



Westmorland
& Furness
Council

westmorlandandfurness.gov.uk

Westmorland and Furness

Local Plan Scoping Consultation and Survey

July 2026





Introduction

Thanks for taking the time to read our leaflet. It provides an overview of the Local Plan process, summarises opinions collected from earlier public engagement, highlights the areas we think the Local Plan will cover and outlines how you can influence it by answering a few simple questions in our scoping consultation survey.

This is the start of the process to create a new Local Plan. We would like to involve as many people as possible to enable us to deliver a Local Plan that is fair to everyone and help make Westmorland and Furness a great place to live, work and thrive.

Access to the Scoping Consultation Survey, accompanied by a digital version of this document, is available via our Local Plan web page at: www.westmorlandandfurness.gov.uk/localplan

To complete the survey, if you haven't already, we need to ask you to create an account. Your personal account can then be used for future Local Plan consultation and will help us make sure your comments are having an impact.

SCAN ME:



Please scan this link to our Local Plan webpage where you can access the survey and further up-to-date information.

What is a Local Plan?

Local Plans are required by Government and set out local planning policies for now, and the future.

It is important to gather the views of people who live and work here as the Local Plan is prepared.



Why are we updating the Local Plan?

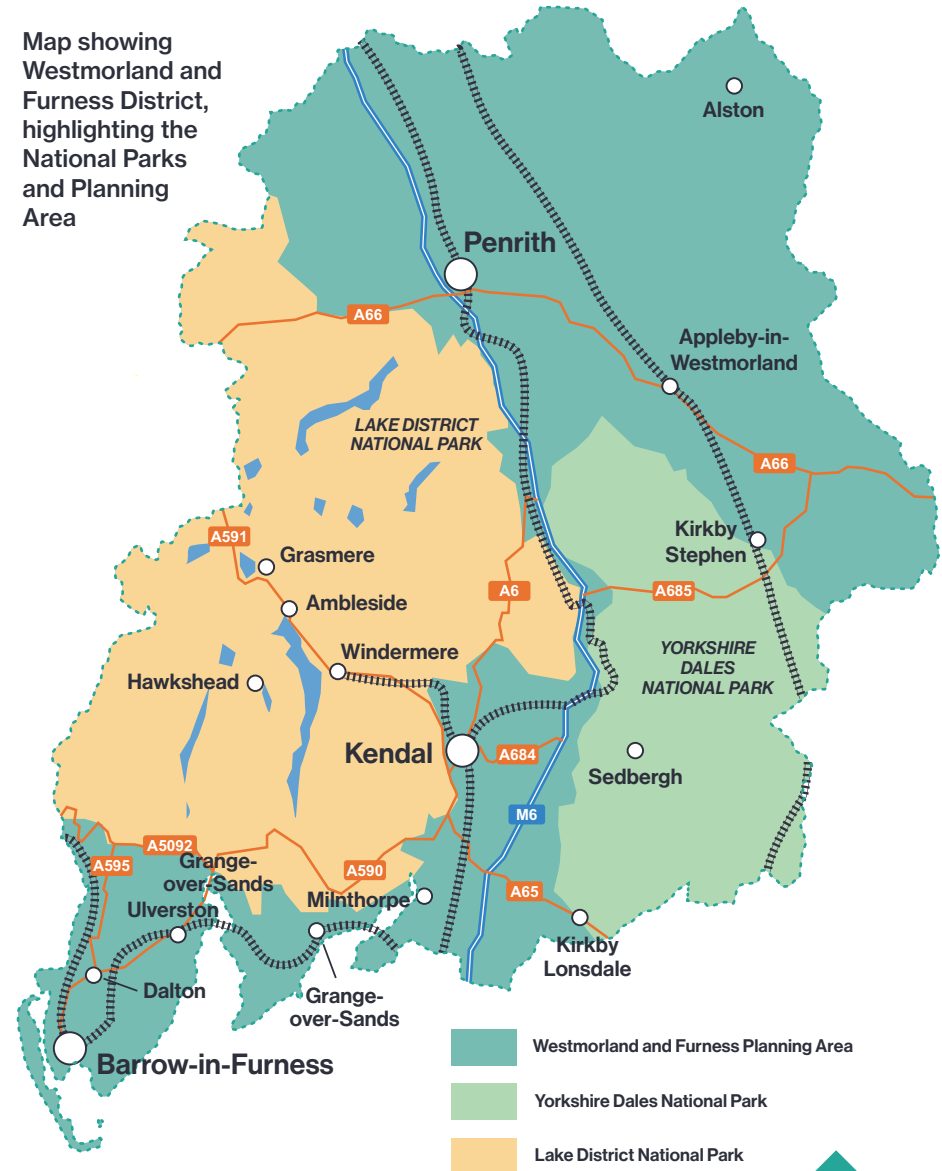
In Westmorland and Furness, we currently rely on the three Local Plans, from Barrow, Eden, and South Lakeland as well as the Cumbria Minerals and Waste Local Plan. These will be replaced by a single new Local Plan for the Westmorland and Furness planning area illustrated on the map.

