



# The Distington **BIG LOCAL** Plan



## Distington Big Local Plan

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# Distington



## Introduction

Distington Big Local is a new initiative that will result in an investment of over £1m into Distington over the next ten years. How this money is spent is entirely up to local people. The Distington Big Local Board, supported by thematic sub-groups, will oversee and guide the allocation of these funds. The Partnership Board is made up of fifteen people, twelve of which are local residents and three are representatives from organisations who are committed to working in Distington and improving the area. This is a once in a generation opportunity for the people of Distington to make their village and the surrounding area an even better place to live. It is an opportunity we will make the most of.

More information can be found:

- on our website: [www.distingtonbiglocal.org](http://www.distingtonbiglocal.org)
- follow us on Facebook: [www.facebook.com/DistingtonBigLocal](https://www.facebook.com/DistingtonBigLocal)
- and on Twitter: @distingtonBL

## Message from the Chair:

Well it's taken a while but we have finally reached the stage of publishing our Big Local Plan.

The Steering Group are happy that the plan gives a clear explanation of what we hope to achieve during the coming years and accurately reflects the views of local people. The Plan follows on from and is supported by the Community Profile & Vision we issued at the beginning of 2014. We are now about to begin the really exciting phase of the Big Local programme when projects and activities are delivered and you'll start to see Big Local in action.

I'd just like to take this opportunity to thank all the people who have taken part in the consultations, the Steering Group members, the people from the various agencies\* who have supported us over the last couple of years, our Big Local Advisor Pete Duncan, our administrative apprentice Lauren Ridley and our development worker Dave Smith. Many thanks to one and all.

Although we've had lots of ideas and suggestions from you as to what will make a real difference to the village in the coming years, we are still keen to get more suggestions so please if you have an idea get in touch with us at our base in the Community Centre or phone 01946 834297.



**Rhoda Robinson**

**Chair, Distington Big Local Steering Group**



**\*Agencies we have been supported by to date include: Lakes College, Home Group, Impact Housing, Copeland Borough Council, Cumbria County Council, Distington Parish Council, Age UK, Cumbria Rural Housing Trust, Cumbria CBI, Whitehaven & District Credit Union, Distington Club for Young People, Inspira, Citizens Advice Bureau, Cumbria CVS, Distington Surgery, UnLtd, Distington Community School, Copeland Community Fund, Cumbria Police and Job Centre Plus.**

## The Vision:

The feedback we got from talking to people was all really positive and everyone had a view as to what was important to the community and what the money should be spent on.

When all the views had been collated, a sub-group made up of Steering Group members worked on them to come up with a shared vision:

***'Our aim is to secure positive improvements for Distington and its people by co-operation in a wide range of activities and projects that offer opportunities to develop skills, build community pride and raise aspirations'.***

In ten years time we want to see a higher percentage of people in our area in employment, we want to see a more people in our area enjoying good health and we want to see our village and the surrounding area looking good and looked after. There is already a high level of community pride in Distington but we want to build on this so that in ten years' time our village is known throughout Cumbria for its community spirit.

As can be imagined, during the consultation process we captured a lot of thoughts, ideas & quotes one of which was:

***"This (Big Local) should be about lifting this community, not just polishing it"***

This quote, from a twenty-five year old Sellafield worker who attended one of the Big Chat sessions, underpins the above vision statement.

## BIG LOCAL:

.....is a funding programme, managed by the Local Trust, that will see a series of Big Lottery Fund investments of £1m into 150 communities in England. These communities were chosen as they had missed out on previous funding programmes. The aim of the programme is to give local people the power to improve their community now and to leave a lasting legacy for future generations. As a result of the Big Local programme people should feel empowered to identify local concerns and take action in response to them. Distington was part of the third and final phase of awards, there being two other areas in Cumbria announced in phase one and two.

The overarching aims of the Big Local programme are that money allocated to an area should result in a community that:

- Is better able to identify local needs and take action in response to them
- Provides residents with increased skills and confidence so that they can continue to identify and respond to local needs in the future
- Makes a real difference to the needs they prioritise
- Leaves residents feeling that their area is an even better place to live

At the end of the ten year period the £1m awarded, together with additional match funding that will be applied for, will make a real difference to the lives of people living in Distington.

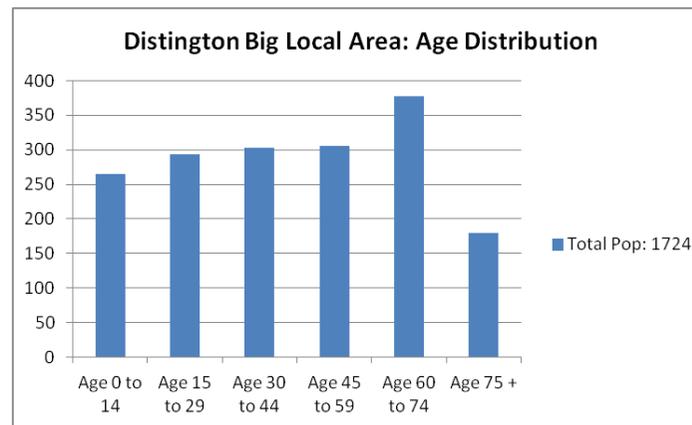
More information about the Local Trust and the Big Local programme can be found at: [www.localtrust.org.uk](http://www.localtrust.org.uk)



## Distington:

Distington village is situated mid-way between the towns of Whitehaven and Workington in West Cumbria and lies within the borough of Copeland. The village Main Street has houses dating back to the 18th century and to the west of the Main Street there are two estates of social housing, one built in the 1940's and a second built in the 1950's with a further phase of building in the 1970's. In the outlying areas can be found a mixture of detached, semi detached and terraced housing.

