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Impact aims and mission

Our mission is to empower young people and adults with the skills and people to be 'Bold' and 'Resilient' so that they can handle whatever

We also want people to be 'Relevant', to have the necessary skills, knowledge, and experience to succeed in jobs today and in careers of

Our work in numbers:

6,000 Adults have accessed our service.

20,000 Young People have accessed our service.

2,300 Number of adults who have moved into a job or learning moved into a job or learning.

Number of employers engaged with.

Introduction of the **Chair and Chief Executive**

2021-22 has been a challenging, but ultimately successful, year. Despite the continued COVID-19 restrictions during the period, particularly the first half of the year, we have seen income return to pre-COVID-19 expected levels.

We have seen a major expansion in our employability work with successful implementation of the Government's Restart contract throughout Cumbria and Lancashire with new operating premises being opened in both Blackpool and Lancaster. We have also started new work offering employment support to ex-offenders.

The need for preparing people for the world of work, whether they are leaving education to make their first steps into employment or returning to work following a period of unemployment, has never been greater. Our traditional work of supporting individual beneficiaries has played a major role in helping businesses recruit the right staff in an incredibly challenging labour market. We are proud that our work to support over 26,000 beneficiaries has also supported over 530 businesses in the region.

Every year on behalf of Trustees, a full staff survey is carried out. This year the trustees were pleased that the results were very positive with 97% taking pride in working for Inspira and 98% finding their work worthwhile. We are

delighted that we were able to bring the full staff team together for the first time in over 2 years at our (normally) annual conference.

The Trustees are proud of the activities carried out, and the diversity of work across an ever-growing range of communities. The review of activities provides detailed case studies of how we are meeting our charitable objectives. The majority of our programmes are delivered as contracts via government departments, local authority or major prime contractor organisations (our major programmes). As an organisation we are big enough to offer scale and reliability but as a charity we are also able to work with smaller funding bodies to give as much added value as possible. This work is described in detail in the partnership section.

Our work as a charity is crucial, we are delighted that despite much of the year being under COVID-19 restrictions we continued to get great results. Looking to the future we are very much involved in developing new partnerships with both existing local authorities and newly forming unitary authorities. We will continue to forge partnerships with organisations who share our values and can ultimately help us help more people.



George Beveridge Chair, Inspira



Mark Bowman **Chief Executive,**

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Our major programmes at a glance

We are experienced in providing inspiring and powerful programmes to dynamically change an individual's life so that they are supported as they broaden their horizons and reach to achieve their potential.

The programmes we manage have a positive impact on people's lives:

The Key on behalf of Cumbria LEP via ESF

The Key offers skills support for adults in Cumbria who are unemployed and inactive in the labour market. Designed to match jobseekers with live local job opportunities, the programme aims to update and improve the skills of participants so that they can compete effectively in the labour market.

The Link on behalf of Cumbria LEP via ESF

Employer encounters are vitally important for all young people. Through The Link we have built a network of SME employers to work with young people across Cumbria to understand the world of work and the skills that are valued in the workplace.

Targeted Careers Information, Advice and Guidance (CIAG) on behalf of Cumbria County Council

Inspira has been commissioned by Cumbria County Council to provide careers information, advice and guidance, and support with progression planning to priority groups of young people. We also manage the September Guarantee to ensure all young people have a suitable offer of post-16 learning.

Lancashire Careers Hub on behalf of Lancashire County Council and the Careers and Enterprise Company

Lancashire Careers Hub is a collaboration of 154 secondary schools and colleges across the whole region who work together to deliver the Gatsby benchmarks. Collaborating with business partners, the public, education and voluntary sectors, they help improve careers outcomes for young people.

National Careers Service on behalf of ESFA through The Growth Company and Education Development Trust

National Careers Service provides careers information, advice and guidance, targeted at adults. We can help our clients to make decisions on learning, training and work at all stages of their career with enhanced support for priority groups.

Education, Training, Employment on behalf of MOJ via Maximus

ETE helps men on probation with gaining new skills, qualifications, training and funding or maintaining work. Our advisers provide a number of interventions including mentoring, disclosure, advice and support with literacy and numeracy.

