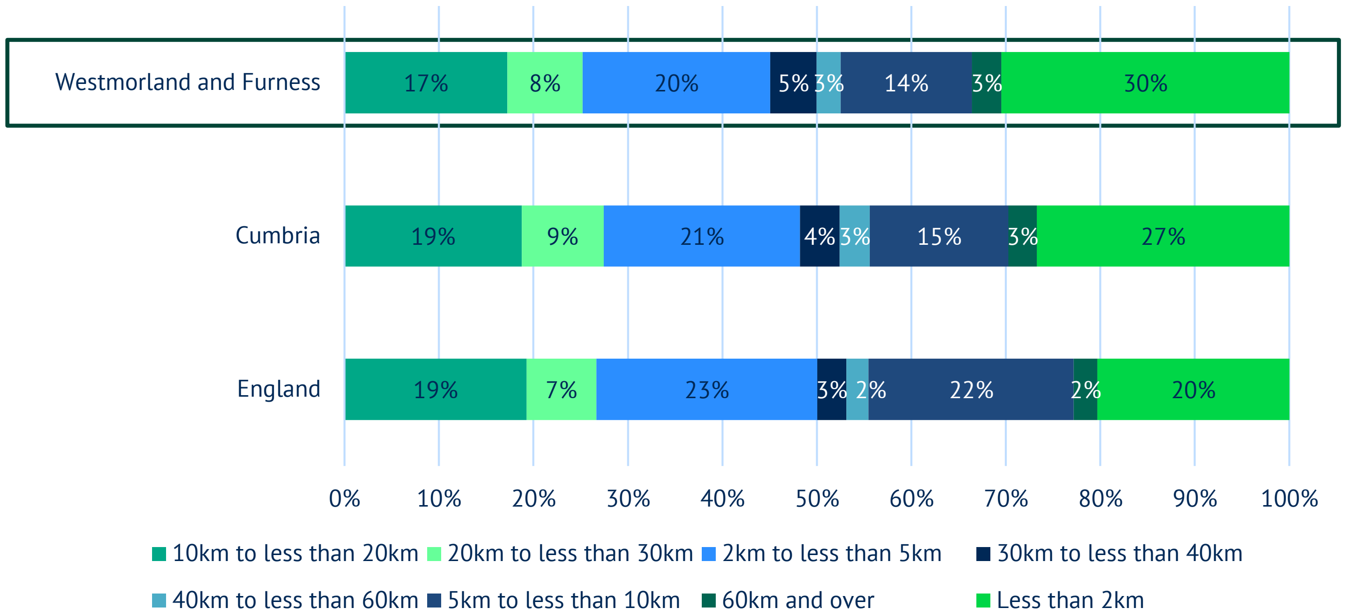


Source: Population Projections, ONS, 2018

Distance Travelled to Work

- The majority of residents in Westmorland and Furness work within a close distance of their home address, with 50% travelling less than 5km to work (excluding those who work from home).
- This is compared to 43% of residents in England travelling less than 5km to work, and 48% in Cumbria overall. The data shows a smaller proportion of residents travelling medium to long distances to work compared to the national average, indicating the importance of local employers.
- Overall, around 25% of residents in Westmorland and Furness mainly work from home (as of 2021). This is a higher level than Cumbria (24%), but significantly lower than in England (32%), and is likely due to the more industrial nature of business activities in the region overall.

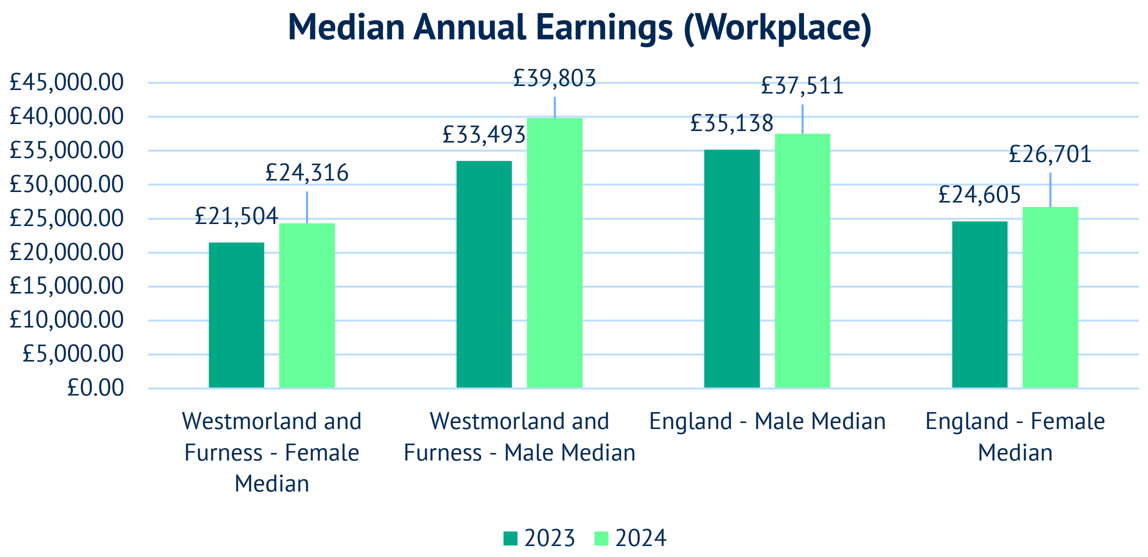
Distance Travelled to Work (excluding work from home, no fixed place and outside UK)

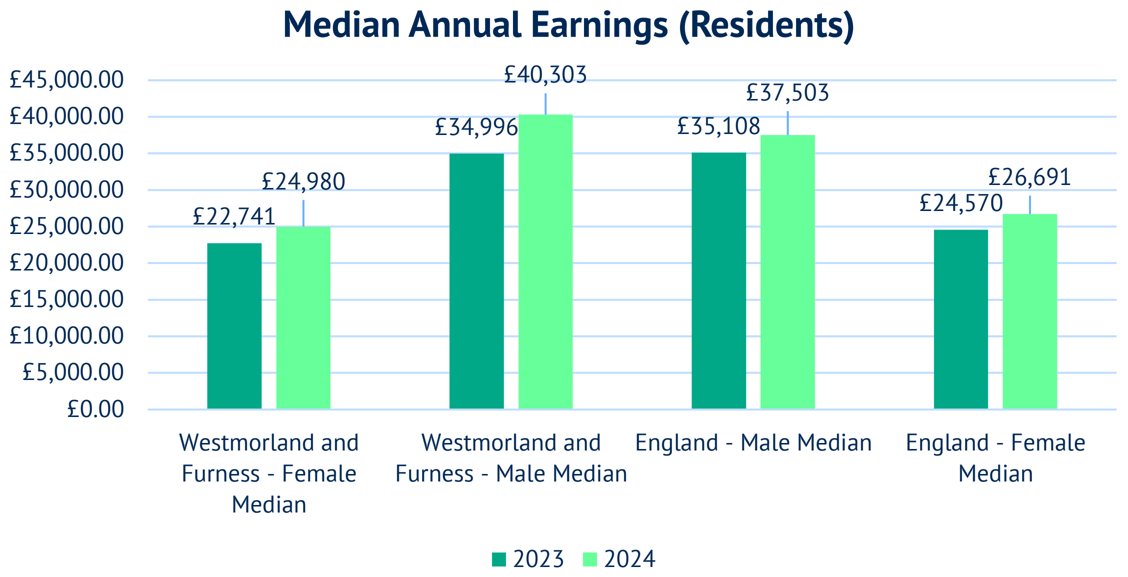


Percentage working mainly from home

Annual Earnings

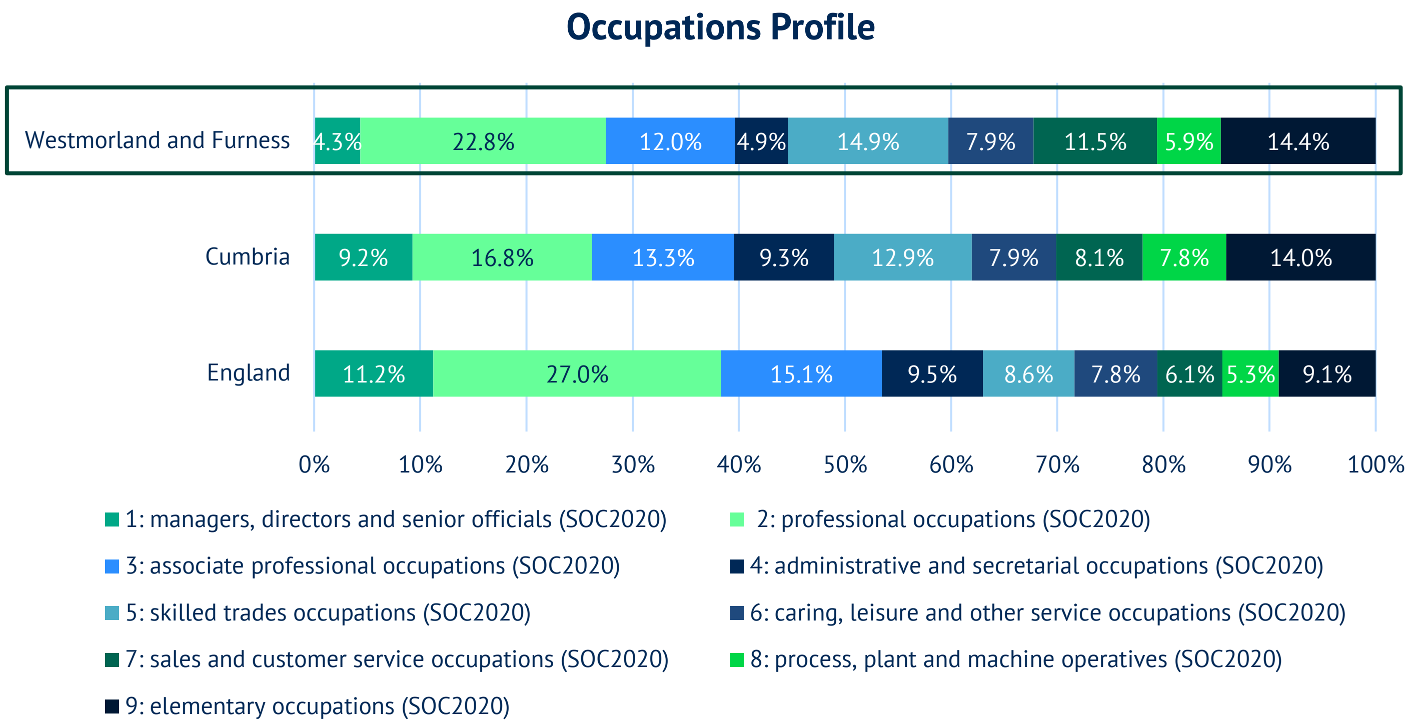
- The median annual earnings for workplaces in Westmorland and Furness is £32,757, compared to £31,875 in England.
- The median annual earnings for workplaces in Westmorland and Furness by gender is £39,803 for males (compared to £37,511 in England) and £24,316 for females (compared to £26,701 in England) – highlighting a significant gender pay gap (48% in Westmorland and Furness compared to 34% nationally).
- The median annual earnings for residents in Westmorland and Furness is £35,599, compared to £31,840 in England – a higher level than workplace earnings.
- Male residents' median annual earnings are £40,303 (compared to 37,503 in England), while female residents median annual earnings are significantly lower at just £24,980 (47% pay gap) (compared to £26,691 in England – a 34% pay gap).
- This data could suggest a need for inclusivity interventions that target improving the gender pay gap for local resident workers.
- Due to Westmorland and Furness being a new local authority, there is limited data on the change in annual earnings over time.

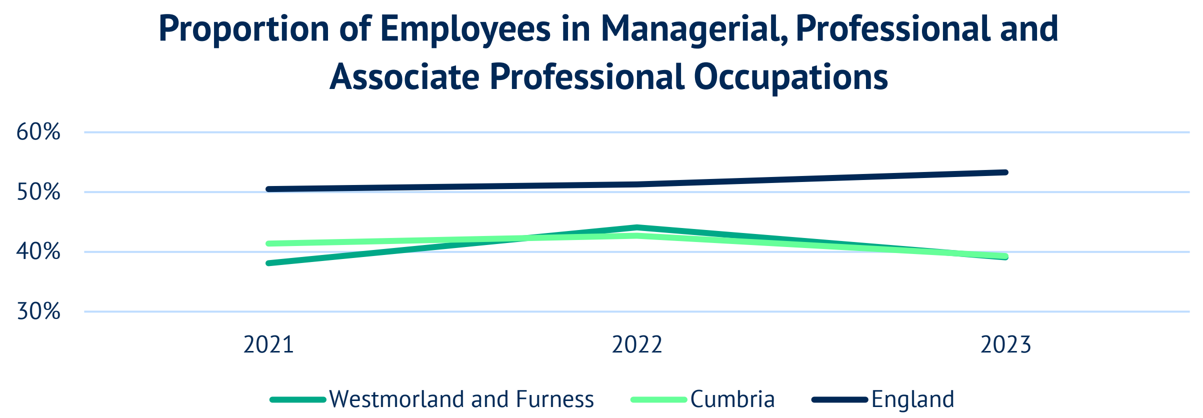




Occupations

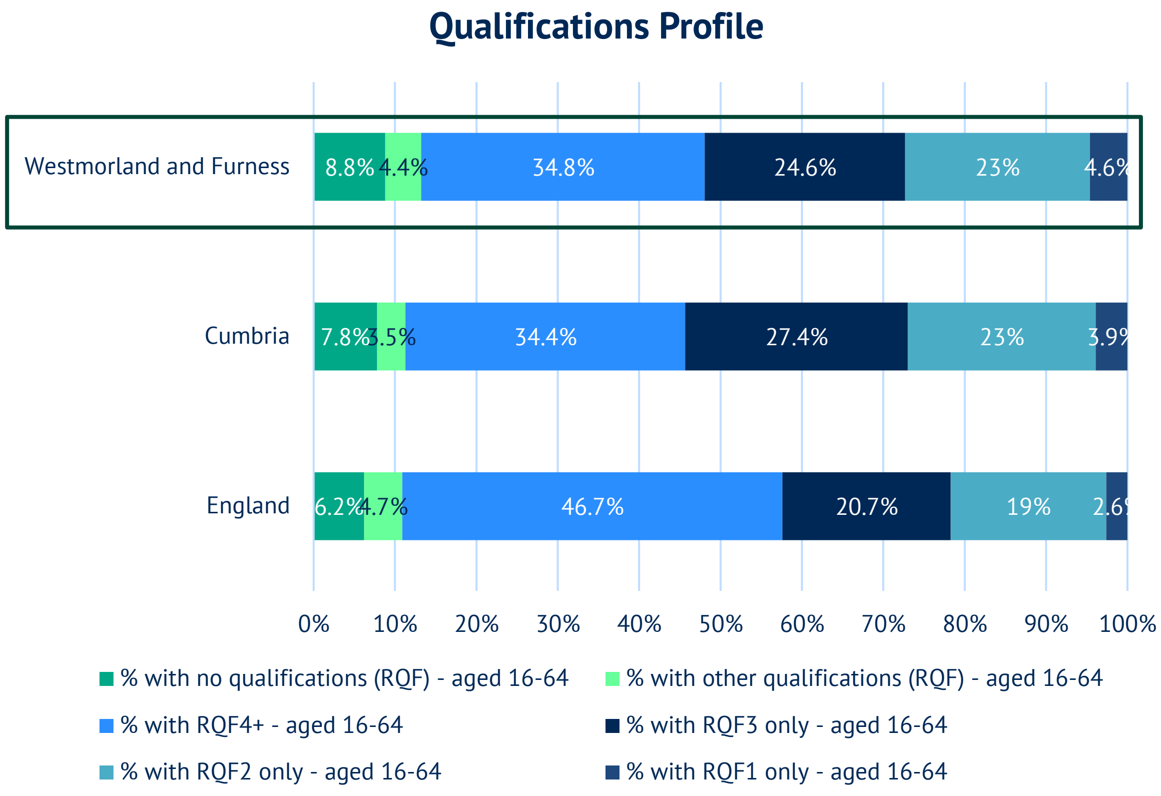
- Westmorland and Furness has significantly lower proportions of people working in managerial, director and senior official occupations (4.3%) compared to Cumbria overall (9.2%) and England (11.2%).
- Westmorland and Furness has similar proportions of staff across all managerial, professional and associate professional occupations (around 40%) – though much lower than 53% in England.
- Since 2021, there has been a 1% increase in the share of workers in managerial, professional and associate professional occupations in Westmorland and Furness, compared to a 3% rise in England and a 2% reduction in Cumbria.
- Westmorland and Furness has higher levels of workers in elementary occupations (14.4%), compared to 14% in Cumbria and 9.1% in England, suggesting a high representation of lower skilled jobs in the region. The data may also suggest a need for upskilling opportunities to support more people to progress to higher level occupations.

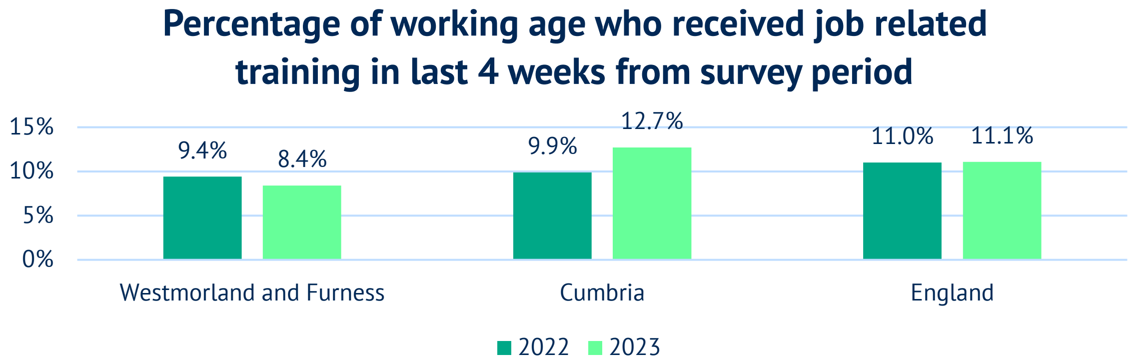




Skills

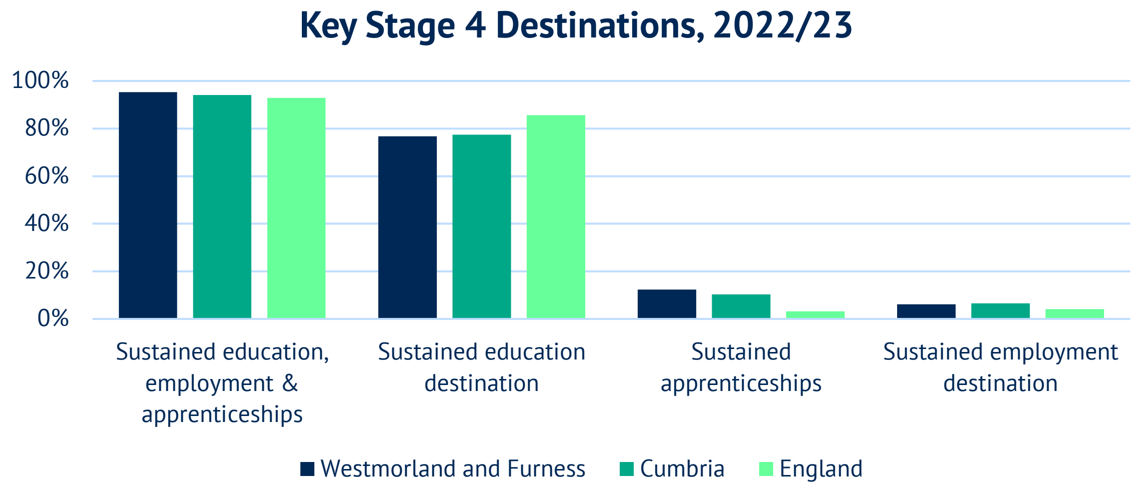
- Westmorland and Furness (in line with Cumbria) has significantly lower levels of people with higher level qualifications of RFQ4 and above (35%) compared to England (47%) and lower proportions of working-age people than Cumbria with RFQ3+ qualifications (25% compared to 27% in Cumbria).
- The proportion of working age people with higher level qualifications of RFQ4 and above (35% in 2023) has fallen from 40% in 2022 according to ONS data. This is thought to be partly driven by a rise in proportions of working age people with other qualifications (+1.6%).
- Westmorland and Furness has significantly higher levels of working-age residents with no qualifications (9%), compared to Cumbria (8%) and England (6%), though this varies between age groups. People who are of older working age (50-64 years) are more likely to hold no qualifications, comprising 10% of all residents aged 50-64 compared to 8% in England.
- This could suggest a need for interventions that support enhanced lifelong learning pathways to enable residents to upskill and meet business needs.
- Additionally, the percentage of working age people receiving job related training is lower in Westmorland in Furness (8%) than England (11%) and Cumbria (13%).

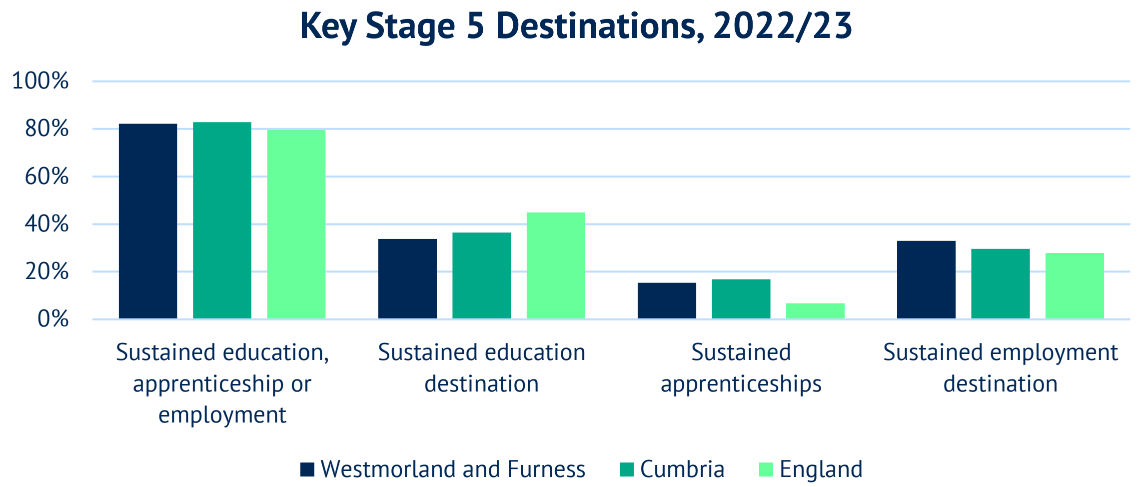




NEET and Positive Destinations

- In November 2024, there were 106 people aged 16-17 not in education, employment or training (NEETs) in Westmorland and Furness. This is equivalent to 2.3% of the 16–17-year-old cohort, below the Cumbria (3.1%) and England (8.6%) average.
- The proportion of Key Stage 4 leavers achieving sustained positive destinations in Westmorland and Furness (95%) is relatively high compared to the national average (93%). Key Stage 5 leavers achieving sustained positive destinations (82%) is also higher than in England (80%), although slightly below the Cumbria average (83%).
- Both Key Stage 4 and Key Stage 5 leavers in Westmorland and Furness have a stronger preference for apprenticeships and employment compared to the national average, highlighting the importance of vocational pathways in the region.