National government has recently updated legislation and consulted on the National Planning Policy Framework. These updates now need to be incorporated into our Local Plan. We want to make sure we are meeting our responsibilities and contributing to the national interest in an appropriate way for the local area.





Map showing Westmorland and Furness District, highlighting the National Parks and Planning Area



In Westmorland and Furness we currently rely on the three legacy Local Plans, from the three legacy councils, Barrow, Eden, and South Lakes. These need to be drawn together into one new Local Plan to work in all interests, make the most of the area's assets, and give you the greatest opportunities for success.

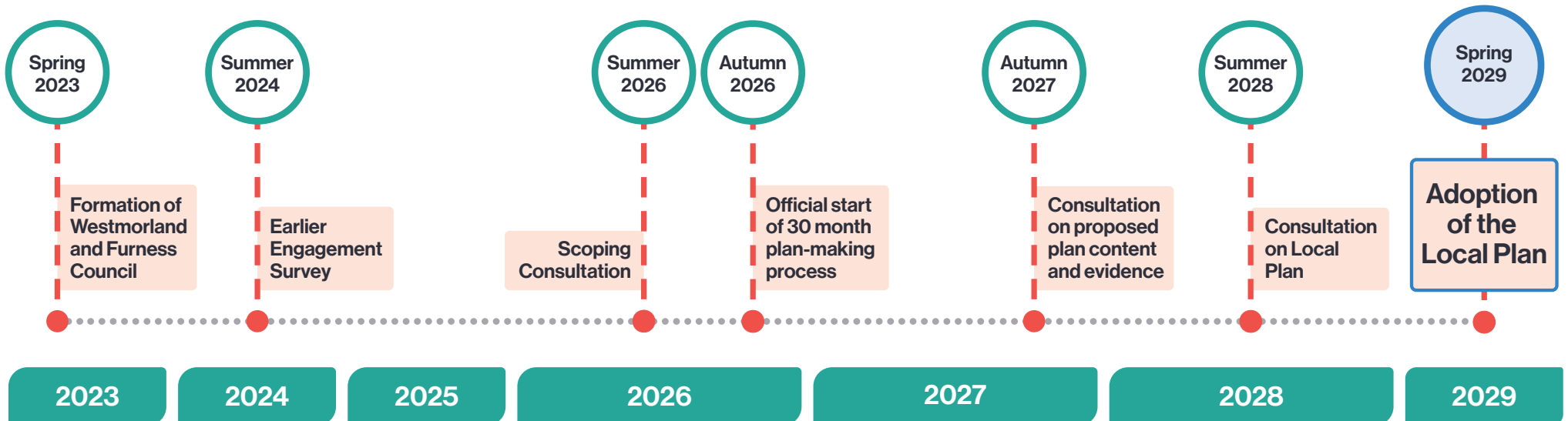
What is the timeline?

A Local Plan should be completed within a 30-month timeframe. During this time there will be a number of opportunities to give your views before the Plan is finalised in 2029. Whilst that may seem like a long time away, now is the chance to become involved so the Local Plan can address your interests.

The scoping consultation survey will be open for a period of six weeks, starting from the **Wednesday 1 July 2026**, and is officially called a 'Scoping Consultation'. The timeline below indicates when we anticipate future public engagement on the Local Plan taking place, leading up to a proposed adoption date of Spring 2029.



Local Plan Engagement Timeline



1 | Health and Communities

You have already told us that you would like improved access to healthcare professionals and places to meet. We understand that we have both an ageing population that is going to require greater

opportunities for care in coming years and health inequalities where people's health is below the national average.

