

# Child Poverty Forum West Cumbria

## CHILD POVERTY:

MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN **YOUR** COMMUNITY

FRIDAY 15TH SEPTEMBER 2017



## ROUNDTABLE REPORT

Child Poverty Forum  
West Cumbria



# West Cumbria Child Poverty Forum Report Approval

As representatives of constituent member organisation of the West Cumbria Child Poverty Forum, the following members have agreed that this report is an accurate representation of the of issues covered in the roundtable event.

**Name: Willie Slavin**  
**Organisation: West Cumbria Child Poverty Forum**

Signature: 

**Name: Cath Howard**  
**Organisation: Cumbria Community Foundation**

Signature: 

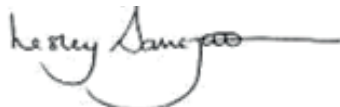
**Name: Suzanne Wilson**  
**Organisation: University of Central Lancashire**

Signature: 

**Name: Andrea Hardi-Knight**  
**Organisation: Howgill Family Centre**

Signature: 

**Name: Lesley Sanczuk**  
**Organisation: Cumbria County Council**

Signature: 

**Name: Vicki Hepburn-Fish**  
**Organisation: Victoria Infant and Nursery School**

Signature: 

**Name: Rachel Head**  
**Organisation: Barnardo's Allerdale**

Signature: 

All information was compiled, analysed and documented by Suzanne Wilson, Research Fellow in Social Exclusion and Community Development at the University of Central Lancashire.

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## Foreword

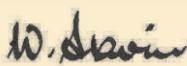
The fact that so many children in our community are denied access to the undoubted wealth enjoyed by many of their contemporaries is a clear indication that inequality, one of the great social problems of our age, is a blight on our community. Poverty by its very nature is relative. It is defined and measured against an agreed set of norms which vary from one context to another.

In a Cumbrian setting, as a county we are not nearly as well off as many other areas. By the same token, in the West Cumbrian setting, we do not have the residual wealth of other parts of the county. However, what we do have within West Cumbria is that the gap between the highest earners and the lowest earners is a significant factor, and the principle reason why inequality, leading to poverty is such a pressing issue. The psychological effect of this gap is a significant factor being addressed daily by those agencies who work tirelessly to alleviate the worst effects of poverty and who seek to reverse the downward trajectory for many families. Within this work a person centred and non-judgemental approach to those facing the most challenging circumstances is paramount.

This acute understanding of the localised manifestation of child poverty and its geographical particularities allowed us, as a community, to come together to face the challenge -

***Child Poverty: Making a Difference in Your Community.***

Since the establishment of the West Cumbria Child Poverty Forum (WCCPF) in 2009, it has been, and will continue to be our task to continue to focus and re-focus our collective efforts to develop a level of understanding of the complexities of the matter to ensure that our interventions are informed by the best research and innovative thinking available. Our collaboration with University of Central Lancashire (UCLan) and its Applied Policy Science Unit (APSU) is proving invaluable in this regard.



Willie Slavin  
Chair of West Cumbria Child Poverty Forum

## Executive Summary

This report provides an overview of the salient issues which emerged through presentations by speakers and discussions led by delegates. It is hoped that this report will inform councillors and community stakeholders of the challenges children and families living in poverty face, and encourage action on both practical and policy levels.

The roundtable event was chaired and hosted by Dr Rick Wylie, Samuel Lindow Academic Director, University of Central Lancashire, who hosted this event. Cath Howard, Chief Operations Officer at Cumbria Community Foundation provided some key statistics around the status of poverty in West Cumbria. Suzanne Wilson, Research Fellow in Social Exclusion and Community Development at University of Central Lancashire gave an overview of the 'Connected Communities' research being undertaken in West Cumbria, with the aim to promote community capital. Lesley Sanczuk, Senior Manager for Children's Services Allerdale & Copeland at Cumbria County Council spoke about their new service 'Pause' which aims to support families with repeat child removals. Andrea Hardie-Knight, Chief Executive at Howgill Family Centre described some typical referrals surrounding parent mental health and debt, and what their services are doing to support families. Vicki Hepburn-Fish, Head at Victoria Infant and Nursery School spoke about their work to improve language and communication at pre-school by working with families and promoting learning at home. Finally, Rachel Head, Children's Services Manager at Barnardo's Allerdale reflected on the challenges encountered in early intervention projects and strategies to overcome these, chiefly offering perinatal support for families.



The main themes discussed in the open forum were adequate housing provision, and the intergenerational transmission of poverty. The impact of austerity on funding was discussed, with partnership working being considered to potentially address these issues. Success stories were shared, where young people displayed resilience and succeeding in their life choices, despite being raised in challenging circumstances. Willie Slavin, chair of West Cumbria Child Poverty Forum, closed proceedings by calling for child poverty champions to step forward, encouraging councillors and community stakeholders to continue to work in partnership with others, influence policies that impact those in poverty, and campaign to challenge policy and practice.

## Introduction

### **History of West Cumbria Child Poverty Forum**

The Forum exists to highlight and improve the plight of those children in our community who live with the harmful consequences of poverty. The WCCPF came together in response to a growing concern, voiced in Parliament by the then MP Jamie Reed about the incidence of child poverty in its local community.

This led to the publication of a Review of Child Poverty in West Cumbria in November 2010. The report, well received at the time, particularly in the public and voluntary sectors, has recently been updated to take account of the continuing economic downturn and the effects of Welfare reform. It is a matter of the greatest concern that gains made over recent years in redressing the balance have gone into worrying reverse. For those agencies who make up the Forum's membership, and who have sought to grasp the complexity of the problem as a prerequisite of transformative action, the group's engagement with UCLan and their APSU is proving immensely valuable.

The developing interest in action research among constituent organisations, able and willing to promote post graduate study, is taking this particular collaboration to another level.

### **Who we are**

WCCPF is an un-constituted group of professionals from a range of sectors, who meet periodically to share information surrounding child poverty on a local, national and international level. There is representation from Allerdale and Copeland Borough Councils, Cumbria County Council Children's Services, Howgill Family Centre, Barnardo's Allerdale, and UCLan.