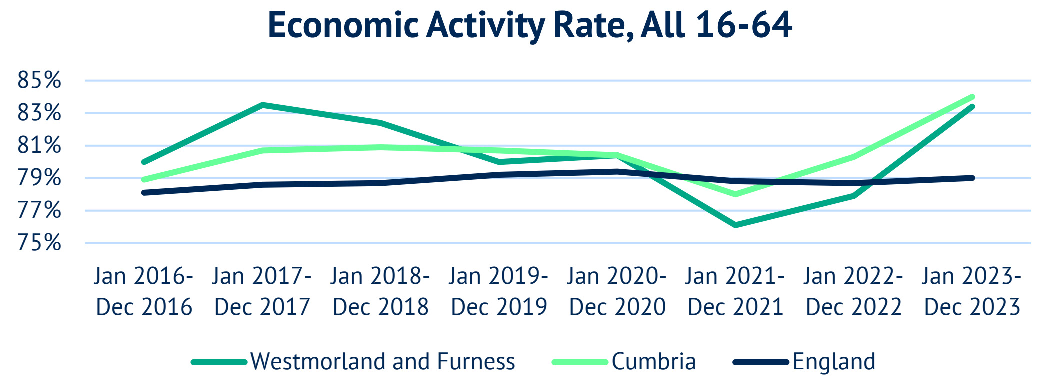


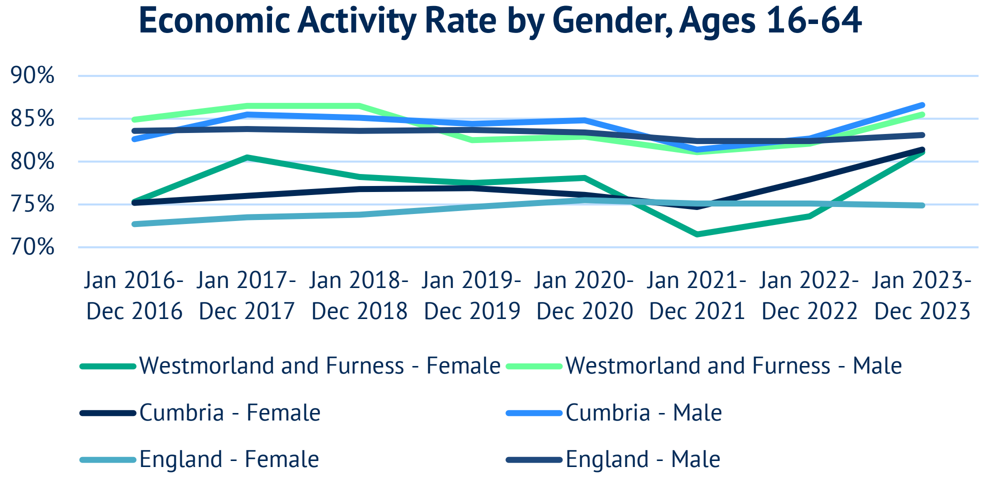


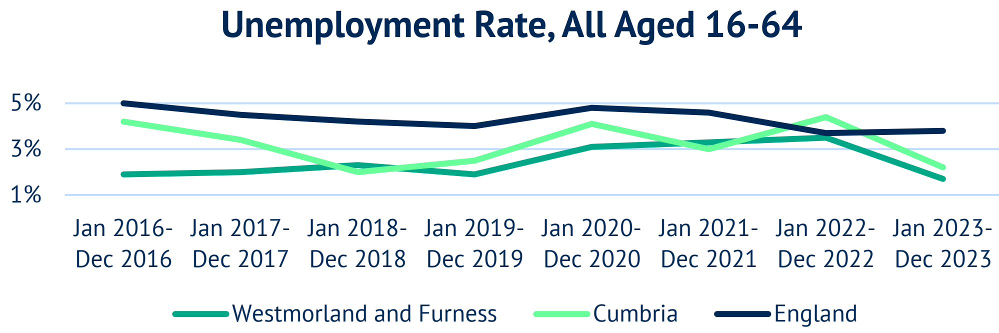
Source: Department for Education, 2022/23; Inspira/NCCIS, 2024

Economic Activity

- The economic activity rate in Westmorland and Furness (as of December 2023) is 83.4%, in line with Cumbria (84%) and significantly higher than England (79%).
- The economic activity rate fell more significantly than in Cumbria and England during the coronavirus pandemic, and this was particularly noticeable amongst the female population.
- Since the pandemic, the overall activity rate has returned to pre-pandemic levels. The male activity rate is 4.4 pp higher (at 85.5%) than the female activity rate (at 81.1%) in Westmorland and Furness, in line with the wider trend in Cumbria.
- The unemployment rate in Westmorland and Furness is lower than both Cumbria and England at 1.7% (previously increasing from 1.9% in 2019 to a peak of 3.5% in 2022).
- There are approximately 19,200 people that are economically inactive in Westmorland and Furness. The top reasons for economic inactivity in Westmorland and Furness are looking after family/home (27.6%), being retired (25.7%) and being long-term sick (24.5%).
- There are though much higher rates proportionality of inactivity due to long-term sickness in Eden (50.1% of all inactive residents in Eden, compared to 24.9% in Barrow-in-Furness and 16.5% in South Lakeland).







Source: Annual Population Survey, ONS, 2022-2023

Summary People Indicators by Legacy Local Authorities

- Legacy local authorities within Westmorland and Furness show significantly different performance across key indicators, with Barrow-in-Furness lagging behind across on most metrics.
- Barrow-in-Furness presents relatively high inactivity and unemployment rates as well as low levels of high-level qualifications and earnings among its residents. The high workplace relative to resident earnings suggest a need to ensure that the benefits from local business' activity are shared locally.
- In contrast, Eden has a growing working age population which is highly likely to be economically active and employed, indicating a healthy labour market. However, its performance in qualifications levels and earnings indicate a need to offer higher value jobs and upskilling the workforce.

Indicator	Barrow-in-Furness	Eden	South Lakeland	Westmorland and Furness
Working Age Population Growth (2016-2022)	-1%	4%	0%	0%
RQF4+ Qualifications (% working age population, 2023)	28%	33%	41%	35%
Economic Activity Rate (% working age population, 2023)	76%	91%	85%	83%
Employment Rate (% working age population, 2023)	73%	91%	83%	82%
Home Working (% aged 16+ in employment, 2021)	19%	28%	27%	25%
Residents Earnings (as % of the England's average, 2022)	92%	88%	99%	97%
Workplace Earnings (as % of the England's average, 2022)	105%	89%	86%	92%

Note: Red cells indicate values lower than Westmorland and Furness, yellow cells indicate similar values, and green cells indicate higher values.

Source: Population Estimates, ONS, 2016-2022; Annual Population Survey, ONS, 2023; Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings, ONS, 2022; Census, ONS, 2021

People – Scoping Consultation Messages

- Feedback gathered through the consultations **strongly reinforces challenges highlighted in the evidence review**, including: **health issues as a driver of inactivity, ageing population** (implications for future workforce pipeline, loss of skills, retraining requirements, support to remain in workforce), **out migration of young people** (capacity and capabilities/skills)**,** levels of **deprivation in some parts of W&F** (e.g. Barrow), and levels of **isolation** in rural areas.
- **Population growth has been identified as one of the biggest issues / challenges for W&F** which requires responses across the themes (e.g. employment opportunities, development of cultural offer, housing offer – affordability and range) to enhance the attractiveness of the area as place to relocate and/or stay, and create a larger population and labour market to drive growth of the economy
- Ensuring the young people's voice is heard in the strategy and actions are developed aimed at **attracting families and retaining young people to support growth** in the working age population
- **Rurality is a key barrier to access to employment, education and services**. Initiatives such as the Rural Mobility Pilot sought to address rural transport barriers, whilst the Borderlands Place Plans in market towns such as Ulverston and Penrith are seeking to strengthen the vitality and offer of these towns to meet population need in the catchment they serve.
- There is a recognition that **educational attainment isn't where it needs to be**. Funding for schools needs to be brought in line with national levels to support investment in provision to facilitate improved educational performance and improve the quality of the offer
- The **skills profile needs to be enhanced**. The proportion with RFQ L4+ is increasing but not at the pace needed. Enhanced skills will support access to higher wages which in turn supports affordability, quality of life, creates a market for culture and leisure etc.
- There has been a **fragmented skills policy landscape nationally** and there is a national drive to reduce fragmentation in local skills systems through aligning supply and demand. Looking ahead, Westmorland and Furness needs to have a clear role as a unitary authority delivering education and skills provision against a clear set of strategic priorities. An education and skills plan needs to sit alongside the economic strategy to facilitate this and support devolution and spend priorities. Employers have an important role to play in informing the demand and supply of skills

People - Scoping Consultation Messages

- Low value activity such as tourism and agriculture influences the skills profile and is a key contributor to insecure and precarious employment. A key challenge is how to **shift the dial towards a higher value, higher skilled economy**. How can we increase value in these important sectors to the economy?
- **Recruitment difficulties are not always driven by skills gaps or shortages**, in some sectors it tends to be more of a **people shortage** (e.g. hospitality). Recruiting and retaining quality teaching staff to support skills development is also a challenge
- **Increasing volume of refugees and asylum seekers** – resettlement requirements need to be considered, as does the long term offer (e.g. including cultural and local service offer) to help retain people in the area
- **Skills provision and the role / potential of educational assets** (e.g. Cumbria University, Furness College) needs to be considered. Other specific points raised on provision included fragmented land based provision following closure of Newton Rigg (and implications for realising future land based opportunities and potential), the lack of FE provision in Penrith area more widely due to closure of Newton Rigg, further promotion of pathways and degree apprenticeships, understanding challenges for delivering Skills Boot Camps in 2025/26
- **Horizon scanning** and **understanding and responding to the skills implications of future growth** will be crucial to unlocking economic growth potential.
- The implementation of **Team Barrow** offers significant opportunities to address challenges in Barrow and to gather evidence of what works, impact of support etc. Similarly, there are opportunities to influence the design of local support for W&F that will be delivered through the **Connect to Work** pilot programme from April 2025, and to consider the role of **Community Power** in delivering solutions
- **Volunteering** is an important entry route to employment which can help tackle wider challenges (e.g. inactivity due to health)
- The economic strategy needs to ensure it is sufficiently responsive to community need with a **strong focus on people** to support aspirations around a **fair, equitable and inclusive** Westmorland and Furness. There are several **priority cohorts** that require consideration including those with protected characteristics including disadvantaged, care leavers, SEND etc. It is important that the strategy is considered through an EDI lens and current gaps in the system are identified and responded to

People - Summary Opportunities and Challenges

Five Defining Opportunities…	Five Defining Challenges…
• High levels of self-containment as shown by relatively short travel to work distances and high job density supporting sustainable travel patterns and ability to capture spend locally	• Sluggish population growth with a below average WAP and a declining 0-15 population, contributing to a tight labour supply and posing a threat to sustainable communities
• Improving educational attainment, investing in higher level skills provision, and encouraging upskilling/reskilling to meet business need can support productivity gains and inclusive growth	• Significant increase in dependent and aged population (65+) which is projected to continue, putting increased demands on services
• Strong progression to positive and sustained destinations post 16 can support social mobility and life chances of young people	• Qualification and occupation gaps contribute to skill shortages/gaps which undermines business competitiveness and limits access to higher wages
• High levels of labour market participation provide opportunities to capture local spend and support vitality in centres	• A large number of economically inactive residents constrain the available labour pool, with caring, retirement and long-term sickness contributing factors
• Major investment and planned initiatives can support community wealth building and inclusive growth	• Low pay and precarious employment in key sectors impacting on poverty, wellbeing and life chances

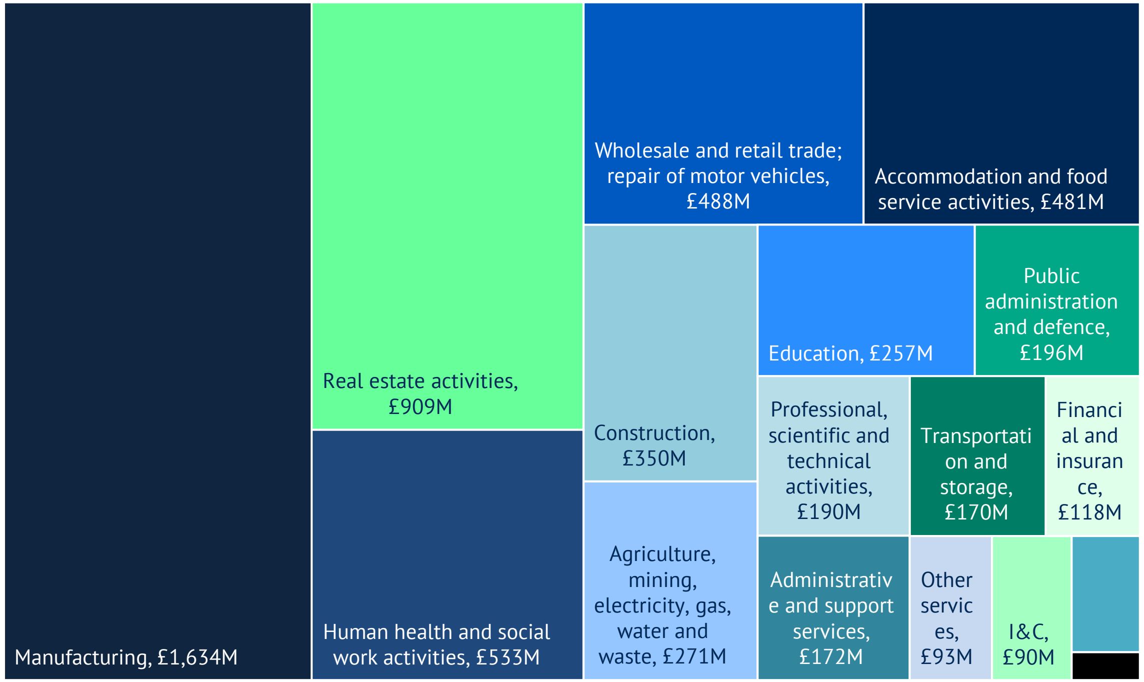
Prosperity

Insight

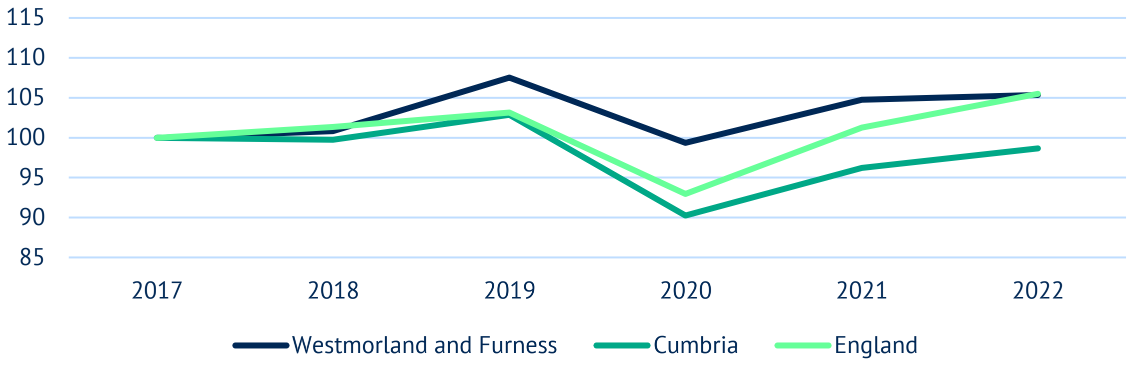
GVA

- Westmorland and Furness' contribution to UK GVA across all industries in 2022 was £6.0bn (at 2019 prices) – 51% of Cumbria's economic output.
- Three sectors generate half of the GVA in Westmorland and Furness: manufacturing (27%), real estate activities (15%), and human health and social work (9%).
- Wholesale and retail and accommodation and food services are also major industries for Westmorland and Furness - each generating around £480m of GVA (8% each).
- GVA grew by 5% between 2017 and 2022, ahead of Cumbria but in line with England position.
- Manufacturing has been a major contributor of Westmorland and Furness' economic growth, seeing significant expansion over the past five years (+32% since 2017).

Westmorland and Furness GVA by Industry, 2022
(2019 money value)

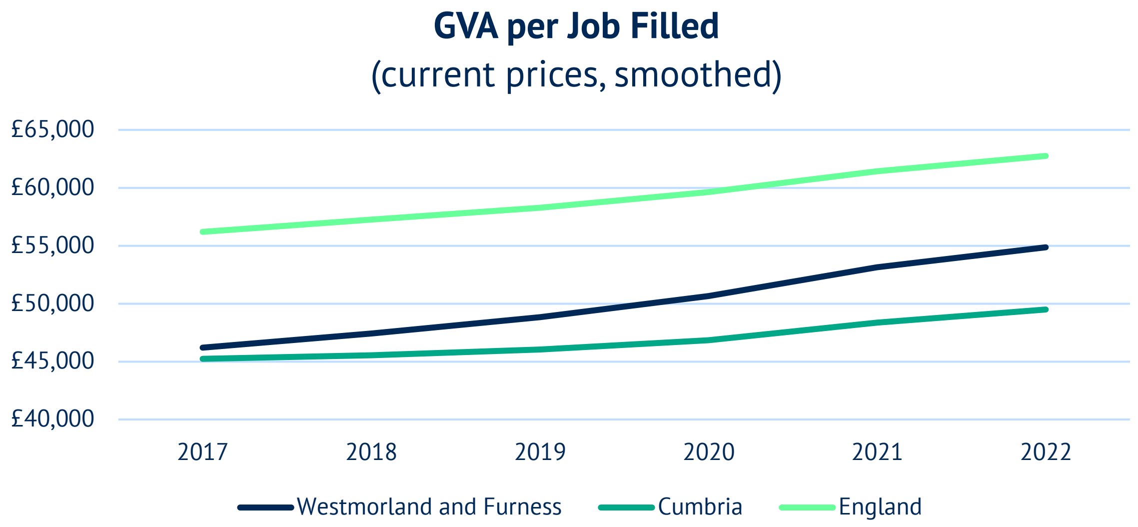


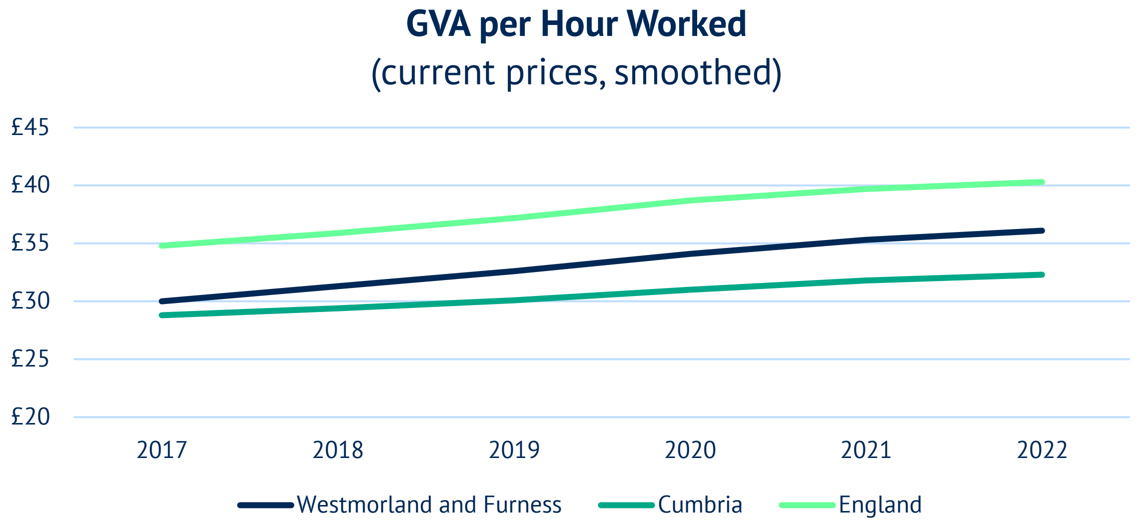
GVA Index Change, 2017-2022 (2019 money value)



Productivity

- Along with GVA, productivity in Westmorland and Furness has grown faster than in Cumbria and England over the last five years, narrowing the productivity gap with England.
- On average, each filled job in Westmorland and Furness contributes £54,865 to the UK economy. This is equivalent to 87% of the England average and exceeds the average for Cumbria.
- GVA per hour worked in Westmorland and Furness was £36.10 in 2022, compared to £32.30 on average in Cumbria and £40.30 in England.

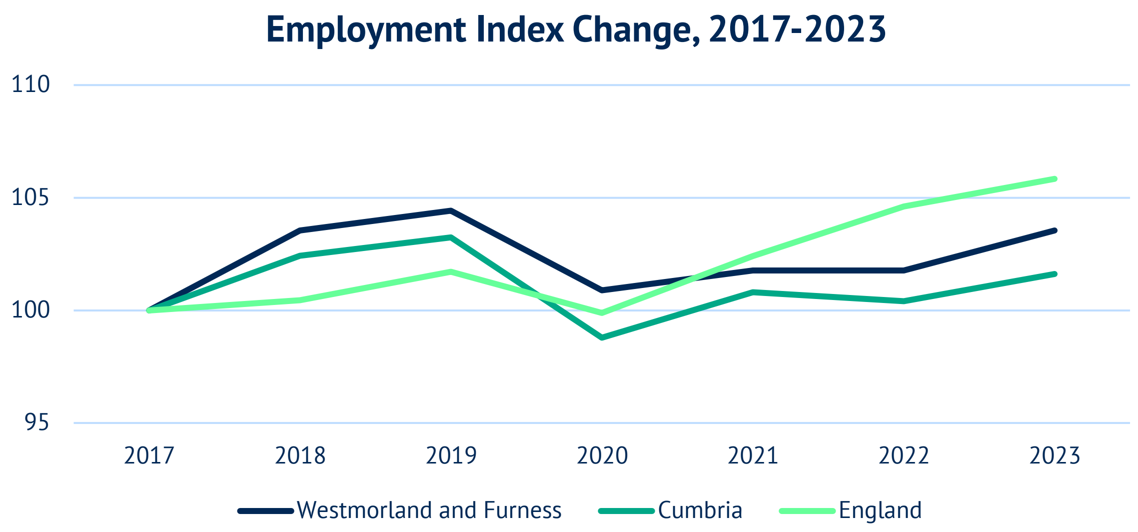


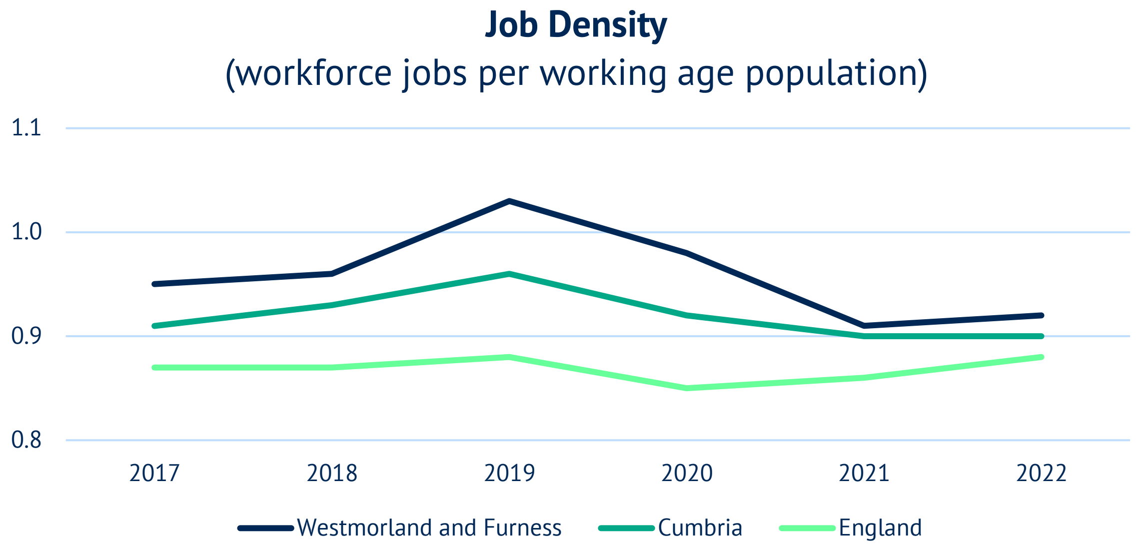


Source: Subregional productivity: labour productivity indices, ONS, 2017-2022

Employment

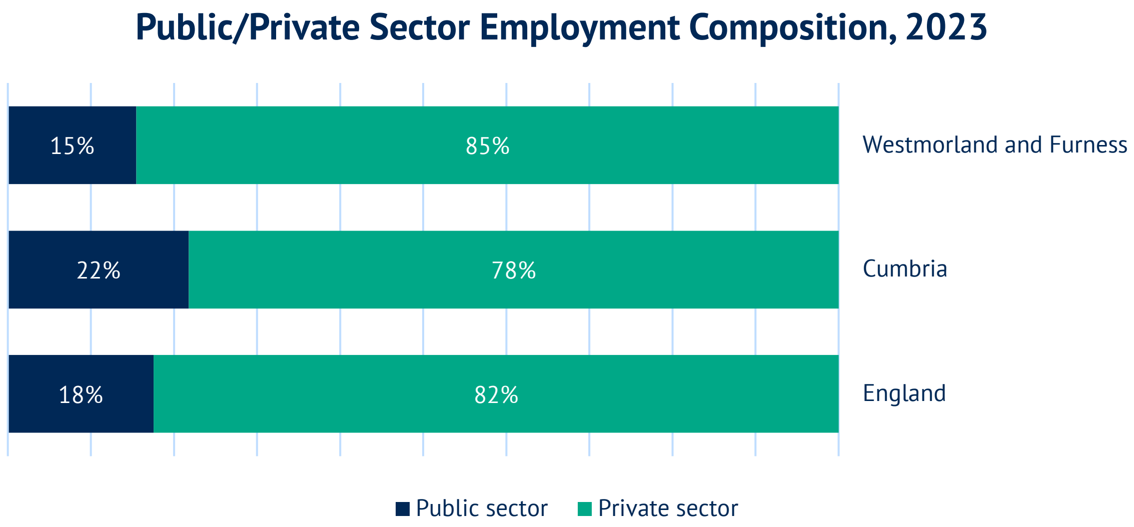
- Total employment in Westmorland and Furness was approximately 117,000 in 2023 – accounting for 47% of total employment in Cumbria.
- The total number of people employed in Westmorland and Furness increased by 4,000 between 2017 and 2023 (+4% growth), surpassing the Cumbria average (+2%).
- Between 2017 and 2019, Westmorland and Furness experienced strong employment growth (+4%) but this was interrupted by the pandemic in 2020 (-3%). Employment has not yet fully recovered, remaining 1% below 2019 levels, equivalent to a loss of 1,000 jobs.
- Despite this slow growth in employment, Westmorland and Furness continues to exhibit a high job density of 0.92 jobs per resident aged 16-64, surpassing both the Cumbria (0.90) and England (0.88) averages.