The population of the Big Local area, as per the 2011 census, is 1,724 living in 767 households and there are slightly more females (889) than males (835). The population of the wider Distington Parish has fallen over the last ten years, in part due to the demolition of a substantial number of houses on the Barfs Road estate in 2005. At the current time, other than the usual fluctuations due to empty properties and the building of new houses, the population is relatively stable at between 1,600 and 1.750 people. There is an even spread of ages in the area and, from information gather during the community consultations, it is estimated that some 60% of the resident population were born in the area.



The parish of Distington dates back to the 12th century and as a variety of industries developed in the area so the population of the village grew. Coal, limestone and iron ore were all found in the local vicinity and, perhaps not surprisingly, this led to the development of large scale iron works, originally the Distington Haematite Iron Works and later High Duty Alloys, Alcan and Pechenay. Situated just to the north of the village, the site provided employment for local people over many years before closing in 2007 after nearly 130 years of operation.

Employment in the area today is much more varied than in the past and includes Lakes College, Tyson Burrige hauliers, Harriets Care Home, Colour Gro wholesale nursery, Distington Surgery, Distington School and variety of businesses situated on the nearby Lillyhall Industrial Estate. Though some distance from Distington, the Sellafeld Nuclear Works provides well paid employment for a number of local residents. Average household annual incomes in the Big Local area are £27,310 which is lower than the average for Copeland by some £5,000.

There are currently five shops in the village, a Co-op store, a bakers/sandwich shop, post office, fish & chips shop and a recently opened outlet selling tiles. There are now no pubs in the area though the Rugby Club does have an associated social club that is open on a nightly basis. The Parish Church of the Holy Spirit holds regular Sunday services and the Community Centre and the Club for Young People are well used facilities with activities taking place within them virtually every day of the week. Distington Library, based in the Community Centre, is also well supported. The one school in the Big Local area is the Distington Community School which caters for pupils from the age of 5 to 11. At present there are 112 pupils on the register and numbers are predicted to remain at a similar level during the coming years. Attached to the school is a pre-school nursery.

A number of community groups are active in the area and these include the Knit & Natter group, the Evergreens, Distington Old Peoples Committee, a Local History Society, Distington in Bloom group, the Craft Club and an Arts group. The Club for Young People holds sessions most nights of the week for the young people of the village and the activities are supported by a large team of volunteers. The club is recognised by local people as making a real difference in the lives of the children of the village. The Rugby Club also plays a very important part in village life, running a number of teams and the related training sessions. In the not too distant past there was also a cricket club, a football club and a boxing club.

Within the Big Local area there is a wide range of housing types. Of the 767 households identified in the 2011 survey 20% are detached houses or bungalows, 40% are semi-detached houses or bungalows, 38% are terraced houses or bungalows and 2% are flats or maisonettes. With regard to tenure, at the time of the 2011 census 56% of the houses in the area are privately owned and 44% are rented with the majority of the rented houses identified as social housing.