### **What we do**

The aim of the Forum is to share information and expertise and raise the profile of child poverty in West Cumbria, keeping the issue at the forefront of the public, and the statutory services. The Forum is purposefully open and unincorporated.

### **Context**

Following a series of conferences and roundtable events hosted by UCLan, and the Forum's growing relationship with the research being undertaken at UCLan, it was felt timely to capture salient issues surrounding child poverty in West Cumbria through discussions with local stakeholders (which supplements statistical reports produced by organisations such as Cumbria Community Foundation and Cumbria Intelligence Observatory). The event was also an opportune time for the Forum to launch its 'child poverty champions' initiative, which will be detailed later in the report.

### **Purpose of the report**

This document is for wide dissemination and use, based on external verified information from a range of expert practitioners across West Cumbria. It presents the salient issues which emerged through presentations by speakers and discussions led by delegates. It is envisioned that the report, by offering a carefully considered snapshot of the current position, will inform and encourage sustained action by both practitioners and policy makers at local and national level. The report will also set the trajectory of future work undertaken by WCCPF, with the support of UCLan's Centre for Citizenship and Community, applied policy sciences at Westlakes, and the Samuel Lindow Foundation.

## Making a Difference in Your Community

### **Speakers summary**

A group of select expert practitioners operating in West Cumbria were invited to contribute to the event, outlining the main challenges they face in working with vulnerable children in West Cumbria, and how they are attempting to overcome this.

### **Cath Howard** Chief Operations Officer, Cumbria Community Foundation

Earlier this year Cumbria Community Foundation published their 'Cumbria Revealed Report' which sets out the key issues in communities and provides an evidence base to guide philanthropy in the coming years. The report suggests that Cumbria has much to celebrate, however, life is far from easy for many people. Within our outwardly appearing comfortable county, too many people are facing real poverty and disadvantage.

Key issues include nearly 12,000 children living in poverty, with 1 in 8 households living on an income less than £10,000, and 1 in 10 households living in fuel poverty.

Health issues include levels of diabetes, overweight adults, hospital admissions due to alcohol and self-harm and suicide all being significantly worse than the national average. People in the West are likely to die 20 years earlier than those living in the East of the county. Rates of mental ill health are higher than national average, particularly in single person households and those impacted by flooding. Overall, 34,000 Cumbrians experience depression, and 1 person takes their own life every week.

Emerging work-related issues include the changing labour market; in the next 5 years 40% of new jobs will need a degree or equivalent whilst only 28% of Cumbria's working population are educated to this level. Youth unemployment is high in Copeland and Allerdale, and there are low salaries in generally affluent areas of the county. This provides a distorted picture of poverty in the county.

Issues relating to children include almost 14% of children in Cumbria living in poverty with 30 wards being above the national average. It was found 1 in 10 children have emotional and well-being problems. Early years foundation assessments (5-year olds) are lower than national average, with Copeland performing the worst at 54% (the national average is 65%). Educational attainment is also below the national average when looking at how many children gain 5 plus GCSEs. Alcohol use amongst young people is high, with hospital admissions twice the average in Copeland and Allerdale.

“Where you live makes a massive difference to your future prospects”

### **Cumbria Community Foundation**

*Cumbria Community Foundation provides philanthropic services to individuals, families and organisations. They connect donors with life changing projects which address the key issues in our communities and in doing so enrich our donors' lives. Grant making 2016/17 was £7.7m and more than £37m distributed since inception in 1999.*

### **Suzanne Wilson** Research Fellow in Social Exclusion and Community Development, University of Central Lancashire

The Applied Policy Science Unit at the UCLan, based at the Westlakes campus are undertaking a 'Connected Communities' research project to promote community development and engagement. This research is supported by the Samuel Lindow Foundation and expands on the work conducted by the Centre for Citizenship and Community over five-years (2010-15) in seven sites (overseen by Professor David Morris), deploying deliberative community engagement and social network analysis to design and evaluate community level interventions for inclusion and wellbeing.

The approach adopts an asset-based philosophy to community engagement, focusing on the strengths available to each local community, while acknowledging their needs. Through co-production, 'Connected Communities' aims to empower communities to better understand themselves, address their own problems in partnership with other organisations, and realise opportunities and aspirations. The 'Connected Communities' approach uses an innovative and inclusive methodology as a means of building community capital. The research aims to strengthen community assets, and develop social value (or dividends). The four key areas we would expect to see an increase in social dividends are in well-being, citizenship, capacity and finance. Suzanne is undertaking research in Woodhouse and Mirehouse, which will focus on developing youth citizenship to overcome the intergenerational transmission of poverty. The research based in Mirehouse will promote citizenship in young people and combating loneliness in older people. This will be in partnership with Cumbria Constabulary and Whitehaven Youth Harbour Project. The

research activity will involve a case study evaluation of the 'Future Pathways' project and a 'Connected Communities' project where young people will conduct community research focusing on older people. The research based in Woodhouse will focus on citizenship in young people and their parents. This will be in partnership with Cumbria County Council, Howgill Family Centre, and local primary and secondary schools. The research activity will involve a case study evaluation of Woodhouse Youth Council, which will support a 'Connected Communities' project focusing on citizenship and participation. Combined, these innovative and exciting strands of research aim to compare and contrast ways of partnership working in projects promoting youth citizenship, informing future research, policy and practice. Best practice can be developed and incorporated on a local and national level though overcoming social challenges and promoting citizenship and engagement.