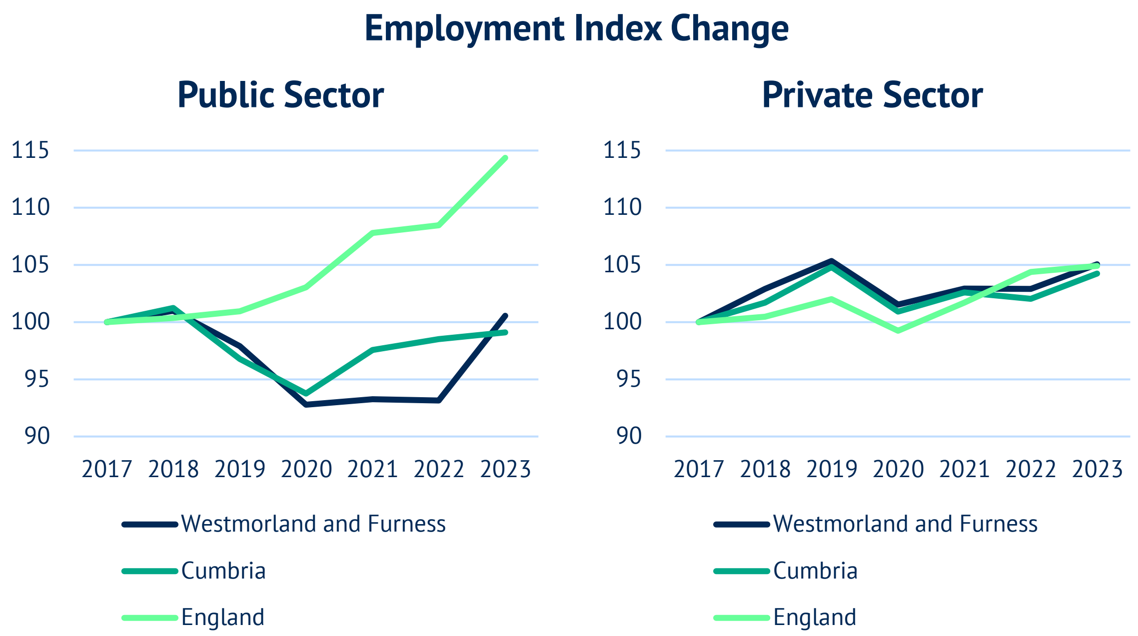




Public/Private Employment

- In 2023, 15% of people employed in Westmorland and Furness worked in the public sector, lower than Cumbria (22%) and England (18%), suggesting a greater reliance on private sector employment than regionally or nationally.
- Public sector employment decreased substantially in 2020 in line with Cumbria's trend but with a slower recovery, returning to 2019 levels only in 2023.
- In contrast, the private sector in Westmorland and Furness showed stronger resilience and followed a similar trend to benchmark areas. Since 2017, the private sector has employed 5% more people, a similar rate to Cumbria (4%) and England (5%).

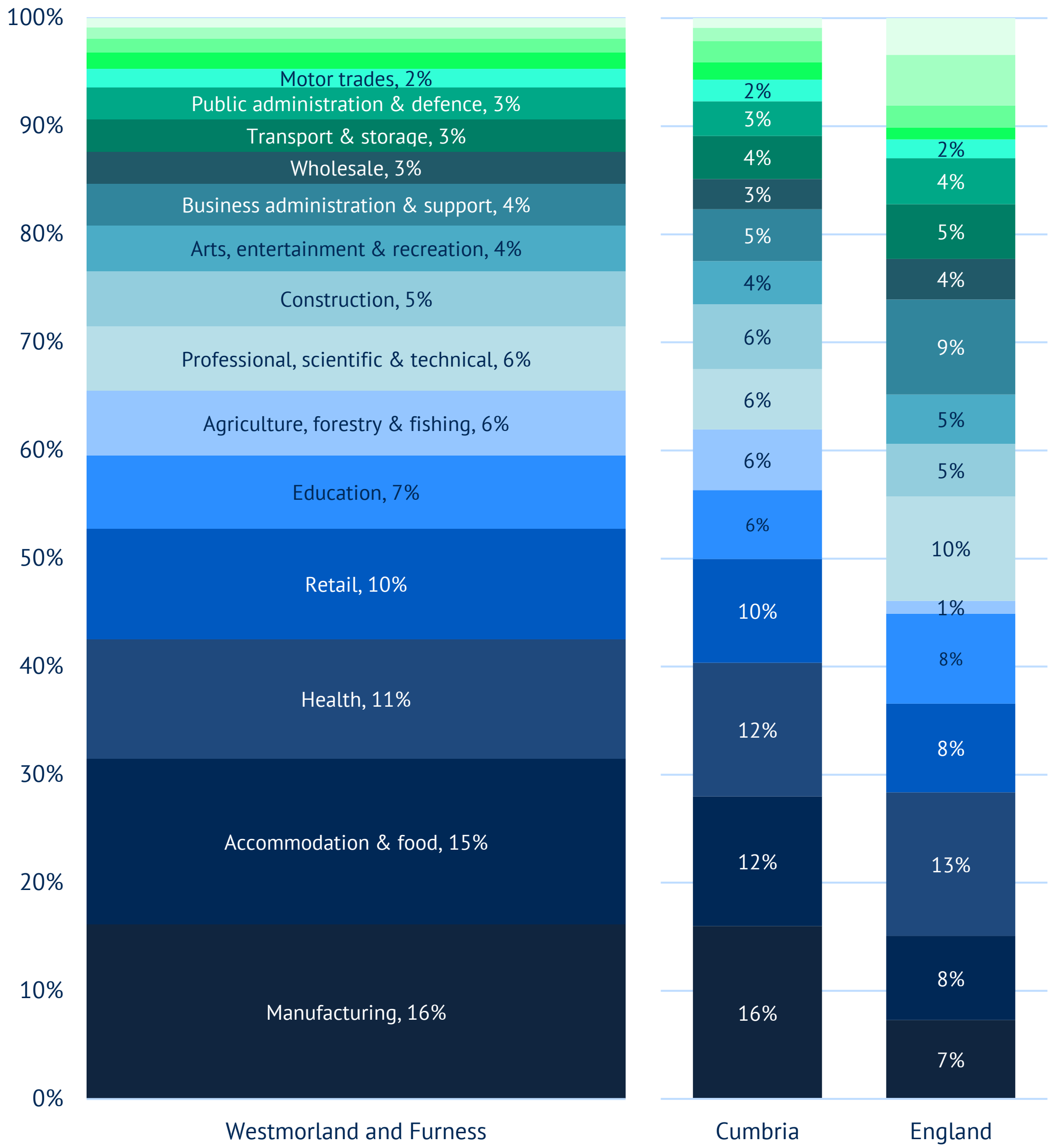




Employment by Sector

- Employment distribution by industry in Westmorland and Furness closely mirrors that of Cumbria, except for a higher concentration of jobs in accommodation and food services (15% compared to 12% in Cumbria).
- The concentration of jobs in accommodation and food is also higher than the national average (13%). This is driven by high levels of employment in accommodation (9,000 jobs, 5 times the national average), while employment in food and drink (8,000 jobs) is in line with the national average.
- The largest sector by employment is manufacturing, which employs 19,000 people, with a high proportion working for BAE Systems. This sector is strongly represented (16%), double the national average (7%).
- Specifically, employment levels in the manufacture of other transport (capturing 10,000 employees) are over 20 times the national average. The second largest manufacturing sub sector is the manufacture of food products where employment levels are slightly higher than the national average.
- Other sectors such as professional, scientific and technical; business administration and support; and information and communication have a low representation compared to the national average. However, as set out on the following slides both professional, scientific and technical services and business administration and support have grown in recent years.

Employment by Industry, 2023

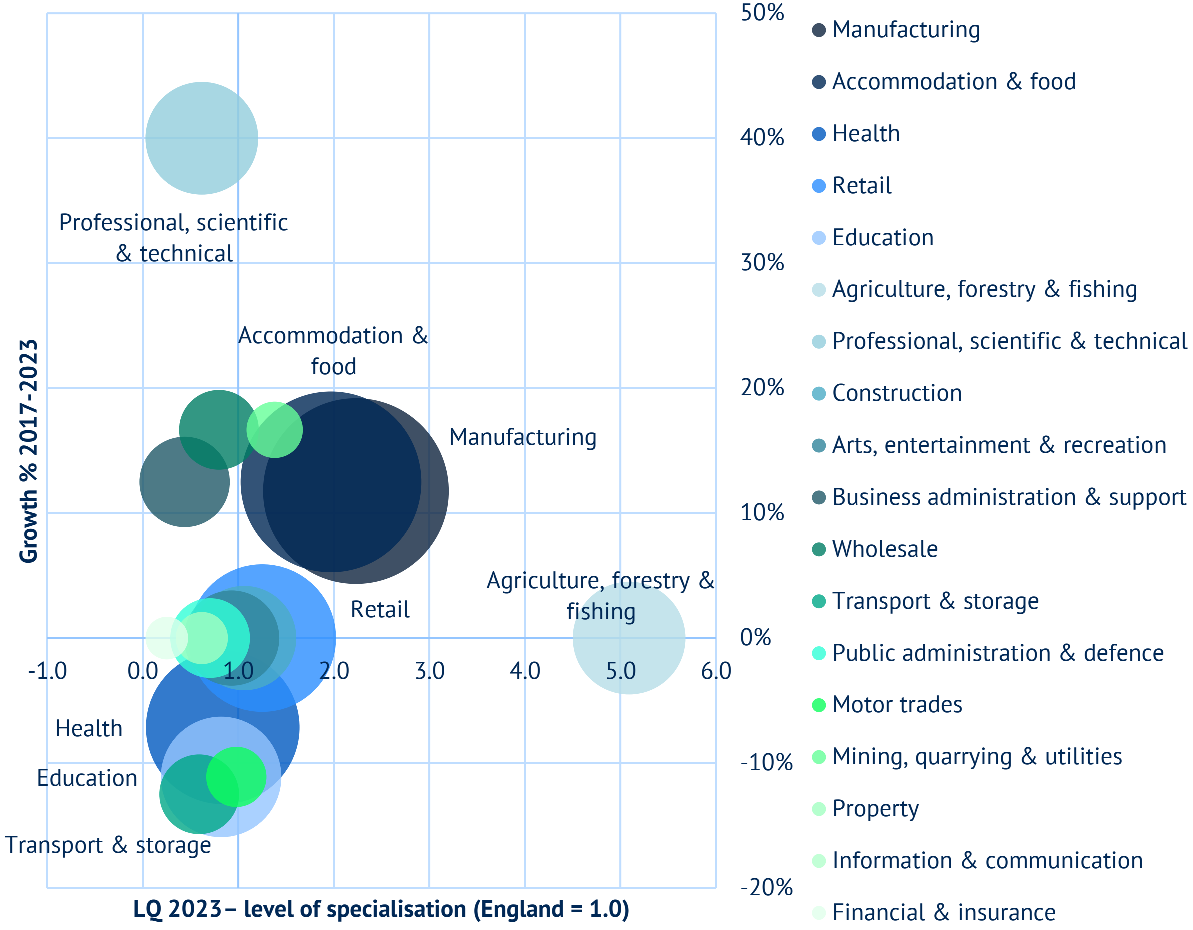


Source: Business Register and Employment Survey, ONS, 2023

Employment and Specialisation

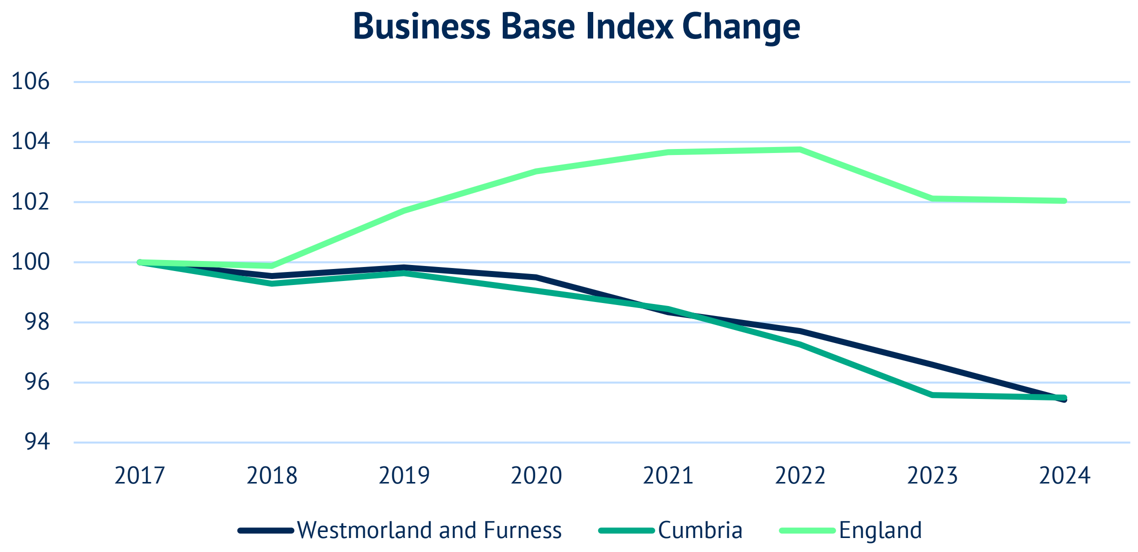
- The sector with the **largest employment increase** over the 2017-2023 period was professional, scientific and technical, accounting for 2,000 additional jobs (+40%). This was driven by legal and accounting services (+1,000 jobs / +67%), activities of head offices and management consultancy (+500 jobs / +40%) and veterinary activities (+400 jobs / +133%). 500 jobs were also created in the business admin and support sector driven by services to buildings and landscape activities.
- Manufacturing and accommodation and food services, both specialised sectors in Westmorland and Furness, **also contributed to growth** with 2,000 additional jobs each. The growth in manufacturing was driven by the manufacture of transport equipment, while the net employment increase was balanced between accommodation and food and drink.
- Several sectors have **seen no growth** compared to 2017, including retail and agriculture, forestry & fishing – both highly represented in the local economy.
- Health and education, key sources of employment in Westmorland and Furness, **have experienced significant losses** (-7% and -11%, respectively), in contrast to the national trend (+11% and +2%). This highlights significant challenges in the foundational economy aligned to meeting population need.

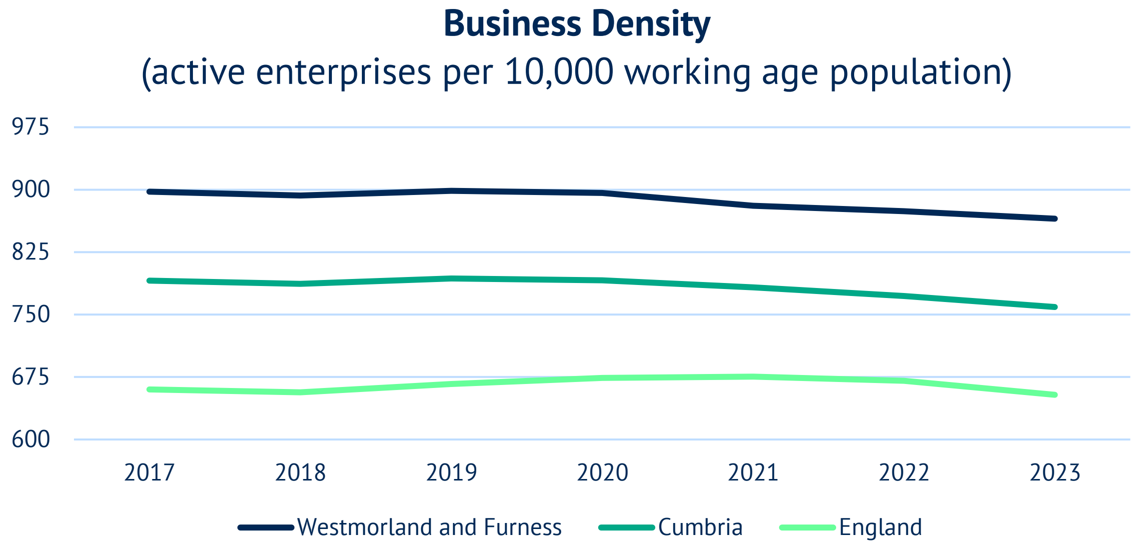
Westmorland and Furness Employment Size, Growth and Specialisation by Sector, 2017-2023



Business Base

- In 2024, Westmorland and Furness had 11,465 active businesses, which compares to 12,015 in 2017 (-5%).
- There are 30 large businesses in Westmorland and Furness, each employing more than 250 employees. Micro and small businesses represent 98% of the business base (11,270), on par with Cumbria and England averages.
- Since 2019, the number of businesses in Westmorland and Furness has been declining at a similar rate to that of Cumbria but contrary to the national trend.
- As a result, the business density in Westmorland and Furness has been in decline (-4% since 2017), although it maintains above comparator areas, with 865 businesses per 10,000 working age people. This compares to 759 in Cumbria and 654 in England.

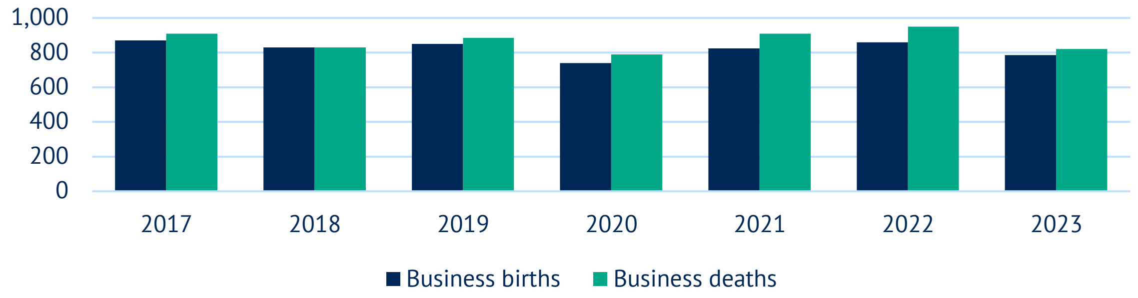




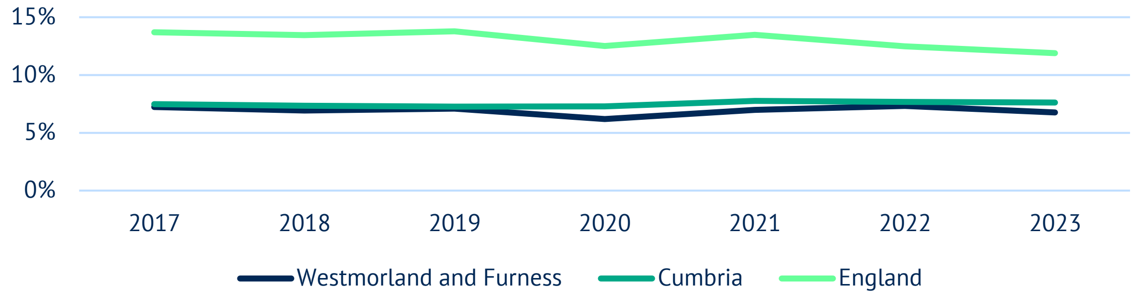
Business Demography

- Between 2017 and 2023, Westmorland and Furness experienced more business closures than openings.
- Business births have dropped during this period, from 870 in 2017 to 785 in 2023 (-10%), with the biggest fall seen in 2020 (-13% compared to 2019 levels).
- This translates into a business birth rate of 7%, below Cumbria and England (8% and 13%). As in Cumbria, business birth rates have remained broadly the same between 2017 and 2023.
- Although Westmorland and Furness presents lower business death rates (7%) than Cumbria (8%) and England (12%), the combination of low business birth and death rates indicates a less dynamic economy. The presence of large and dominant employers also plays a role in suppressing entrepreneurial appetite.
- Despite high long-term business survival rates in Westmorland and Furness, one-year survival rates have been declining (93% in 2023 vs. 96% in 2021). This suggests that starting and establishing a business has become more challenging in recent years.

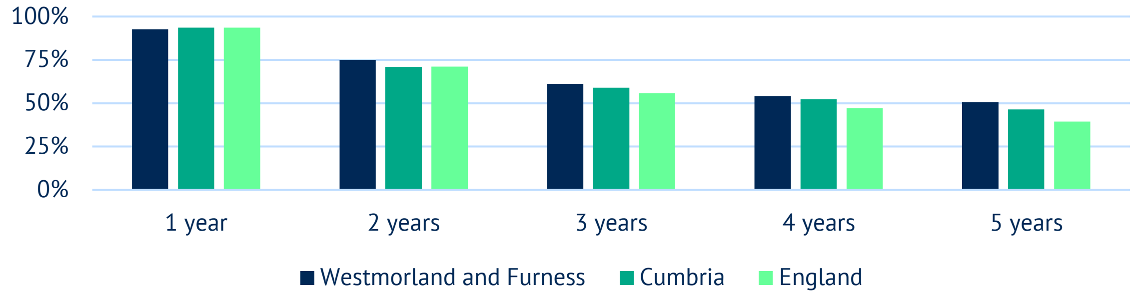
Business Births and Deaths, Westmorland and Furness



Business Birth Rate

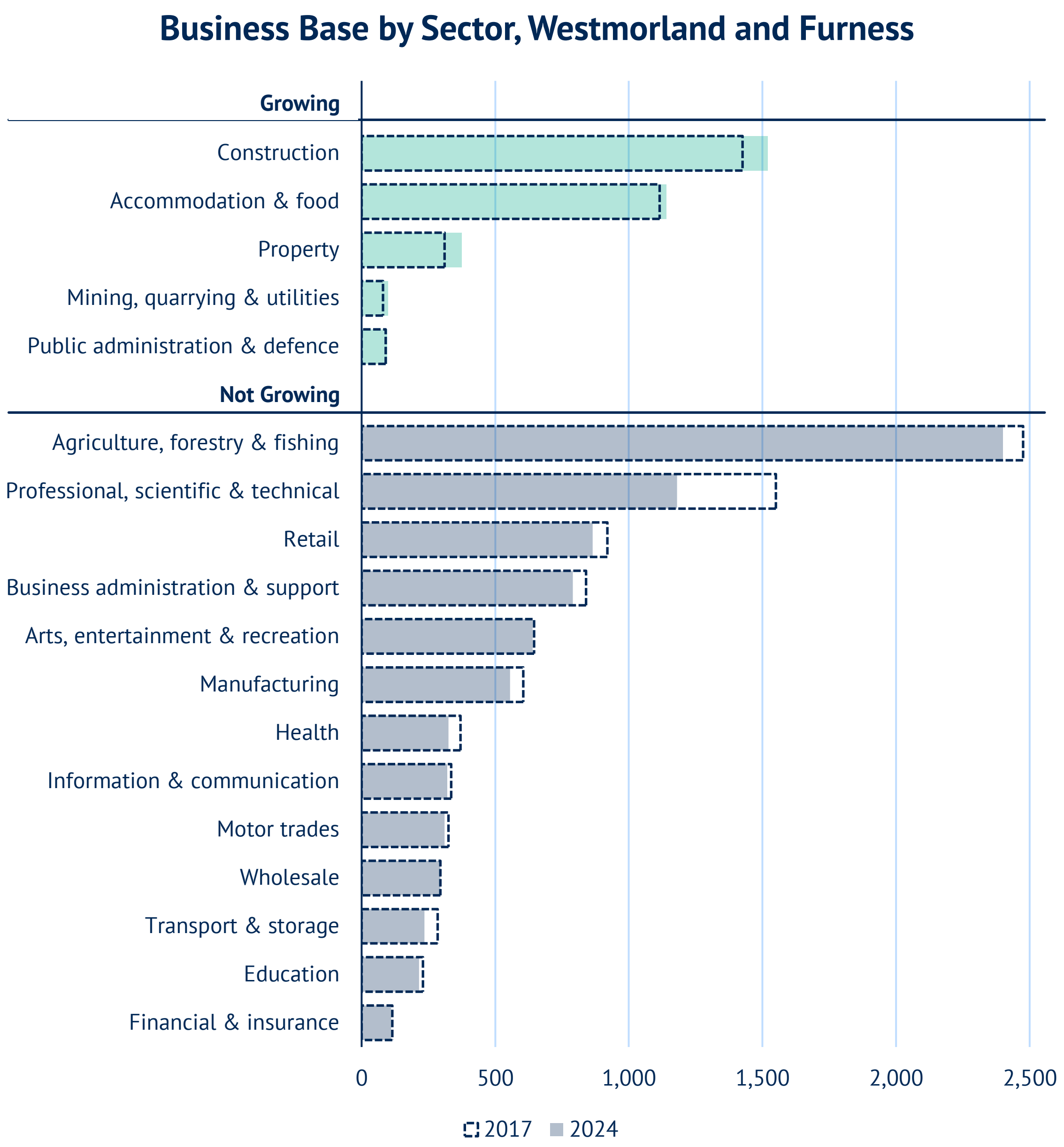


Business Survival Rates in 2023



Businesses by Sector

- Two sectors concentrate over a third (34%) of the business base in Westmorland and Furness: agriculture, forestry and fishing, and construction.
- Only five sectors have seen an increase in their business base, although in most cases at a slower rate than Cumbria and England. For example, the number of businesses in accommodation and food services has grown by 2% (+25), while in England, the increase has been 16%.
- Several sectors have experienced a contraction in their number of businesses including key industries in Westmorland and Furness' economy such as agriculture, forestry and fishing, retail, manufacturing, and health.
- The largest losses are found in the professional, scientific and technical sector (-370 or -24%), with the majority being micro businesses. While this sector has experienced growth in GVA and employment, the high number of business closures may suggest a competitive market where small, less productive firms struggle to survive.



