

Pride in Place Scoping Report: South Maryport

Dr Suzanne Wilson & Dr Katherine Jewell

Dr John Scanlan & Natasha Dawson

Dr Ursula Pool & Raeesa Jassat

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Contents

Executive Summary	4
Introduction.....	6
Disclaimer	6
Background	7
Researcher Profiles	7
Westlakes Research Limited	8
PEOPLE: Demographics and Participation in South Maryport.....	9
PAST: A History of Community Investment in South Maryport	17
PLACE: The Outdoor Environment and Wellbeing in South Maryport	26
Recommendations	37
Conclusion.....	40

Executive Summary

This scoping report provides an evidence-informed assessment of South Maryport to support the Pride in Place programme and the work of the Neighbourhood Board. It brings together demographic and deprivation evidence, examples of community participation and previous investment, and research concerning the relationship between the outdoor environment, place and wellbeing. The evidence points to an area facing significant socioeconomic and health challenges, but also one with strong community identity, established local organisations, valued community assets and a demonstrated capacity for collective action.

South Maryport has a population of approximately 6,500 people living in almost 3,000 households. The demographic evidence highlights comparatively high levels of deprivation across the area, particularly in relation to health and disability, income, employment, and education and skills. Health is an especially important consideration: around 24% of residents report a disability, while reported levels of good or very good health are below the national average. The evidence also identifies challenges associated with travel to employment, lower qualification levels, housing energy efficiency and income deprivation affecting children. These issues are interconnected and suggest that investment should consider the broader circumstances that shape people's ability to participate in and benefit from community life.

These challenges sit alongside significant community strengths. Maryport, Flimby and Broughton Moor have histories of residents organising around issues that matter to them, from healthcare and regeneration to flood protection, playgrounds, community assets and access to local countryside. The evidence demonstrates that participation takes many forms, including petitions and campaigning, consultation, volunteering, youth participation and involvement in decisions concerning local facilities and public spaces.

Previous investment provides an important foundation on which Pride in Place can build. Local councils and other funders have supported community halls, sports clubs, youth organisations, play areas, green spaces, environmental improvements, heritage activities and community events. In Broughton Moor, for example, significant community effort and partnership funding enabled the development of the Welfare Field play area and refurbishment of the community centre. These examples demonstrate the importance of sustained investment in everyday community

infrastructure rather than viewing regeneration solely through the lens of large capital projects.

The area's outdoor environment represents another significant asset. South Maryport's relationship with the coast, surrounding countryside and local green spaces provides opportunities for contact with nature, recreation, physical activity and stronger connections with place. Research considered within this report suggests that outdoor environments can contribute to wellbeing through five interconnected pathways: contact with nature; walking, movement and access; social connection; sense of place; and participation and caring for places.

The evidence suggests that the quality of people's everyday environment matters. Improvements to paths, green spaces, seating, access points, play and recreation spaces, wayfinding and connections between neighbourhoods and community facilities may collectively have a substantial effect on how people experience South Maryport. Investment should therefore consider the area as a connected network of people, places and community assets rather than as a collection of isolated projects.

Overall, Pride in Place presents an opportunity to combine physical investment with community capacity-building. The strongest approach will be one that builds on existing assets and community organisations, addresses barriers to participation, improves the environments people encounter every day and gives residents a meaningful role in determining priorities. The findings in this report should consequently provide a starting point for community discussion rather than a predetermined programme of interventions.

Introduction

This report provides an evidence-based overview of South Maryport to inform the Pride in Place programme and future community investment. It brings together demographic analysis, deprivation data, a review of previous regeneration initiatives, and research on the relationship between the outdoor environment and community wellbeing. By examining the area's social, economic, environmental, and historical context, the report identifies the strengths, challenges, and opportunities that should guide future decision-making. The findings are intended to support neighbourhood boards and stakeholders in developing targeted, sustainable, and community-led interventions that enhance wellbeing, strengthen local identity, and foster long-term cohesion.

Disclaimer

This report is based exclusively on desk-based research, drawing together publicly available data, published literature, policy documents, historical records, and existing evidence relating to South Maryport. It is intended to provide an evidence-informed overview of the area and identify themes, strengths, challenges, and opportunities that may support discussion within the Pride in Place programme.

The findings should not be interpreted as a substitute for the knowledge, experience, and expertise of local residents, community organisations, practitioners, or other stakeholders with lived experience of South Maryport. The report does not seek to define community priorities or prescribe solutions. Rather, it offers evidence-based observations and suggestions that are intended to complement local knowledge and stimulate informed discussion.

Communities themselves are the experts in their own places. Their lived experience, aspirations, and priorities should remain central to decision-making throughout the Pride in Place process. Any recommendations or considerations presented in this report should therefore be viewed as indicative rather than definitive and should be tested, refined, and, where appropriate, challenged through meaningful engagement with local people.

Responsibility for determining priorities and making investment decisions rests with the Neighbourhood Board. It is expected that the Board will consider the evidence presented here alongside community engagement, local intelligence, professional expertise, and residents' perspectives to develop interventions that are locally appropriate, community-led, and responsive to local needs.

Background

Researcher Profiles

Dr Suzanne Wilson	Suzanne Wilson is a Research Fellow at The University of Lancashire, working with communities to identify effective and sustainable means of fostering social inclusion. Her expanding research portfolio focuses on how low-income coastal communities, regarded as 'left behind', can overcome barriers to participation in civil society.
Dr John Scanlan	John Scanlan is a Research Fellow in Place and Culture at the University of Lancashire's West Cumbrian campus near Whitehaven. His work is concerned with developing cultural infrastructure and ecology. He collaborates with partners in the cultural sector and is a Trustee of Egremont and Area Regeneration Partnership. He is also, along with Ursula Pool, Learning Partner for Everyone Here, West Cumbria's Arts Council-funded Creative People and Places Programme.
Dr Ursula Pool	Ursula Pool is a Research Fellow in Health and Wellbeing at the University of Lancashire's Westlakes Campus. Her work is based in West Cumbria and focuses on how different types of settings and environments can affect health and wellbeing.
Dr Katherine Jewell	Dr Katherine Jewell is a Research Assistant and PhD candidate, specialising in political sociology, qualitative research methods, ethnography, and social movement studies. Her research has focused on the Labour Party-affiliated organisation Momentum, examining its development, organisational structure, and political activism through ethnographic methods.
Natasha Dawson	Natasha Dawson is a Research Assistant in Place and Culture at the University of Lancashire's West Cumbrian campus near Whitehaven. She is also a PhD candidate, and her thesis examines the relationship between past and present through the lens of representations of Whitehaven's cultural memory. As part of this project, she has recently collaborated with local community groups and Everyone Here to create an exhibition on West Cumbrian carnivals.
Raeesa Jassat	Raeesa Jassat is a Research Assistant and PhD candidate with a background in neuroscience and public health research. Her work spans mental health, trauma care, and evidence synthesis, with expertise in qualitative and quantitative research methods, systematic reviews, and multidisciplinary health research projects.

Westlakes Research Limited

Westlakes Research Limited (WRL) is a public benefit educational charity established in 1992. Since 2008 it has been a member of the University of Lancashire family of organisations, which has given WRL access to the vast range and depth of academic work at the University of Lancashire as our partner, but also, as a research institute based uniquely in West Cumberland, this collaboration provides the university with the opportunity to undertake research in a clearly-bounded location of great social and economic variety which is then portable and scalable to other locations and contexts.

The Research Areas

Research will apply scholarship to create 'additionality' in the form of contributions towards professional practice, policy design and implementation relevant to the political economy of Cumberland and re-scalable to wider national and international contexts in each of four research areas.

- Social Inclusion: Working with communities to identify effective and sustainable means of increasing community capital
- Place and Culture: Developing expertise in heritage and cultural memory, cultural regeneration policy and place governance.
- Health and Wellbeing: Focusing on the health and wellbeing benefits of a range of settings and environments
- Public Value Governance: Working with a range of organisations in public and private sectors to develop their measurable value profiles through case studies.