“I'd like to develop some best practice on a local and national level, looking at how we can overcome social challenges and promote citizenship and engagement, ultimately to give young people the best opportunity they can have”

### **University of Central Lancashire Westlakes Campus**

*Located on the Westlakes Science and Technology Park in West Cumbria, the University of Central Lancashire Westlakes campus is focused on innovative thinking for the real world. Using state-of-the-art facilities it offers innovative and vocational courses at undergraduate and postgraduate level that meet the needs of the local community whilst maintaining national and international appeal. A combination of academic learning and practical experience ensure University of Central Lancashire Westlakes graduates are well prepared for the working world.*

### **Lesley Sanczuk** Senior Manager, Children's Services Allerdale & Copeland, Cumbria County Council

Many of the children Cumbria Children's Services work with suffer from chronic neglect, and that neglect manifests itself in various forms including financial, emotional and physical poverty. Consequently, repeat referrals are common, suggesting that services are failing to address fundamental issues.

In West Cumbria, 504 children were removed from their families' care in five years. Out of this figure, over 300 children came from families who had repeat removals. Just over 20% of all children from repeat removal households came from the same women. This is indicative of chronic neglect, with large sibling groups, and a relatively small

number of women who have had a large number of children. There have been a number of cases where mothers are in court proceedings with Children's Services and just before those proceedings are due to finish, they become pregnant again. This highlights how a cycle of poverty can be perpetuated.

Children's Services have observed that some women have experienced very traumatic childhoods themselves and come from very complex backgrounds, often having had an episode in care themselves when they were young. Some women in these circumstances have issues relating to drug and alcohol misuse or domestic violence, which is prevalent in West Cumbria.

In an attempt to overcome the cycle of poverty, Children's Services have entered into a partnership with a national initiative called 'Pause' aims to break the cycle in West Cumbria through helping women take a pause from having children, so that they can receive support to gain employment or find training opportunities, find suitable housing, and just take time to stabilise their lives. The project is in its infancy in West Cumbria, but Children's Services look forward to updating child poverty champions at the next WCCPF event.

"if you've got that background and you have children and you live in poverty, it's not impossible to bring your children up, but it is harder"

### **Cumbria County Council Children's & Families Services**

*Children's & Families Services are responsible for a wide range of services for children, young people, their families and schools in Cumbria including education for all ages, social care, youth support, early help, children's centres, the youth offending service, special educational needs and children with disabilities. There are currently over 112,000 children and young people aged 0-19 in Cumbria. These children and their families are key 'customers'. All services are geared towards championing children and young people and improving outcomes for them and their families by ensuring they receive swift and timely access to the services they need.*

### **Andrea Hardie-Knight** Chief Executive, Howgill Family Centre

The impact of child neglect is life-long. Before the age of two, a baby's brain has developed by 75% and these can have lasting effects. By twenty-two months, a child's development can predict outcomes at the age of twenty-six. By two years, the experiences of children physically affect the brain structure. By four years, the difference in the number of words different groups of children hear is nineteen million. By five years, a child's vocabulary will predict their educational success and outcomes at the age of thirty. The result of this is that a child born in

poverty being £50,000 worse off throughout their life than their wealthier peers.

Howgill receive on average twenty referrals every week including referrals from services and self-referrals. A common area of referral relates to education. For example, one child, who did attend reception class failed to attend the first ten days of their full primary school teaching. It emerged that the mother was suffering with poor mental health and was keeping the child from going to school in response to her loneliness. The household was living in poor conditions, which included domestic violence and alcohol abuse. Another common referral relates to debt. For example, a young parent had three children, and could not afford food, school clothing or electricity. In an attempt to cope this mother began using loan sharks which added to her anxiety. Howgill were able to provide foodbank vouchers to enable the family to eat. This is a service that Howgill provide on a weekly basis. Furthermore, Howgill will also be part of the new Fare Share project, where excess food from supermarkets is given to families in need.

Howgill employ forty workers, supporting families with a range of issues from domestic violence, drug and alcohol abuse issues, to parenting skills, parenting courses and therapeutic interventions. There are also play therapists working with five to twelve-year olds who have dealt with trauma and are vulnerable to low self-esteem and depression. It is hoped that these interventions provide coping strategies to these traumas, preventing life-long negative consequences and break the cycle of poverty. Howgill also want to target parents through adult education, supporting parents to gain qualifications which they hope will positively impact on children's aspirations, lead to employment and break the cycle of poverty.

"We want to give every child an increased aspiration, we want to break this cycle"

### **Howgill Family Centre**

*The Howgill Family Centre aims to provide support for children and families throughout West Cumbria so that every child might have equality of opportunity to achieve their full potential. The organisation coordinates centre-based activities, Home Support and Community outreach projects. The Howgill Family Centre is dedicated to high quality service provision, open to external inspection, evaluation and assessment and the premises and activities are registered with Ofsted, where appropriate.*

## Vicki Hepburn-Fish

Head,

Victoria Infant and Nursery School

Victoria Infant and Nursery School is a school in Workington, recognised by Ofsted as Outstanding for the third consecutive time in 2015. The catchment is largely from the Moss Bay ward but the school's reputation attracts many pupils from across Allerdale. In 2016 the school extended their age range to accommodate a purpose built additional nursery for two year olds. The Local Authority recognised the need for funded places for children who would benefit from a fifteen hours a week free place from the age of two and consequently the school has grown in capacity with over 300 pupils in July 2017 on roll.

The school have been involved with the Learning Enhancement Project since 2011, which was a steering group organised through UCLan to identify how organisations can address the spoken language and communication barriers of children in West Cumbria. Many children in the Moss Bay area of Workington present with poor communication and language skills, and has been consistently below the Cumbrian and national average for over a decade. At Victoria Infant and Nursery School over 40% of the children are classed as disadvantaged, well above local and national levels. It was observed that children start school with multiple barriers to access learning and consequently, the school introduced a pilot called 'Talk to Me', a multi-agency project involving the Children's Centre and Barnardo's. For six weeks prior to starting their funded nursery place, a programme is delivered on a weekly basis, focused on communication and language, promoting activities at home to continue learning beyond the school gates. Through this, language and communication barriers are challenged, providing children with the best start to their primary education. The project has successfully run for three years and last October it expanded the school age range to two year olds, rather than starting at three. This has impacted positively on those children who are funded to access that provision, through earlier access to earlier education, including good quality language and communication from the staff within the school. It has also enabled staff to work closely with those families in identifying their needs, whether it be Children's Services' needs, family needs or health needs at an earlier stage. The multi-agency approach ensures the right services are identified at an earlier stage, helping families to support their child to be 'school ready'. Through families being present at school, working with school staff, parents are more confident to support their children and have developed relationship with school staff. This is key because many families of children attending the school have bad experiences of schooling themselves, they either were non-attendants, or they had issues in their own lives.