RTIC Analysis – Business Sectors

- Looking beyond the Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) code groupings of businesses (which are often viewed as dated), the Data City's Real-Time Industry Classifications (RTICs) use AI and machine learning to map businesses in dynamic sectors which reflect a more modern business landscape.
- This data uses web technologies to identify businesses linked to their websites. While this may not be comprehensive, it provides some insight particularly on hard-to-analyse sectors.
- Analysis shows that the top RTICs in Westmorland and Furness by number of businesses include Net Zero, Life Sciences, Business Support Services and Digital Creative Industries, while the area also has high specialisations in a number of RTICs including the geospatial economy and robotics and automation.

Top 20 RTIC Sectors by Business Count in Westmorland and Furness

RTIC	Business Count	Location Quotient (LQ)
Net Zero	99	2.7
Life Sciences	96	2.9
Business Support Services	92	1.6
Digital Creative Industries	51	1.3
Agency Market	46	2
Research and Consulting - Physical Sciences and Engineering	39	2.1
Marine and Maritime	28	3
Legal Services	24	1.5
Advanced Manufacturing	24	1.3
Media and Publishing	22	1.4
Electronics Manufacturing	22	1.9
Geospatial Economy	19	4
Telecommunications	19	1.8
CleanTech	15	2.1
Robotics and Autonomous Systems	14	3.5
FoodTech	12	N/A
Defence	11	N/A
Rehabilitation	11	1.4
Energy Generation	11	0.9
Design and Modelling Technologies	9	3.2

Source: The Data City, January 2025 |
*LQs may be higher than through other datasets due to the smaller base of businesses assessed. Based on businesses with 1+ employees

RTIC Analysis – Business Sub Sectors

Looking at the 10 largest RTIC sectors, the tables below show the top RTIC Verticals, giving an indication of the key sub-sectors in these sectors by the number of businesses in Westmorland and Furness.

Net Zero	Count
Renewable Energy Planning Database	47
Renewables	33
Waste Management and Recycling	31
Low Carbon Energy Generation	18
Diversion of Biodegradable Waste from Landfill	15

Life Sciences	Count
Human Health Services	70
Environmental Services Products and Services	18
Life Sciences Manufacturing	3
Research	3
Chemical Products and Services	2

Business Support Services	Count
Landscaping and Cleaning Services	26
Machinery Rental Services	24
Office Support Services	15
Emplyoment and Recruitment Services	14
Security Services	11

Digital Creative Industries	Count
Film/TV	13
Architecture	12
Advertising	11
Photography	9
Branding	9

Agency Market	Count
Branding	19
Performance Marketing	10
Advertising	8
Office Support Services	7
User Experience	6

Research and Consulting - Physical Sciences and Engineering	Count
Architectural Consulting	14
Engineering Consulting	12
Engineering Research	7
Architecture	5
Physical Sciences Research	5

Marine and Maritime	Count
Shipping - Container, bulk, RoRo, tanker	18
Professional Services	7
Ports Ecosystem	5
Shipping - Workboats	5
Autonomy and Robotics	4

Legal Services	Count
Wills, trusts, probate and estate administration	11
Family	7
Divorce	6
General	5
Employment	5

Advanced Manufacturing	Count
Digital Design	7
Computer Aided Manufacturing	7
Engineering Research	5
Data Processing and Visualisation	4
Engineering Consulting	4

Media and Publishing	Count
Printing Services	16
Video and Motion Graphics production	5
Photography	3
Film/TV	2
Sound and Music Production	1

Based on businesses with 1+ employees

RTIC Analysis – Business Specialisms

- The table shows the top 20 RTIC sectors in Westmorland and Furness based on the Location Quotient (LQ) for the number of businesses.
- The data shows that Westmorland and Furness has high specialisations in a number of RTIC sectors. The RTICs showing the highest specialisation in the area include the Geospatial Economy, Robotics and Autonomous Systems, Land Remediation, Design and Modelling Technologies, Marine and Maritime, Life Sciences and Net Zero – all with an LQ of greater than 2.5. Other sectors including Advanced Manufacturing (1.3 LQ) have lower LQs, but are still specialised RTICs in the area.
- While in some cases a low number of businesses are highlighted through the RTIC analysis, this data does show some sectors in addition to the previous slides. These include Land Remediation, Agritech, and Energy Storage, which are all RTIC sectors of specialisation in Westmorland and Furness.

Top 20 RTIC Sectors in Westmorland and Furness by Location Quotient

RTIC	Location Quotient (LQ)	Business Count
Geospatial Economy	4	19
Robotics and Autonomous Systems	3.5	14
Land Remediation	3.2	8
Design and Modelling Technologies	3.2	9
Marine and Maritime	3	28
Life Sciences	2.9	96
Net Zero	2.7	99
Clean Tech	2.1	15
Research and Consulting - Physical Sciences and Engineering	2.1	39
Agency Market	2	46
AgriTech	1.9	4
Electronics Manufacturing	1.9	22
Telecommunications	1.8	19
Energy Storage	1.8	7
Space Economy	1.7	6
Business Support Services	1.6	92
Legal Services	1.5	24
Rehabilitation	1.4	11
Media and Publishing	1.4	22
Digital Creative Industries	1.3	51
Advanced Manufacturing	1.3	24

Source: The Data City, January 2025 | Copyright in the data belongs to Data City and/or its licensors, 2025, thedatacity.com | *LQs may be higher than through other datasets due to the smaller base of businesses assessed. Based on businesses with 1+ employees. RTICs with less than 4 businesses excluded. Based on all locations business activity.

Potential Key Sectors

Taking account of the employment analysis (based upon SIC classifications of activity), business analysis (based upon RITC classifications of activity) and local intelligence on the relative strengths of the Westmorland and Furness and economy, the key sectors outlined below and on the following slide have been identified for further exploration through the development of the Strategy.

Manufacturing

19,000 jobs
Employment LQ 2.2

Employment (SIC) insights:
Manufacture of Transport Equipment (10,000 jobs, LQ 21.5)

Business (RITCS) insights:
Advanced Manufacturing (24 businesses and LQ 1.3)

Robotics and autonomous systems (14 businesses, LQ 3.5)

Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing

7,000 jobs
Employment LQ 5.1

Employment (SIC) insights:
Manufacture of Food Products (2,000 jobs, LQ 1.44)

Business (RITCS) insights:
Agri-tech (4 businesses and LQ 1.9)

Food tech (12 businesses, LQ N/A)

Energy

1,260 Jobs
Employment LQ 1.0

Employment (SIC) insights:
Support activities for other mining and quarrying (50 jobs, LQ 20.9)
Extraction of crude petroleum (100 jobs, LQ 8.4)
Production of electricity (300 jobs, LQ 3.3)
Collection of non-hazardous waste (450 jobs, LQ 1.6)

Business (RITCS) insights:
Net Zero (99 businesses and LQ 2.7)
Clean Tech (15 businesses, LQ 2.1)
Energy Generation (11 businesses, LQ 0.9)
Energy Storage Management (7 businesses, LQ 1.8)

Source: RTIC LQs and Business Counts from The Data City, January 2025 | Copyright in the data belongs to Data City and/or its licensors, 2025, thedatacity.com | Businesses may have multiple RTICs | *LQs may be higher than through other datasets due to the smaller base of businesses assessed. ONS Employment LQs and Job Numbers from BRES 2023

Potential Key Sectors Continued…

Visitor Economy

22,000 jobs
Employment LQ 1.6

Employment (SIC) insights:

Cultural and Creative Sector
(3,000 jobs, LQ 0.5)

Accommodation
(9,000 jobs, LQ 5.3)

Defence

11 businesses
RTIC LQ N/A

Business (RITCS) insights:

Platforms (12 businesses)

Space and Resilient Communications (4 businesses)

Comprehensive Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (4 businesses)

Modernised Logistics and Support (3 businesses)

Professional, Scientific and Technical

7,000 jobs
ONS LQ 0.6

Employment (SIC) insights:
Legal and accounting activities (2,500 jobs, LQ 0.8)
Activities of head offices; management consultancy activities (1,750 jobs, LQ 0.5)
Veterinary activities (700 jobs, LQ 2.2)

Business (RITCS) insights:
Digital Creative Industries (51 businesses and LQ 1.3),
Agency Market (46 businesses and LQ 2.0)
Research & Consulting – physical sciences and engineering (39 businesses, LQ 2.1)
Legal Services (24 businesses, LQ 1.5)
Media and Publishing (22 businesses, LQ 1.4)
Geospatial Economy (19 businesses, LQ 4.0)

Opportunities which span sectors: green economy/clean growth
Other considerations: role of the foundational economy and social enterprise

Growth Flag Analysis

Growth Flag is an innovative, first-of-its-kind, data intelligence tool that provides comprehensive insights on businesses across the UK. In particular, the tool utilises bespoke algorithms to highlight business risk, and to forecast which businesses will grow by 20% over the next year – currently with over 90% accuracy. This growth is based on multi-variate analysis, meaning the actual financial measure tracked will vary depending on the most appropriate metric for each business.

Growth Flag also uses other innovations, including the Best Match SIC code, which identifies the actual activity of businesses when this is misfiled in official records.

Data analysis here is as of January 2025. Growth Flag data is updated up to four times a day at growthflag.com, so this analysis is a snapshot and subject to change. Some key points from the analysis include:

- There are approximately 10,100 businesses that currently have a trading or registered presence in Westmorland and Furness.
- On average, these businesses have 10 employees and have been operating for 12 years.
- 1,725 of these businesses are newly incorporated and yet to file accounts.
- 1,231 businesses in Westmorland and Furness have a High Growth Score, meaning they are likely or very likely to achieve 20% growth in the next year. This is 13% of businesses compared to 10% nationally – indicating stronger business growth potential in the region.

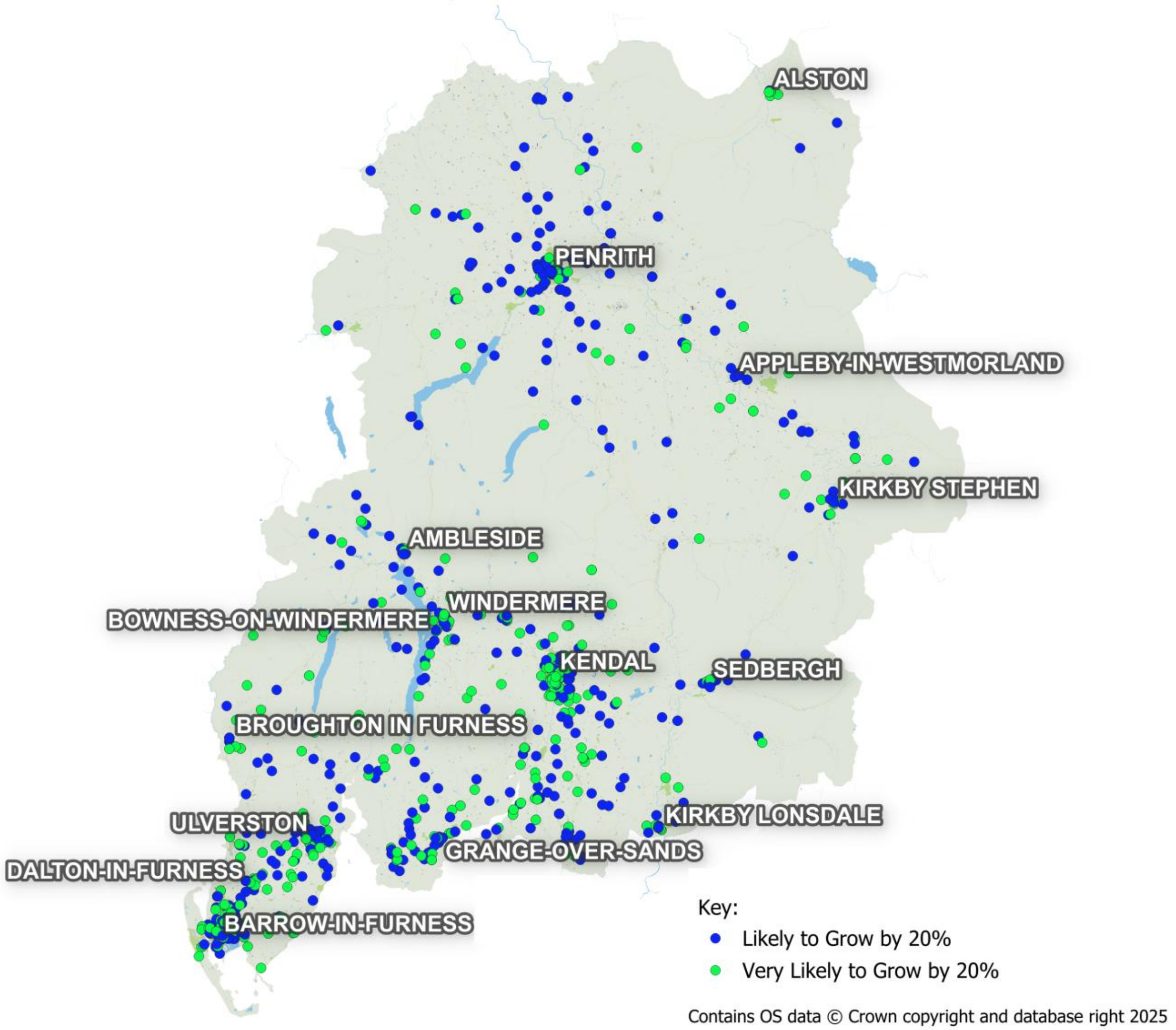
11.2%

of businesses likely or very likely to achieve 20% growth in the next 12 months

10.4% nationally
10.9% in Cumbria

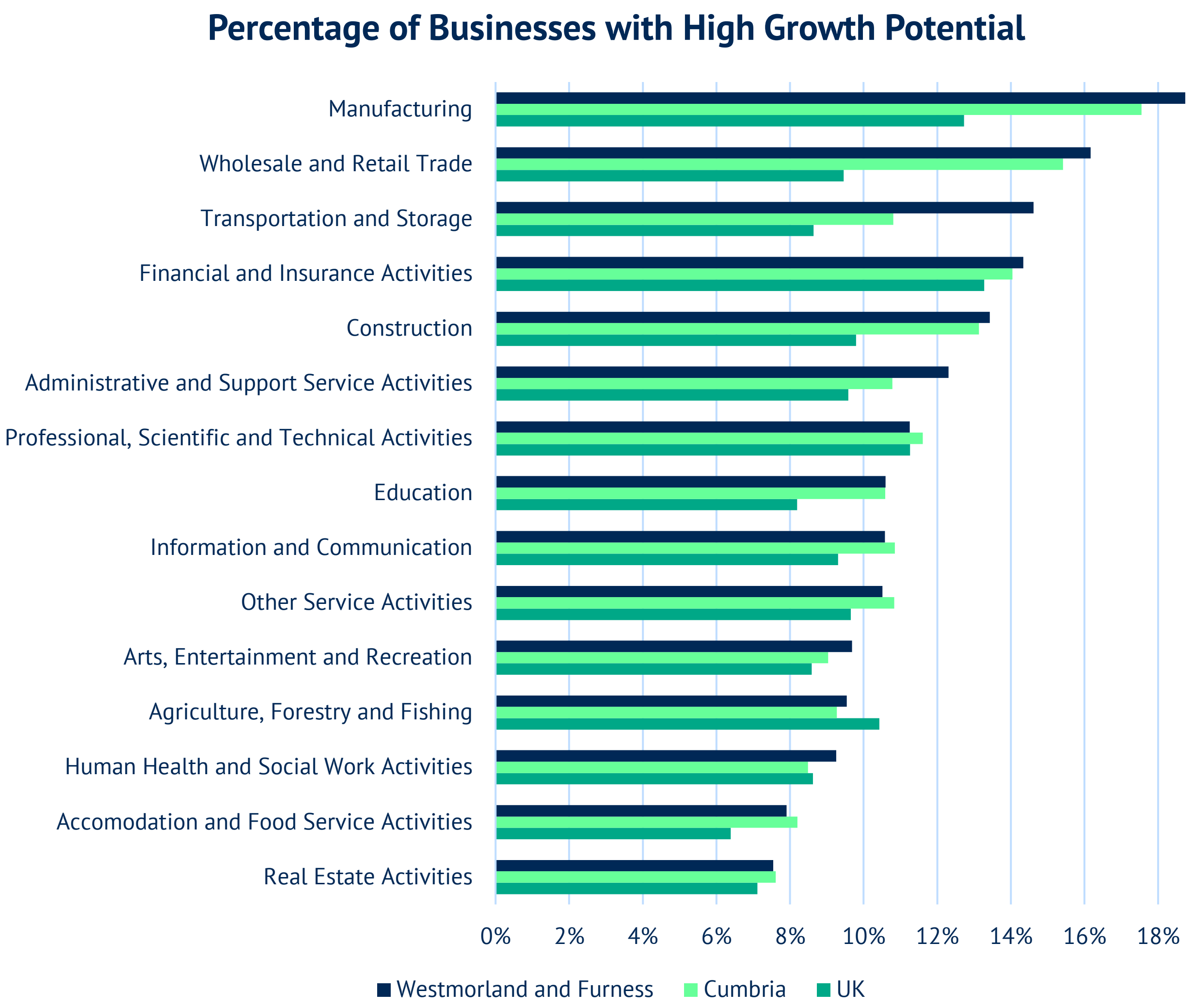
Growth Flag: High Growth Potential Businesses

- 1,231 (11.2%) businesses in Westmorland and Furness are expected to grow by 20% in the next year. This is compared to around 10.6% of businesses in Cumberland, 10.9% in Cumbria, and 10.4% of businesses nationally.
- This includes 778 businesses in Westmorland and Furness which are *likely* to grow by 20% in the next year and 453 businesses which are *very likely* to grow by 20% in the next year.
- As shown by the map, these businesses can be found throughout Westmorland and Furness, with clusters centred in urban areas.



Growth Flag: High Growth Potential Businesses

- The accompanying chart illustrates the proportion of businesses by sector in Westmorland and Furness which are expected to grow by 20% in the next year, compared to the averages in Cumbria and the UK.
- The analysis shows that the sectors in Westmorland and Furness with the highest proportion of businesses showing high growth potential include Manufacturing (19%), Wholesale and Retail Trade (16%), and Transportation and Storage (15%). For all of these sectors, there is significantly greater levels of businesses with high growth potential compared to the national average for these sectors, and the average for all sectors of 10.4%.
- Overall, the data shows a positive picture for business growth potential in Westmorland and Furness across a range of sectors, with most key sectors having higher proportions of high growth potential businesses than the UK – and in many cases also Cumbria.



Growth Flag: Business Risk

- Around 11% (1,093) of businesses in Westmorland and Furness and currently demonstrating signals of financial distress. This is slightly lower than nationally, where 13% of active businesses are currently showing some signals of financial distress.
- The levels of financial distress vary across different businesses in Westmorland and Furness, as summarised below.

994 businesses
With One Red Flag

These businesses are showing early signs of financial distress. This could be for a variety of reasons ranging from financial challenges to director churn and not filing accounts on time.

33% of these businesses typically fail within 2 years.

60 businesses
With Two Red Flags

These businesses are showing more serious signals of financial distress. These businesses typically fail multiple checks against our risk algorithms and support is now much more urgent.

50% of these businesses typically fail within 1 year.

39 businesses
With Three Red Flags

These businesses are in critical distress and most of these businesses are unlikely to survive. Three Red Flags provides a final warning before businesses fail, or in some cases make a recovery.

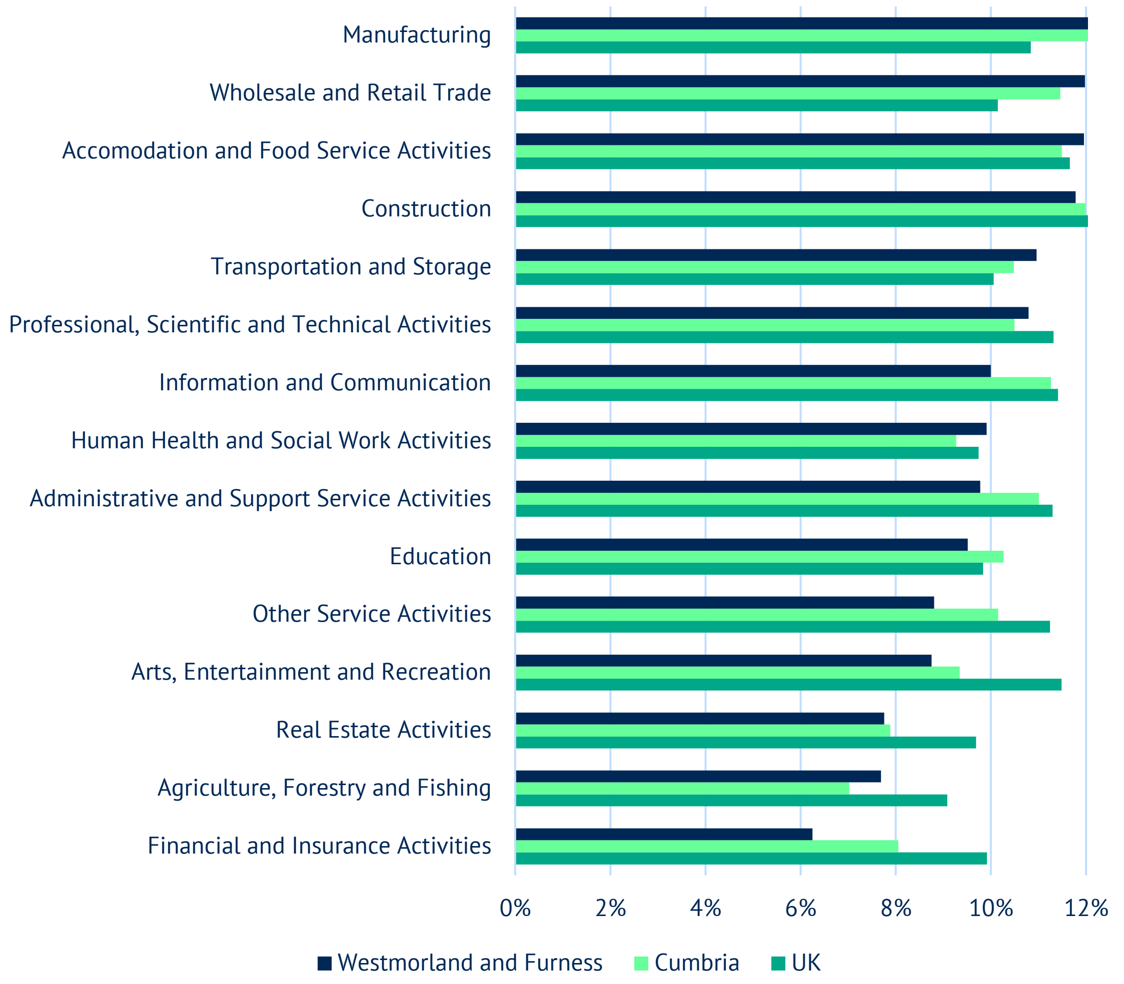
78% of these businesses typically fail within 1 month.

Source: Growth Flag, January 2025, growthflag.com

Growth Flag: Business Risk

- The accompanying chart illustrates the proportion of businesses by sector in Westmorland and Furness showing signs of business distress, compared to the averages in Cumbria and the UK.
- The analysis shows that the sectors in Westmorland and Furness with the highest proportion of businesses showing signals of financial distress include Manufacturing (12%), Wholesale and Retail Trade (12%), Accommodation and Food Service Activities (12%), and Construction (12%).
- The chart shows lower proportions of businesses in financial distress in Westmorland and Furness compared to Cumbria and the UK in sectors including financial and insurance activities, education, and information and communication. In contrast, there are though higher levels of risk among businesses in the area compared to Cumbria and the UK in the Wholesale and Retail Trade; Accommodation and Food Service Activities; and Transportation and Storage sectors.