PEOPLE: Demographics and Participation in South Maryport

Dr Katherine Jewell & Dr Suzanne Wilson

Demographics

The area covered by the South Maryport Pride in Place project is defined by the Allerdale 005 middle super output area (MSOA). It is a somewhat smaller MSOA than average, covering only four lower super output areas (LSOAs) and a total population of approximately 6,500 people in almost 3,000 households. All of the statistics presented in this section are taken from the 2021 Census (<https://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/customprofiles/build/>) or the 2025 Index of Deprivation for England (<https://deprivation.communities.gov.uk/>). The interactive Census map used did not have pre-set MSOA footprints, so an approximation was custom drawn via the website; this means that there may be some slight variation between the population captured by the Census data and the deprivation data, although this is not likely to be significant or to meaningfully change the general themes and characteristics presented here.

The section will continue by highlighting demographics in which this area deviates significantly from the national average, followed by an overview of the deprivation data, and conclude with a brief summary and suggestions regarding the key issues to note for this area arising from the data.



Notable Census Demographics

Age

Flimby & Broughton has a significantly higher-than-average number of young people under 15 and of people aged 50-70. It has a much lower-than-average number of people aged 15-50 but is around average for 70+. This shows a more nuanced picture than the aging population that is often ascribed to West Cumbria.

National identity, residency and ethnicity

As with many West Cumbrian neighbourhoods, Flimby & Broughton has an overwhelming majority of people who were born in the UK and identify as white, both at around 97% and 99% of the local population respectively. A similar number report their national identity as one of the countries in the UK, although over 25% of people do not have a passport, which is more than twice the national average. This corresponds to a much lower-than-average number of people who are foreign-born or have a foreign national identity, and to fewer than 1% of the local population reporting having lived in the UK for 10 years or less. More than 98% of the population speaks English as their native language.

Religion

A high proportion of the population identifies as Christian: over 56% versus the national average of 46%, and less than 0.5% report a religion other than Christianity. This suggests that the local population holds a stronger Christian identity than in other areas of the UK, which may influence worldview tendencies and have implications not experienced elsewhere in the country. However, it should be noted that the number of people reporting 'no religion' is roughly equal to the national average.

Health and disability

Only about 75% reported good or very good health, compared with over 82% nationwide, while almost 24% reported fair or bad health, compared with around 16% nationwide. The number reporting very bad health was broadly comparable. Similarly, over 24% of people reported having a disability, which is almost 7% higher than the national average. However, the proportion of people providing unpaid care is broadly in line with national averages.

Housing

Energy efficiency ratings for residences are considerably lower than the national average, with over 10% more properties in Band D and only a third as many in Band B. Notably, Flimby & Broughton has over 55% 3-bedroom properties, compared to the

national average of 40%. This undoubtedly contributes to the higher-than-average under-occupancy rate: over 75% of homes in the area have more bedrooms than are needed for their occupants. Almost 40% of households are social-rented, compared with 17% nationally.

Employment, economics and travel

Flimby & Broughton has a higher-than-average proportion of adults who are economically inactive, as well as those who have never worked. Employment and socioeconomic class are weighted heavily towards trades, caring roles, retail/sales/customer service and routine and semi-routine occupations. However, this area has a lower proportion of working-age benefit claimants than the national average, as well as a higher-than-average number of people employed in full-time hours. There is a higher proportion of non-students, as well as a lower-than-average number of people with higher qualifications. Travel is a key challenge, with 70% of people travelling to their place of work compared to the national average of 54%, and only around a third as many working mainly from home. Almost 10% travel more than 30km to work, which is more than twice the national average. Almost 70% either drive or get a lift in a private car to their workplace. This is particularly notable considering almost 30% of households do not own a car, significantly higher than the national average. Interestingly, more people walk to work than average, an average number take the bus, but almost half as many cycle or take the train despite there being a train station in Flimby.

Index of Deprivation Ratings

The following diagrams show the spread of ratings across the four LSOAs covered by the Flimby & Broughton project.

Overall deprivation ratings

Each coloured bar represents 10% of the total number of LSOAs in England. The leftmost dark bar is the 10% most deprived, whereas the rightmost light bar is the 10% least deprived. Three of the areas covered in this project are considered extremely relatively deprived overall, whilst the remaining one is still well below average for the country.



Deprivation rating by category

Each category contributes a different weighting to the overall rating above. For more information on how each category is measured and how they are combined, visit: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/68ff547a49d08dd781b48351/ID_2025_Research_Report.pdf.

Income

The income category focuses on the number of people receiving certain benefits (including in-work benefits, unemployment support, housing support and pension credit) or assistance as asylum seekers. This category makes up 22.5% of the overall deprivation rating.

All of the LSOAs in Flimby & Broughton have relatively high numbers of benefit recipients, with two rated in the most deprived 10% in the country.

Employment

The employment category includes all in- and out-of-work benefits, including disability-related benefits, carers allowance and Universal Credit. It does not include those in receipt of pension credit, housing benefit, or asylum support. This category makes up 22.5% of the overall deprivation rating.

For Flimby & Broughton, the spread of deprivation for employment is similar to that for income, with two LSOAs in the bottom 30% and two areas are in the bottom 10% for employment.

Education & Skills

Education and skills cover qualification attainment and English-speaking skills for adults. For children and young people, it covers key stage test scores, school absence and entry to higher education. This category makes up 13.5% of the overall deprivation rating.

In Flimby & Broughton, two of the LSOAs are in the bottom 10% of the country with the other two clustered around the 20% mark. Overall, this area is particularly deprived on this measure.

Health & Disability

The health and disability category draws from NHS data on morbidity (various causes of being unwell), potential lost years of life and disability rates, including both physical and mental health. This category makes up 13.5% of the overall deprivation rating. This category also shows high overall deprivation across the project area, with none of the LSOAs significantly above the bottom 20% nationally.



The crime category draws from police data on all recorded crime, including violent and sexual crimes, theft, criminal damage, public order offences and possession of weapons, as well as anti-social behaviour. This category makes up 9.3% of the overall deprivation rating.

Compared to other categories, crime is not as high a contributing factor for deprivation in this area. However, there are still two LSOAs in the bottom 30%, and the other two are just on the more deprived side of average.



Barriers to housing and services cover connectivity to local amenities, housing affordability, homelessness rates, housing overcrowding, broadband speeds and patient-GP ratio. This category makes up 9.3% of the overall deprivation rating.

Flimby & Broughton is less deprived overall on these measures than other categories. The two lowest LSOAs are clustered around the 30% mark, with the other two around the country average.



Living environment covers a wide range of environmental factors, including the quality of housing (e.g., energy efficiency), the amount of private outdoor space, air quality, road safety (i.e., injury rates for cyclists and pedestrians), and levels of noise pollution. This category makes up 9.3% of the overall deprivation rating.

Overall, this category also represents less local deprivation than other areas, but potentially the greatest spread between the different LSOAs. Two are in the bottom 30% of areas, one is around average, and one is in the top 30% of least deprived areas on this measure. It is interesting to note that the least deprived LSOA in this category

is consistently towards the lower end of many of the other measures (identified by the pick circle).

Income deprivation affecting children and old people

These are new measures introduced in 2025 that represent subsets of the income category above. The number of children and older people living in income-deprived households is derived from the overall levels of income deprivation in each LSOA.

Income deprivation affecting children

As can be seen, there are two distinct clusters across Flimby and Broughton, both reflecting relatively high levels of children experiencing income deprivation. Two LSOAs are in the 10% most deprived, whilst the other two are clustered around 30%. Income Deprivation affecting old people:

The picture is slightly different for older people. One LSOA is still near the bottom 10% for older people in relative income deprivation, one is closer to the 20% mark, and the other two are nearer the national average. Overall, a lower proportion of older people seem to be in relative income deprivation than children within the project area.

Summary and Potential Considerations

From this demographic data, it can be seen that Flimby and Broughton exhibit a spread of deprivation characteristics across the area, whilst also being remarkably homogeneous in terms of ethnicity.