Westmorland and Furness Council want to make sure that when new developments are considered appropriate, we are delivering the best new places that we can, valuing our resources, and investing in the long-term health of our area. We also want to improve existing places and spaces for the benefit of everyone by building in active travel, improving air and water quality, and making the most of what we already have.

Our local communities provide vital lifelines for people, and we want to invest in them to help make them stronger. The council's 'Community Focus' initiative is helping us empower people to build stronger more vibrant communities, but we still want to know your thoughts so we can better understand how we can improve our communities through the new Local Plan.



What we learnt from earlier consultation



There is a desire for better access to sports and cycling.



People raised concerns about water quality.

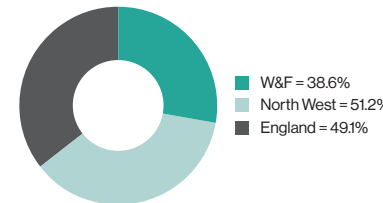


People felt improving access to healthcare professionals would help in making our places healthier.

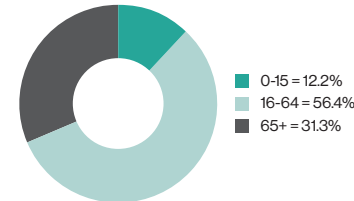


Some context and background

Physically active children in W&F 2024/25



W&F Population projections for 2047



Some ways the new Local Plan can influence Health and Communities

Accessibility | Public Facilities | Community Centres | Libraries | Allotments | Adult Social Care
Community Led Housing

2 | Place

People and places are at the heart of the Local Plan. We want to maintain the places we already value as well as create new ones, so we all have an opportunity to feel comfortable where we live, work, and relax.

We know that people want improved access to services, as well as nature, to lead the sort of lives they would like. Therefore, we need to balance development with other resources and make the most of what we value to meet these goals. As part of the

Local Plan, we need to locate enough sites to accommodate our planned business and housing needs, as well as associated education, health, leisure and recreation needs. You can help by getting involved in our **Call for Sites**, accessible via the QR code and our Local Plan webpage and letting us know where you think could be an ideal location for future development and new public open spaces.

The Westmorland and Furness district is the third largest unitary authority in the UK, however, approximately half of this area is split between the Lake District National Park and the Yorkshire Dales National Park. The National Parks develop their own Local Plans in consultation with us, and so are not covered by our Local Plan.

We want to make Westmorland and Furness a place for people of all ages, at all stages of life, and so we need to provide the places that meet their needs and aspirations.



What we learnt from earlier consultation



A sense of community is important to our sense of place.



You value how peaceful the area is.

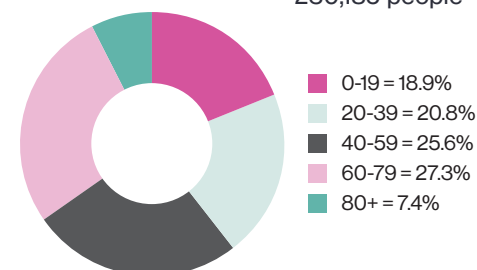


Landscape, Character, and Heritage help make a place.



Some context and background

In 2024 W&F had a population of 230,185 people



49 Average age in W&F



Some ways the new Local Plan can influence Place

Accessibility | Heritage | Green Spaces | Housing | Facilities | Services | Transport | High Streets
Education Facilities | Cultural Buildings | Location and Scale of Development
Design Guidance | Connectivity

3 | Economy

There are 11,500 businesses in Westmorland and Furness contributing to a diverse economy that covers agriculture, national security, tourism, paper making, turbines, and many other nationally recognised enterprises.

The Port of Barrow is leading the way in manufacturing with a marine technology cluster focused around BAE Systems. But we need more opportunities in other areas to support a healthy economy.



Approximately a fifth of our businesses are within agriculture including forestry, fishing, and livestock sectors employing around 9,000 people in the area. They also provide the backdrop to our tourism industry which is largely based on people's experience of the outdoors and the hospitality sector.

In order to continue growing our economy we need to be able to keep young people in the area and attract young people from outside of it. Being able to offer good transport links and quality housing in the right places, as well as the sort of job opportunities that attract people, are vital to building a successful economy.

As well as building on what we have we want to give businesses the opportunity to expand and/or move here. To do this we will need a choice of suitable sites. If you think you know of any places which might be appropriate to support our economy then you can let us know in our **Call for Sites**, accessible via the QR code and our Local Plan webpage.



What we learnt from earlier consultation



We need to keep young people in the area.