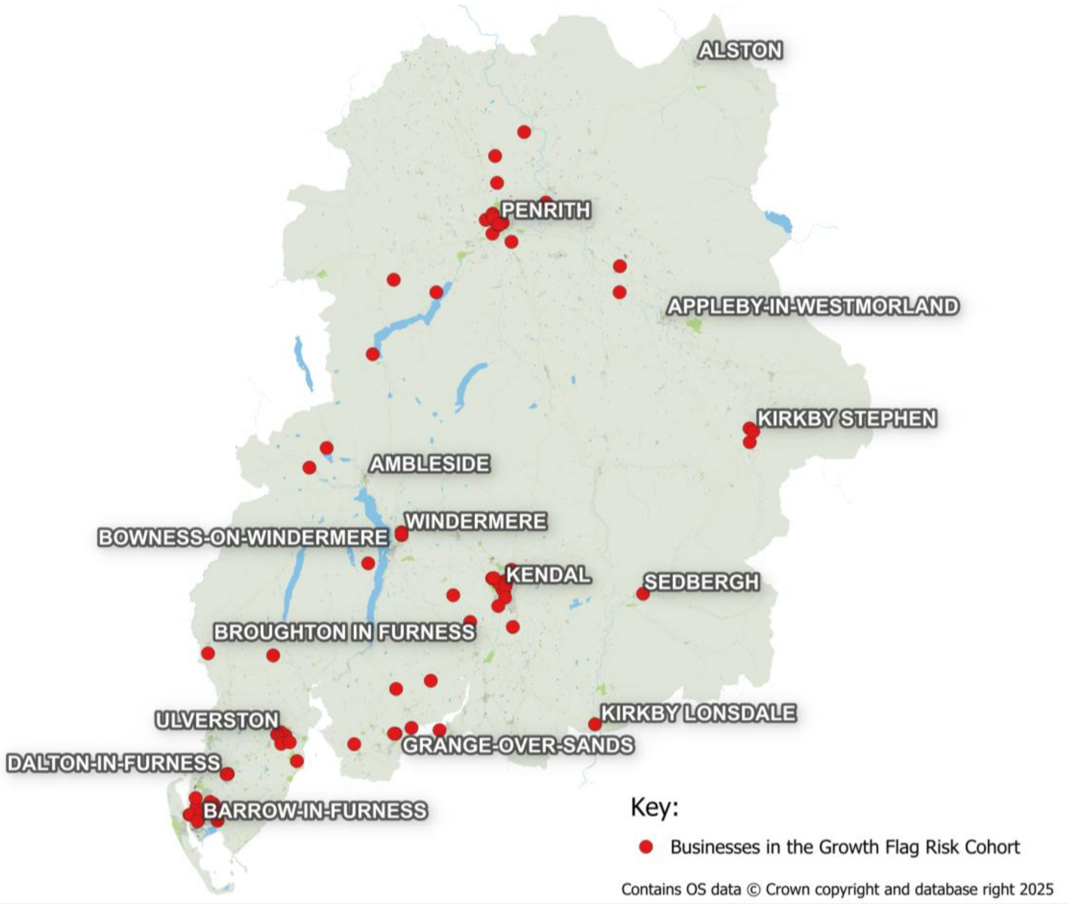
Percentage of Businesses with Any Signals of Financial Distress



Source: Growth Flag, January 2025, growthflag.com

Growth Flag: Risk Cohort

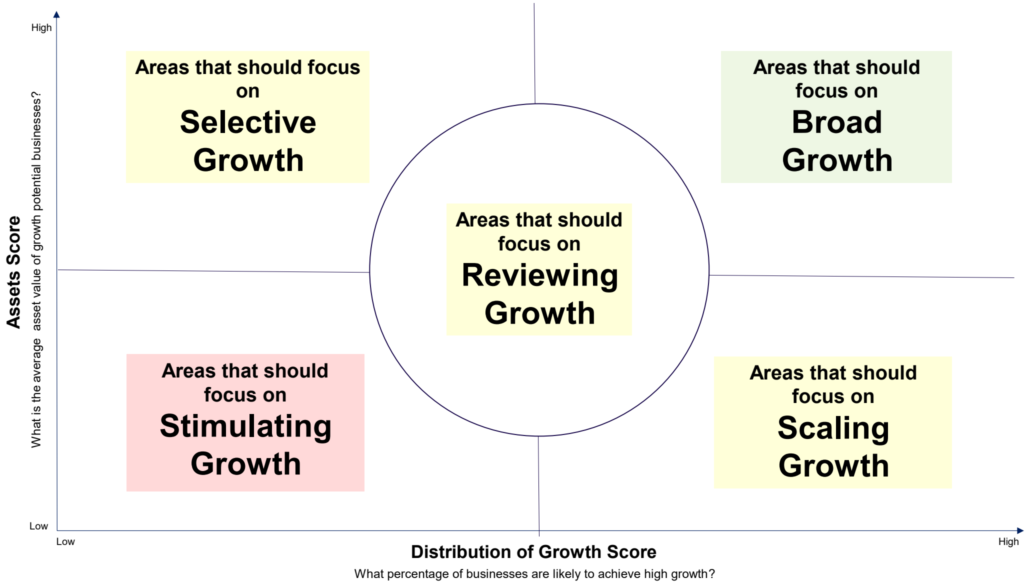
- Growth Flag analysis gives particular attention to businesses in the 'Growth Flag Risk Cohort' – a cohort of businesses across the country which have high growth potential and are expected to grow by 20% in the next year but are simultaneously displaying distinct signals of financial distress (around 33% of which typically fail within 2 years).
- 84 businesses in Westmorland and Furness are currently in the Growth Flag Risk Cohort. These businesses are located across different parts of the area, as shown by the map – though there are particular clusters in Penrith, Kendal, Ulverston and Barrow-in-Furness.
- These businesses in Westmorland and Furness operate across a broad range of sectors, though higher numbers of these businesses can be found in the retail sector, where 17 businesses (20%) are in the cohort. There are also significant levels of construction (12%) and manufacturing (8%) businesses with the simultaneous growth and risk signals in Westmorland and Furness.
- Businesses in the Growth Flag Risk Cohort are expected to grow but also display early signs of financial distress. Offering targeted support to businesses in this cohort could help these businesses navigate current challenges to achieve forecasted growth – maximising impacts for the local area.



Source: Growth Flag, January 2025, growthflag.com

Growth Flag: Strategic Comparisons

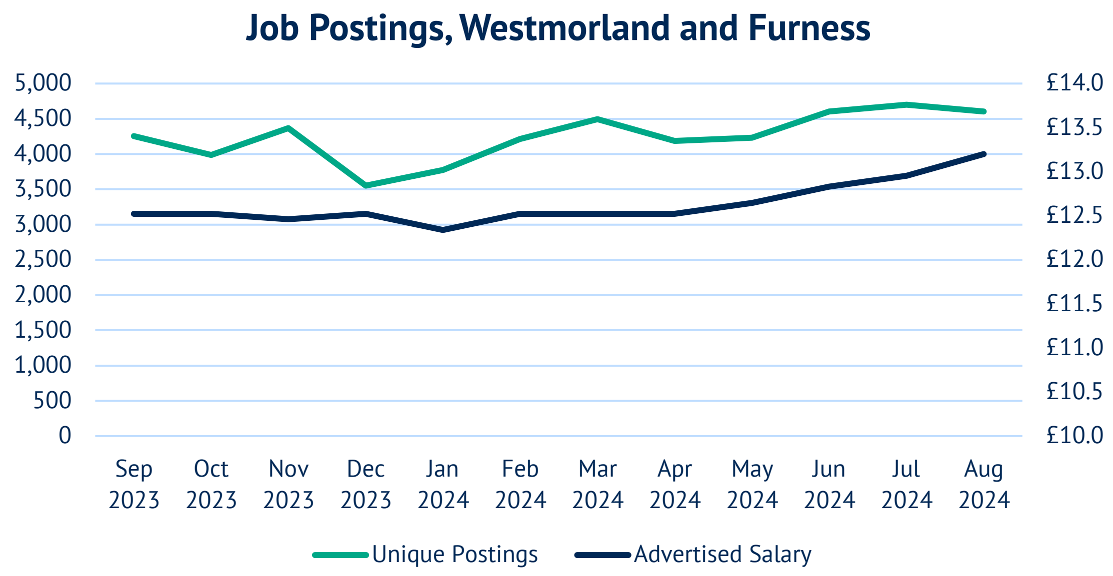
- Westmorland and Furness is highlighted in the Growth Flag Power Outlook 2025 in the category of 'Scaling Growth'.
- The Growth Flag Power Outlook, published annually as part of the Growth Flag Annual Report, provides an innovative methodology for direct comparison between (single or upper tier) local authorities across the UK.
- The Power Outlook works by giving each local area two scores – one assessing the percentage of businesses in each area that are expected to grow, and another assessing the average asset value of these businesses. It then provides suggested strategies for helping to drive business growth based on the scores.
- Based on the evidence, areas in the 'Scaling Growth' category have a high proportion of high growth businesses but could benefit from greater growth among the larger value businesses.
- Westmorland and Furness' position in the Power Outlook has remain unchanged since 2024. Cumberland is also in the same category for 2025 – moving down from 'Broad Growth' (where there is high value high growth potential widely present) in 2024.
- More information, including the rankings of other local authorities, can be found in the [Growth Flag Annual Report.]

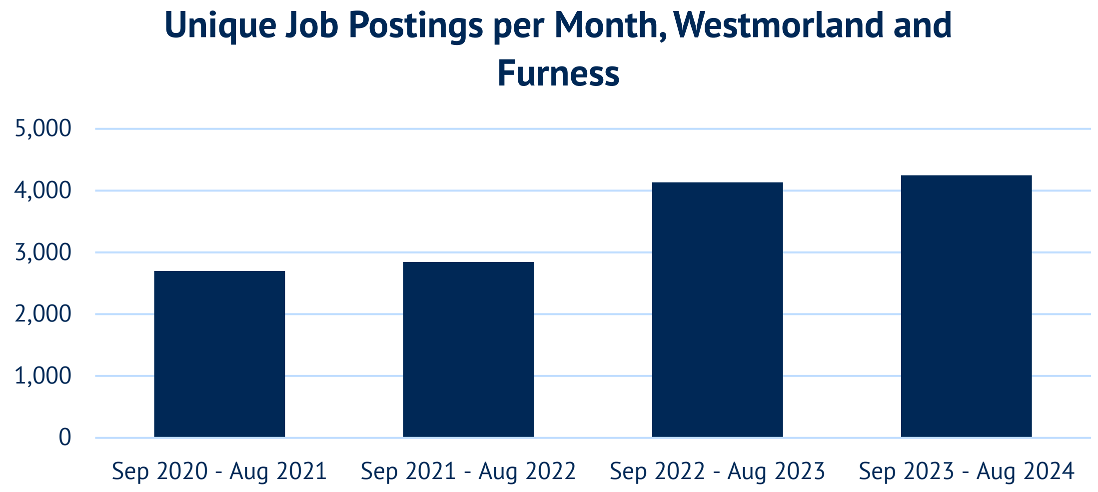


Source: Growth Flag, January 2025, growthflag.com

Job Postings

- Westmorland and Furness had 24,676 unique jobs postings between September 2023 and August 2024. Advertised jobs and salaries increased during this period, while a longer-term trend shows that postings have stabilised since the pandemic.
- Of these job postings, 10,971 were in South Lakeland (44%), 8,347 in Barrow-in-Furness (34%) and 5,358 in Eden (22%). Most job postings (73%) were concentrated in three towns – Barrow-in-Furness, Kendal and Penrith.
- BAE Systems was the top employer, with 1,541 postings, accounting for 6% of all job postings in Westmorland and Furness and 19% in Barrow-in-Furness.
- Job postings at BAE Systems remained open for an average of 19 days, shorter than the 24-day median for both Westmorland and Furness and the wider region. This suggests fast recruitment, which could indicate high demand and skills available, but also that smaller employers may struggle to compete for skilled workers.

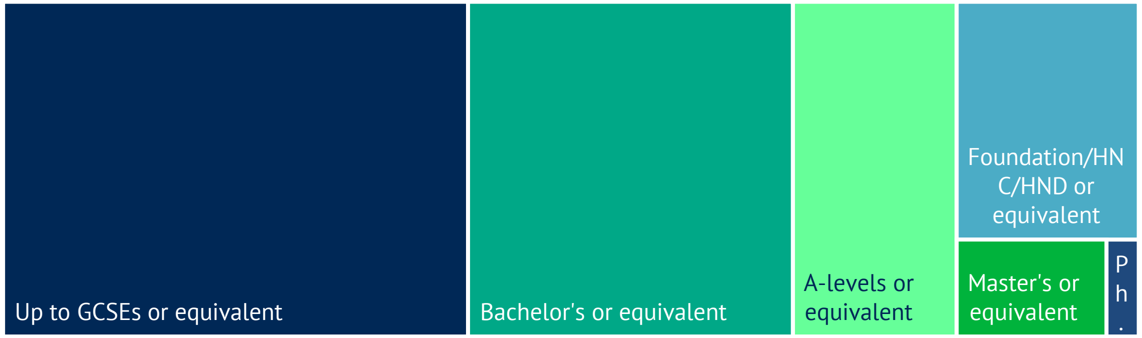




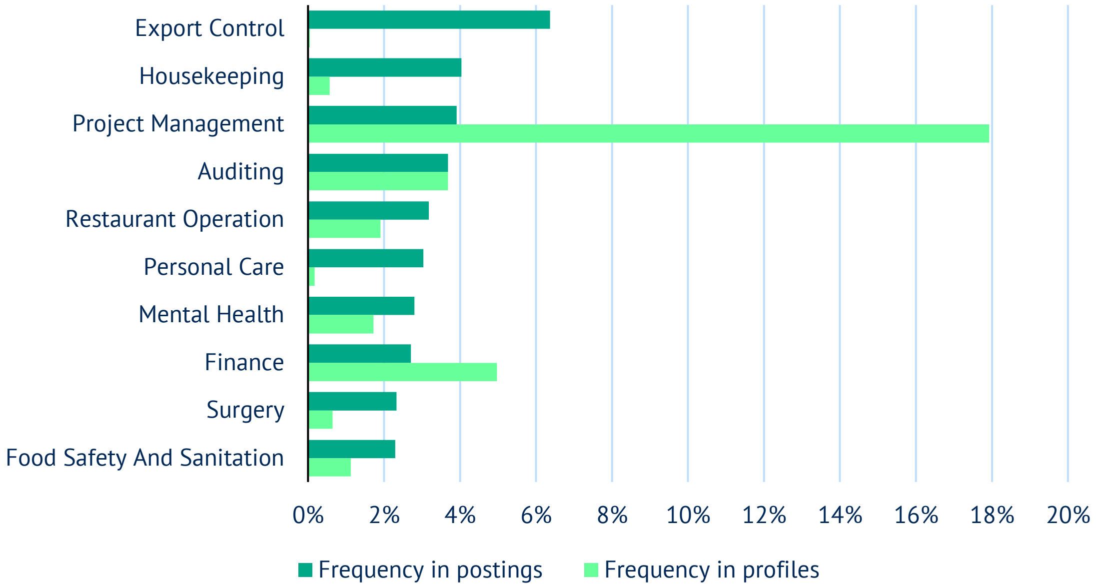
Skills in Demand

- Although many job postings don't specify experience or education requirements, among those that do, there is a high concentration of roles requiring low levels of experience, with nearly half (49%) requiring only 0 to 1 years of experience. Similarly, lower-level qualifications are more common, with just 33% of postings requesting a bachelor's degree or higher.
- The top specialist skills required in Westmorland and Furness span multiple sectors, including regulatory compliance, business, hospitality, and healthcare, indicating a diverse local demand.
- However, data on professional profiles suggest a mismatch between local skills and employer needs. There are more professionals in Westmorland and Furness with skills in project management, finance, and marketing than there are job opportunities requiring them. In contrast, employer demand exceeds workforce availability for specialist skills in healthcare, hospitality, and regulatory roles, pointing to skills shortages in these key sectors.

Minimum Education Level in Job Postings, Westmorland and Furness



Top Specialised Skills in Job Postings, Westmorland and Furness



Summary Prosperity Indicators by Legacy Local Authorities

- Both Eden and South Lakeland have experienced significant GVA growth in the last five years. This performance, along with high job and business density and business survival rates, indicate a thriving economy.
- In contrast, Barrow-in-Furness has experienced significant losses in its business base (-460), with a high proportion of businesses struggling to survive beyond 5 years. As a result, the area performs poorly when considering business density. The dominance of key employers (BAE Systems) is a key contributor to economic and employment growth.

Indicator	Barrow-in-Furness	Eden	South Lakeland	Westmorland and Furness
GVA growth (current prices, 2017-2022)	13%	27%	24%	22%
Employment Growth (2017-2023)	6%	6%	1%	4%
Job Density (workforce jobs per working age residents, 2022)	0.77	1.01	0.98	0.92
Business Density (businesses per 10,000 working age population, 2022)	403	1,129	1,059	874
Business Base Growth (2017-2024)	-23%	2%	-2%	-5%
Business Births Rate (2023)	12%	5%	6%	7%
5-Year Survival Rates (business born in 2018)	39%	57%	54%	51%

Note: Red cells indicate values lower than Westmorland and Furness, yellow cells indicate similar values, and green cells indicate higher values.

Source: UK gross value added (GVA) and productivity estimates for other geographies, ONS, 2017-2022; Business Register and Employment Survey, ONS, 2017-2023; Job Density, ONS, 2022; UK Business Counts, ONS, 2017-2024; Population Estimates, ONS, 2022; Business Demography, ONS, 2019-2023

Prosperity - Scoping Consultation Messages

- The UK Industrial Strategy identifies key sectors for growth, many of which are represented locally. There is a need to provide a **clear value proposition** to government to identify the role that Westmorland can play in supporting government to deliver against these sectoral ambitions
- In identifying key sectors, consideration needs to be given to the sectors that are going to make a difference to the future prosperity of Westmorland and Furness. Sectors which are widely acknowledged as **important drivers** in Westmorland and Furness include: advanced manufacturing, agriculture, energy, tourism, culture and creative industries. The absolute and relative importance of these key sectors varies by place across the area
- Acknowledging the **nuances of BAE System's role** within the Furness locality (and more widely) and balancing its growth ambitions with the effect that it has on the local business base by acting as a draw for talent
- The **green economy is recognised as a significant growth opportunity** – both as a stand-alone sector and through links with innovation in existing activity (e.g. agriculture). The **circular economy** can play an important role in meeting green growth aspirations
- The **culture and creative sector** also has an important role to play in placemaking and quality of life, supporting population growth and retention
- Visitor economy benefits need to be **better dispersed**, reaching the lesser-visited places, and focusing on lower volume, higher value. Growth in the sector also needs to be underpinned by **sustainable tourism** in line with Cumbria Destination Management Plan
- The **role of the foundational economy should also be considered** as this supports the rest of the economy. The foundational economy supports provision of entry level jobs as well as the expansion of local services / amenities (e.g. retail) which serve local residents as well as tourists. The balance between local services / visitor services has been raised more widely (including the scale and availability of public services to service large visitor numbers in addition to local residents)
- **Construction is an important enabler** of delivering major projects and growth ambitions in Westmorland and Furness but there are gaps in the local offer which presents a barrier to local procurement, and skill shortages and gaps pose a barrier to sector growth

Prosperity – Scoping Consultation Messages

- Raising awareness of **disruptors, new technologies and drivers of change** including cyber, AI, national security etc, considering where future growth opportunities lie for Westmorland and Furness
- **Innovation-led enterprise** needs to be encouraged to support business competitiveness and growth. Businesses need to be supported to harness R&D as a driver of growth with national / international expertise harnessed. This includes bringing together HEIs, research institutions and business support with employers
- **The role of micro and small businesses is sometimes overlooked** – this is a key part of the local economy that offers opportunities and should be highlighted. There is also a need to consider **small business growth and increased levels of enterprise** recognising that business support will be delivered at the Cumbria level. The performance and impact of new local initiatives offers learning opportunities (e.g. Barrow 100). Opportunities to support entrepreneurship through wrap around support and targeted interventions to stimulate young enterprise e.g. youth markets in the culture and creative sector should be facilitated
- **Local supply chain development** to take advantage of major investment in the area with support to access new markets and diversify activity to access growth opportunities
- **Attracting inward investment** i.e. through securing expansion of existing and new investment to access supply chain opportunities i.e. MoD, BAE Systems etc and ensuring the right conditions are in place to facilitate (premises, skills, networking etc)
- Similarly, **social enterprise is a significant area of opportunity** which should be prioritised – offering growth potential as well as opportunities to tackle local challenges. The role and learning from Alston as the first social enterprise town should be considered.

Source: Scoping Consultations

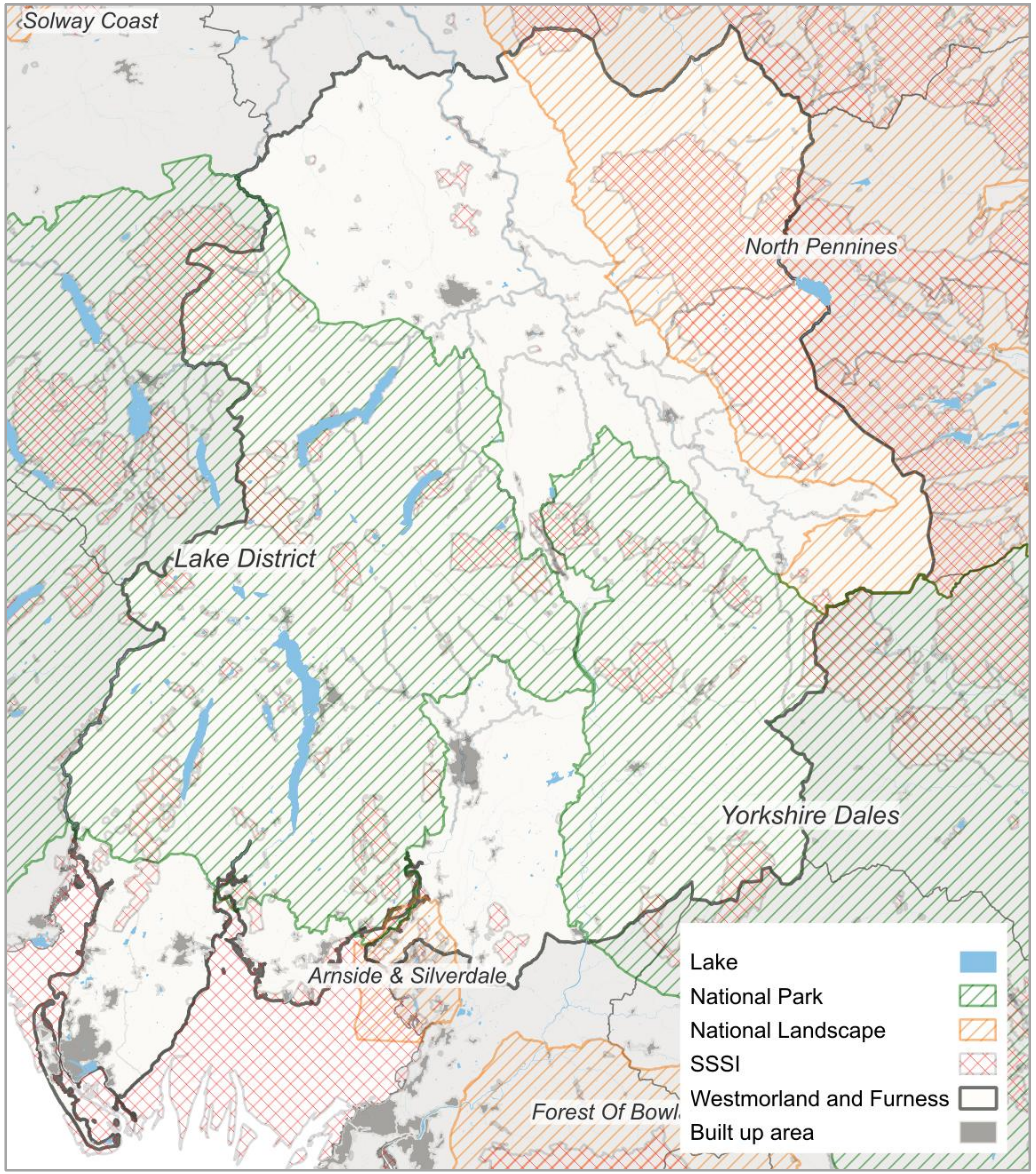
Summary Opportunities and Challenges - Prosperity

Five Defining Opportunities…	Five Defining Challenges…
• A significant and growing contributor to UK plc delivering £6bn in economic output in 2022	• Productivity gap (87% of the England average) although this has narrowed over time
• Fast growing and increasingly productive economy with a narrowing productivity gap with England, driven by contribution of the manufacturing sector	• Below average rate of employment growth relative to national rate and remains 1% below the 2019 peak
• High job density supporting self-containment and access to more employment opportunities for residents within the area	• Below average representation of the public sector, presenting challenges in access to public services and the ability to meet population need. This is further emphasised by significant employment losses in health and education
• Key sectors driving employment growth including manufacturing, visitor economy, professional, scientific and technical. The presence of dynamic sectors including net zero, life sciences, business support and digital and creative is also notable	• Presence of lower value sectors such as accommodation and food and agriculture, highlighting need for support to move up value chain
• High number of businesses exhibiting a high growth score, indicating strong business growth potential	• Declining business base, a below average business birth rate and declining 1-year survival rates