The following headline observations from the data are recommended to be taken into account during the course of decision-making for the Pride in Place project:

- Employment statistics suggest that although there is a larger than average group of residents with long-term economic inactivity, there are more than average employed on full-time hours and fewer than average claiming benefits. This presents a potentially complicated economic picture that would benefit from further investigation.
- People are travelling further to work than on average, with fewer working from home. This could be linked to the employment profile being weighted away from office-based jobs that offer more flexibility for working from home, but it could also mean that additional or different infrastructure may be needed to support a higher number of people travelling to their place of work.
- Recognise the religious identity held by many, alongside the homogenous ethnicity of the area. This could have significant implications for community cohesion, social interactions, and worldviews, presenting both potential

strengths and distinct challenges compared with those experienced elsewhere in the country.

- Note the age distribution and ensure appropriate representation of interests from all age groups.
- Health and disability represent the highest levels of deprivation across the entire project area and potentially impact on other areas such as income and employment. Further examination of the relationship between poor health or disability and employment/income may shed light on whether this may be a primary root cause of the higher level of relative deprivation experienced by many local residents. For example, high levels of disability and poor health may be linked to the 'never worked' rate, in turn resulting in higher levels of income deprivation caused by reliance on benefits.
- The high level of full-time employment suggests that it may possibly be beneficial to look at assisting households to maximise the income they do have. For example, reducing reliance on private cars for travel can free up household finances for other areas of expenditure.

This is a relatively small MSOA, which means that the amount of grant funding per person will be higher than other Pride in Place areas. This offers a potential advantage in terms of affecting real improvement for residents, but care should still be taken to ensure the maximum value is realised for the area. It is also important to consider the size of the MSOA in the context of average deprivation – whilst it is small, residents experience more deprivation on average across the whole area than the other Pride in Place locations in Cumberland, and it is more homogenous in its relative deprivation.

Participation in South Maryport

Maryport has a particularly strong history of organised campaigning. Healthcare has been a major focus: residents marched to protect cottage hospital services in 2006, and in 2016 more than 7,000 people signed a petition opposing the loss of overnight beds at Victoria Cottage Hospital. Continued pressure was followed by the investment and refurbishment of the hospital into a day hospital and rehabilitation facility.

Campaigning has extended beyond healthcare. Residents opposed potential nuclear-waste development in 2022, raised concerns about marine restrictions affecting fishing and tourism, supported youth mental-health campaigns, and became actively involved in decisions surrounding the town's £12 million regeneration programme.

Participation in Maryport therefore goes beyond protest. Residents vote on regeneration designs and names, young people participate in councils and public art projects, community members contribute to policing priorities, and a local social enterprise has taken responsibility for operating the regenerated facilities.

Flimby's strongest example of collective action followed Storm Desmond in 2015, when more than 100 homes were internally flooded. Residents campaigned for stronger protection in 2016, with the subsequent response eventually including the £1.7 million Flimby Flood Alleviation Scheme.

Community participation also occurs on a smaller, highly local level. In 2025, two schoolboys campaigned for improvements to the deteriorating village playground, gathering 600 petition signatures; the document reports that £50,000 was subsequently secured for the upgrade. Residents and schoolchildren have also participated in the "Flimby Inspires" railway-station initiative. More broadly, residents participate in flood-management consultations and environmental interventions, while the Pride in Place programme is intended to give local people a major role in deciding how long-term investment is used.

Broughton Moor's campaigning centres rely heavily on protecting community assets, countryside and village identity. Between 2015 and 2017, residents fought to preserve public access to the Soddy Gap area, submitting evidence of community use and ultimately securing legal protection for public access. Residents also campaigned in 2022 to preserve St Columba's Church as a community asset and had previously opposed proposals for opencast coal mining at the former Broughton Moor arms depot. More recent grassroots activity includes volunteer litter-picking and village-improvement initiatives. Participation also takes place through schools, parish and council structures. Residents can contribute to co-design and planning processes, while young people and families participate in school policymaking and community-safety activities.

PAST: A History of Community Investment in South Maryport

Natasha Dawson & Dr John Scanlan

Introduction

The following is a summary of what we have learned from examining investment in social infrastructure, community belonging and wellbeing, and place attachment in the selected areas/neighbourhoods for Pride in Place investment. As will be shown in what follows, local government investment in these places is broadly directed towards improving community spaces and infrastructure, including green spaces, supporting local community organisations, and in some places, commemorating aspects of the community's past, a crucial aspect of the intergenerational social compact, promoting community wellbeing and, in general, responding to the concerns of citizens in relation to their places and communities.

Beyond local government, where we have found evidence, we have also highlighted examples of local business and arts organisations working with communities in ways strongly related to the aims of the Pride in Place programme.

Council Funding and the Lakes to Sea Community Panel

For the purposes of local government neighbourhood investment, the Maryport areas fall within the scope of the Cumberland Council Lakes to the Sea Community Panel, which was established in 2023. Its budget for the year 2025/26 was £67,548. As with the other Community Panels, this is made up of Cumberland councillors from the wards covered by the panel and one co-opted member selected from applications. At the time of writing, no significant funding from the Community Panel was received by any of the three Maryport areas. The details of groups, events and other initiatives funded by local government in this report draw on the minutes of Maryport Town Council (for Flimby and Ellenborough) and Broughton Moor Parish Council.

Community Groups and Events

We can gain a snapshot of social and community investment during the last ten years in Flimby through an examination of the funding support that the town has received from the various local government units it falls within, which include Maryport Town Council, Allerdale Borough Council, Cumbria County Council, and since 2023, Cumberland Council.

Maryport Town Council, for instance, supports an array of community groups and events with regular funding of modest sums, which are vital in keeping these groups ticking over and maintaining the regular nature of events that celebrate aspects of community life. These are often awarded annually, usually between £1,000 and £2,000 per group. Groups in receipt of regular support were:

- Flimby Allotment Society
- Flimby Youth Club
- Flimby Community Hall
- Flimby Girl's Brigade
- Flimby Children's Carnival
- Flimby Pensioners Committee
- Flimby Over-60s Club
- Flimby Sports and Social Club

Other organisations and events, such as the Flimby Village Show, Flimby Vikings ARLFC rugby club, Flimby Social FC and Flimby Scarecrow Festival and field day for children (similar to others held along the places of the Cumbrian coast), sometimes apply for and receive funding in small amounts (usually less than £1,000). According to the Maryport Town Council website, the funding awarded to Maryport and Flimby Carnivals was £5,500 (to cover both events). Other groups within the community receive ad hoc support when applied for and in support of community events, such as Jemcare (a Flimby elderly care provider), and local children, such as the provision of Christmas Goody Bags for Flimby nursery children or special occasion funding, such as that awarded to the local school to attend the event marking the return of Maryport Paralympian Simon Lawson (a Bronze medallist at the Commonwealth Games).

In Ellenborough, community investment from the councils has been directed to the area's main community assets. These were, firstly, Ellenborough Rangers ARLFC, the local rugby club, which has been the most regular recipient of funding, and, secondly, Ellenborough Play Area (discussed in more detail in the next section).

Ellenborough Rangers ARLFC is a local Rugby League Club based in Maryport. They have an open-age team and multiple youth teams, which they are looking to expand. They are actively trying to encourage more people to take part in sport and be more active. From 2016 to 2023 they received regular funding from Maryport Town Council (usually £1,000 per year) and in 2025 the same amount again from the Cumberland Council 'Lakes to the Sea' Community Panel. The funds have usually been for

equipment but also covered floodlight repairs on one occasion. The rugby club represents an important source of social cohesion and community pride in the area, but also an opportunity for young players to open a pathway to the semi-professional leagues. In this respect, they have also been supported by coaching from Workington Town RLFC players to 'help them to produce more players capable of progressing in the game'.

Other funding has been awarded for equipment and the training of teaching staff at the local primary school, Ellenborough Academy, to deliver 'balance bike' training sessions to children from the neighbourhood (£3,813 from the 'Lakes to the Sea' community panel).