Empty shops should be brought back to life.

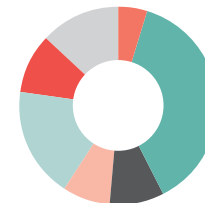


Town centre regeneration and support for local businesses should be encouraged.



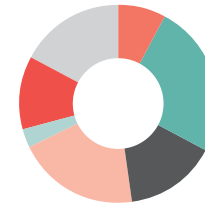
Some context and background

Business worth by sector in W&F



- Agriculture, Mining, Utilities, Waste = 5%
- Manufacturing, Construction, Transport = 38%
- Wholesale and Retail = 9%
- Tourism, Arts, Restaurants, Entertainment = 8%
- IT, Financial services, Real Estate = 18%
- Professional, Admin, Defence = 10%
- Education, Health, and Social Work = 13%

Employment rate by industry in W&F



- Agriculture, Mining, Utilities, Waste = 8%
- Manufacturing, Construction, Transport = 25%
- Wholesale and Retail = 15%
- Tourism, Arts, Restaurants, Entertainment = 20%
- IT, Financial services, Real Estate = 3%
- Professional, Admin, Defence = 12%
- Education Health, and Social Work = 17%



Some ways the new Local Plan can influence Economy

Business Development | Sector Development | Transport Infrastructure | Digital Infrastructure | Housing
Rural Economy | Town Centres | Tourism | Farm Diversification | Renewable Energy

4 | Climate and Nature

In response to the climate and biodiversity crises the Council has developed a Climate Change Action Plan to help us achieve net zero by 2037. We have also put together a Local Nature Recovery Strategy to make sure any action undertaken has the greatest positive impact; both these documents are available on the Council website to read in more detail.

Cared for in an appropriate way, our natural landscapes provide opportunities for improving agriculture, biodiversity, flood mitigation, renewable energy, tourism, and a space to breathe.

Our coastline provides further valuable natural habitats and resources. Both Walney Island and the Arnside and Silverdale National Landscape are both coastal areas of national significance, recognised for their environmental value and therefore subject to special protections.

We are currently utilising some of our unique natural resources to provide renewable energy from offshore wind farms which feed into the country's power network. Reducing our reliance on less sustainable methods of energy production helps us protect our climate while improving our resilience.

The natural environment also plays an important role in providing us with valuable amenity space and you have already told us that improvements to public transport would make it easier to access our natural landscapes. There are lots of other areas to consider under this theme too, so please let us know your thoughts by answering the scoping consultation survey.



What we learnt from earlier consultation



Public transport options should be improved.



People said good design and biodiversity were important considerations for new development.

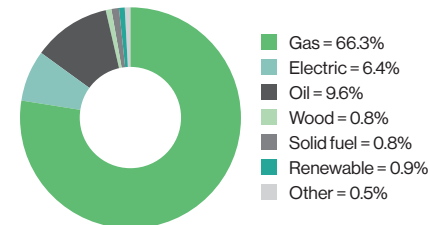


Green energy infrastructure and sustainable drainage should be encouraged.

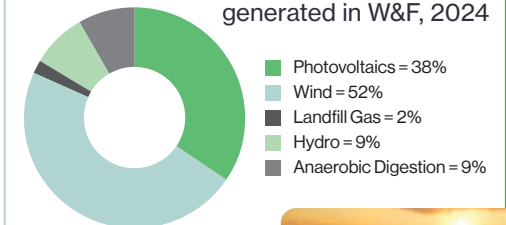


Some context and background

W& F Domestic heating type in 2021



Production of renewable energy generated in W&F, 2024



10.7% Households living in fuel poverty in 2024



185,966 MWh Total renewable electricity generated in W&F in 2024



Some ways the new Local Plan can influence Climate and Nature

Conservation | Biodiversity | Flood Mitigation | Economy | Tourism | Access | Renewable Energy | Marine Planning
Water Management | Energy Conservation | Landscape Protection | Biodiversity Net Gain | Design Guidance
Light and Noise Pollution | Green and Blue Infrastructure | Public Rights of Way | Woodlands | Protected Spaces

5 | Travel and Infrastructure

From feedback already collated we understand that transport networks are hugely important in making sure people have equal opportunities.



People with personal forms of transport tend to have increased access to health services, nature, employment, and friends. Consequently, people from our earlier consultation noted a desire for better connectivity and improved public transport to help increase access to these assets.