Place

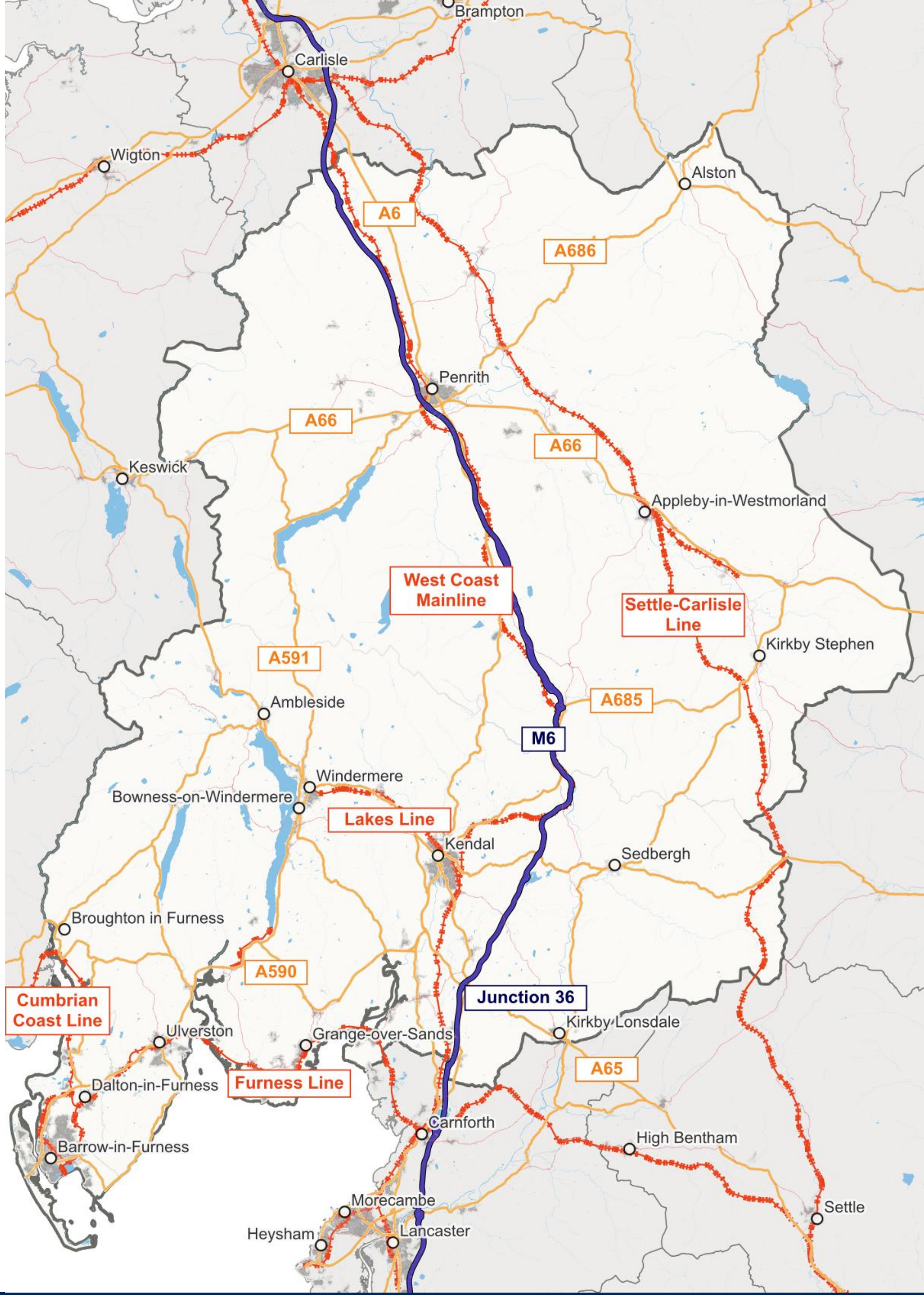
Natural Assets

- W&F has a diverse array of landscapes and natural assets that are fundamental to the area's local industry, culture and its global reputation:
  - **UNESCO World Heritage Site** (Lake District) and **UNESCO Global Geopark** (North Pennines)
  - **Lakes/reservoirs**: e.g. Windermere, Ullswater, Coniston, Haweswater
  - **Extensive range of habitats**: from rugged upland landscapes, to limestone areas and river networks through to important wetland sites such as Morecambe Bay and the Duddon Estuary (both RAMSAR sites)
- Active projects helping to actively promote stewardship of the landscape and the role of sustainable environments include:
  - **Cumbria Community Forest:** DEFRA funding to create over 150 hectares of woodland to enhance natural capital and support decarbonisation
  - **Invest Lake District** – an innovative financing model incentivising investors to support the preservation of Cumbria's landscapes, wildlife and cultural heritage
  - Development of and delivery of the **Cumbria Local Nature Recovery Strategy** (LRNS), including a business case to develop a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) to facilitate natural capital improvements through new development and investment via Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) and Nutrient Neutrality (NN)



Transport and Digital Assets

- The **West Coast Mainline** (WCML) is a valuable strategic rail connection and plays an important role in supporting the visitor economy
- The **Lakes Line** and **Furness Line** play a valuable role in supporting the visitor economy, although both experience capacity and reliability issues
- The **Settle-Carlisle Line** plays a vital role connecting key communities, enabling Eden residents to commute to Carlisle and Leeds and supporting visitor access to the Eden Valley.
- The **M6** provides strategic north-south connectivity. The importance of the **A590, A66 and A595** strategic road connections is elevated given the area's rurality and reliance on private car usage
- £1.5bn **strategic highways upgrade** to the A66 between the M6 at Penrith and A1(M) at Scotch Corner is set for completion in 2029
- The southern arm of the **Cumbria Coastal Route** (CCR200) runs along the South Lakes peninsulas from Barrow to Arnside
- The **Cumbria Project Gigabit programme** will see £56.4m invested in full fibre infrastructure in Westmorland and Furness, with coverage rising to well above 95% by its completion in 2026. The **Shared Rural Network**, a £1bn investment across the UK, will improve 4G geographic coverage from all four Mobile Network Operators



Barrow – Assets and Investments

Team Barrow Partnership (BAE Systems, W&F Council and Government)

£200m Barrow Transformation Fund

Brilliant Barrow – Town Deal

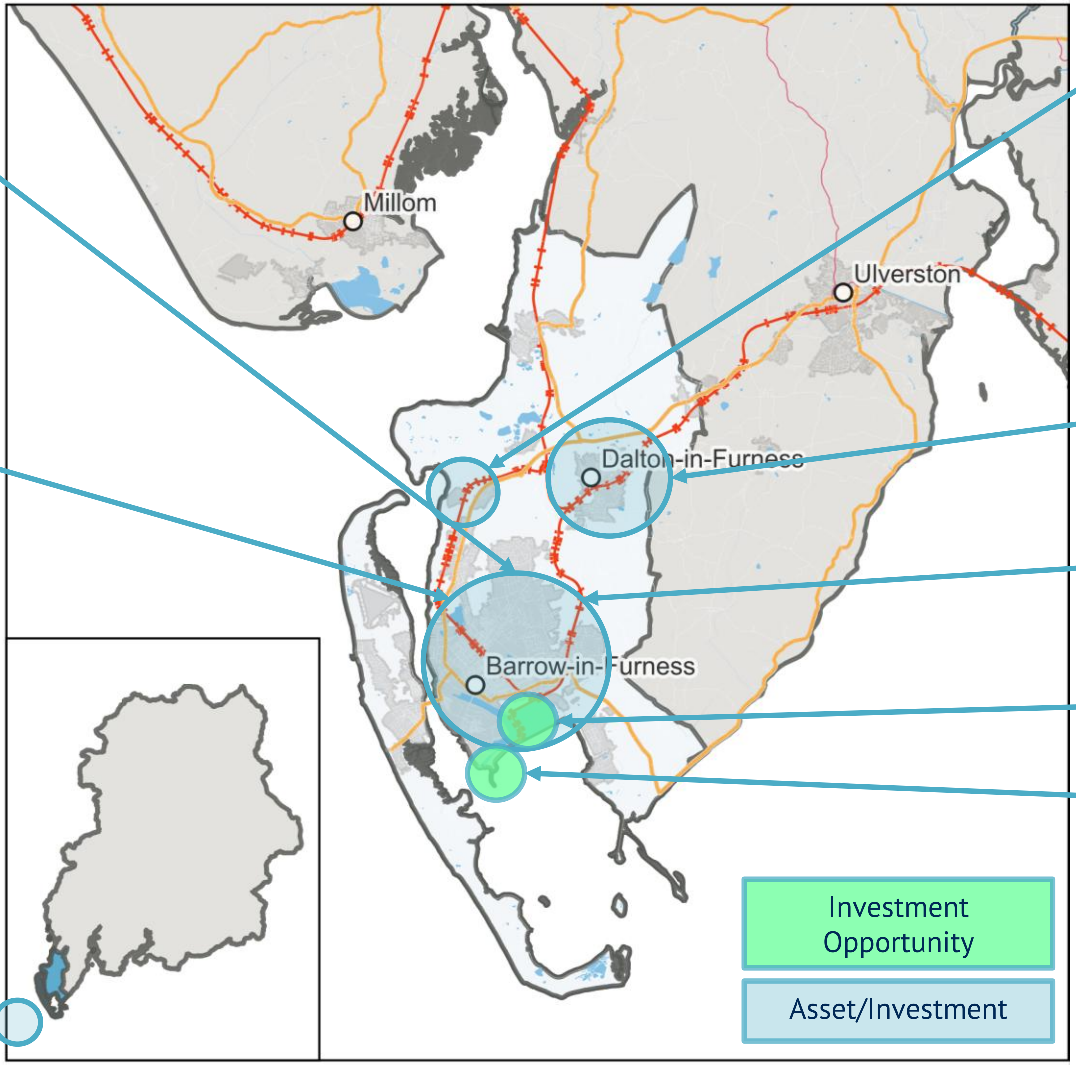
Learning Quarter / University of Cumbria Campus

Town Centre regeneration

Outdoor Learning Centre

Walney Offshore Wind Farm

Morecambe Bay Gas Fields



Sandscale Park Solar Farm

Kimberley-Clark Green Hydrogen Hub

Borderlands Place Plan for Dalton

Barrow High Street Heritage Action Zone

Marina Village (housing site)

Port of Barrow (employment site)

Descriptions of assets and investments included at Appendix 1

South Lakeland – Assets and Investments

Windermere Gateway (mixed use site)

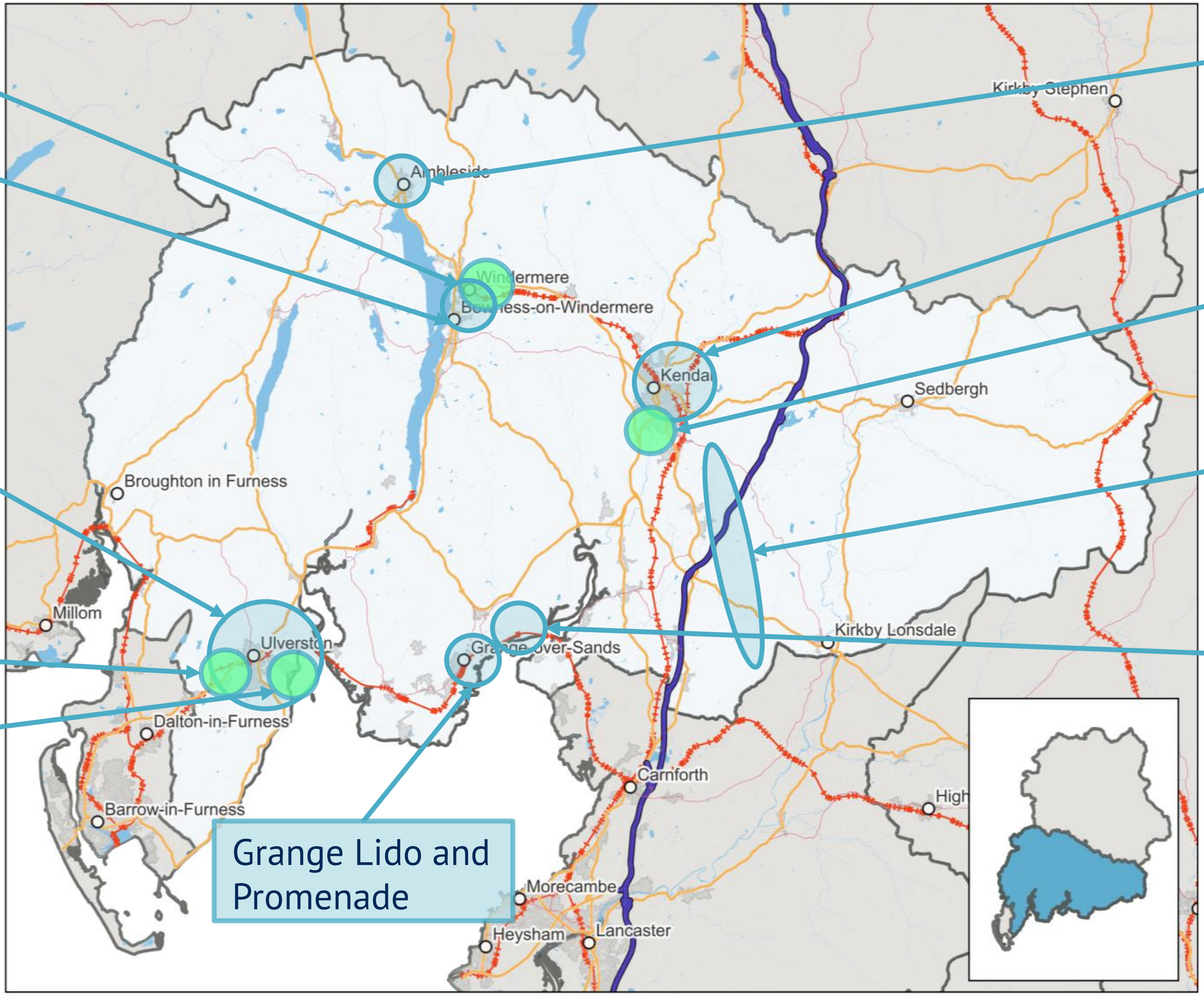
Windermere 5G Ferry

Windermere water quality improvements (Revere)

Borderlands Place Plan for Ulverston

Cross-a-Moor (housing site)

GSK, Ulverston / Advanced Manufacturing Park (employment site)



Grange Lido and Promenade

University of Cumbria – Ambleside Campus

Levelling Up Funding – Heart of Kendal

Scroggs Wood (employment site

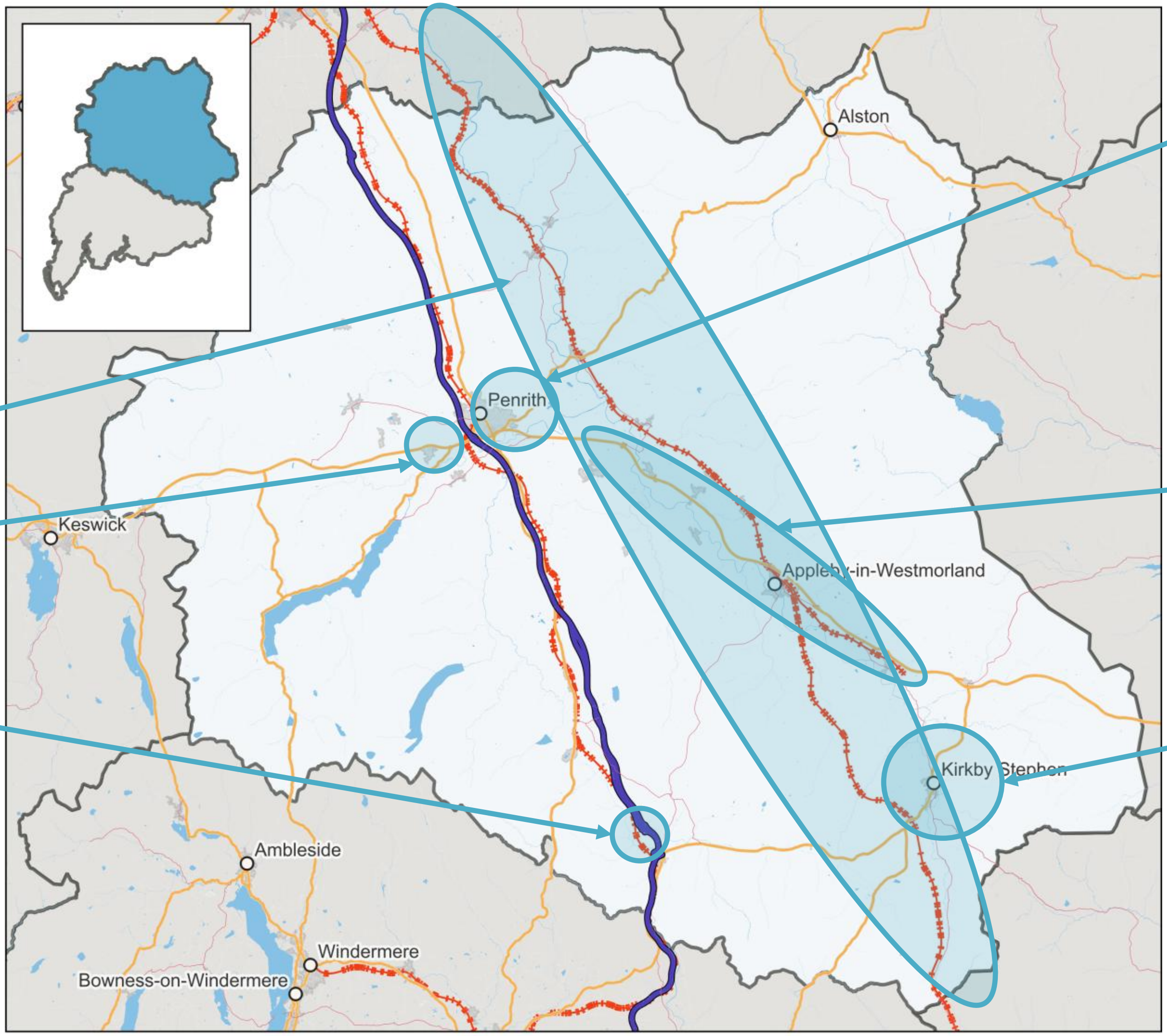
Lancaster Canal Towpath Trail

Witherslack Mosses (peat restoration and carbon capture)

Investment Opportunity

Asset/Investment

Eden – Assets and Investments



Leeds-Settle-Carlisle Line Corridor

Changing Places grant at Rheged and Tebay

Levelling Up Funding – Enterprise and Innovation Hub

Borderlands Place Plan for Penrith

Eden Youth Hub

A66 Trans-Pennine dualling

UKSPF public realm improvements

Investment Opportunity

Asset/Investment

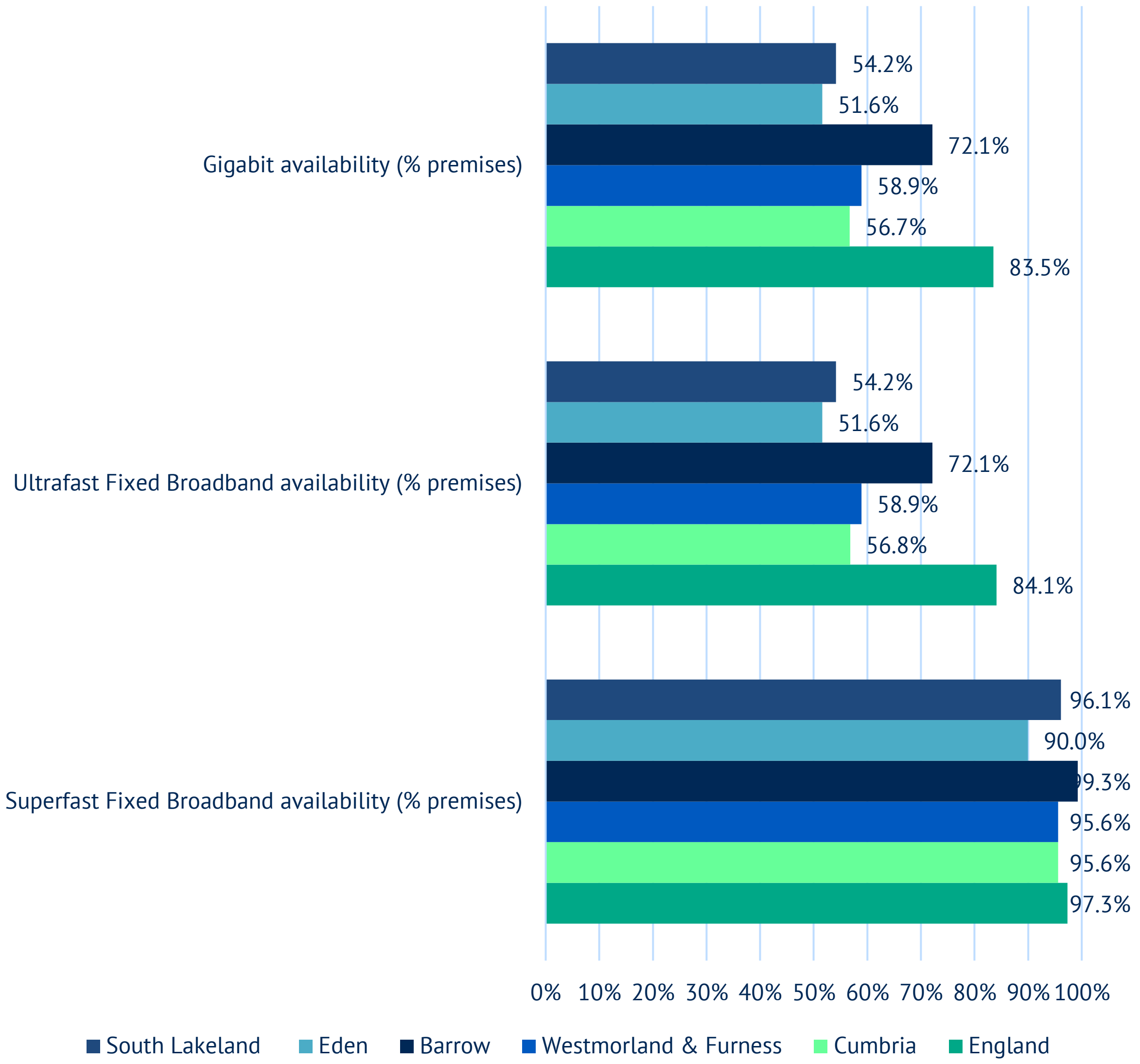
Transport and Connectivity

- Transport and connectivity play a fundamental role in growth and prosperity, influencing residents' access to employment, education, key services and leisure facilities. It also ensures access to wider markets for local businesses and is a key enabler of economic growth
- A focus on 'city level' issues (primarily congestion), rather than locally significant 'rural' issues of **reliability and resilience**, has led to **historic underinvestment** in Westmorland and Furness. Infrastructure planning work is underway which seeks to secure investment to address these issues
- Connectivity issues in the area are two-fold:
  - **Strategic connectivity is essential**, and investment is needed to improve transport links, address issues of reliability and resilience and unlock the significant growth potential of W&F
  - **Local connectivity is also critical**, to bring about social benefit and aid in attracting people to, and retaining people in, the area – ultimately bringing about sustainable and inclusive growth
- The rurality of the area means that private vehicles remain the dominant form of transport for both residents and visitors, which poses a **challenge for decarbonisation efforts**. This reliance on the highway network also means that a lack of resilience can have significant implications that create barriers to travel – this is especially significant on the A590, A66 and A595, all of which form part of the Major Road Network (MRN)
- Reliability is also an issue on the rail network, with **network capacity issues** resulting in limited-service frequency, unreliable service provision and poor connectivity on several lines (Lakes Line and Furness Line)
- The West Coast Mainline (WCML) is a valuable strategic rail connection and plays an important role in supporting the visitor economy; however, it also requires investment to support plans for improved passenger services and significantly increased rail freight
- Although local towns are compact and, therefore, should be able to support active travel, there is a lack of infrastructure provision to capitalise on this potential to walk, cycle or wheel for shorter journeys

Digital Connectivity

- Westmorland and Furness has slightly stronger level of digital connectivity than Cumbria overall, though these levels are often well below the national average.
- 95.6% of households in Westmorland and Furness are able to receive superfast fixed broadband, in line with the level in Cumbria and compared to 97.3% in England.
- Ultrafast fixed broadband availability is much lower in Westmorland and Furness, with this available to 58.9% of households in 2024. This is higher than 56.8% in Cumbria, but significantly lower than 84.1% availability in England. Gigabit availability (typically at least 1,000 Mbps) is also limited.
- The data does though show significant variations throughout Westmorland and Furness. While still below the national average (with the exception of Superfast Fixed Broadband), broadband availability is much higher in Barrow-in-Furness than in South Lakeland and Eden.
- Mobile connectivity is additionally more limited in Westmorland and Furness than nationally. Nationally, only 1.33% geographical areas have no access to 4G connectivity, however, this is 4.5% in Westmorland and Furness (compared to 8.2% in Cumberland).