Broughton Moor receives a donation of annual funding from Engie (a French multinational renewable energy company) and Clean Earth Energy, the country's leading developer of small windfarms and individual turbines, to provide grants for community groups and projects in the Broughton Moor Wind Farm area. This small wind farm, known as Fox Houses Wind Farm, lies on (Parish Council controlled/owned) land between Flimby and Broughton Moor. The fund, which is managed and distributed on behalf of the parish council by Cumbria Community Fund, amounts to approximately £11,450 per year, and community groups can apply for amounts in the range of £200- £5,000 (though higher amounts may be approved depending on the application). Some of the community groups and events funded include:

- St Columba's Church (£1,600)
- Cuddly Koalas pre-school (£1,000) - it closed in 2019
- Over 60s Group (£3,000)

Christmas Tree lighting ceremony has sometimes been accompanied with a gift for every child in the school (there were 58 on the roll in 2016, when this was mentioned)

Community Spaces and Infrastructure

The Pride in Place programme seeks to empower communities to renew/regenerate their neighbourhoods and areas based on place-sensitive knowledge and local needs. Community involvement and community voice are a means of developing pride in place, a sense of belonging, social cohesion and connection or attachment to place. In the past, the community spaces in the Pride in Place areas that were a conduit for enhancing these values were most often overseen by local councils (including town and parish councils), and sometimes in co-operation with borough or county councils

(up to 2023) and the new unitary authority of Cumberland Council in the last three years. In Flimby, for instance, Maryport Council has been responsible for maintaining and investing in a number of playgrounds and green spaces in the village, including:

- Flimby Community Garden
- Flimby Cemetery
- Street furniture, flower displays at various sites in the village

In response to concerns about the use of Flimby Great Wood, located to the east of the village on land separating Flimby from Broughton Moor, attention has also been drawn to its heritage value. In addition to the public footpaths running through the woodland, the area contains several remains associated with its industrial past, including those of the former Robin Hood Pit and Colliery, which closed in 1909, and the reportedly 'surprisingly complete' remains of an eighteenth-century blast furnace.

Like many West Cumbrian communities, Flimby's mining history, and the history of disasters and loss of life, is part of the village's shared history and memory. A memorial sculpture by Colin Telfer, 'Three Miners', funded by the Millennium Commission in the late 1990s as part of a series of sculptures in towns and villages along the coast, can be seen on the A596 road from Flimby to Maryport at the site of the old Risehow colliery. These sculptures, made from iron ore dust and resin - the stuff that helped create the wealth of the west coast and, in a sense, raised up communities like Flimby out of the ground - form part of the cultural memory of such places.

Within the Great Wood, the walls of disused mine-related structures still stand and are sometimes used as memorial spaces (some images show wreaths attached to them). Local newspapers report that the community regard Flimby Great Wood not only as a valuable local amenity that provides access to natural green space within a few minutes' walk of the village, but also as an important part of their heritage. Concerns about misuse of the wood that causes damage are occasionally raised in local media reporting. In relation to 'green space' in the last ten years, Maryport council has invested in the following in Flimby:

- Tree planting and tree preservation orders in the village
- Preservation of Flimby Great Wood
- The provision of memorial garden trees in general, and also special occasional planting, such as the provision of trees for schools to plant to mark the Queen's Platinum Jubilee (2022)

The West Cumbria Rivers Trust, funded by the Environment Agency and Defra, has also undertaken work to combat the effects of tree felling on the local environment and to mitigate flood risk (as the wood, if maintained properly, can prevent floodwaters from flowing into the village). Further investment in flood alleviation was made by Cumberland Council, in partnership with the Environment Agency, in 2024.

Within the village, the maintenance of roads, footpaths, and other infrastructure includes funding for signage at the village entrances, bus shelters, a community noticeboard, footway lighting, and cemetery footpaths. In 2019 Flimby Primary School 'adopted' the village railway station, and since then have collaborated with Workington Academy (which older Flimby schoolchildren attend), the Colourful North and Community Rail Cumbria (which promotes the Cumbrian Coast Line as an attraction), to add history boards to the station (e.g., one board included information about wartime evacuees to Flimby, which received children from industrial cities during WWII).

More recently, the Lakes to the Sea Community Panel funded a new display panel and leafleting initiative ('Ticket to Independence') for Flimby, which was developed by a partnership including the Cumbria Coast Line Community Rail Partnership with three Learning Disability and Adult Care organisations who provide support to vulnerable adults and children (this was for a small amount, £700).

The local cemetery is also the site of memorials funded by the council, including World War II commemorative benches, which can be counted with a number of other commemorative initiatives that, taken together, can be viewed as a means of connecting people not only to their local area, but to place in a more general sense, including:

- Commemorative coins, mugs and spoons for local school children to mark various events (including VE75 Day, the Platinum Jubilee)
- Memorial tree planting and seating in remembrance of those who lost their lives in the Covid 19 pandemic
- A new commemorative bench on the occasion of VE80 Day

Ellenborough Play Area, which appears to have been the target of persistent vandalism (a local newspaper report described it as a 'no go area') has received funding on a number of occasions from both Maryport Town Council and the Cumberland Council 'Lakes to the Sea' community panel. This is an area designed for use by children up to and including primary school age, but since it opened in 2014,

it has required regular repairs and maintenance (e.g., graffiti removal and replacement of broken equipment that posed a risk to children).

In Broughton Moor, as well as routine investment in the maintenance of green spaces and other community assets and spaces, including pavements, benches, bus shelters (vandalism has been a problem – teenage kids have nothing to do, nowhere to go) the main targets for community spending over the last ten years have been (i) a children's play area; (ii) the disused St Columba's Church; (iii) refurbishment of the community centre; and (iv) upgrading of community tennis court.

In 2017, the Parish Council began fundraising to develop a new play area in a community field behind the village school (known as the Welfare Field). The cost of which rose from an estimated £40k in 2017 to c. £100k by the time the new Playdale play area was opened in 2022. To complete this project, the Parish Council secured funds and donations from Cumberland Building Society, United Utilities, the Dulverton Trust, Broughton Moor Wind Farm fund, and Cumberland Council's 'Lakes to the Sea' community panel, as well as fundraising in the community through things like Christmas raffles. The Parish Council also used some of its own reserve funds.

The Welfare Field is regularly used for both casual and organised sporting activities, with football goalposts positioned in close proximity to the playground. About a third of the £100,000 spent recently was to erect a high protective fence around the play area to protect children at play from stray footballs from games played on the adjacent ground. Routine maintenance, repairs and upgrades represent an additional annual investment.

Since 2022, the Parish Council has received £19,000 funds from Gleeson Homes (who opened a new 66-home development on village land in 2024). This money has been earmarked specifically for the Welfare Field (which also includes the children's play area) and must be spent by the end of 2029. The parish council is considering creating a BMX track, or something for older children, and adding picnic tables and benches to encourage families to use the play area together.

Another neglected community asset earmarked for increased investment in the Welfare Field is the concrete tennis court. In February 2026, a delegation representing the two local MPs, Josh McAllister and Markus Campbell-Savours, visited the Tennis courts and saw the plans for its future. St Columba's Church is the other main development project that the Parish Council has been working on in

recent years. Since efforts first began in 2022, the Parish Council has secured the church as a gift to the village from the diocese of Carlisle for community use.

Substantial investment has also been made in the refurbishment of the community centre, e.g., £12,000 in 2024, for roof repairs, remedial work, and a toilet/kitchen/office area revamp, and the installation of a pagoda in the rear yard. This was followed by a further £34,000 in 2025 (initial work revealed more problems with the building that required attention).

In addition to using its own funds to renovate the village community centre, the Parish Council received support from Sellafield Ltd to furnish the village hall with three new lockable storage units. Broughton Moor Wind Farm Fund has also paid for picnic tables, seats and 10 concrete planters at the community centre.

Local Business and Community Pride

Flimby-based sports shoe manufacturer New Balance brought the village to national and international attention by celebrating the skills of the local workforce in a series of media stories, videos and an event ('a two night celebration at the legendary Flimby factory') to promote its 40th anniversary 'Made in the UK' programme in 2022/23. The company first set up a factory at Lillyhall in 1982 and moved nine years later to its present location in Flimby, where it has produced the celebrated footwear sold worldwide. News stories about the company's growth in those four decades often attribute its sustained success to the relationship it has established with the community in Flimby, which supplies most of the 200+ workforce at its factory there.