National Citizen Service on behalf of NCST and the Growth Company

National Citizen Service (NCS) is a government-backed programme delivered by Inspira in Cumbria, Lancashire and parts of the North East. This unique programme was established in 2011 to tackle three key social issues, social cohesion, social engagement and social mobility. Taking place in the summer and autumn holidays, the programme focuses on fun and discovery, including 30 hours of commitment to a community project that benefits both young people and society.

Launchpad on behalf of Cumbria LEP via ESF

Launchpad offers NEET young people aged 16-24 across Cumbria a range of personalised support, tailored development opportunities, experiences and encounters with employers to help them progress into mainstream labour market opportunities, education and apprenticeships.

Restart on behalf of DWP via G4S

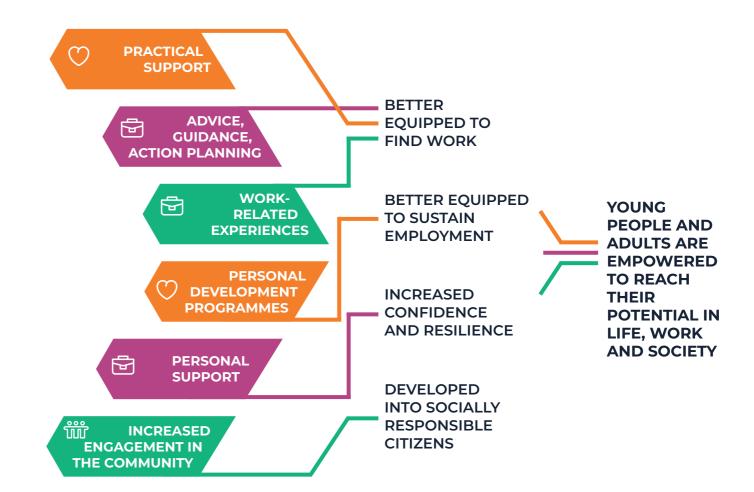
The Restart Scheme offers Universal Credit claimants who have been out of work for at least 9 months and have multiple barriers to employment enhanced support to find jobs in their local area. This is achieved through personalised one to one support and bespoke employer engagement.

How we work

Inspira's model is customer centric and encompasses a six-pronged approach, with support adjusted depending on an individual's need or community-led initiative.

We ensure young people and adults have access to, and experience of the working world and the knowledge and skills to succeed in it.

Helping to build stronger local communities.





Inspira's six pillars of working with people are interrelated. Each part of the jigsaw plays its part to inspire clients to reach their potential in life work and society, helping them to be **bold**, **resilient** and **relevant**. This in turn makes it easier for our commissioners and funders to meet their objectives.

Our impact





THE LINK

304 employers engaged with. to 14,334 interventions with young people.



employers engaged with.

TARGETED CIAG

Over 10,000 young people from years 11 and 12 making transition into education, training or employment.

Over 800 young people both pre and post 16 who were at risk of NEET or being NEET were supported into provision.

Young people with SEN (15-25yrs), 478 were supported with career decision making and next steps.

We supported over 210 young people from other vulnerable groups.

Our impact



RESTART

people supported by the service.

Over **220** people moved into employment.

LAUNCHPAD

moved into employment or education.



NATIONAL CAREERS SERVICE

4,110 people accessing the service via Inspira.

1,942 people moved into a job or training.



NATIONAL CITIZEN SERVICE

young people taking part in NCS during 2021*. hours of social action

*Reduced programme due to COVID-19 pandemic.

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Personal support

Inspira's personal support is designed to equip young people and adults with the skills they need to get their careers and education on track. This strand works in tandem with Inspira's other five areas of support.

Callum's Story

Since the COVID-19 pandemic some people are finding it difficult to gain employment, with many lacking in confidence, suffering from anxiety or social isolation. Inspira offers personal support that really makes a positive difference to their lives.

After struggling for some time to find fulltime employment Callum got in touch with Inspira and was referred to Karen, one of our Employability Advisers at Blackpool.

It's fair to say Callum hadn't had the easiest starts in life. Together they identified and discussed his barriers to work. It was quickly recognised that his lack of confidence and negative mindset were key factors in preventing him from being successfully employed.

Callum was referred to Inspira's new Ready for Work programme - a four-day programme with an emphasis on building confidence; along with helping participants to develop and practice key workplace behaviours and qualities, such as team working, planning and communication.