In certain areas, Westmorland and Furness is comparatively well connected and various projects are underway to improve services for public transport, roads, and non-motorised transport across the district.

As well as transport, we would also like to hear about other types of infrastructure that may be important to you such as schools, health facilities, energy, and anything that helps support our day to day lives. We need these services to work well for residents both now, and in the future to help achieve our goals.



What we learnt from earlier consultation



It is easy to get access to the outdoors, friends, and services with a car.



Active travel routes should be increased to provide alternatives to motorised transport.

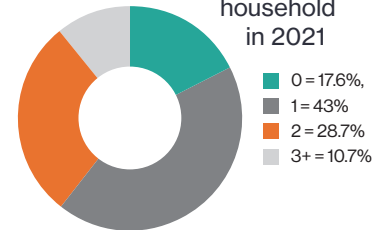


More car charging points are needed.

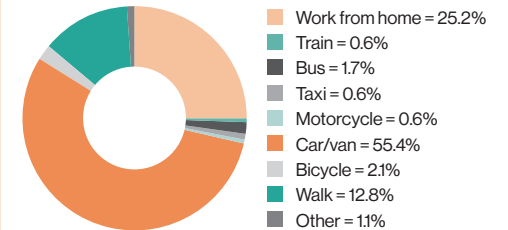


Some context and background

Number of cars or vans in a W&F household in 2021



W&F Commuter journeys undertaken in 2021



272.4
per 100,000
population

EV chargers publicly available across Westmorland and Furness as of April 2026



Some ways the new Local Plan can influence Travel and Infrastructure

Accessibility | Public Transport | Electric Vehicles | Broadband | Drainage | Roads | Rail Network
Rights of Way | Active Routes | Parking | Utilities | Renewable Energy

6 | Housing

Government now sets housing targets for all Local Authorities nationwide. Westmorland and Furness' housing targets have significantly increased and we need to find suitable places where we can build more affordable, desirable and sustainable new homes.

If you know of anywhere that might be suitable for helping provide these homes, let us know through our **Call for Sites**, accessible via the QR code and our Local Plan webpage.



We need to build not just more houses but the right type of houses too. With an ageing population and increased pressure on energy demands it is important we are providing homes fit for our needs that will continue to be an asset going forward.

Our homes provide a backdrop to everything we do in our personal lives in defining the character of towns and villages, we would like to understand your ideas on how we can help maintain and improve these communities.



What we learnt from earlier consultation



More affordable homes need to be built.

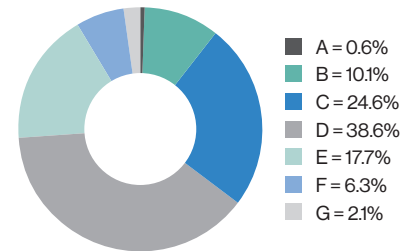


New homes should be good quality and energy efficient.

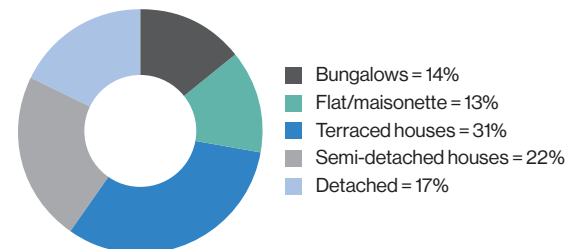


Some context and background

Energy efficiency of homes across W&F



Types of homes in W&F



651

Net new homes built in W&F area between 2024 and 2025 (source: MHCLG)

26,000

New homes target for the whole Westmorland and Furness District by 2045



Some ways the new Local Plan can influence Housing

Adaptability and Accessibility | Location | Density | Affordability | Housing Types | Local Occupancy Housing | Student Housing | Traveller Sites | Self and Custom-Build Housing | Community-Led Housing | Housing for Older People | Design Guidance

Scoping Consultation Survey

Thanks for taking the time to answer our scoping consultation survey.

Hopefully you already know we are putting forward these questions to help inform the new Local Plan, build on earlier consultation, and involve as many people from as many areas within Westmorland and Furness as possible.

If you would like some further background information on the Local Plan process, and if you haven't already, please take the opportunity to review our Scoping Consultation Leaflet.

Following this scoping consultation survey, and once we have had an opportunity to review the results, there will be further opportunities for consultation.

This is the start of the formal process of consultation, and we are looking forward to hearing from you.