New Balance has repeatedly promoted the local workforce as a key element in its success, with workers at the Flimby factory influencing the design of special-edition handmade footwear lines, such as the Flimby Cutting Room release, which is sought after by collectors. And in its new line of footwear, New Balance unveiled a new 'Allerdale' sports shoe, 'born directly from the landscape around us, [and] taking its name from the historical area of Cumbria where the factory is based', in the words of the company, which they said was their way of 'embedding that sense of place into the shoe.'

Community Arts Initiatives

In 2020 Maryport Council provided support for the 'Peascod Festival', which was set up to celebrate the centenary of the birth of Bill Peascod (1920-85), a renowned local climbing pioneer, former Maryport miner, and, following emigration to Australia, where he spent 30 years, a distinguished artist/painter. Later in his life, Peascod

returned to Cumbria in 1974 (he died in 1985, aged 65, while climbing in Snowdonia). Funding for a programme delivered in partnership with The Settlement in Maryport was used to initiate an arts project around mining, mountain climbing and art to reflect the legacy of Peascod as a celebrated son of Ellenborough (and Maryport). Most of the funds have been used to pay for covered visits by The Settlement to local primary schools to share Peascod's legacy with schoolchildren. The Settlement is based at Castle Hill Maryport, where it aims to establish 'a programme of arts, crafts, education and social activities', providing a local cultural asset for the people of Maryport. The council also funded £500 for a heritage plaque to be unveiled at Shaps Yard, Bill Peascod's former residence.

Everyone Here, the Arts Council-funded Creative People and Places programme in West Cumbria, has undertaken a series of activities in Flimby since 2025. Established in 2022, Everyone Here has received £2.9m to fund arts engagement across West Cumbria, with a focus on areas with the lowest levels of arts engagement. Decisions on how to spend its funds are determined by a citizen's jury, consisting of West Cumbrians, whose membership may include (but does not have to) people from the areas it works in. The citizen's jury meets in person for two weekends each year (and is consulted more frequently in virtual meetings and will soon be supported in its decision-making with a bespoke Everyone Here smartphone app). During these meetings, it determines how and where in West Cumbria it will spend a budget of approximately £100,000 on cultural programming for the year ahead. From 2026, a small portion of the budget, £20,000, will be available for Jury members to support small projects, events and activities in their local communities.

The work of this jury is further supported by a sub-group of community evaluators. Both features are unique to this West Cumbria Creative People and Places programme. The rest of Everyone Here's annual funding pays for infrastructural aspects of the programme, such as salaries and payments to permanent and temporary staff, the hiring of venues, training, external evaluators, and so on, that are required to develop and run such programmes and events, and to fulfil its reporting remit to Arts Council England. They also stage an annual 'Imagine' festival aimed at engaging larger audiences with their work.

In 2025 Everyone Here began running 'Create and Connect' arts workshops at Flimby Sports and Social Club (running weekly from Oct 2025 to Feb 2026), led by artist Zoe Forster, and a separate 'Inside Out / Outside In' initiative, which involved members of the community in weekly workshops led by artist Nanette Madan for two months between February and April 2026, working together to create an indoor sensory

garden. Members of the community were able to learn new skills, connect with other people and contribute to a lasting creative work that was displayed at Everyone Here's Imagine Festival, held in Whitehaven in April 2026.

Everyone Here is now led by a new CIC called Everywhere Everything Everyone (EEE), which can raise money and develop initiatives to spend on community projects beyond those funded by the core Arts Council England income. In 2026, for example, it will work with the citizen's jury and the Flimby community to develop an EEE project about experiences of nature in rural and urban environments, which will build on its earlier work, and bring the experiences of people in Flimby to other places in West Cumbria through a touring sensory theatrical experience.

PLACE: The Outdoor Environment and Wellbeing in South Maryport

Dr Ursula Pool and Raeesa Jassat

Introduction

People experience their neighbourhoods through the outdoor environments they encounter in their everyday lives. Ordinary activities such as walking to local shops, taking children to school, visiting a park, meeting neighbours, using community spaces, or just moving through the streets all contribute to how people relate to the places where they live. These everyday experiences influence both individual wellbeing and the wellbeing of communities.

By “the outdoor environment”, we mean the network of publicly accessible spaces that people encounter in everyday life. This includes parks, green and blue spaces, streets, walking and cycling routes, recreation areas, civic spaces and the outdoor spaces associated with community facilities. Together, these environments shape everyday experiences of neighbourhood life and create opportunities for physical activity, social interaction, contact with nature, and connection with place.

Evidence from research on health, wellbeing and place suggests several pathways through which the outdoor environment can support wellbeing. Contact with nature can support psychological restoration, attractive and accessible streets encourage walking and everyday movement, and well-designed public spaces provide potential for people to meet, spend time together and participate in community life. The contribution of each space is shaped by its quality, accessibility, relationship to surrounding places, and the ways people experience and use it.

The following discussion considers how the outdoor environment may contribute to individual and community wellbeing within the South Maryport Pride in Place area. Drawing on evidence from environmental psychology, public health, and related disciplines, it develops a framework for understanding the role of the outdoor environment and applies it to the area. The aim is to support the Neighbourhood Boards by providing an evidence-informed perspective on the contribution that the outdoor environment can make to individual and community wellbeing. We highlight broad characteristics of the area's outdoor environment and identify possibilities that the Neighbourhood Boards may wish to consider when developing local investment priorities.

The intention is to complement the knowledge and experience already held within the area. By bringing together research evidence and observations on the local character of the area, we offer an additional perspective to support local discussion and decision-making about future investment in the outdoor environment.

An evidence-informed framework

The outdoor environment contributes to individual and community wellbeing by creating opportunities for everyday experiences, social relationships and meaningful connections with local places. The five themes outlined below describe different ways in which the outdoor environment can contribute to wellbeing. Together, they provide a framework for considering how investment in the outdoor environment may support healthier, more connected and more resilient neighbourhoods.

The five themes are:

1. Contact with nature
2. Walking, movement and access
3. Social connection
4. Sense of place
5. Participation and caring for places

These themes are then applied to South Maryport, drawing attention to broad characteristics of the local outdoor environment and highlighting key considerations for the Neighbourhood Board.

1. Contact with nature

Regular contact with nature is associated with a wide range of benefits for health and wellbeing. People who have the chance to experience natural environments often report higher levels of wellbeing, while access to green and blue spaces has been associated with reduced stress, improved mood and greater life satisfaction. Natural environments can also encourage physical activity and provide space for relaxation, reflection and enjoyment.

These benefits are not limited to large parks or nationally important landscapes. Research increasingly suggests that everyday contact with nature can make an important contribution to wellbeing. Street trees, small neighbourhood green spaces, community gardens, rivers, ponds and other natural features may all contribute to how people experience their local environment. Frequent, familiar encounters with nature as part of everyday routines can be just as important as occasional visits to larger destination sites. Blue spaces, including rivers, lakes and coastal environments,

are associated with many of the same wellbeing benefits and may also contribute to local identity, distinctiveness and sense of place.

The quality and accessibility of natural environments influence how they are experienced and used. Subjective experiences of local places can influence wellbeing as much as, or more than, the objective presence of natural features. Well-maintained, attractive and accessible spaces are more likely to encourage use and support positive experiences. Accessibility extends beyond physical access. The extent to which people feel welcome, comfortable and safe influences whether outdoor spaces become part of everyday life. Visibility, ease of access and connections to surrounding streets and neighbourhoods all influence how frequently natural spaces are encountered and used.

For Pride in Place neighbourhoods, this suggests that the contribution of nature to wellbeing depends on more than just the quantity of green or blue space available. The location, quality, accessibility and everyday experience of natural features are likely to influence the wellbeing benefits they provide. Smaller, well-used spaces that form part of daily routines may therefore make a valuable contribution alongside larger parks, recreation areas and wider landscapes.

Implications for Pride in Place

When considering investment in the outdoor environment, the Neighbourhood Board may wish to consider:

- How easily do residents encounter nature as part of their everyday lives?
- Are existing green and blue spaces welcoming, attractive and easy to access?
- Is there potential to improve the quality and everyday use of existing spaces?
- Could relatively small improvements increase opportunities for contact with nature across the neighbourhood, alongside investment in larger parks and natural spaces?