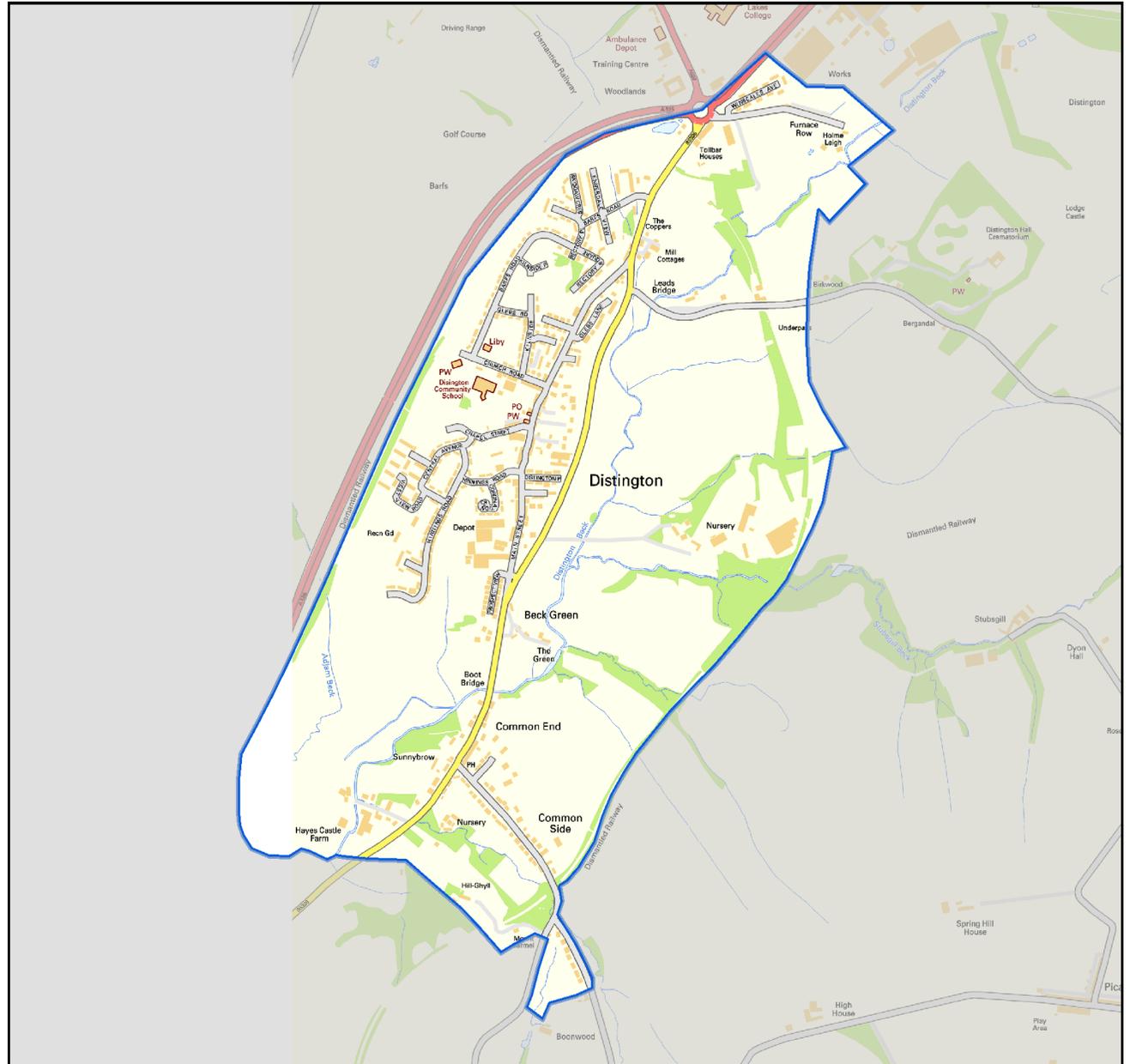


## The Distington Big Local Area

The Big Local area contains the whole of Distington village as it lies between the A595 and B5036, the old and the new by-passes, and is approximately midway between the towns of Workington and Whitehaven.

Heading south from the village the housing at Common End down to Hayscastle is included as are the houses up Swallow Hill to Common Side and Boon Wood.

To the north of the village the houses in the Winscales Avenue area are included and to the east of the B5036 the houses at Beck Green, as are those in the Toll Bar area.



## The story so far:

Distington found out it had been awarded Big Local funding towards the end of 2012 and, as might be imagined, the news was received with a mixture of elation and disbelief. An initial meeting was arranged at which over forty people attended and the Big Local process was explained. It was agreed to set up a Steering Group to help take the Programme forward. It was further agreed that the Steering Group would meet once a month and that any local resident who wished to could become a member of the Group. Meetings were held at different times during the day so that those in work could make some of the meetings. Some representatives from local organisations who work in the Big Local area, such as housing associations, the local Surgery, Lakes College and Citizens Advice Bureau, were also invited to attend these meetings. The meetings, which were chaired by Rhoda Robinson a local resident who has lived in the village all her life, were always well attended and progress along the Big Local Pathway was good.

Help to undertake the community consultation (see below) that would inform the writing of the Community Profile & Vision was sought via a commissioning process. During the second half of 2013 we carried out a large scale community consultation exercise that included talking to people in their homes, on the door-step, in drop-in sessions, in Big Chat public meetings and at the Big Local Shop that was opened specifically to allow people to put forward their views. There was also a separate piece of work undertaken that captured the views of young people in the Big Local area. In all, over the two consultations, we managed to talk to nearly 700 people which is about 40% of the population of the Big Local area. We made sure that we talked to a good cross-section of local residents and from different parts of the Big Local area. The feedback we got from talking to people was really positive and everyone had a view as to what was important to the community and what the money should be spent on.

### 'Forgotten' village receives an early £1m Christmas present

**BY SARAH ROBINSON**

A Christmas party cheer was present as news of the £1m Big Local award was announced. The village of Distington, which has been awarded the money, was the first to receive the funding. The money will be used to improve the village and to help the community to grow.

The money comes as part of a £100m Big Local award which will be spread across 100 towns across England. The money will be used to improve the village and to help the community to grow.

**WE'RE IN THE MONEY** Distington residents, including children, celebrate the news of the £1m Big Local award. The money will be used to improve the village and to help the community to grow.




### Big chat over village money

**BY ANDREW CLARKE**

DISTINGTON residents have their chance to make suggestions on how a million pounds could be spent in the village.

The newly-formed Distington Big Local Steering Group will run two 'Big Chat' sessions for residents on Thursday April 11.

They will be held in the village's Community Centre (open to 4.30pm) and the Rugby League Club (open to 8.30pm) and residents are urged to attend to give their views on how the money should be spent.

The money comes as part of a £100m Big Local award for 'forgotten' communities. These are areas with social and economic problems overlooked for funding in the past.

Distington is one of 50 places to receive this funding in the latest round. They join 100 other towns across England which have received funding in the past.

Examples of what other areas that have spent money on include training and education schemes, improving housing, tackling anti-social behaviour or providing more activities for young people.

**HAVE YOU GOT NEWS FOR US!**  
CALL OUR NEWSDESK ON 01946 595136



Once we had the draft Community Profile and Vision in place a further round of community consultations were undertaken to try to ensure that people agreed with its findings and to get some idea as to what peoples priorities were. In early 2014 two sub groups were set up made up of members of the Steering Group, one to look at the development of the Big Local Board and the associated Terms of Reference and one to oversee the development of this Big Local Plan.

The recommendation of the first of the sub groups was that the Board, who will eventually take over from the Steering Group, should be made up of fifteen people, twelve local residents and three representatives from organisations and businesses who are active in the Big Local area. It was further agreed that the Chair and the Vice-chair should always be local residents and that each Board member should serve a two year term. In August 2014 a Distington Big Local AGM was held at which open elections to the Board were held. The first Board meeting will be held in September 2014. To ensure that the engagement of the wider community continues there will be a sub-group for each Theme area and community wide forums held at least twice a year.

As the rental agreement for the Big Local Shop was coming to an end in spring of 2014 the Steering Group considered the various options regarding where Big Local should be based in the village. To purchase and undertake the refurbishment of the shop was considered but felt to be too expensive, especially as there was an office within the Community Centre that was not being used. It was agreed that Big Local should be based in the Community Centre and in May the move was made.

There is a real commitment within the membership of the Steering Group to employing local people whenever possible and when the local college suggested that it might be helpful to have an administration apprentice working on the programme everyone was keen to try and recruit a local resident. After the usual recruitment process we were lucky enough to be able to recruit, with the assistance of the college, a young person who lives within the Big Local area.