The school is also participating in the national research project, 'Talk Boost', recognising that communication is the foundation of all subsequent learning. Fundamentally, language and communication is the absolute core of what Victoria Infant and Nursery School deliver, with the hope that these skills support children in their lifelong learning, through primary and secondary school, and beyond.

"Parents are more open and communication with parents is really strong"

### Victoria Infant and Nursery School, Workington

*Achieve Believe Learn Together: Victoria Infant and Nursery School aims to create an inclusive learning community inspiring all learners to achieve their true potential. They recognise each learner as an individual, and aim to equip them with the aspirations and learning behaviours to success and become active and responsible members of the community in an ever changing world.*

## Rachel Head

Children's Services Manager,

Barnardo's Allerdale

Research and professional experience evidence that it is key to ensure that vulnerable children get a positive early childhood experience which enables them to have the best opportunities within education. In 2016 there were 267 children in Workington who were assessed using the early year's foundation stage profile at aged five (to assess a good level of development). Only 38.6% of children defined as disadvantaged obtained a good level of development last year, compared to 62.8% of those who were not defined as disadvantaged (leaving a gap of 24.2%). Furthermore, only 50% of all children achieved a good level of development across the Workington area, which is 14% below the national average.

The aim of the 'Funded Two's' initiative is to help those children from the most disadvantaged backgrounds to have the opportunity to catch up, or at least not further fall behind children from more advantaged families. Waiting to intervene until children are older means it can already be too late. However, findings from a local review with providers of Funded Two placements indicate that many children often have low and sporadic attendance. This is partly due to parental disengagement. It has been reported that parents can see the provision as free childcare, rather than an early learning opportunity and providers have to work really hard to engage parents to understand this better. Furthermore, findings suggest that parents can be preoccupied with their own needs and their challenging circumstances, often impacted by mental health, domestic abuse and substance misuse. Consequently, parents often have low aspirations for themselves and therefore their children, which are further compounded by worklessness, debt and poverty. This can result in minimal active interest in supporting learning at home, which is critical to children doing well in education.

One of the ways Barnardo's aims to prevent this is through their 'Welcome to the World', a pre-birth programme, which offers parents the best opportunity to have a positive start with their baby and build a positive and secure attachment. From this very early intervention, the Children's Centres offers a pathway of support services, in a multi-agency context, that can give young children and their families the best chance of success as the children grow and develop. However, there is still more to be done and a real need through effective partnership working to 'turn the curve' for our most disadvantaged aiming to increase the life chances for all children and their families. An example of effective partnership working to improve children's early learning has been demonstrated in the Early Years Foundation Stage data from 2016 which revealed an improved level of good development in boys from Maryport. Furthermore, 58% of those children who reached a good level of development in 2016 had attended a Children's Centre Service as well as experiencing good early years provision from partners, demonstrating the widespread positive impact early intervention services are having on our children.

"We need to share the belief, aspiration and commitment to work together if we're going to make a difference"

"So although we may, as professionals and providers and perhaps members of the public often get very frustrated with why aren't people doing better, we really need to take the time to understand their story"

### **Barnardo's Allerdale**

*Through the Children's Centre across Allerdale, we work in partnership with parents/carers, children, young people and their families and alongside other agencies to identify needs; offer support; encourage positive relationships and help children to develop appropriately. Through a wide range of one to one support and group work we aim to make a positive, lasting difference in the lives of our children and young people.*

## Main Themes Discussed in Open Forum

Critical people in the community were invited to contribute their feedback on the issues covers, and provide their informed opinions on the main concerns facing families in poverty in West Cumbria. These key themes will now be discussed.

### **Housing**

Housing was the first and most frequently mentioned topic in the round table discussion, despite not being covered by any of the speakers. A Cumbria County Councillor was first to raise the issue, highlighting that it wasn't necessarily a lack of housing that is a problem in West Cumbria, but poor living conditions. He provided examples of young families, who reside with the local social housing provider living in houses with severe damp and crumbling walls. It was widely felt that the problems are continuing to worsen.

Difficulties in communicating with housing associations was identified as being a challenge. Some delegates highlighted that a housing provider no longer had a front facing desk or a housing officer that residents could speak to. Now the only way to contact the provider is through calling an office in Newcastle. Indeed, all local housing associations were invited to the roundtable event, and none attended.

Delegates reflected that such challenges facing families can negatively impact not only on health, but also on other areas of a child's life, such as education, as parents are preoccupied with the challenges of poor housing.

Councillors expressed their frustration with feeling unable to offer help to these families, as they were unaware of what to advise. Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) informed the group that, despite cuts to Legal Aid with austerity, there are funds available for serious disrepair in housing and there are specialist housing staff at the CAB who can advise on this.

"if you're on about these initiatives with the schools and that, that's brilliant, but they're trying to get a house that's habitable"

"[parents] are doing their best...it was that damp, and she was going round and round in circles...so I'm going to try my best for them now but that is a really, really big issue in Copeland"



## Family and Intergenerational Challenges

Supporting parents was discussed at length by speakers, and this topic arose during the open discussion. It was argued that families are complex systems, with many experiencing multi-generational poverty. This may result in crucial parenting skills not being available to children when they became parents themselves. Further exacerbated by austerity, these considerations provide insight into the increasingly challenging circumstances families living in poverty face.

A range of barriers impacting on families accessing services were identified to include:

- A fear that Social Services will remove children from households
- The embarrassment of going to food banks
- Not knowing what services were available
- Poor mental health and substance abuse issues

This is not to blame parents for the situation they are in, rather this highlights that there is insufficient service provision for the most vulnerable of families. It was acknowledged that to effectively challenge multi-generational issues surrounding poverty, a sustained holistic approach must be used, incorporating education, finance, parental mental health (including substance misuse) and housing.