Engagement

1. We would like to hear from as many people as possible. What would be the best way to understand and record your thoughts in future consultation?

- ☐ Online survey
- ☐ Drop-in sessions
- ☐ Council stalls at public events
- ☐ Focus groups
- ☐ Other, please provide examples

Health and Communities

2. People have let us know they would like improved access to sports and leisure activities and facilities. Please pick the three options that would best improve your access?

- ☐ More and/or different sports facilities
- ☐ Improved access by public transport
- ☐ More dedicated active routes
- ☐ Improved access to green spaces
- ☐ More allotments and growing spaces
- ☐ Improved leisure facilities
- ☐ Other

Place

3. We have previously asked people what they think makes their area a special place. Which three options are most important to you, or are there other points you would like to add?

- ☐ Community
- ☐ Landscape
- ☐ Character
- ☐ Heritage
- ☐ Green Spaces
- ☐ Local Amenities
- ☐ Other

4. We also asked what people would like to improve, or change, about the place they live. Do you agree with the issues raised in our engagement 2024 or would you like to highlight something else?

- ☐ Education
- ☐ Healthcare
- ☐ Public Transport
- ☐ Conservation
- ☐ Housing
- ☐ Community facilities
- ☐ Other

Economy

5. When we asked what would help keep people in the area and improve the economy we received lots of great ideas. What would be your three priorities from these suggestions, or would you like to add something else?

- ☐ More Affordable Housing
- ☐ Improved Public transport
- ☐ Better access to childcare
- ☐ Improved Broadband Speed
- ☐ Job availability
- ☐ Enhanced Town Centres
- ☐ Better access to skills and Training Opportunities
- ☐ Other

Climate and Nature

6. Please choose the three issues you think are most important for the Local Plan to address?

- ☐ Protecting nature and biodiversity
- ☐ Better use of natural resources
- ☐ Sustainable development
- ☐ Flood adaptation
- ☐ Improved access to open space
- ☐ Renewable energy provision
- ☐ Other

Travel and Infrastructure

7. Results from consultation undertaken in 2024 suggested many people wanted to see improvements made to public transport. What two changes do you think would have the biggest positive impact on our services?

- ☐ Service frequency
- ☐ More Service routes
- ☐ Connection to active travel routes
- ☐ Road improvements
- ☐ Real-time live public transport information
- ☐ Other

Housing

8. Since our earlier consultation Westmorland and Furness' housing targets have significantly increased in line with national policy. Where do you think new housing development should be focused in order to have as positive an impact as possible on the area?

- ☐ Existing urban areas
- ☐ Existing rural villages
- ☐ Previously used sites
- ☐ Greenfield sites
- ☐ Close to transport links
- ☐ Other

Natural Resources and Recycling

9. Following changes to National Planning Policy the new Local Plan will now also include policies relating to how we use our natural resources and address how we go about managing waste. What could help you recycle more at home, and at work, to reduce waste?

- ☐ More bins
- ☐ Local collection points
- ☐ Recycling hubs
- ☐ Swap shops
- ☐ Other



Any other areas of interest

10. The questions we have asked in this survey reflect Westmorland and Furness Council's aspirations of what we hope to address in the new Local Plan. Are there any additional themes you think should be addressed by the Local Plan?

Focus group interest

11. Would you like to become involved in future focus groups, either in relation to a particular specialism or a particular area of interest? If so, let us know what area interests you, or what you're specifically qualified in.

Alternatively, if you would just like to remain up to date with Local Plan progress, please sign up on the main Local Plan webpage accessible via the QR code and our Local Plan webpage:
www.westmorlandandfurness.gov.uk/localplan

SCAN ME:





Translation Services

If you require this document in another format (e.g. CD, Braille or large type) or in another language, please telephone: **0300 373 3300**.

للوصول إلى هذه المعلومات بلغتك، يرجى
الاتصال **0300 373 3300**

আপনি যদি এই তথ্য আপনার নিজের ভাষায় পেতে চান তাহলে অনুগ্রহ
করে **0300 373 3300** নম্বরে টেলিফোন করুন।

如果您希望通过母语了解此信息，
请致电 **0300 373 3300**

**Jeigu norėtumėte gauti šią informaciją savo kalba,
skambinkite telefonu 0300 373 3300**

**W celu uzyskania informacji w Państwa języku proszę
zatelefonować pod numer 0300 373 3300**

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