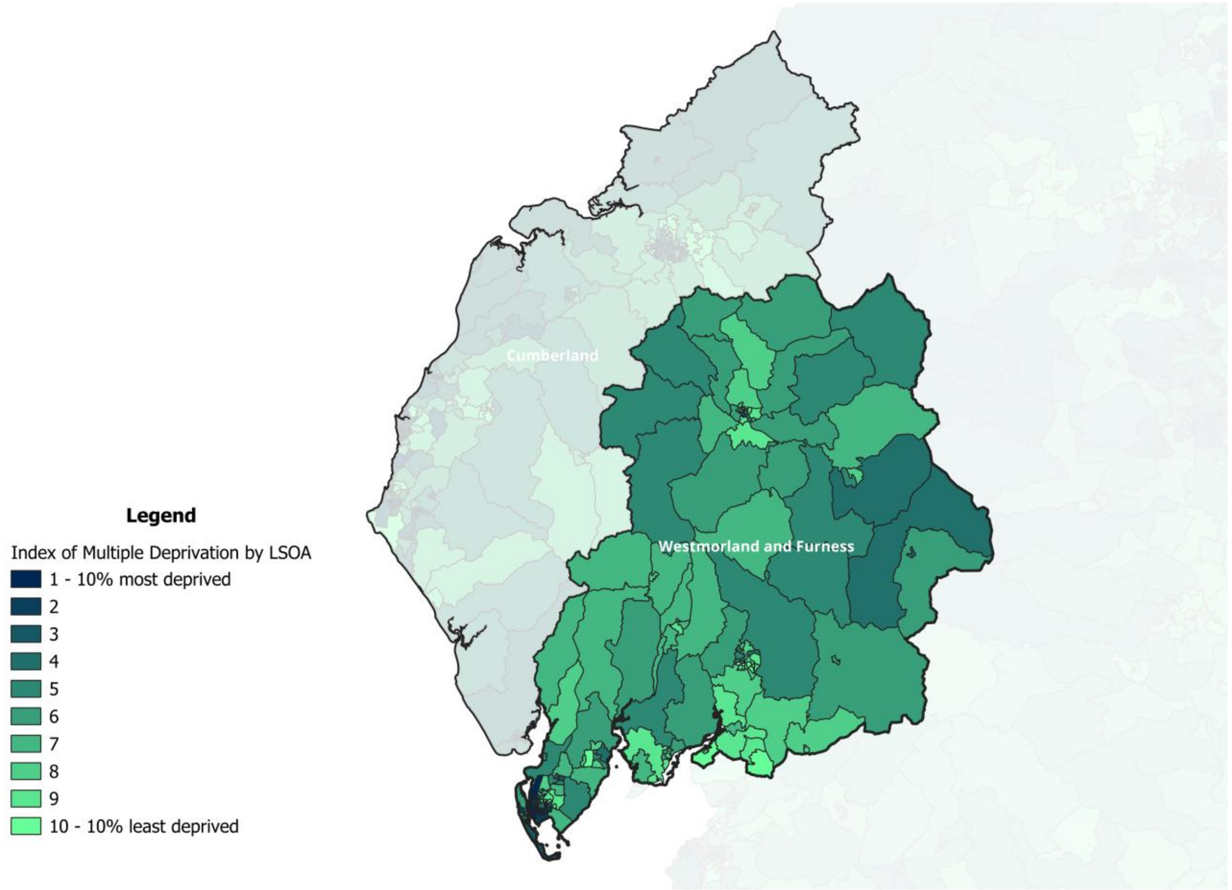
Households with access to Fixed Broadband Services, July 2024



Source: Connected Nations, Ofcom, 2024

Deprivation

- Overall, Westmorland and Furness has low levels of deprivation based on the 2019 Indices of Multiple Deprivation, and lower than Cumbria overall
- There are though some pockets of acute deprivation, with 14% of LSOAs in Westmorland and Furness among the 20% most deprived areas in the country (compared to 17% in Cumbria)
- Westmorland and Furness has particularly high levels of deprivation in the living environment domain, with 49% of LSOAs in the area among the 20% most deprived in the country for this particular domain. This suggests a need for interventions to improve the quality of housing locally, as well as interventions to reduce road traffic accidents and improve air quality
- Health deprivation is a key issue, with 25% of LSOAs in the area among the 20% most deprived in the country on the health domain. This measures the risk of premature death and the impairment of quality of life through poor physical or mental health



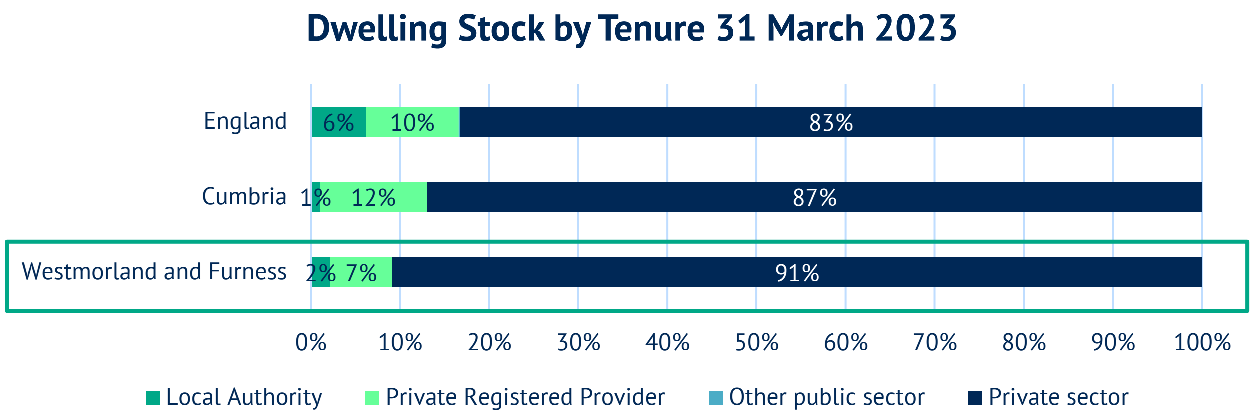
Westmorland and Furness LSOAs in the 20% Most Deprived Areas by Domain

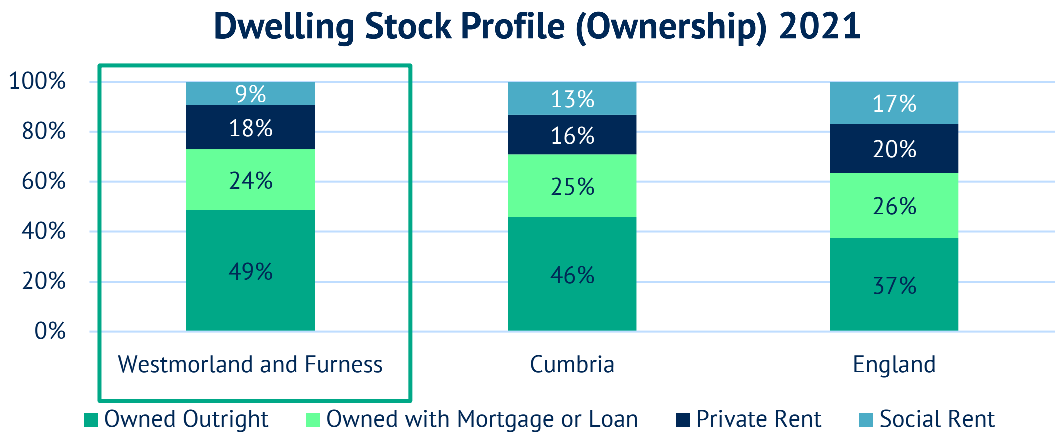
	Index of Multiple Deprivation	Income	Employment	Education	Health	Crime	Barriers to Housing and Services	Living Environment
Of 144 Westmorland and Furness LSOAs	14%	10%	16%	13%	25%	1%	19%	49%
Of 322 Cumbria LSOAs	17%	12%	21%	23%	29%	7%	19%	36%

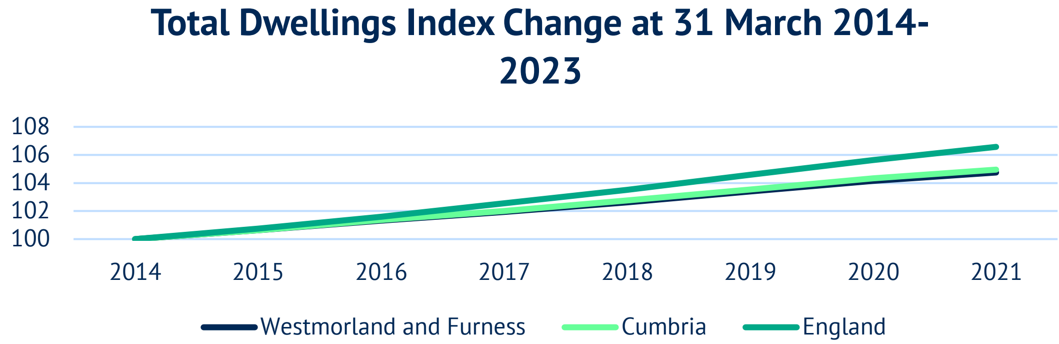
Source: Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government, 2019

Dwelling Stock

- There are around 120,000 dwellings in Westmorland and Furness – 47% of the total dwelling stock in Cumbria
- The vast majority of dwellings in Westmorland and Furness are managed in the private sector (91%) – 4% higher level than in Cumbria and 8% higher than in England
- Westmorland and Furness has a slightly higher proportion (2%) of local authority managed dwelling stock than Cumbria overall (1%), though 4pp lower than England (6%)
- When looking at ownership, 49% of dwellings in Westmorland and Furness are owned outright, compared with 46% in Cumbria and 37% in England
- The overall change in dwellings in Westmorland and Furness has followed the same trend as in Cumbria, though the increase has been slower than the England trend since 2017
- The revised Government housing requirement for Westmorland and Furness is 1,430 homes per year.* This represents a 285% increase on the previously identified requirement of c.500 homes per year for the three former districts combined





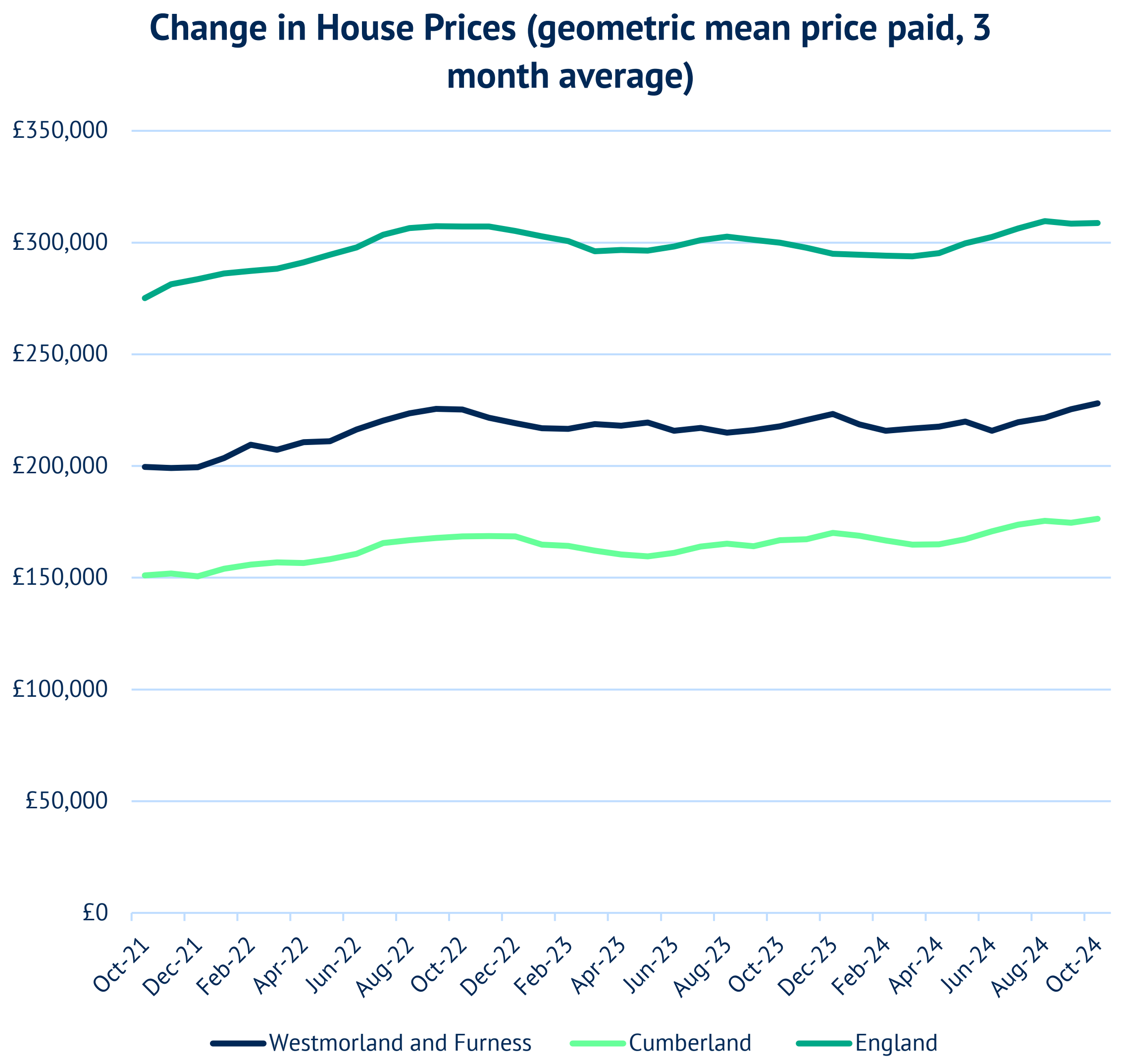


Source: Subnational estimates of dwellings by tenure, England, ONS, 2012-2021

* Note that the share of housing requirement between the Westmorland and Furness and two National Park planning authorities is not currently (February 2025) determined

House Prices and Affordability

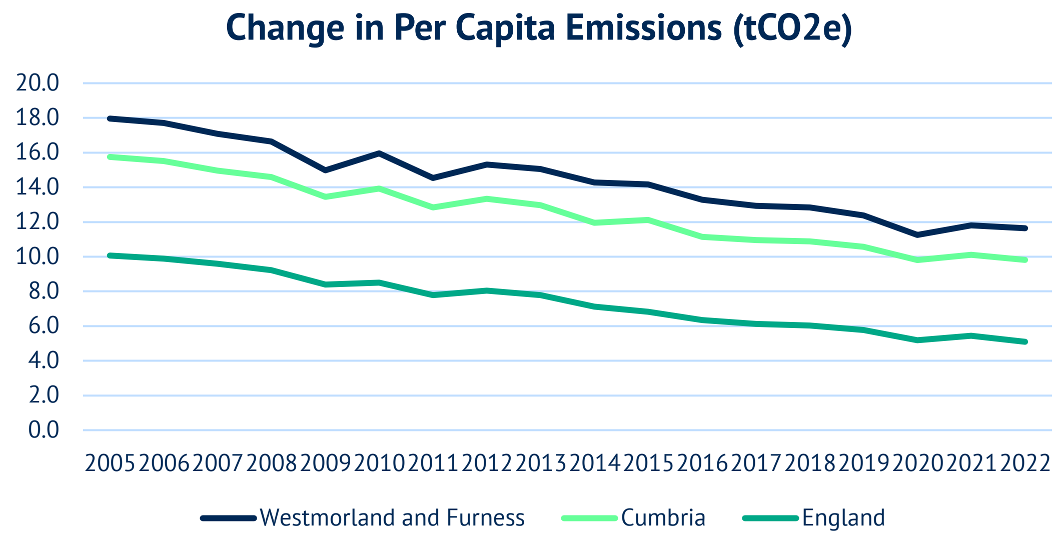
- The average price paid for a house in Westmorland and Furness in the three months ending in October 2024 was £228,055, compared to £176,000 in Cumberland. While higher than in Cumberland, the average price paid for properties in Westmorland and Furness is significantly lower than the average £308,781 in England
- While data is limited beyond January 2023, evidence suggests significant differences in house prices in different parts of Westmorland and Furness. In January 2023, the 3-month average house price was just £144,955 in Barrow, while in Eden this was £267,152. In South Lakeland, average prices were £289,057 – approximately £95,000 above the Cumbria average at the time and only £13,000 below the national average
- Average property prices are 7.3 times the average household income in Westmorland and Furness, while they are 10.1 times the average in South Lakeland. This presents **significant challenges around housing affordability in parts of the area**, particularly in Eden and South Lakeland. These issues are also added to by high levels of second homes in the region, presenting challenges for the local economy. In contrast, Barrow-in-Furness has some of the most affordable houses in the country due to well-paid local employment opportunities but consultation points to a **mismatch between supply and demand by housing type**.

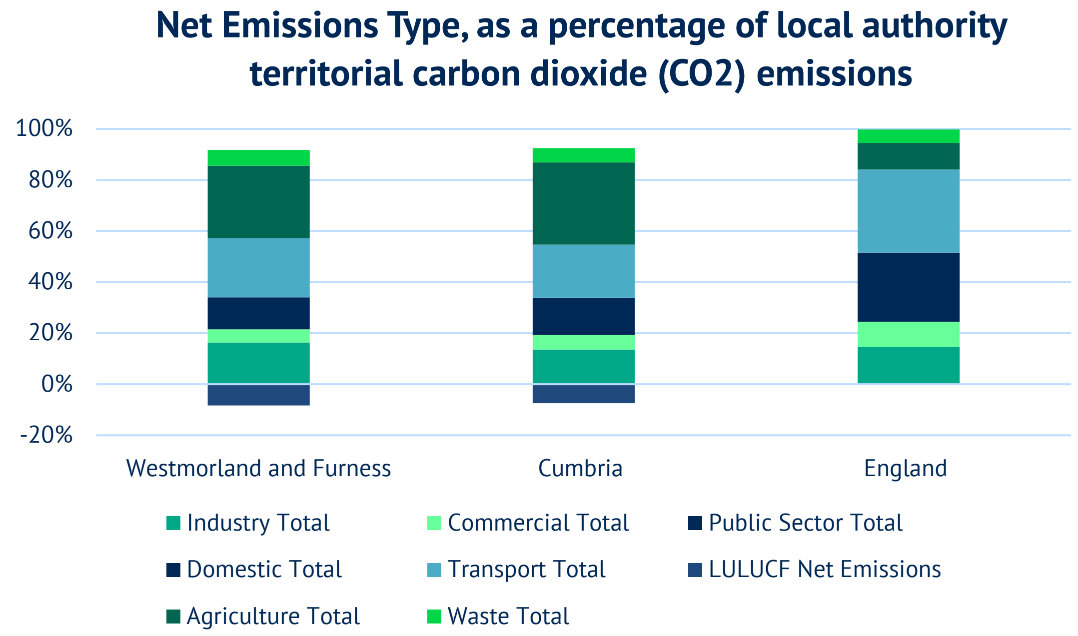


Source: UK House Price Index, ONS, 2021-2024 | Westmorland and Furness Council, 2024

Carbon Emissions

- Overall, per capita CO2 emissions have been falling at a similar pace in Westmorland and Furness to Cumbria and England since 2005
- However, Westmorland and Furness has consistently had a higher level of carbon dioxide emissions per capita (11.6 tCO2e in 2022) compared to Cumbria (9.8 tCO2e in 2022) and England (5.1 tCO2e). The significant emissions per capita in Westmorland and Furness compared to the national average suggests the need for targeted interventions to decarbonise
- By net emissions type, agriculture is the largest contributor to CO2 emissions in Westmorland and Furness (34%, compared to 38% in Cumbria and 11% in England). Transport is the second largest contributor (28% compared to 24% in Cumbria and 33% in England), followed by industry (20% compared to 16% in Cumbria and 15% in England)
- Notably, however, emissions per km2 are lower in Westmorland and Furness (0.7 kt CO2e) than the national average (2.2 kt CO2e)
- Westmorland and Furness and Cumbria both have greater negative contributions for LULUCF Net emissions than England, however, agriculture makes up a much higher proportion of total emissions than average





Summary Place Indicators by Legacy Local Authorities

- Both Eden and South Lakeland show challenges around transport and digital connectivity associated with their rural characteristics. Housing affordability is also a challenge in these areas as a result of low earnings and higher incidence of second home ownership.
- Although Barrow-in-Furness presents a better performance on these metrics, it has a high concentration of deprived areas, mainly in the towns of Barrow-in-Furness and Ulverston. The high levels of deprivation in the living environment indicate relatively poor conditions of housing.

Indicator	Barrow-in-Furness	Eden	South Lakeland	Westmorland and Furness
Travel to Work by Car or Van (% commuters aged 16+, 2021)	69%	79%	75%	74%
Travel Time by Public Transport (average minimum time to nearest key services*, 2019)	16	46	26	29
Ultrafast Fixed Broadband Availability (% premises, July 2024)	72%	52%	54%	59%
Most Deprived Areas (% LSOAs in the worst 10% nationally, 2019)	24%	0%	0%	8%
Most Deprived Areas, Living Environment (% LSOAs in the worst 10% nationally, 2019)	37%	50%	24%	35%
Dwelling Stock Growth (2014-2023)	4%	13%	5%	6%
Housing Affordability (workplace-based, 2023)	4.0	7.8	8.7	6.8

*Note: Red cells indicate worse values than Westmorland and Furness, yellow cells indicate similar values, and green cells indicate better values. * Medium sized centres of employment, primary schools, secondary schools, further education, GPs, hospitals, food stores and town centres.*

Source: Census, ONS, 2021; Department for Transport, Journey Time Statistics, 2019; Ofcom Connected Nations, 2024; English Indices of Deprivation, 2019; MHCLGC Live Tables on Dwelling Stock, 2023; ONS Housing Affordability in England & Wales, 2023

Place - Scoping Consultation Messages

- **Place is a key theme and consideration for the strategy –** The focus on W&F, local priorities and the role that the Unitary Authority can play is a key factor which distinguishes the W&F Economic Strategy from the Cumbria Economic Strategy. The priorities and key interventions / activities planned through the Cumbria Economic Strategy should be acknowledged in the W&F strategy as part of the scene / context setting
- Linked to the above, **the diversity of the area** needs to be articulated and considered throughout the strategy. Widely acknowledged that W&F is an area where *'one size fits all'* responses will not work. The issues and challenges present in Barrow vary significantly from those in Penrith. The issues within a place preventing economic growth need to be understood and identified priorities and actions will need to be linked to a place-based response. There needs to be a clear focus on **making places more attractive** with the right housing, infrastructure, culture and leisure etc. A clear description of the area and localities / typologies within this will be needed up front in the strategy as part of the case for intervention. This should include local challenges and opportunities
- The strategy also needs to be **outward looking** and recognise important economic linkages to Lancashire, Yorkshire and across the North. This highlights the importance of strategic transport connectivity to support the movement of people and goods
- Slow population growth and the size of the working age population is a major barrier to economic growth. **Clear links with the Local Plan are required** with the strategy helping to make the case and provide direction for the delivery of local plan targets (housing and employment land / sites) to support economic growth. Note, links are also needed with other Directorate strategies and plans
- **Connectivity and transport links / infrastructure** are frequently cited as a major barrier to growth and an investment priority (e.g. A66 dualling and West Coast Rail). The dependence on private transport is a barrier to green growth ambitions. Elevating the importance of transport in the economic strategy alongside **exploring the role of devolution,** as well as presenting a **coherent and consistent voice** for W&F (as well as Cumbria more widely) in solving **transport resilience** issues. This needs to consider strategic transport connectivity and the connectivity between individual communities and settlements
- Second home ownership presents a threat to sustainable communities. The strategy needs to encourage **sustainable communities** that meet the needs of residents through housing, employment and service provision (schools, GPs etc)