“So that’s why a lot of people don’t come in the early days when they have problems, because they’re frightened once they let Social Services in, it’s going to lead to them losing their children. And that isn’t the case at all”

## The Impact of Austerity on Funding

Reduced funding was acknowledged to have a significant impact on service delivery from statutory services through to volunteer organisations. Specific areas noted to be of concern were early intervention and funding for existing projects. The great work of local volunteers in challenging child poverty in West Cumbria was praised, but more funding is needed to ensure services are sustainable. Partnership working, between and across services, was proposed to offer a potential solution to the challenge of funding. Through partnerships, it was felt that more holistic services could be offered, producing bigger impacts, which in turn would better attract funders.

“we can get smart, we can work together in more effective ways... our relationships are really good with each other and we’re prepared to work together, and we can do really good work together”

“I think it’s simply because we haven’t got the funding that we don’t do enough work with the adults, that’s where it starts with, once you have a child, you make a commitment when you have a child to look after that child, to love it and bring it up in the best way possible”



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## Partnership Working

Delegates agreed that while partnership working helps alleviate funding cuts, it also offers other opportunities by encouraging innovative solutions. It was widely acknowledged that one of the strengths of West Cumbria is the excellent relationship that exist between organisations, all of whom have a range of experience, knowledge and skills to bring to the mix.

A focus on partnership working provides the ground for a holistic approach, the most appropriate manner in which to deal with the multifaceted nature of the problem presented. For example, if someone has a substance abuse issue, they are less likely to gain employment, and thus may be more likely to need to access a food bank.

Discussion identified a number of partnership networks relating to child poverty in West Cumbria:

- **Cumbria Advice Network:** An online resource which aims, through partnership working in Cumbria, to improve referral processes between third sector advice agencies and support organisations, and to facilitate the sharing of expertise and provide shared training opportunities.
- **Centre of Excellence in West Cumbria:** A group of services in Cumbria, facilitated by Children's Services to share best practice.
- **Children and Young People Partnership within Allerdale:** Organised by Cumbria County Council, it aims to work in a more collaborative, strategic way to address the needs of children and young people in Allerdale with emphasis on the areas of need.
- **The Copeland Hub:** A joint venture between Cumbria Constabulary, Copeland Council, social housing associations and other agencies. Its aim is to enable people to report issues which will be tackled by agencies working together.

Ensuring that effective communication systems are established was noted to be paramount in keeping local agencies are fully informed of what services are available. The roundtable event was reported to be a useful networking opportunity in addition to sharing information, with a number of reports of potential collaborations following the event.

"we've got a lot of experience, knowledge and skills, and it's how we utilise that to get the best effect we can for the children, young people, and the families that we work with in West Cumbria.

"the only way we're going to succeed is for all partners to work together"

"our relationships are really good with each other and we're prepared to work together, and we can do really good work together, but if we had more funding to do that, then obviously our impact would be greater"

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## Success Stories

The importance of acknowledging the resilience of young people, despite their challenging circumstances was stressed by youth work managers, with several examples being provided. This evidence also helps funding bids and was applauded by County and Borough councillors.

"I can list you kids from Sandwith who worked towards their Duke of Edinburgh, or kids from Mirehouse who go on a skiing trip every year"

"I do sometimes sort of sit there and go, but hang on a minute, these kids with all these barriers, with endless amounts of barriers, are achieving incredible things"



## Moving Forward

### **Impact: Real research in the real world for real people**

Together with UCLan and the Samuel Lindow Foundation, WCCPF seeks to make a demonstrable impact on those affected by child poverty. Through the working relationship between the Forum and UCLan's Centre for Citizenship and Community, the work will produce original data from impactful applied research, for real people in the real world.

### **Future Work: Responding to Emerging Themes**

Housing provision is a priority concern for WCCPF, identified through the roundtable discussion event. WCCPF propose to complete a 360-degree appraisal of housing provision in West Cumbria which will involve creating a positive, non-judgemental dialogue with all parties concerned, mainly those involved in housing provision and the residents they service. Through this increased understanding of the challenges facing all parties, we will strive to educate and influence those involved in housing provision and policy, ensuring that all residents have access to a reasonable standard of housing.

All delegates were encouraged to act as child poverty champions. Through this, the WCCPF are calling on councillors as local community leaders and activists to:

- Maintain connections and nurture a sense of partnership between services
- Stand up for the communities they champion
- Develop policies and influence the policies that are going to affect those in poverty
- Campaign on a local and national level to challenge policy and practice

In collaboration with UCLan and the Samuel Lindow Foundation, WCCPF will endeavour to energise and engage elected child poverty champions through the following steps:

- Provide child poverty champions with monthly updates on the latest policy and practice publications relating to child poverty.
- Organise subsequent events where child poverty champions can reflect on the impact of the child poverty champions initiative, evidencing concrete examples of increased participation and knowledge.
- Actively respond to emerging themes as identified by our child poverty champions, to gain an improved understanding of the challenges facing families in poverty in West Cumbria. This improved understanding will support the Forum in seeking out solutions to these issues through influencing policy and practice.
- Continually engage with Professor David Morris and colleagues at the Centre for Citizenship and Community at UCLan, working alongside the 'Connected Communities' research being undertaken.
- Work with the Councils to provide support for policy development and review, and member engagement in issues relating to child poverty.

## Improving Policy & Practice: Child Poverty Champions

One of the aims of the event was to gain a common understanding of the challenges facing those working with and supporting disadvantaged children. An outcome of the event is the development of a collective who will to meet to discuss those challenges and to establish a network of champions.