During spring of 2014 it was agreed that some of the 'Start up' funds should be used to set up a couple of 'Quick Win' projects. During the consultation a number of people had mentioned that there had been a Credit Union collection service in the village that no longer operated. This had led to many people letting their membership lapse. After discussions with the Whitehaven, Egremont & District Credit Union a plan was agreed to open a new collection service on Tuesday mornings based within the Community Centre. Five volunteers were trained and free membership was offered to local residents. The service has been well received and membership continues to grow.

It had always been an ambition of the Steering Group to set up a 'Community Chest' for local community groups to apply to for small scale funding. Though funds have been quite restricted initially, it is clear from the number of applications received that this will be a much appreciated resource for local groups and organisations working in the Big Local area.

## The Distington Big Local Board: Autumn 2014

The Distington Big Local Board was elected at the first AGM held on August 26th 2014 in the Community Centre. The meeting was open to all and was publicised in the DBL newsletter, on the website, Facebook and Twitter pages. The local paper, The Whitehaven News, also promoted the event. Forty-four people attended the meeting on the night with apologies being received from a further eight people. Nominations had previously been collated and the election of the fifteen members of the Board, twelve local residents and three representatives from local agencies, was supported by all those present together with acceptance of the Terms of Reference. Board meetings will be held once a month and at the first Board meeting in September a Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary and Treasurer will be elected. Non-voting members of the Board will include a representative from the Local Trusted Organisation, Cumbria CVS, the local County Councillor and the Partnerships Officer from Lakes College.



The Board members are: Alison Boyd, John Bowman, Reg Gallagher, Josephine Greggain, Christine Pattinson, Mike Pritt, Norma Pritt, Rhoda Robinson, Kathleen Sharpe, Roy Shepherd, Mary Smart and Annette Whitehead (all local residents). The three agency members are Robert Gate (Local Businesses), Julia Powley (Local Churches) and Lorraine Thornley (Home Group).

## Community Consultation June 2013 – November 2013

**The overriding criteria associated with the Big Local award is that the money must be spent on what local people would like to see it spent on.**

During 2013 we carried out a large scale community consultation and talked to people in public meetings, on the door step, in the street, on the phone, by email, by text, in the Big Local Drop-in Centre, at the Big Local Lunch for Businesses, on a transept walk through the area and at the Club for Young People. The Big Local Drop-in Centre was opened during the late summer in an empty shop on the village Main Street. Staffed by volunteers, the Drop-in Centre enabled people to find out more about the Big Local programme and make their views known as to what solutions would work best for specific issues. In all we managed to talk to nearly 700 people from all age groups and from all parts of the Big Local area. This is about 40% of the population of the Big Local area. Consultations took place during the day, in the evenings and at weekends to try and ensure that as many people as possible were contacted directly. All parts of the Big Local area were visited and every household has received newsletters with 'Tear off' slips on which to make views known.

There were three distinct stages to the consultation process:

- 1. The Likes & Dislikes stage:** in which we asked people what they liked about living in Distington and what they felt could be improved.
- 2. The Solutions stage:** in which we asked people to suggest solutions to the issues raised in stage one.
- 3. The Prioritisation stage:** in which we asked people to choose which of the suggested solutions they felt would work best and should be delivered sooner rather than later in the programme.

The initial responses of the vast majority of people spoken to were that they loved living in Distington and would not want to live anywhere else. As the consultation progressed it became clear that a number of 'themes' were emerging.

## Programme Themes: Community & Community Safety:

Most people felt that there was a good community spirit in Distington though the majority also felt that it was not as good as it had been in the past and could be improved. There are numerous community groups that meet on a regular basis and they are supported by a network of local volunteers. These groups, together with the Parish Council, were seen as being really important to the community though some concerns were expressed regarding the age of volunteers and the lack of younger replacements. Concerns were also expressed by some about the long-term viability of community facilities.

When asked what they thought was missing from their community many people honed in on the closure of local clubs and pubs. Most felt that this had led to a lack of social interaction in the community. Others remembered the village carnival, the sports days, the pram races, events that brought the whole village together and generated real community spirit. Many elderly people felt that there were not enough opportunities for cross-generational contact and activities and it became clear during the consultations that there were a number of elderly people living on their own who would welcome meeting new people.

A number of concerns were raised with regard speeding cars in the village, the availability of drugs and instances of petty vandalism. Some people felt that they would like to see an increase in the police presence in the area whilst others felt that it was fine as it was. The reported crime figures for the area are very low and the local PCSO is regularly seen in the village and is well known to local residents.

The Steering Group have agreed to encourage and facilitate the development of projects that will:

- ***Support the development of current and new community activities***
- ***Enhance community spirit***
- ***Support the recruitment and training of community volunteers***
- ***Develop viable community facilities***
- ***Support community safety initiatives***



...since the Legion closed we've got nowhere to go & have a crack..

## Young People & Families:

One of the best things about Distington is the number of young people living in the village. So many Cumbrian villages are overwhelmingly elderly. At the time of the 2011 census there were 265 people under the age 14 and 294 people between the ages of 15 and 29. Given these figures it would be safe to assume that there are at least 370 people currently living in the Big Local area under the age of 20. All the young people spoken to during both the general consultation and the one aimed specifically at young people, had clear views on how funds should be allocated and had a real sense of 'their community'.

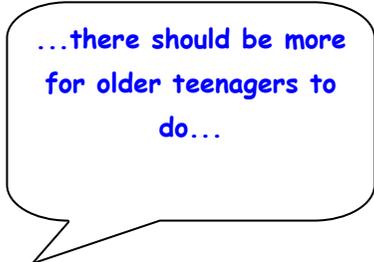
The Club for Young People has a proud history of providing activities in a supportive environment for the young people of Distington and this was widely recognised during the consultation process. The Club, which has been running now for over fifty years, also has a strong record of fund-raising which is an ongoing, annual process. Both staff and volunteers recognise that the club needs to continue to develop if it is to continue to meet the needs of young people. A number of suggestions were made as to how this might be achieved and these included a new art facility.