2. Walking, movement and access

Walking is one of the main ways in which people experience their local environment. Everyday journeys to schools, shops, workplaces, parks and community facilities shape how people experience their neighbourhood and influence the opportunities they have to spend time outdoors. The design and connectivity of the outdoor environment therefore play an important role in supporting both individual and community wellbeing.

Research consistently shows that environments that are attractive, accessible, and easy to navigate encourage walking and other forms of everyday physical activity. Walking provides a way to experience neighbourhoods at a human scale. It creates repeated encounters with local streets, green spaces, community facilities and other people, helping to shape familiarity with an area and chances for contact with nature and social interaction. Many of these benefits arise through routine, everyday journeys rather than planned recreational activities.

The experience of walking is influenced by more than just the presence of footpaths or pavements. The quality of the surrounding environment, perceptions of safety, ease of crossing roads, accessibility for people of different ages and abilities, and the continuity of walking routes all affect whether people choose to walk and how enjoyable those journeys are. Routes that are well connected and pleasant to use can encourage people to spend more time outdoors and strengthen connections between neighbourhood destinations.

The outdoor environment can therefore support wellbeing by making everyday movement easier, more attractive and more enjoyable. Connections between parks, community facilities, local centres, schools and residential areas are an important part of this wider neighbourhood experience. Investment that strengthens these connections can increase opportunities for walking while also supporting social interaction, access to local services, and a stronger sense of place.

Implications for Pride in Place

When considering investment in the outdoor environment, the Neighbourhood Boards may wish to consider:

- How easy is it for residents to walk between key neighbourhood destinations?
- Do pedestrian paths feel welcoming, attractive and safe for people of different ages and abilities?
- Are parks, community facilities and local centres well connected by accessible routes?
- Could relatively small improvements encourage more walking as part of everyday neighbourhood life?

3. Social connection

The outdoor environment provides a setting for people to spend time together, meet informally and participate in community life. Parks, public spaces, streets, play areas and the outdoor spaces associated with community facilities all create settings in which neighbours can encounter one another during everyday activities. These

regular interactions contribute to the social fabric of neighbourhoods and can help to strengthen community wellbeing.

The potential for informal social contact is an important aspect of healthy neighbourhoods. Conversations while walking, children playing together, people stopping to talk in local parks, or community activities taking place in shared outdoor spaces all contribute to a sense of familiarity and belonging. While these interactions may appear small in isolation, their cumulative effect can help to build trust, strengthen local relationships and encourage participation in community life.

The design, quality and accessibility of outdoor environments influence how readily these opportunities arise. Public spaces that are welcoming, comfortable and well maintained are generally more likely to be used by a wide range of people. Features such as seating, planting, play areas and spaces that support community activities can encourage people to spend longer outdoors and increase the likelihood of informal interaction. Equally important is the relationship between different outdoor spaces. Well-connected neighbourhoods make it easier for people to move between places and participate in local activities.

Social connection is shaped by many factors beyond the physical environment, including local organisations, community groups and opportunities for participation. The outdoor environment provides a setting in which these activities can take place and can help to support existing community strengths. Investment in outdoor spaces, therefore, has the potential to contribute to community wellbeing by creating environments that encourage people to spend time outdoors, interact with others, and participate in neighbourhood life.

Implications for Pride in Place

When considering investment in the outdoor environment, the Neighbourhood Board may wish to consider:

- Which outdoor spaces already bring people together as part of everyday neighbourhood life?
- Is there potential to make shared outdoor spaces more welcoming, comfortable and inclusive?
- How can outdoor improvements complement the work of local community organisations and activities?
- Could improvements encourage people to spend more time outdoors and strengthen opportunities for informal social interaction?

4. Sense of place

People's relationships with places develop over time through repeated experiences of everyday neighbourhood life. Familiar streets, local parks, community spaces, views, natural features and spending time outdoors all contribute to the ways in which people perceive and value the places where they live. These experiences help to create a sense of place that can support both individual and community wellbeing.

A positive sense of place is associated with higher levels of wellbeing, stronger feelings of belonging and greater satisfaction with local areas. Sense of place develops through everyday experiences and the meanings that people attach to local environments. Distinctive natural features, attractive public spaces, opportunities to meet other people and environments that feel cared for can all contribute to positive perceptions of neighbourhoods.

The way people perceive the outdoor environment is an important part of this process. Subjective experiences of local places influence wellbeing alongside the physical characteristics of the environment itself. Features such as cleanliness, maintenance, accessibility, attractiveness and perceived safety all contribute to how people experience neighbourhoods and whether outdoor spaces become places that people value and use regularly.

Each neighbourhood has its own character, shaped by its landscape, history, communities and everyday patterns of use. Investment in the outdoor environment can strengthen these existing qualities by enhancing places that are already important to local people, improving everyday experiences and supporting stronger connections between people and place.

Implications for Pride in Place

When considering investment in the outdoor environment, the Neighbourhood Board may wish to consider:

- Which outdoor places are particularly valued by local residents, and why?
- How can investment build on the distinctive character and identity of the neighbourhood?
- Can everyday experiences of outdoor spaces be enhanced through relatively small changes?
- How might improvements help people feel more connected to their neighbourhood and encourage greater use of local outdoor spaces?

5. Participation and caring for places

The outdoor environment can also contribute to wellbeing by creating frameworks for people to become involved in shaping, improving and caring for the places where they live. Community gardening, environmental improvement projects, volunteering, local events and other shared activities all provide structured spaces for residents to work together, develop new relationships and strengthen connections with their neighbourhood.

This kind of participation in caring for local places can benefit both individual and community wellbeing. Taking part in practical activities outdoors can support physical and mental wellbeing, offer the chance to develop new skills and strengthen social connections. At a community level, shared involvement can help to build trust, encourage collaboration and strengthen people's sense of ownership and responsibility for local places.

People are more likely to become involved where opportunities are welcoming, inclusive and connected to places that already matter to them. Small-scale projects that improve existing outdoor spaces, create space for local participation or support community-led activities may therefore contribute to wellbeing while also strengthening the long-term care and sustainability of neighbourhood environments.

The relationship between people and place is dynamic. Well-used and well-cared-for outdoor environments encourage people to spend time outdoors and develop stronger connections with their neighbourhood. In turn, these experiences can encourage greater involvement in caring for local places, creating a positive cycle in which people and places support one another over time.

Implications for Pride in Place

When considering investment in the outdoor environment, the Neighbourhood Board may wish to consider:

- How can local people be involved in shaping, improving or caring for outdoor spaces?
- Are there opportunities to build on existing community groups, activities or volunteering initiatives?
- Which projects are most likely to encourage ongoing community involvement?
- How can investment support outdoor environments that continue to be valued and cared for over the longer term?

Together, these five themes provide a framework for considering how investment in the outdoor environment may contribute to wellbeing through the experiences it creates, the relationships it enables and the connections people develop with local places.

Applying the framework to South Maryport

The framework outlined above provides a way of considering how the outdoor environment may contribute to individual and community wellbeing. The following sections apply this framework to South Maryport, highlighting broad characteristics of their outdoor environments and considering how these may support wellbeing.

Each neighbourhood has its own history, landscape, pattern of development and community assets. Consequently, the contribution of the outdoor environment is likely to differ between areas. Some neighbourhoods may benefit from extensive green or blue spaces, while others may derive greater value from the quality of everyday streets, local parks, community spaces or walking connections. The aim is to understand how the particular character of each neighbourhood creates opportunities for everyday experiences, social relationships and meaningful connections with place.

The observations draw on publicly available mapping, local information and the general characteristics of each area. They are intended to complement the knowledge and experience of local residents and the Neighbourhood Board, providing an additional perspective to support discussion about future investment in the outdoor environment.

Each neighbourhood profile is organised around three questions:

- What characterises the neighbourhood's outdoor environment?
- How might these characteristics contribute to individual and community wellbeing?
- What opportunities might the Neighbourhood Boards wish to consider when developing local investment priorities?