# Appendices

Appendix A:

## Local Statistics Information Sheet

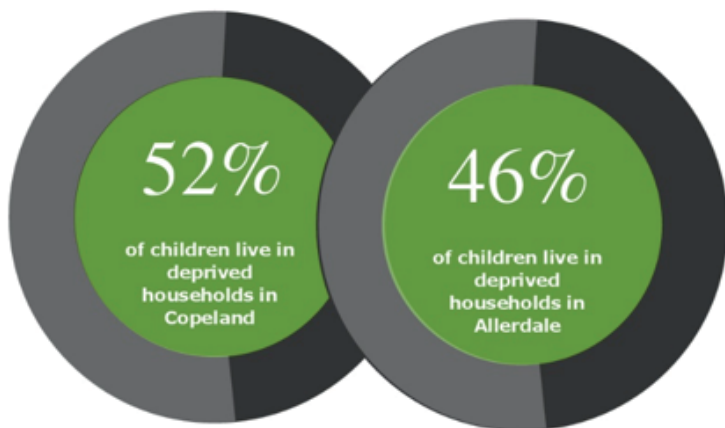
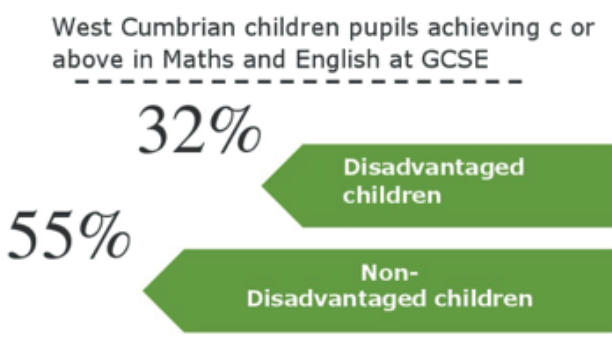
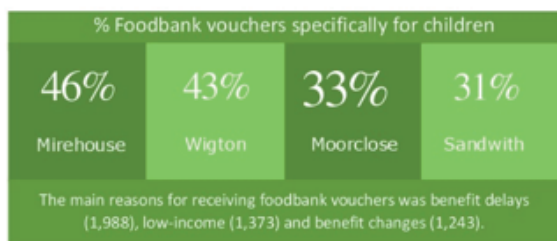
**Child Poverty Forum**  
**West Cumbria**

# Child Poverty

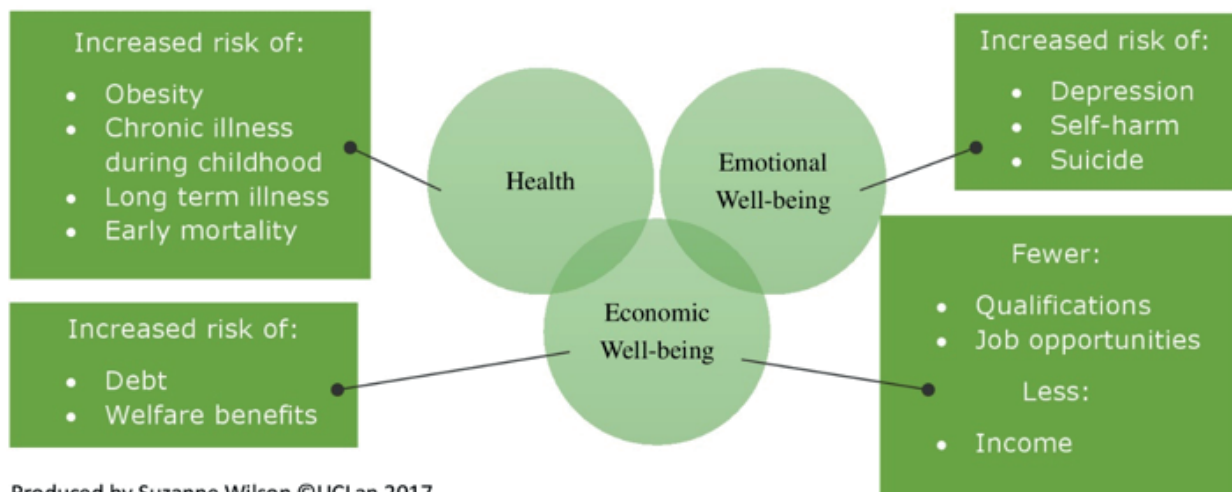
In West Cumbria



West Cumbria



Impact



Produced by Suzanne Wilson ©UCLan 2017

West Cumbria is unique in that there are many 'pockets of poverty', where communities who score very highly for deprivation live beside those who score very low. This can result in an experience of relative deprivation. Relative deprivation is the experience of being deprived of something to which one believes to be entitled. It refers to the discontent people feel when they compare their positions to others and realise that they have less of what they believe themselves



to be entitled than those around them.

Relative deprivation can:

- Cause feelings of stress,
- Challenge concepts of community coherence
- Impact on political attitudes
- Impact on participation in collective action.

Sandwith, the most deprived ward in Copeland borders on St Bees, one of the most affluent.

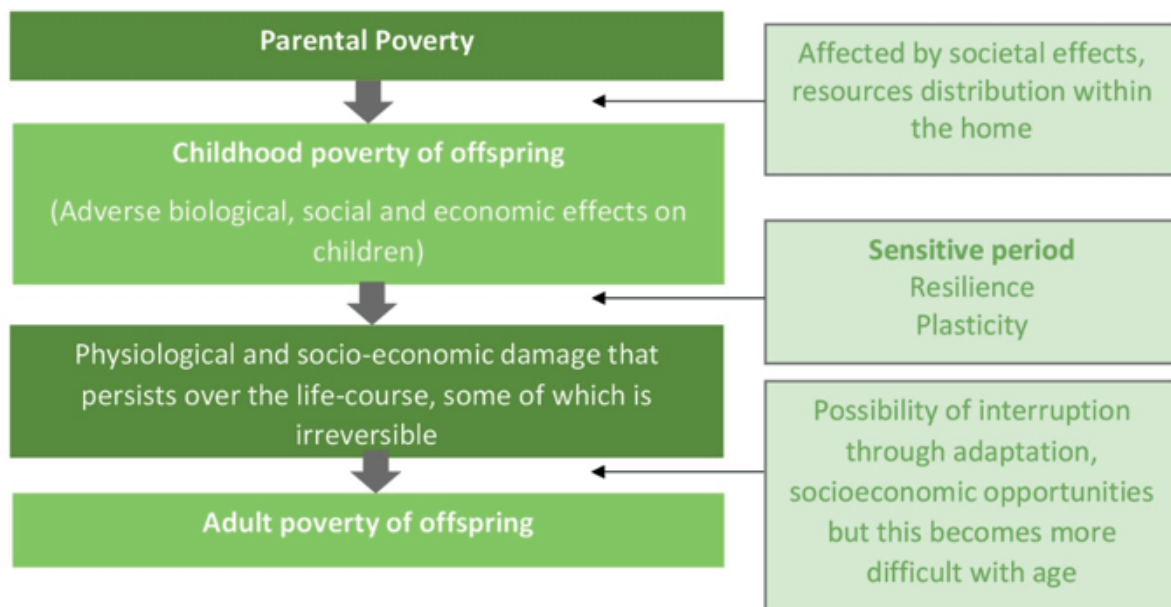
Mossbay is one of most deprived areas in Allerdale, and borders on Harrington which is much more affluent.