Other issues that were raised included the lack of activities for older teenagers and the lack of facilities for the under 5's (and young families), i.e. the two ends of the young persons spectrum. There was also felt to be a lack of support and training for young parents.

Everyone recognised that young people are the future of this community and it is important to continue to engage them in a meaningful way in the wider Big Local project as it moves forward.

The Steering Group have agreed to encourage and facilitate the development of projects that will:

- ***Support the development of the Club for Young People***
- ***Support cross-generational contact and understanding***
- ***See young people take the lead in project development and delivery***
- ***Support new activities and facilities***



...there should be more  
for older teenagers to  
do...

## Employment & Training:

The issue of unemployment was raised by the majority of people during the consultation process. Though many people felt quite pessimistic about future employment prospects in the area, and a number expressed doubts as to whether the Big Local Fund could play a positive role in helping people find employment, a variety of ideas were suggested. These included the setting of a local Job Club to help local people find and apply for job vacancies, as well as raising the profile of local job seekers with local employers. Other suggestions included the publishing of a register of local businesses and delivering one to every house in the area to encourage more people to use local firms, this in turn might eventually lead to an increase in employment within these companies. It is possible that a number of Big Local projects might create employment opportunities for local people and the funding available through UnLtd has already assisted some local residents in setting up their own businesses.

At a Big Lunch for Local Businesses event we sought the views of local businessmen and women on how best Big Local could help both them and people seeking employment. Their comments were illuminating. They felt that the idea of a local Job Club based in the village was a good idea and a facility they would use to promote vacancies. They also liked the idea of using some of the Big Local funds to support the employment of young people from the Big Local area on apprenticeships.. The most recent figures for unemployment in the area (May 2014) show that Distington ward, a larger area than Distington village, has 71 people in receipt of Job Seekers Allowance, an unemployment rate of 2.9%. This compares to a figure of 2.4% for Copeland and 2.0% for Cumbria. A reasonable guesstimate for the number of people in receipt of JSA in the Big Local area would be 55 and this would be approximately 4% of the working population. It should also be remembered that many people who receive benefits other than JSA, or no benefits at all, are also seeking work.

The Steering Group have agreed to encourage and facilitate the development of projects that will:

- ***Support the employment of people living in the Distington Big Local area***
- ***Support the establishment of new businesses in the Big Local area in conjunction with UnLtd***
- ***Support the viability of existing local businesses***
- ***Develop work with local training providers***



...we must try and do something for the young ones that are looking for work...

## Environment & Housing:

A wide range of concerns and issues have been clustered together under the linked heading of Environment and Housing. These include the way the village looks, many people thinking that it appears scruffy and unkempt with both litter and dog fouling being highlighted, and the related issue of the number of derelict sites and buildings in the village. Whilst most of the common areas within the village are well maintained, some don't get the attention they require during the summer months.

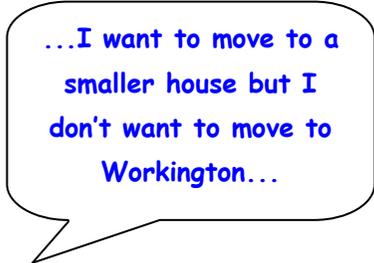
The issue of a lack of parking, especially around the Doctors Surgery area, was recognised by everyone as being a problem and “an accident waiting to happen”. The lack of bus shelters in certain parts of the area was also highlighted together with the condition of the shelters that were in place, many of which have been damaged.

A number of people suggested that a way of ensuring that the village as a whole was looked after would be to set up a village maintenance ‘team’ that would undertake a regular programme of works as well as responding to ‘one off’ occurrences such as graffiti or fly tipping.

Other issues raised included the maintenance problems of large gardens, lack of support for tenants and residents, empty or derelict buildings, some in prominent positions in the village, some on the estates, and the lack of both smaller one or two bedroomed properties for rent and sheltered accommodation for those elderly people who need additional care. Many people made the point that if elderly people wanted to downsize to a house that was more manageable they would have to move out of the village, something that few, if any, would want to do.

The Steering Group have agreed to encourage and facilitate the development of projects that will:

- ***Improve the appearance of the village***
- ***Help to improve the housing mix in the area***
- ***Support the empowerment of tenants and residents groups***
- ***Support the use of public transport***
- ***Improve road safety in the area***



...I want to move to a smaller house but I don't want to move to Workington...

## Health & Well-being:

There are usually certain issues that during most consultations tend to remain 'hidden'. Health and well-being is quite often one of these 'hidden' issues. However, this most certainly was not the case during the Distington consultation. Many people had a very clear view that they would like to take part in a variety of activities that either directly or indirectly supported personal health and fitness. There have been a number of health related activities undertaken in the area in the relatively recent past, some of which continue, and this may well have played a part in peoples responses. These activities have included keep fit sessions, cookery classes, veg box schemes and a walking for health group and many people said they would like to see these activities being offered to local residents again. Previously, when funding for a specific piece of work has come to an end so the activity or project has also ended. The aim of any project delivered under this strand of activity should be to try and ensure that, after some initial pump prime funding, the activity becomes self-supporting and continues to support the overall aim of a healthier population in the Big Local area.

At the time of the 2011 census 72% of the residents of the Big Local area considered themselves to be fit and healthy and 28%, 477 people, had some type of limiting condition that interferes with their day to day activities. Staff at the Distington Surgery highlighted diabetes, and associated issues, as a particular concern in the area. Mental health was not an issue raised during the consultation. 1 in 5 people will have some type of mental health problem at some time during their life and there is no reason to suppose that the Distington Big Local area will be exempt from this statistic. Studies have shown a direct link between physical well-being, social interaction and mental well-being and the potential projects suggested below support good mental health.