Source: Scoping Consultations

Place - Scoping Consultation Messages

- **Culture and leisure provision** is integral to supporting quality of life, supporting community life and creating a sense of place. It can play a critical role in addressing challenges such as a declining working age population and capturing local spend. It can also help to build aspirations of young people through providing valuable experiences, skills and employment opportunities. Access to culture and leisure provision is unequal across Westmorland and Furness, partly due to low population density in rural areas to support sustainable provision however there are also gaps in key urban settlements such as Penrith. There are clusters of activity including the presence of NPOs in Barrow supporting growth in the sector
- Recognition of the **W&F focus on climate and nature.** This focus should come through strongly in the W&F strategy. Access to green and blue infrastructure is an important consideration, supporting quality of life, health and wellbeing, and the visitor economy
- Developing the **place branding and narrative** for W&F is recognised as a priority which could help unlock opportunities (e.g. inward investment) and address challenges (e.g. Population growth and retention). It has been suggested that this needs to move beyond a focus on the area's natural assets and to capture the area's overall offer and opportunities
- There are **strong partnerships** in place across W&F to build upon and harness in delivery and resourcing of Economic Strategy. **Liaison with national departments and organisations** (e.g. DEFRA, National Trust, ACE) will be key to securing, delivering and maximising impact of local opportunities (linking in with liaison at the Cumbria level)
- It is important to maintain a **live pipeline of projects** to support swift response to emerging funding opportunities. What are the other projects that need to be initiated to meet identified need? Funding decisions are likely to be more strategic and less competitive in the future. The economic strategy needs to identify actions to support building the project pipeline. This includes being bold in setting out 'big ticket' infrastructure requirements

Summary Opportunities and Challenges - Place

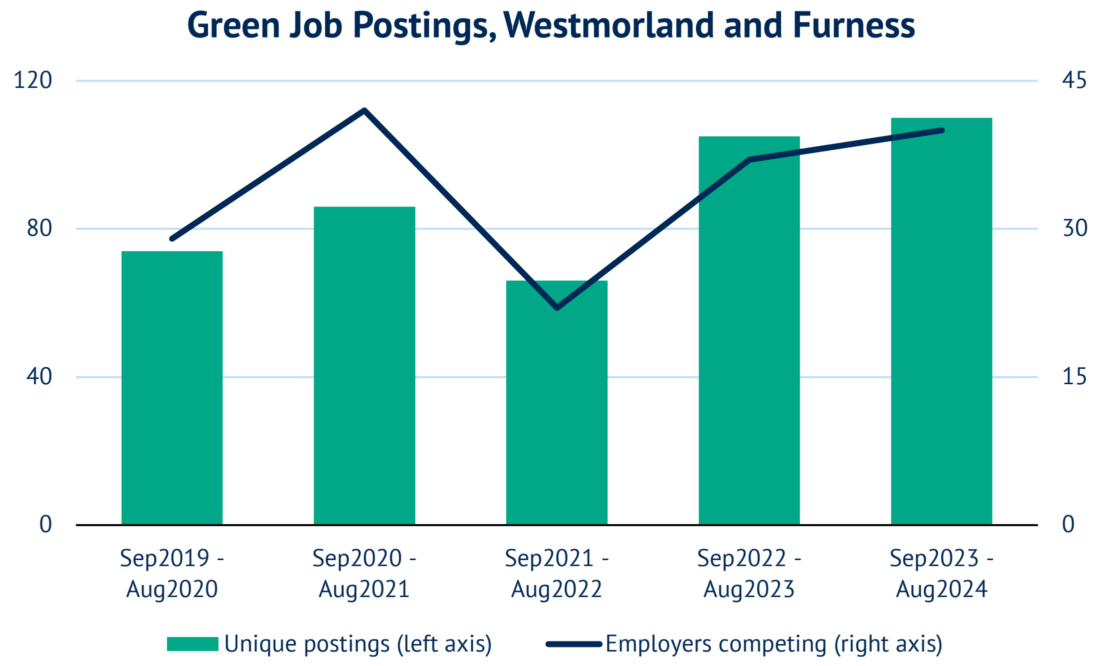
Five Defining Opportunities…	Five Defining Challenges…
• Scale and profile of natural capital assets supporting positive image and profile, identity and pride, visitor and investment attraction, health and wellbeing, biodiversity and sustainability	• Resilience and reliability of existing transport connections, with high levels of historic underinvestment, presenting a barrier to economic growth
• Presence of strategic transport assets providing national connections to people and markets	• Rurality as a barrier to access to services and economic opportunities, highlighting the importance of local connectivity and local service provision
• Key assets and major projects shaping and elevating the investment proposition	• Below average digital connectivity (ultrafast/gigabit capable and mobile)
• Delivery of new housing to meet demand, including affordable homes and providing breadth of choice	• High levels of acute deprivation in particular areas, including the living environment, housing and services, and health
• Strengths and assets to lever to support growth in clean energy, supporting the net zero agenda, energy security and providing a stimulus for economic growth	• Significant housing affordability challenges, particularly in Eden and South Lakeland, accentuated by the presence of second home ownership

Cross Cutting Themes

Insight

Green Jobs

- Between September 2023 and August 2024, 110 unique jobs postings in Westmorland and Furness were classified as green jobs by Lightcast, accounting for 0.4% of job postings in the area. The table provides examples of green job titles with the highest number of postings.
- This marks a 49% increase from 74 postings in August 2020. The number of employers seeking green jobs has also risen, from 29 in 2019 to 40 in 2024, suggesting growing recognition of sustainability and environmental related roles across a wider range of businesses.
- Demand for green jobs has also expanded across industries, growing from nine 2-digit SIC industries in 2019 to 22 by August 2024. New areas now include, for example, waste management and remediation, building construction, and management consulting.



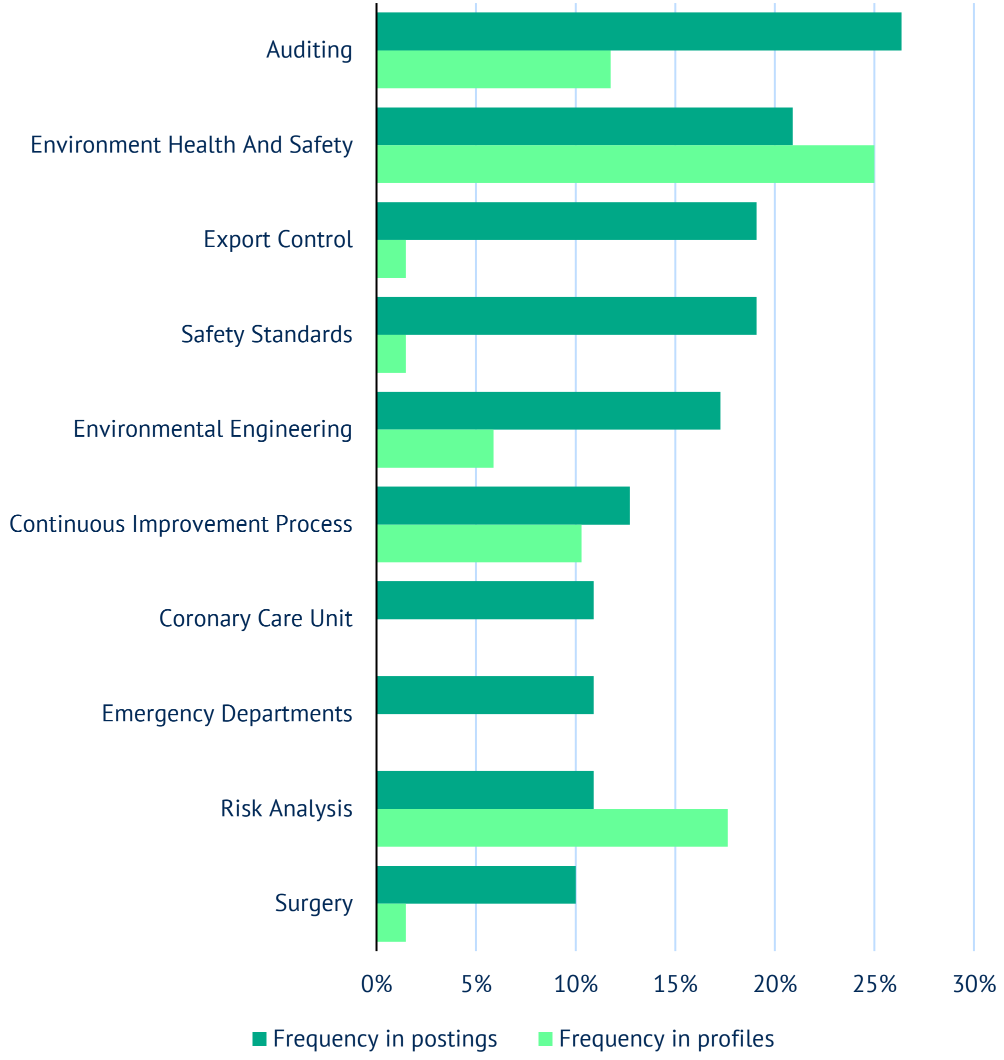
Job Titles	Unique Postings
Safety/Environmental Engineers	24
Environmental Health and Safety Managers	9
Wind Turbine Technicians	8
Environmental Services Supervisors	8
Environmental Advisors	7
Environmental Assistants	6
Environmental Officers	4
Environmental Planning Interns	4
Environmental Regulatory Specialists	4
Sustainability Managers	3

Source: Lightcast, 2025. Note: Lightcast taxonomy of 'green jobs' includes 370 job titles connected to green keywords and activities such as sustainability, environmental protection and decarbonisation.

Skills for Green Postings

- Compared to other job postings in Westmorland and Furness, green jobs require more advanced qualifications. Over half (53%) green job postings require at least a Level 4 qualification, compared to 43% across all job postings in the area.
- The chart shows the top 10 specialised skills in demand for green postings in Westmorland and Furness and how these compare to the existing skills profiles of the workforce.
- Several of these skills are in short supply, with the largest gaps found in export control, safety standards, auditing, and environmental engineering.
- However, some skills are notably more common among the workforce, such as environmental health and safety and environmental management systems, suggesting that certain green job roles could be more easily filled with existing talent.
- Additionally, green jobs in Westmorland and Furness offer a salary premium of approximately £4 per hour, providing a financial incentive for workers to upskill or transition into these roles.

Top Specialised Skills in Green Job Postings, Westmorland and Furness



Green Growth: Key Considerations and Consultation Findings

- There are **various routes to accessing green growth opportunities**:
  - Identifying the **green economy as a priority sector**. This could incorporate new green growth opportunities to pursue and trailblaze (e.g. linked to climate change and biodiversity)
  - **Diversification, innovation and decarbonisation in existing activities** (e.g. agriculture and clean energy) to unlock green growth
  - **Maximising the green impacts and opportunities of planned investment**, including supply chain opportunities
- **Green skills** and **green technology requirements** need to be identified and understood as part of horizon scanning activity. There are, for example, construction sector/trade gaps in green skills to support housing retrofit and installation of green energy infrastructure (e.g. EV charging and PVs).
- **Green finance and place-based impact investment needs to be considered to facilitate green growth** – e.g. securing investment from investors who are not driven by purely commercial returns. E.g. use of Nature Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) to enable nature inventions in Cumbria (as part of Borderlands Inclusive Growth natural capital arm) focusing on Biodiversity Net Gain and Nutrient Neutrality.
- Need for **alignment with the Climate Change Action Plan** (Parts 1 and 2) and **Local Nature Recovery Strategy**
- Consider engagement with **Cumbria Action For Sustainability** (CAFS) and **farming networks** (eg NFU and the Farmers' Network)
- Highlighted some notable green projects: **Omega Proteins** (Penrith) opportunity for district heating network; **Spirit Energy** (Barrow) growth plans around carbon capture and storage linked to the Morecambe Bay Net Zero Project

Inclusive Growth: Key Considerations and Consultation Findings

- Inclusive growth is a **clear cross cutting theme which needs to be well integrated into the strategy and its delivery** to ensure that the benefits of growth and felt and shared across the local population
- Linked to the above, **the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) agenda should be integrated into delivery** of all aspects of the strategy – key groups include young people, ageing population, refugees and asylum seekers, SEND, care leavers, disadvantaged
- **Inclusive growth has the potential to help address key challenges** including deprivation, health inequalities, economic inactivity, youth retention, population growth – this needs to be considered in the identification of thematic priorities. E.G. balancing high growth and / or technical, highly skilled opportunities with accessible opportunities (e.g. entry jobs and pathways)
- There is potential to increase **opportunities and enhance impacts of social value activities within anchor institutions** to help address local challenges and support inclusive growth
- There is a **significant role for the well-established VCSFE sector** to play in supporting and delivering inclusive growth (e.g. connecting residents and supporting residents to access opportunities) and this can be facilitated through targeted investment, coordination and partnership. The social enterprise sector can support growth in the sector aligned to local issues and opportunities

Summary Conclusions

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Conclusions and Next Steps

The evidence base shines a light on the key issues and opportunities that the strategy needs to consider and seek to address. This provides a strong platform for testing and refining this understanding with stakeholders as part of the strategy development process and will inform the development of a draft strategic framework for consultation.

Key considerations arising from the evidence base research for the strategy development phase include:

- The diverse geography of Westmorland and Furness, as shown by the varied performance on key metrics and the locally specific issues and opportunities. This highlights the importance of a place-based focus within the strategy
- The rapid pace of change and drivers and disruptors at work, highlighting the need for the strategy to be agile and open to changing issues and opportunities
- Securing a balance between strategic and localised solutions, in recognition that there is a need for both
- The importance of consultation and engagement in ensuring all voices are heard and that solutions are tailored to local need
- A clear focus on a select number of key outcomes to provide measures of success

Next steps include:

- A visioning workshop with officers and external partners to draft a strategic framework for the strategy to test and refine through consultation
- An extensive engagement phase including workshops, 1-1 consultations, briefings and a microsite with surveys to provide feedback

Appendices

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Appendix 1 – Key Assets and Investments

Asset/Investment/Activity	Locality (former District)	Description
Cumbria Project Gigabit Programme	All	The Cumbria Project Gigabit programme will see £56.4m invested in full fibre infrastructure in Westmorland and Furness, with coverage rising to well above 95% by its completion in 2026.
Shared Rural Network	All	The Shared Rural Network, a £1bn investment across the UK, will improve 4G geographic coverage from all four Mobile Network Operators.
Cumbria Community Forest	All	£900,000 Defra funding to create over 150 hectares of woodland to enhance natural capital and support decarbonisation. Cumbria's Community Forest hugs the western edge of the Lake District National Park and stretches from the northern city of Carlisle to the post-industrial towns in the south (eg Barrow).
Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal Place Plan	Barrow	Projects identified in Dalton's Place Plan include town centre regeneration, improving transport links and infrastructure to better connect Dalton and surrounding areas and upgrading public spaces, including parks and pedestrian areas.
Team Barrow	Barrow	Government, BAE Systems and Westmorland and Furness Council are now working together as Team Barrow, a partnership formed to enable the significant new development required to deliver the Astute, Dreadnought and AUKUS submarine programmes as part of the UK's Defence Nuclear Enterprise. In March 2024 the Government announced the creation of the Barrow Transformation Fund, with the Government committing an immediate £20 million and a further minimum of £20 million a year over the next 10 years to make Barrow an even more attractive place to live, work, and build a career. This investment of over £200 million will include projects to support people towards work, improve health outcomes, build more homes, develop the transport network and support local schools.
Barrow Towns Fund (#BrilliantBarrow)	Barrow	Barrow was one of the first towns in the country to secure a £25m Town Deal from the UK Government for seven exciting projects that will help the area to thrive for generations. These include a new Learning Quarter and campus for the University of Cumbria, improved active travel infrastructure, support for start-ups and entrepreneurship and a network of community hubs including a £6 million Outdoor Learning Centre. A further £17.5m regeneration scheme funded by UK Government will reinvigorate the town centre so it is ready to embrace a prosperous and healthy future.
Levelling Up Funding	Barrow	£16.5m Levelling Up Fund regeneration scheme to reinvigorate Barrow town centre through enhancement of the Market Hall and improvements to the public realm and transport infrastructure.
Barrow High Street Heritage Action Zone	Barrow	£1.1m High Street Heritage Action Zone project to rejuvenate the retail heart of the town, improve housing opportunities and increase pride in place.

Asset/Investment/Activity	Locality (former District)	Description
Port of Barrow *(Investment Opportunity)*	Barrow	This major asset supports the shipyard's growth and private sector investment in green growth and supply chain development. There are over 200 hectares available for further development and we seek to advance the port as a marine gateway that facilitates development of our nationally significant sectors, including offshore wind and other clean growth opportunities, as well as cargo handling and visitor cruise opportunities from this gateway to the Lake District. Associated British Ports have developed a Future Ports Masterplan for Barrow.
Marina Village, Barrow *(Investment Opportunity)*	Barrow	At Marina Village, a 25-hectare brownfield site in Barrow town centre owned by Westmorland & Furness Council, investment of over £30m from Homes England's Brownfield, Infrastructure and Land fund and the Getting Building Fund will remediate the land to allow the development of 800 new homes, a nature conservation area and new public open spaces. The Council is currently preparing a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) to guide the transformation of the site into a modern, attractive and desirable place to live.
Barrow Renewable Energy Projects	Barrow	Walney, operated by Ørsted, is one of the world's largest offshore windfarms. Carlton Power has secured Government support to build a green hydrogen hub for Kimberly-Clark's manufacturing facility while Spirit Energy has plans for one gigaton carbon capture facility by repurposing its Morecambe Bay gas fields.
Levelling Up Funding	Eden	2 Market Square Enterprise and Innovation Hub. BID to create an Enterprise Hub in Eden. Pending Government authorisation.
UKSPF Public Realm improvements	Eden	Up to £285,000 UKSPF funding to improve public realm in Kirkby Stephen, including playpark, memorial garden, interpretation board and Visitor Centre external refurbishment.
Changing Places	Eden	Grant given to Westmorland Ltd for installation and maintenance of Changing Places in Eden (Tebay and Rheged). The Changing Places initiative at Rheged and Tebay aims to provide enhanced toilet facilities for people with severe disabilities, ensuring they have access to safe, clean, and well-equipped restrooms.
Eden Youth Hub DWP Funding	Eden	Tripartite partnership between DWP, W&F and Inspira funding Eden Youth Working to engage with NEETs and get them into work, education or volunteering. Funded by DWP and Council.
Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal Place Plan	Eden	The Place Plan for Penrith focuses on several key areas to drive growth and development. Projects include Penrith Station (awarded £476,000 to support improvements within the concourse and station buildings), Penrith Playhouse aimed at enhancing local cultural facilities and Castle Park (awarded £35,000 contract for design improvements to Castle Park, which is part of the broader efforts to enhance public spaces).
A66 Trans-Pennine Dualling	Eden	National Highways have begun the preparatory works for the construction of a £1.5bn strategic highways upgrade scheme to provide a high quality, high-speed dual carriageway route on the A66 between the M6 at Penrith and A1(M) at Scotch Corner. Dualling will provide excellent connectivity along a key local, regional and national route for east/west journeys in the north of England for freight, tourism and businesses across the UK.
Leeds-Settle-Carlisle Line Corridor	Eden	The Settle-Carlisle Line plays a vital role connecting key communities, enabling Eden residents to commute to Carlisle and Leeds and supporting visitor access to the Eden Valley. This rural to city link encourages people to live in Eden and commute along the line to work plus it enables visitors to access the Eden Valley via Carlisle or Leeds. There is an opportunity to develop an integrated transport solution which could bring benefits to the railway lines corridor.
Borderlands 5G Innovation Regions (5GIR) Programme	South Lakeland	£3.8m of funding by DSIT to deliver a programme to demonstrate the commercial opportunities for advanced wireless technology in a rural tourism setting. The programme is run and managed by Connecting Cumbria. The initial programme will focus on commercially viable and sustainable use of 5G technology to meet a mixture of use cases at five venues, including the Windermere 5G Ferry.

Asset/Investment/Activity	Locality (former District)	Description
Grange Lido and Promenade	South Lakeland	£6.8m investment in restoration of Grange Lido and Promenade and delivering new multi-use public space, landscaping and public realm improvements. Partly funded by the Coastal Communities Fund, received jointly with Morecambe Bay Partnership to deliver a sustainable tourism programme around Morecambe Bay.
Lancaster Canal Towpath Trail	South Lakeland	£1.1m project, coordinated by the Lancaster Canal Regeneration Partnership and the Canal & River Trust, to improve a four-mile stretch of towpath between Kendal and Holme, including widening the current towpath and installation of a new self-binding surface dressing. This will be combined with a programme of promotional activities to increase usage for leisure cycling/walking and awareness of the path's heritage. The project was funded by Westmorland and Furness Council, through the UKSPF and Rural England Prosperity Fund, as well as legacy grant funding from Cumbria County Council and South Lakeland District Council.
Windermere Water Quality	South Lakeland	Revere – a collaboration between Palladium and National Parks Partnership has secured £100,000 from Estee Lauder Companies UK & Ireland (ELC) to study water quality issues in Windermere and deliver nature-based improvements for the area, as well as develop a long-term financial model for maintain improvements.
Witherslack Mosses	South Lakeland	With support from Wilder Carbon, Cumbria Wildlife Trust are in the process of acquiring degraded peat areas to re-wild and re-wet to create a thriving habitants and carbon capture demonstrator.
Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal Place Plan	South Lakeland	Projects identified in Ulverston's Place Plan include the enhancement of the cultural offer centred around key assets of The Coro, Roxy Cinema, Laurel & Hardy Museum, the Market Hall and Ford Park. The Place Plan also describes projects focused on town centre regeneration, improving connections between Ulverston and surrounding area and investing in parks and recreational areas.
Levelling Up Funding	South Lakeland	Kendal's Heart of Kendal project has been provisionally awarded £13.5 million through the third round of the Government's Levelling Up Fund. This funding will support several transformational projects aimed at improving Kendal town centre and enhancing connectivity along the River Kent. Supported with additional funding from Westmorland and Furness' UKSPF allocation.
Windermere Gateway *(Investment Opportunity)*	South Lakeland	Windermere Gateway is a long-term vision for a mixed-use development next to Orrest Head to provide housing and employment space, improvements at the existing railway station and to deliver a new transport interchange.
GSK, Ulverston / Advanced Manufacturing Park *(Investment Opportunity)*	South Lakeland	A 42 hectare site owned by GSK, on the eastern edge of Ulverston within five miles of the Lake District National Park and overlooking Morecambe Bay. There is a future investment opportunity in the production facilities on site, which have a unique capability manufacturing lifesaving cephalosporin products exported and used around the world. Proximity to the A590, M6 and Furness and West Coast Main Rail Lines gives easy access to Manchester and Liverpool airports and the ports of Barrow, Heysham and Liverpool.
Cross-a-Moor, Ulverston *(Investment Opportunity)*	South Lakeland	A combined 52 ha of land available for housing across four allocated sites south of Ulverston. The sites can deliver a significant proportion of housing to meet local needs, with around 1,000 new homes, and help provide the workforce needed by local businesses in Westmorland and Furness. All sites are now served by a newly built roundabout, with a £12m investment made into enabling infrastructure.
Scroggs Wood, Kendal *(Investment Opportunity)*	South Lakeland	This is a prestige 18 ha site on the main southern approach to Kendal. It is a highly accessible development site adjacent to the A591 dual carriageway and just 5 minutes from M6 Junction 36. The site is allocated for employment and is intended for high quality, campus-style development reflecting its prominent location and draws upon the heritage and character of the site's riverside setting at the gateway to the Lake District.

Appendix 2 – SIC Code Definitions

Definitions for Energy (SIC Codes)

38210	Treatment and disposal of non-hazardous waste
38220	Treatment and disposal of hazardous waste
38110	Collection of non-hazardous waste
38120	Collection of hazardous waste
35110	Production of electricity
72190	Other research and experimental development on natural sciences and engineering
74901	Environmental consulting activities
06100	Extraction of crude petroleum
09900	Support activities for other mining and quarrying
39000	Remediation activities and other waste management services
35130	Distribution of electricity

Definitions for Visitor Economy (SIC Divisions)

4910	Passenger rail transport, interurban
4932	Taxi operation
4939	Other passenger land transport n.e.c.
5010	Sea and coastal passenger water transport
5030	Inland passenger water transport
5110	Passenger air transport
5610	Restaurants and mobile food service activities
5621	Event catering activities
5629	Other food service activities
5630	Beverage serving activities
5510	Hotels and similar accommodation
5520	Holiday and other short stay accommodation
5530	Camping grounds, recreational vehicle parks and trailer parks
5590	Other accommodation
6820	Renting and operating of own or leased real estate
7711	Renting and leasing of cars and light motor vehicles
7721	Renting and leasing of recreational and sports goods
7734	Renting and leasing of water transport equipment

7735	Renting and leasing of air transport equipment
7911	Travel agency activities
7912	Tour operator activities
7990	Other reservation service and related activities
8230	Convention and trade show organizers
9001	Performing arts
9002	Support activities to performing arts
9003	Artistic creation
9004	Operation of arts facilities
9102	Museum activities
9103	Operation of historical sites and buildings and similar visitor attractions
9104	Botanical and zoological gardens and nature reserve activities
9200	Gambling and betting activities
9311	Operation of sports facilities
9319	Other sports activities
9321	Activities of amusement parks and theme parks
9329	Other amusement and recreation activities

Appendix 3 – List of Consultees

- Westmorland and Furness Council representatives from the following departments:
  - Planning
  - Sustainable Transport / Infrastructure
  - Community infrastructure
  - Safe and strong communities
  - Housing
  - Climate and Natural Environment
  - Skills – Education and Inclusion
  - Policy and Performance
- Enterprising Cumbria

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