Legacy

**The inter-generational transmission of poverty in West Cumbria**

The impact of child poverty is passed through the generations. The figure below explains the process involved in the inter-generational transmission of poverty, along with influencing factors:



Produced by Suzanne Wilson ©UCLan 2017

## Appendix B: Methodology

The methodology behind the creation of this report will now be outlined. As this research involved UCLan, ethical approval was granted from the university prior to any data collection.

### Sample

WCCPF agreed that the event would aim to inform local councillors and community stakeholders about key issues impacting on child poverty, encouraging members to champion child poverty issues in their area. It was also agreed that key organisations should be invited to contribute to discussions, sharing their valuable opinions and experiences. An invitation was sent to local councillors and community stakeholders, as identified by WCCPF.

A total of 50 people attended the event. This included 11 Cumbria County Councillors, 5 Allerdale Borough Councillors and 2 Copeland Borough Councillors. Below is a table outlining key local organisations who also attended the event:

- Monkway Primary School
- St Mary's Catholic Primary School
- St. Begh's Catholic Junior School
- St Benedict's Catholic High School
- Phoenix Youth Centre
- Inspira
- Soundwave
- Whitehaven Youth Harbour Project
- Always Another Way Ltd
- Citizens Advice Allerdale
- Cumbria Youth Alliance
- Copeland MP Trudi Harrison's office
- Christians Against Poverty
- Phoenix Enterprise Centre
- Cumbria Constabulary

### Materials

A local data information sheet surrounding child poverty was given to all attendees to help inform the discussions (Appendix A). The roundtable discussion event was recorded using two digital recording devices.

### Procedure

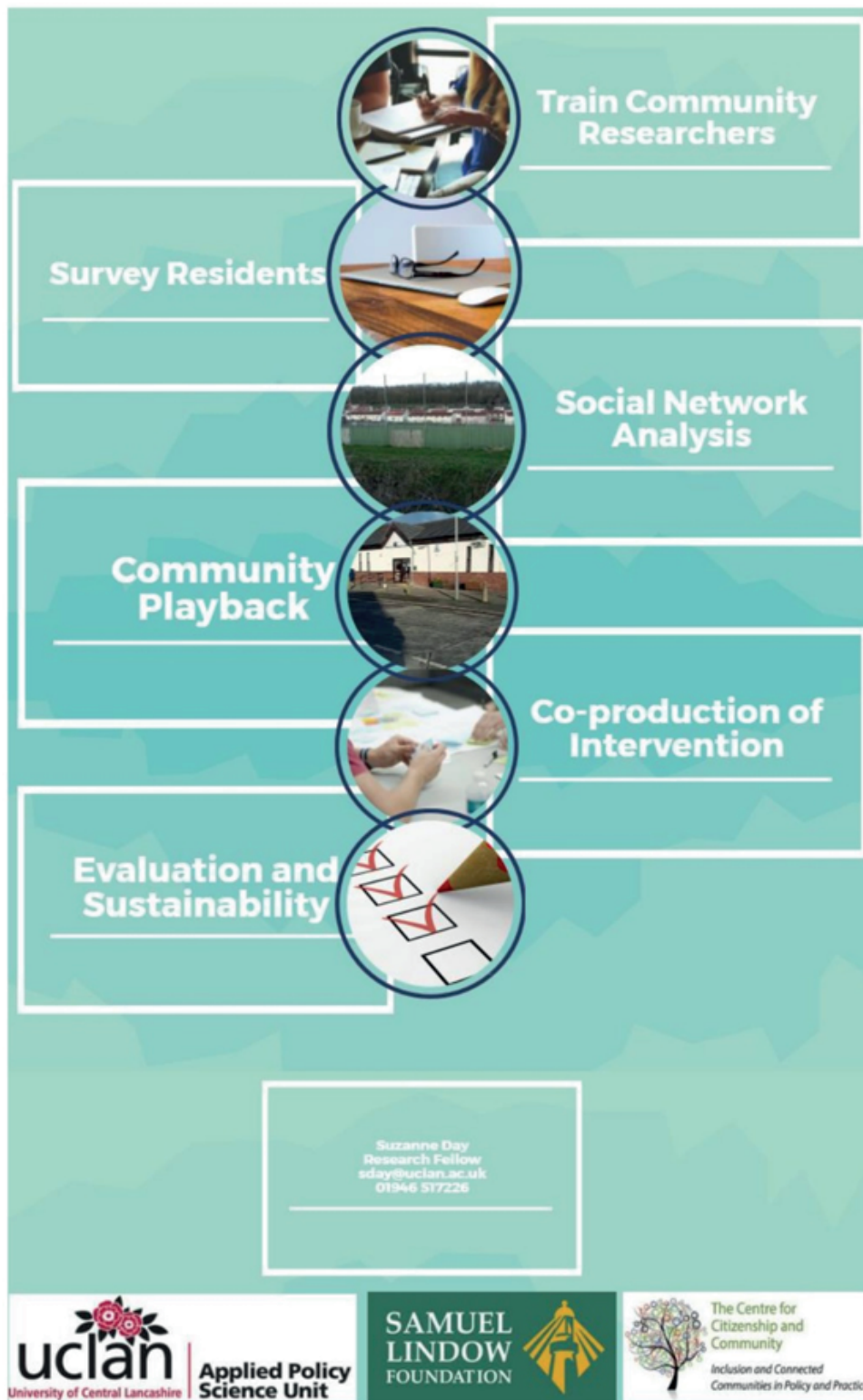
The event was introduced by the chair, Dr Rick Wylie, who reminded attendees that the event would be recorded using a digital device and would be used to inform this report. Six speakers give ten-minute oral presentations, summarising key issues or interventions within their respective fields. The discussion was then open to the audience, inviting attendees to provide feedback about the presentations given, and contribute their own opinions and experiences.