The Steering Group have agreed to encourage and facilitate the development of projects that will:

- ***Increase the use of the local footpath network***
- ***Improve the health & well-being of individuals***
- ***Encourage healthy eating choices***
- ***Support cross generational activities***
- ***Encourage 'Grow your own' activities***



...there's loads of open spaces in the village where we could be growing things...

## Other Issues:

As mentioned previously, there are some issues that tend not to be raised during community consultations and it is important not to forget or ignore what could potentially be important areas of work. These issues include:

- **Poverty:** we know from the statistics that 52% of households in the Distington Big Local area, using the ACORN classification, are classed as being 'hard pressed' as compared to the Copeland average of 29%, yet few people raised poverty in the community as being a major concern. A couple of people mentioned that they used food banks on a regular basis and a number of individuals commented on the financial impact that the 'bedroom tax' was having on their family so clearly there are issues that the Big Local Board need to be aware of. Forthcoming changes to welfare benefits may also have a negative impact on household incomes. Further work will need to be undertaken to get a better understanding of the situation in the Big Local area. This could include talking to the local housing associations about rent arrears, the school about free school meals and talking to food bank providers about user numbers. Social investment through Big Local will clearly have a role to play in addressing this type of issue and learning from what has worked in other Big Local areas will be essential.
- **Community capacity:** the issue of lack of volunteers coming forward to take on roles within community groups, currently undertaken by people who are now getting on a bit, was raised regularly during the consultation process and a number of suggestions were made as how to try to address the issue. However, it would probably be better to address this issue as a wider community capacity building concern, i.e. do local people have the skills required to ensure the continued development of community organisations? Who are the future fund-raisers, who are the future writers of business plans? Together with partners in the Third Sector, Distington Big Local needs to ensure that the community organisations in the village thrive and grow and are able to meet the needs of the community in the 2020's.
- **Engagement:** though a lot of people have talked to us during the consultation process only fifty or so people engage with Big Local on a regular basis, i.e. 3% of the population of the Big Local area. We need to improve this level of engagement and to ensure that we are engaging with a wider range of age groups than at present. The development of the five sub-groups should allow for the recruitment of a wider range of local people and perhaps the introduction of Participatory Budgeting, which has been shown elsewhere to be very effective at increasing levels of engagement, might be a good way forward. Continuing to develop the current communication tools will also be essential.

It should be remembered that any consultation is only a reflection of people's views at a specific time and that views and opinions will change with time. Regular consultation should be embedded in the Distington Big Local programme to ensure the views of local people are accurately reflected.

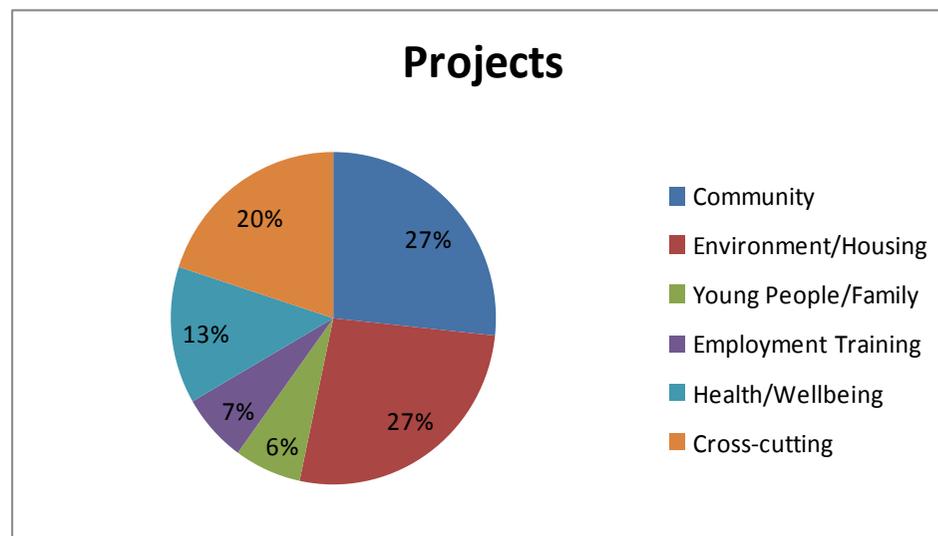
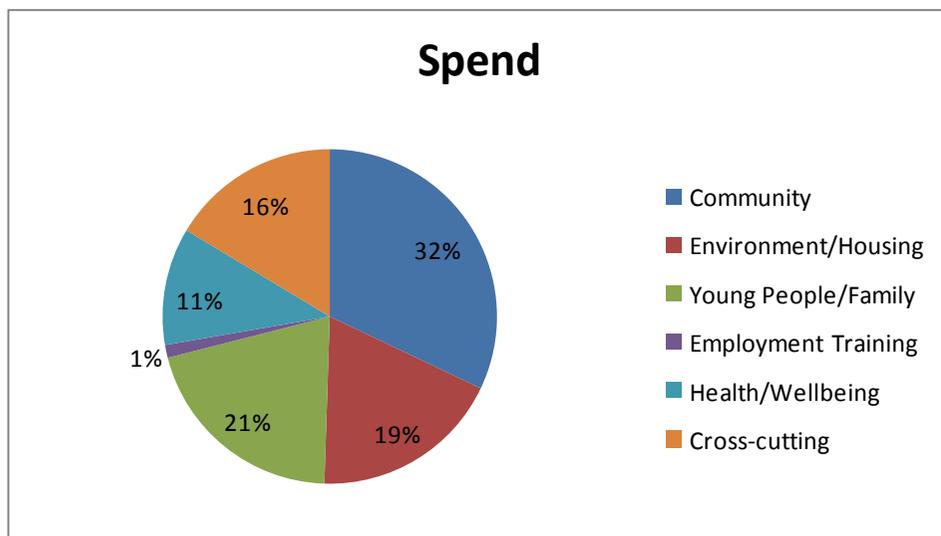
## Proposed Budget 2015 & 2016