South Maryport

Character of the outdoor environment

South Maryport is characterised by the close relationship between residential neighbourhoods, the coast and the wider landscape. The area includes several distinct neighbourhoods connected by a network of open spaces, local green areas

and the coastal environment. Rather than being defined by a single town centre or major public space, its outdoor environment is shaped by the interaction between neighbourhoods and the surrounding landscape.

This close relationship between neighbourhoods and the surrounding landscape means that residents may encounter a varied natural environment as part of everyday life. The proximity of the coast, together with access to open countryside and local green spaces, creates opportunities for recreation, walking and regular contact with nature, contributing to the area's distinctive character and its potential to support wellbeing.

Contribution to wellbeing

The combination of coastal, rural and neighbourhood environments provides opportunities for regular contact with nature in a variety of settings. Coastal landscapes, nearby countryside and local green spaces each offer different experiences and may contribute to wellbeing in complementary ways. Together, they create opportunities for restoration and physical activity throughout the year.

The pattern of the local areas also highlights the importance of walking and connectivity. The quality of routes linking neighbourhoods with local facilities, the coastline and surrounding green spaces may influence how readily residents can benefit from these environments as part of everyday life. Improving connections between individual spaces may therefore be as important as enhancing those spaces.

The varied character of the outdoor environment also provides opportunities to strengthen local identity. Coastal settings, open views and the relationship between communities and landscape contribute to a distinctive sense of place that differs from more densely urban neighbourhoods. Investment that enhances these qualities while supporting everyday use of local outdoor environments may therefore contribute to both individual and community wellbeing.

In this neighbourhood, investment may be most effective where it strengthens the relationship between local places, the coast and surrounding green spaces. Improvements that make it easier and more enjoyable to move between these environments (for example through better walking connections, improved access points, seating, wayfinding or enhancements to key public spaces) could encourage more frequent use of the area's existing environmental assets.

Considerations for the Neighbourhood Board

Potential priorities:

- Strengthening links between neighbourhoods, the coast and surrounding green spaces to make it easier for residents to experience the area's natural assets.
- Improving access to coastal and natural environments, including entrances, paths, seating and wayfinding where appropriate.
- Enhancing key public spaces so they complement the area's wider landscape and encourage everyday outdoor use.
- Building on the distinctive coastal and landscape character of the area through improvements that reinforce local identity.
- Supporting opportunities for walking and recreation that encourage more frequent use of existing outdoor environments.

Supporting wellbeing through the outdoor environment

South Maryport's outdoor environment is shaped by the close relationship between its residential neighbourhoods, the coast and surrounding countryside. This creates opportunities to support wellbeing through investment in everyday outdoor environments, local green spaces and the connections between neighbourhoods and the wider landscape. Several themes emerge from the evidence and observations presented above.

- First, the greatest opportunities to support wellbeing often arise from the quality of everyday environments rather than from individual landmark projects. Streets, neighbourhood green spaces, pedestrian and cycle paths, community spaces and the connections between them are encountered regularly and therefore have an important influence on everyday neighbourhood life.
- Second, the way people experience outdoor environments is as important as the physical features they contain. Accessibility, connectivity, attractiveness and opportunities for everyday use all influence whether outdoor spaces become valued parts of neighbourhood life.
- Third, investment is likely to be most effective when it builds on the distinctive character of the areas within South Maryport. Strengthening connections between residential areas, local green spaces, community facilities, the coast

and surrounding countryside offers opportunities to support both individual and community wellbeing while reinforcing local identity.

- Finally, the outdoor environment should be considered as part of a connected neighbourhood rather than as a series of individual sites. The relationships between streets, green and blue spaces, community facilities and places where people meet contribute collectively to the experiences that shape everyday neighbourhood life.

This perspective suggests that Pride in Place investment can contribute to wellbeing by enhancing the environments that people use every day and by strengthening the relationships between people, places and communities. Improving the quality, accessibility and connectivity of these environments can support healthier, better connected and more resilient neighbourhoods.

Recommendations

The recommendations below should be treated as strategic considerations for testing through community engagement, rather than predetermined investment decisions. The report explicitly recognises residents as experts in their own places and places responsibility for determining priorities with the Neighbourhood Board.

- 1. Put community voice at the centre of investment decisions:** Develop accessible and continuing mechanisms through which residents can identify priorities, co-design projects and participate in decisions throughout delivery. Engagement should include children and young people, older residents, disabled people, working households and residents who may not normally participate in formal consultation.
- 2. Prioritise improvements to everyday places:** Alongside larger projects, consider relatively modest interventions that can have frequent and visible benefits: paths, seating, lighting, planting, play areas, community spaces, signage, accessibility improvements and maintenance. The evidence suggests that the environments residents encounter routinely can be particularly important for wellbeing.
- 3. Improve connectivity across South Maryport:** Strengthen walking and, where appropriate, cycling connections between residential areas, schools, community facilities, green spaces, the coast and other local destinations. Particular attention should be given to accessibility, perceived safety, crossings, continuity of routes and the needs of residents of different ages and abilities.
- 4. Use green and blue infrastructure as a wellbeing asset:** Protect and enhance access to the coast, countryside, woodland and neighbourhood green spaces. Investment should consider not only the existence of natural assets but their quality, accessibility, attractiveness and ability to become part of residents' everyday lives.

- 5. Invest in community infrastructure and existing organisations:** Build upon community halls, sports clubs, schools, play areas, voluntary organisations and established events rather than assuming that entirely new infrastructure is always required. Previous investment demonstrates that relatively modest, sustained support can help organisations maintain activities that contribute to social connection and community life.
- 6. Give particular consideration to children and young people:** The area's demographic and deprivation profile makes young people an important consideration. Investment could support safe places to meet, play and participate in sport and recreation, while ensuring young people have meaningful opportunities to influence decisions about the places they use.
- 7. Make accessibility and inclusion a cross-cutting principle:** Given comparatively high levels of disability and poorer health, accessibility should be incorporated from the outset rather than treated as an additional consideration. Physical improvements, community activities, consultation processes and communications should all consider different mobility, health and participation needs.
- 8. Strengthen local identity through heritage, culture and landscape:** Use South Maryport's coastal setting, industrial and mining heritage, community traditions and distinctive local places as assets. Previous heritage, arts and community initiatives demonstrate opportunities to connect physical regeneration with storytelling, creativity and intergenerational participation.
- 9. Build partnerships that increase the value of Pride in Place investment:** Seek opportunities to combine Pride in Place resources with council funding, environmental programmes, community funds, businesses, arts organisations and other external funders. Previous projects show that partnership funding can significantly increase what communities are able to deliver.

- 10. Invest for long-term stewardship, not simply project delivery:** Project assessment should consider maintenance, ownership, community involvement and long-term sustainability from the beginning. Wherever possible, investment should create opportunities for residents and organisations to participate in caring for places after physical works are completed.
- 11. Address interconnected needs rather than isolated symptoms:** Health, disability, employment, income, transport and access are likely to interact. The demographic evidence therefore supports considering how individual investments might deliver several outcomes simultaneously—for example, an accessible walking route could improve mobility, access to services, physical activity, social interaction and connection with nature. The report itself identifies further examination of relationships between poor health, disability, employment and income as potentially valuable.
- 12. Establish a clear framework for measuring impact:** The Neighbourhood Board should establish baseline measures and proportionate indicators for funded projects. Evaluation should look beyond physical outputs to consider outcomes such as participation, accessibility, use of community assets, wellbeing, social connection, perceptions of place and residents' sense of influence over local decisions.

Conclusion

South Maryport enters the Pride in Place programme with a combination of significant need and significant community strength. The evidence demonstrates socioeconomic and health inequalities that should inform investment decisions, but it also reveals communities with established organisations, valued assets, strong identities, and a history of residents taking action to protect and improve the places where they live.

The opportunity presented by Pride in Place is therefore greater than that of delivering individual capital projects. It provides the potential to connect investment in people, community infrastructure and the physical environment. Improving everyday places can support health and wellbeing; strengthening community organisations can increase social connection and participation; and involving residents directly in shaping those improvements can reinforce ownership, belonging and pride in place. South Maryport's coast, countryside, green spaces, community facilities, sporting organisations, heritage and traditions provide an existing foundation for this work. The evidence suggests that future investment will be strongest when it connects these assets, improves accessibility and everyday experiences, and reinforces rather than replaces existing community capacity.