### Analysis

The audio recording was transcribed into text by a UCLan approved transcriber. The text was returned to the researcher who then coded the data to identify key themes discussed. These were grouped into salient categories, which were then analysed in more depth. These categories form the content of the second section of the results outlined in this report.

Appendix C:  
Connected Communities West Cumbria,  
The Centre for Citizenship and Community, UCLan

## Connected Communities West Cumbria



## Appendix D: Key Contacts

### **Allerdale Borough Council**

**W:** [www.allerdale.gov.uk/](http://www.allerdale.gov.uk/)  
**T:** 0303 123 1702

### **Affinity Credit Union**

**W:** [www.affinitycu.co.uk/](http://www.affinitycu.co.uk/)  
**E:** [info@affinitycu.co.uk](mailto:info@affinitycu.co.uk)  
**T:** 0800 086 8766

### **Barnardo's Allerdale**

**W:** [www.barnardos.org.uk/allerdale.htm](http://www.barnardos.org.uk/allerdale.htm)  
**T:** 01900 826782

### **Citizens Advice Allerdale**

**W:** [www.citizensadviceallerdale.org.uk/](http://www.citizensadviceallerdale.org.uk/)  
**T:** 01900 604735

### **Citizens Advice Copeland**

**W:** [www.citizensadvicecopeland.org.uk/](http://www.citizensadvicecopeland.org.uk/)  
**T:** 01946 693321

### **Copeland Borough Council**

**W:** [www.copeland.gov.uk/](http://www.copeland.gov.uk/)  
**E:** [info@copeland.gov.uk](mailto:info@copeland.gov.uk)  
**T:** 01946 598300

### **Cumbria Advice Network**

**W:** [www.cumbriaadvicenetwork.org.uk/can/](http://www.cumbriaadvicenetwork.org.uk/can/)  
**E:** [network@can.cabnet.org.uk](mailto:network@can.cabnet.org.uk)

### **Cumbria Community Foundation**

**W:** [www.cumbriafoundation.org/](http://www.cumbriafoundation.org/)  
**E:** [enquiries@cumbriafoundation.org](mailto:enquiries@cumbriafoundation.org)  
**T:** 01900 825760

### **Cumbria County Council**

**W:** [www.cumbria.gov.uk/](http://www.cumbria.gov.uk/)

### **Cumbria County Council's Children's & Families Service**

**W:** [www.cumbria.gov.uk/childrensservices/aboutus.asp](http://www.cumbria.gov.uk/childrensservices/aboutus.asp)  
**T:** 01900 706350

### **Cumbria Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB)**

**W:** [www.cumbrialscb.com/](http://www.cumbrialscb.com/)  
**E:** [LSCB@cumbria.gov.uk](mailto:LSCB@cumbria.gov.uk)  
**T:** 01228 226898

### **Cumbria Youth Alliance**

**W:** [www.cya.org.uk/](http://www.cya.org.uk/)  
**T:** 01900 603131

### **Foodbank**

**W:** [www.thefoodbank.org.uk/](http://www.thefoodbank.org.uk/)  
**E:** [info@thefoodbank.org.uk](mailto:info@thefoodbank.org.uk)  
**T:** 07502311452

### **Howgill Family Centre**

**W:** [www.howgill-centre.co.uk/](http://www.howgill-centre.co.uk/)  
**E:** [info@howgill-centre.co.uk](mailto:info@howgill-centre.co.uk)  
**T:** 01946 817900

### **Inspira**

**W:** [www.inspira.org.uk/](http://www.inspira.org.uk/)  
**T:** 01900 604674

### **Phoenix Enterprise Centre**

**W:** [www.phoenixenterprisecentre.co.uk/](http://www.phoenixenterprisecentre.co.uk/)  
**E:** [admin@phoenixenterprisecentre.co.uk](mailto:admin@phoenixenterprisecentre.co.uk)  
**T:** 01946 813 555

### **Phoenix Youth Project**

**W:** [www.phoenixyouthproject.org.uk/](http://www.phoenixyouthproject.org.uk/)  
**E:** [paul.rowe@phoenixyouthproject.org.uk](mailto:paul.rowe@phoenixyouthproject.org.uk)  
**T:** 01946 814555

### **Soundwave**

**W:** [www.soundwave.org.uk/](http://www.soundwave.org.uk/)  
**E:** [info@soundwave.org.uk](mailto:info@soundwave.org.uk)  
**T:** 01900 61116

### **West Cumbria Child Poverty Forum**

**E:** [swilson21@uclan.ac.uk](mailto:swilson21@uclan.ac.uk)  
**T:** 01946 517226

### **Whitehaven Harbour Youth Project**

**W:** [www.whyp.org.uk/](http://www.whyp.org.uk/)  
**E:** [admin@whyp.org.uk](mailto:admin@whyp.org.uk)  
**T:** 01946 690 404

### **Whitehaven, Egremont and District Credit Union**

**W:** [www.wedcu.co.uk/](http://www.wedcu.co.uk/)  
**E:** [info@wedcu.co.uk](mailto:info@wedcu.co.uk)  
**T:** 01946 66755