Project	Theme	Lead Organisation	2015	2016	Match Funding	Comments
Community Chest	Community	Distington Big Local	£5,000	£5,000	Expected to be £10,000 over two years	Small scale funding for local activities that will increase the range of opportunities available to residents
Programme Support	Community	Distington Big Local with Lakes College & Cumbria CVS	£27,000 From Oct 14	£23,000	Some financial support has been accessed through the Apprenticeship support programme.	To include the cost of a part time development worker, admin assistant, rent, newsletter etc.
Village Maintenance	Environment & Housing	TBC	£12,000	£18,000	Once a suitable local person has been sought, match funding will be found through business start up funding. Up to £20,000 in Year 1, hence more DBL in Year 2.	Will see the development of a new social enterprise that will eventually become self financing and create local employment. Work with UnLtd on this project.
The Club for Young People	Young People & Families	Distington Club for Young People	£25,000	£25,000	Some match funding already in place, some still to be found. Three Year Business Plan in place  £80,000	Will assist with the further development of the organisation, the activities it offers and increase the number, age range and aspirations of young people it works with. Scope for apprentice placement.
Relief project	Community	Distington Church	£3,000		£3,000 currently being sought	A loo for the church and the wider com-
Job Club	Employment & Training	Job Centre Plus & Distington Community Centre	£2,000	£1,000	£2,000 might be required. DCC would be applicant but all applications would be completed by DBL staff who will support the project.	A Job Club running in the Mabel Knowles Room on either a Monday or a Wednesday. Run on similar lines to those in Cleator Moor and Salterbeck. Aim to find employment for 10 local people per year.
Distington Rugby Club Development	Health & Wellbeing	Distington Amateur Rugby League Club	£12,500	£5,000	Some match funding is already in place. Rest to be sought.  £30,000	The project will see the upgrading and bringing back into use of the football pitch, and associated infrastructure on both Football and rugby pitches. Will see the formation of football teams.

Project	Theme	Lead Organisation	2015 DBL Spend	2016 DBL Spend	Match Funding	Comments
Renewable Energy	Environment & Housing	Distington Community Centre		£5,000	£5,000 match. Support will be given to the DCC Com to assist with fund-raising.	A project to install solar panels on the Community Centre. Thus assisting with the financial viability of the facility.
Upgrading of Social Club	Community	Distington CASC	£10,000	£5,000	£8,000 match will be required. Support will be given to assist with fund-raising.	This project will see the upgrading of the toilets, the installation of solar panels and the completion of the purchase of
Footpath development project	Health & Wellbeing	Cumbria County Council	£5,000	£5,000	£10,000 Match funding. Match funding will be overseen by CCC.  Potential for large amount of match funding over time.	A project that will deliver the development of new footpaths and the upgrading of existing footpaths that will encourage more people to walk for health.
Community Events Programme	Cross-cutting	Various	£5,000	£5,000	Small scale match funding for each project. £5,000	External organisations may be commissioned to deliver certain community events if organisations within the com-
Bus Shelters Project	Environment & Housing	Distington Parish Council & Cumbria CC	£3,000	£2,000	Some match might be required. £2,000	Would see the installation of two vandal proof bus shelters, one at Common End and one at Tollbar. Other shelters could be installed in future years.
Community Land Trust Feasibility Study	Environment & Housing	Cumbria Rural Housing Trust	£5,000		Match funding probably not required for the feasibility study but large scale match expected for any follow on project	Feasibility study to investigate the possibility of small scale CLT development in the village.
Community Education Project	Cross-cutting	Various	£5,000	£5,000	Each activity under this project would be expected to bring an amount of match funding, possibly in kind. £10,000	Would cover areas such as community capacity building, volunteer training and parental training.
Advice Project	Cross-cutting	Copeland CAB	£10,000	£10,000	CAB might be able to bring in some match-funding for this project. £10,000	Would be based in the Community Centre and project would include the training of volunteers.

**TOTAL: £243,500 (DBL) (2015: £129,500 - 2016: £114,000) £175,000 (Match-funding)**

Community	Environment/Housing	Young People/Family	Employment/Training	Health/Wellbeing	Cross-cutting
4 Projects	4 Projects	1 Project	1 Project	2 Projects	3 Projects
£78,000	£45,000	£50,000	£3,000	£27,500	£40,000



The Big Local Board will work closely with the identified lead organisations on the projects and activities above at all stages of the delivery process and will assist with raising match-funding and other actions when requested to do so. Appropriate outputs will be agreed with partner organisations together with arrangements for monitoring progress and reporting back to the Board. It should be remembered that this is not an exhaustive list and that as things change and develop in the community, so new projects and activities will be considered and commissioned.

## Next Steps:

**Delivery:** Partnership working is an essential part of delivery for Distington Big Local. The majority of the work we want to undertake will be delivered by partner organisations, both those that are based in the Big Local area and those based elsewhere but who work in the Big Local area. To ensure that partner organisations understand what is expected of them good, two-way communications between the Big Local Board and the individual organisations will be required. Outputs will need to be agreed and monitored and systems for reporting back to the Board agreed. The above also relates to the LTO, Cumbria CVS.