There is no single intervention capable of addressing all of the challenges identified in this report. A combination of strategic investment and smaller community-led improvements, connected by a clear long-term vision, is more consistent with the evidence presented. Crucially, decisions about what this means in practice should emerge through meaningful engagement with the people who live in South Maryport. The central principle for the next stage should therefore be simple: build on what South Maryport already has, improve the places people use every day, remove barriers to participation, and give communities a meaningful role in shaping and caring for their future. In doing so, Pride in Place has the potential to leave not only improved physical assets, but stronger relationships, greater community capacity and a more connected, healthy and resilient South Maryport.



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A History of Community Investment in South Maryport



South Maryport

1 Introduction

Local investment in South Maryport has focused on improving community spaces and infrastructure, supporting local organisations, commemorating the area's past, promoting wellbeing and responding to community priorities. We also found examples of local businesses and arts organisations working with communities in ways that align with the aims of the Pride in Place programme.



2 Council funding and the Lakes to Sea Community Panel

The Maryport areas fall within the Cumberland Council Lakes to the Sea Community Panel, established in 2023. Its budget for 2025/26 was £67,548. At the time of writing, no significant funding from the panel was received by any of the three Maryport areas. Details of locally funded groups, events and initiatives are drawn from Maryport Town Council (Flimby and Ellenborough) and Broughton Moor Parish Council.



3 Community groups and events in Flimby

Maryport Town Council supports a range of community groups with regular funding, typically £1,000–£2,000 per year, including:

- Flimby Allotment Society
- Flimby Youth Club
- Flimby Community Hall
- Flimby Girl's Brigade
- Flimby Children's Carnival
- Flimby Pensioners Committee
- Flimby Over-60s Club
- Flimby Sports and Social Club



Other events, such as the Flimby Village Show, Flimby Vikings ARLFC, Flimby Social FC and the Flimby Scarecrow Festival, also receive smaller or ad hoc support.

4 Community investment in Ellenborough

Funding has focused on Ellenborough Rangers ARLFC, the local rugby club, which received regular support (usually £1,000 per year) from 2016–2023 and again in 2025, and on Ellenborough Play Area. The rugby club encourages sport and provides opportunities for young players, with support from Workington Town RLFC. The Lakes to the Sea panel also funded balance bike training at Ellenborough Academy (£3,813).



5 Broughton Moor funding

Broughton Moor receives around £11,450 per year from the Broughton Moor Wind Farm Fund (managed by Cumbria Community Fund), with grants of £200–£5,000 for community groups and projects. Examples include St Columba's Church (£1,600), Cuddly Koalas pre-school (£1,000) and the Over 60s Group (£3,000). The Christmas tree lighting ceremony has sometimes included a gift for every child at the school.



6 Community spaces and infrastructure

Investment has improved playgrounds, green spaces, footpaths, street furniture and community facilities. Key projects include Flimby Great Wood, village green spaces, cemetery improvements, Ellenborough Play Area and, in Broughton Moor, a new play area (opened in 2022), community centre refurbishment, tennis court upgrades and improved local infrastructure. Funding has also supported flood alleviation, tree planting and heritage features.



7 Local business and community pride

Flimby-based New Balance has brought national and international attention to the area, celebrating local skills and the workforce through media, events and special-edition footwear such as the 'Allerdale' shoe.



8 Community arts initiatives

Projects include the Peascod Festival (celebrating local artist Bill Peascod) and Everyone Here, the Arts Council-funded Creative People and Places programme, which has delivered workshops and creative projects in Flimby, with further activity planned through Everywhere Everything Everyone (EEE).



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The Outdoor Environment and Wellbeing in South Maryport



South Maryport

1 Contact with nature

Regular contact with nature is associated with a wide range of benefits for health and wellbeing, including reduced stress, improved mood and greater life satisfaction. Natural environments can also encourage physical activity and provide space for relaxation, reflection and enjoyment.



2 Walking, movement and access

Attractive and accessible outdoor environments encourage walking and everyday movement, helping people to stay active, connect with local destinations and feel more part of their community.



3 Social connection

Well-designed outdoor spaces provide opportunities for people to meet, spend time together and participate in community life. Parks, green spaces, streets and community spaces can all help to strengthen social relationships and a sense of belonging.



4 Sense of place

Natural and built environments contribute to local identity, distinctiveness and pride. Valuing and enhancing the quality of outdoor spaces can strengthen people's connection to South Maryport and support a positive sense of place.



5 Participation and caring for places

Involving local people in the use, improvement and care of outdoor spaces can build a sense of ownership, increase use and help to create healthier, more connected and more resilient neighbourhoods.



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Recommendations for Pride in Place



South
Maryport

1 Put community voice at the centre of investment decisions

Develop accessible and continuing mechanisms through which residents can identify priorities, co-design projects and participate in decisions throughout delivery. Engagement should include children and young people, older residents, disabled people, working households and residents who may not normally participate in formal consultation.



7 Make accessibility and inclusion a cross-cutting principle

Given comparatively high levels of disability and poorer health, accessibility should be incorporated from the outset rather than treated as an additional consideration. Physical improvements, community activities, consultation processes and communications should all consider different mobility, health and participation needs.



2 Prioritise improvements to everyday places

Alongside larger projects, consider relatively modest interventions that can have frequent and visible benefits: paths, seating, lighting, planting, play areas, community spaces, signage, accessibility improvements and maintenance. The evidence suggests that the environments residents encounter routinely can be particularly important for wellbeing.



8 Strengthen local identity through heritage, culture and landscape

Use South Maryport's coastal setting, industrial and mining heritage, community traditions and distinctive local places as assets. Previous heritage, arts and community initiatives demonstrate opportunities to connect physical regeneration with storytelling, creativity and intergenerational participation.



3 Improve connectivity across South Maryport

Strengthen walking and, where appropriate, cycling connections between residential areas, schools, community facilities, green spaces, the coast and other local destinations. Particular attention should be given to accessibility, perceived safety, crossings, continuity of routes and the needs of residents of different ages and abilities.



9 Build partnerships that increase the value of Pride in Place investment

Seek opportunities to combine Pride in Place resources with council funding, environmental programmes, community funds, businesses, arts organisations and other external funders. Previous projects show that partnership funding can significantly increase what communities are able to deliver.



4 Use green and blue infrastructure as a wellbeing asset

Protect and enhance access to the coast, countryside, woodland and neighbourhood green spaces. Investment should consider not only the existence of natural assets but their quality, accessibility, attractiveness and ability to become part of residents' everyday lives.



10 Invest for long-term stewardship, not simply project delivery

Project assessment should consider maintenance, ownership, community involvement and long-term sustainability from the beginning. Wherever possible, investment should create opportunities for residents and organisations to participate in caring for places after physical works are completed.



5 Invest in community infrastructure and existing organisations

Build upon community halls, sports clubs, schools, play areas, voluntary organisations and established events rather than assuming that entirely new infrastructure is always required. Previous investment demonstrates that relatively modest, sustained support can help organisations maintain activities that contribute to social connection and community life.



11 Address interconnected needs rather than isolated symptoms

Health, disability, employment, income, transport and access are likely to interact. The demographic evidence therefore supports considering how individual investments might deliver several outcomes simultaneously—for example, an accessible walking route could improve mobility, access to services, physical activity, social interaction and connection with nature.



6 Give particular consideration to children and young people

The area's demographic and deprivation profile makes young people an important consideration. Investment could support safe places to meet, play and participate in sport and recreation, while ensuring young people have meaningful opportunities to influence decisions about the places they use.



12 Establish a clear framework for measuring impact

The Neighbourhood Board should establish baseline measures and proportionate indicators for funded projects. Evaluation should look beyond physical outputs to consider outcomes such as participation, accessibility—use of community assets, wellbeing, social connection, perceptions of place and residents' sense of influence over local decisions.



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