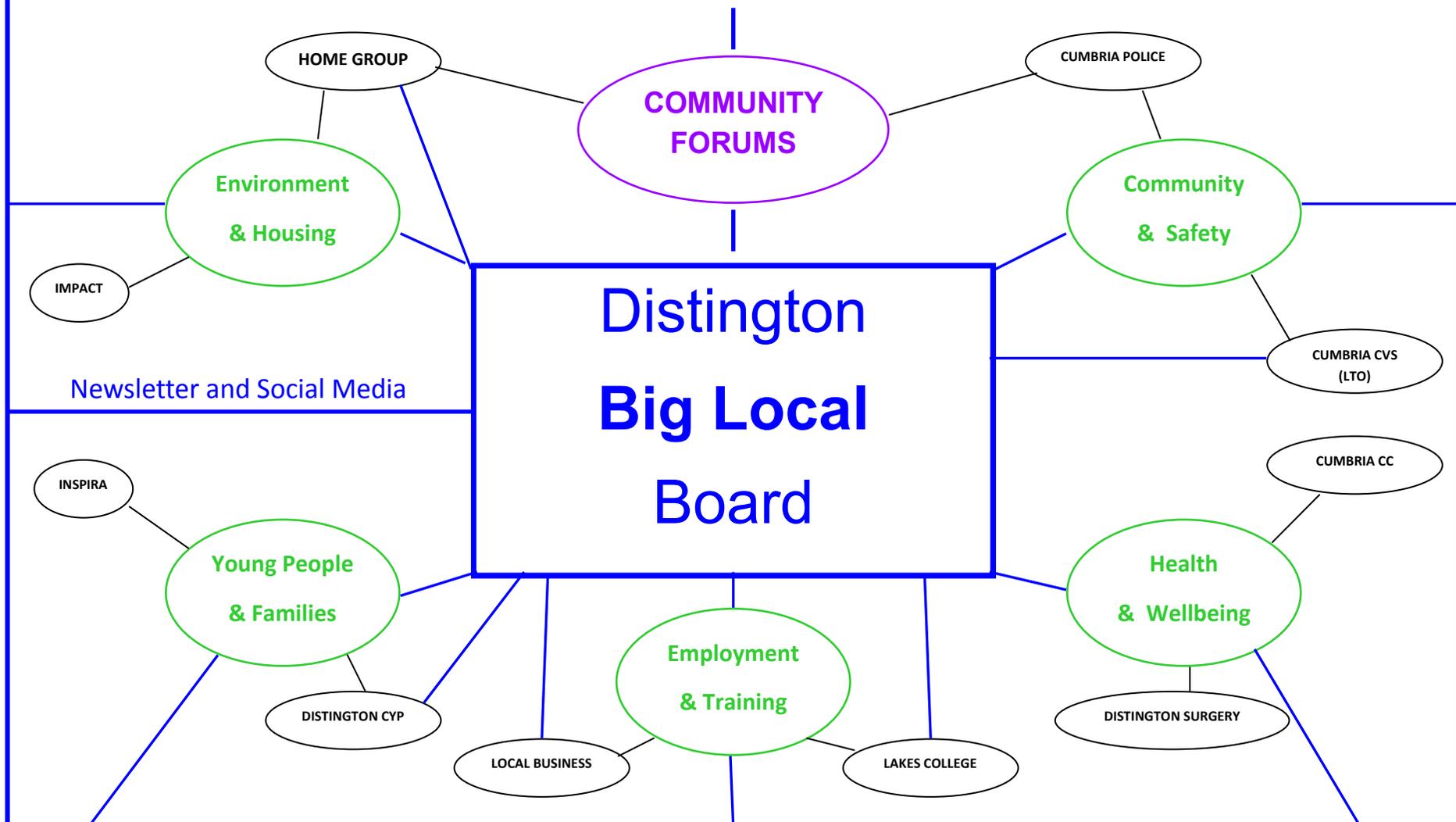
**Commissioning:** In the Terms of Reference it is made clear that, initially, Distington Big Local will be an unincorporated organisation. The implications of this are that in most cases the Board will commission work from partner organisations. The decisions of the Board as to what will be commissioned will be informed by the Thematic sub-groups, the Community Profile & Vision document, this Big Local Plan and regular soundings taken in the community. It is also important that the Board has the flexibility to respond quickly to changing situations within the Big Local area should the need arise, as it surely will during the coming years. Wherever possible the commissioning process should be used to support the employment of people from the Big Local area.

**Influencing:** Over the coming years Distington Big Local is going to become an important part of the Third Sector in the Big Local area. However, it should be recognised that, in terms of service delivery, it is the three tiers of local government that are the major providers. To help improve and develop local service provision, as highlighted in the community consultations, Distington Big Local is going to have to develop an influencing role. Relationships with County, Borough and Parish councillors are already good and closer working with local government officers will be developed during the coming years.

**Learning from others:** Too often in the past community groups and organisations have worked in isolation. This has rarely been beneficial and Distington Big Local is committed to both working with others and learning from others. In particular the wide-ranging support provided by the Local Trust will be used to build links with other Big Local areas to see what has and hasn't worked for them. One of the Big Local areas in Cumbria is only some eight miles from Distington and there is clearly the opportunity here for some joint training and workshop sessions and perhaps something more innovative at a later date.

**The Future:** During the coming years it will be important for the Board to look at social investment projects and activities with a view to trying to generate an income that will benefit the Distington community for many years beyond the lifetime of the Big Local programme. As stated above, seeing what works elsewhere will be of real value to Distington Big Local. There are potentially two or three large projects that will come forward, after appropriate feasibility studies, in 2017 onwards and these will need careful planning and might require the employment of project officers to help deliver specific projects. These could include a community housing project and a new social facility. Communities change, as do the views of the people that live in them and to ensure that the Big Local project in Distington retains the support of local people and continues to reflect their views, community consultations will need to be an ongoing element of the work that the Board undertakes. Having the flexibility to respond to changing circumstances and new opportunities will be key to the success of the Big Local programme.

# The Distington Big Local Community



The above diagram shows the links between the Distington Big Local Board, the thematic sub-groups, the Community Forums, including the AGM, the various supporting agencies and the wider Big Local Community. Each sub-group will, ideally, comprise two Board members, representatives from two agencies and two members of the wider community.