As the days progressed Callum's confidence grew. As well as leading, he was able to take instructions and advice from other participants to help them complete challenges as a team. Having observed Callum's interaction with his peers, Employability Adviser, Emma took Callum aside and asked if he had ever

considered work in the youth sector. Callum explained that working with young people and being in a job where he could positively influence other young people would be his dream. However, he felt this was unrealistic and out of reach to "someone like him".

With support from Karen and Emma, Callum got an interview for a role supporting young care leavers They worked with Callum to make sure he was mentally and practically ready for the interview. Then, off he went.

Callum got the job! He said that this would be life changing for him and his three young children and that he was so grateful for the collective support, advice and guidance he had received from Inspira.

Going forward, Callum will receive in-work support.



Personal support

"I knew from the first time I met Callum that there was huge potential there. It was my job to draw that out and support him to be the best possible version of himself. It wasn't always an easy journey but once he started to believe in himself, he took every opportunity to move forward not just into a job but a career."

– Karen, Inspira Employability Adviser.



Personal support





Personal support

Matthew's Story

Matthew was referred to the National Careers Service at our Barrow centre by a family member who had previously had an appointment. Matthew had recently moved to the area from the Midlands for a fresh start to get away from the drug culture that he was heavily involved in.

The appointment began by discussing Matthew's background and how he had made the decision to make changes in his life. He explained that he had been introduced to Class A drugs by his mother at the age of 13 and had tried to get support with his drug addiction, which was initially successful.

He achieved GCSEs at school and went on to get an apprenticeship in Electrical Engineering. Unfortunately, he was still living at home and mixing in the same circles which led to him using drugs again resulting in the loss of his apprenticeship.

With the support of other family members, he left home and moved away from these bad influences. He engaged with a local charity who run a recovery programme, but this didn't work out for Matthew, and he relapsed. Fortunately, he had strong support who identified a different rehabilitation programme which he felt met his needs.

When our adviser met with Matthew, he was one month into recovery and confident that this would be long term. He said that he wanted to find a job as he wanted to keep busy and take his mind off his addiction.

His skills were discussed, and he said that he wanted a practical job and didn't want a job sitting behind a desk. He had recently been helping a family member with a building project and thoroughly enjoyed this. His long-term goal was to be an Electrical Engineer and we discussed apprenticeship opportunities in the local area, and he was directed to the Find an Apprenticeship website.

Through the discussion Matthew recognised that he needed to take small steps to meet his long-term goal and successfully beat his addiction. He was offered the opportunity to attend the Key Programme that was linked to a Construction Skills Certification Scheme (CSCS) course. He was introduced to the course tutor to help him feel comfortable and to explain the course detail along with what would be expected in terms of attendance to give him the best possible chance of achievement.

Matthew attended the programme and successfully passed the course enabling him to apply for the CSCS card. He was introduced to recruitment agencies and local employers recruiting for labourers and with his new CV was able to apply for suitable vacancies.

After only a matter of weeks Matthew had successfully gained employment as a labourer with a local construction company working with the defence industry.

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^{*} name changed for confidentiality



Work related experiences

Work-related experiences are an essential step in the process to help people get ready for work and be successful at the interview stage. By providing inspirational, high-quality work-related experiences, Inspira has a significant impact on people's futures and change people's lives.

Working with Inspira helps Kay secure dream job

Kay came to Inspira through the Launchpad programme for support regarding career opportunities as she he had no formal qualifications or work experience, which were hindering her job search. Inspira referred Kay to a Skills and Development Adviser, Stevie, who offers 1:1 support for 16–24-year-olds.

After the initial meeting Stevie was able to offer Kay personalised and practical targets to complete, helping her with her future career plans and ambitions. Together they were able to develop her CV to ensure it was attractive to local employers.

Stevie then referred Kay to a Traineeship which allowed her to gain recognised Maths and English qualifications which are vital in today's job market. She was also able to improve her employability skills but most importantly it was a great chance for her to participate in a voluntary work placement whilst boosting her confidence.

After some reflection, Kay decided she'd like to go into the adult social care sector. Kay now had work experience which enabled her to attend an interview for a placement at a service for adults with additional needs and she was successful.

Through her work with Inspira, Kay had found a career path she was passionate about and felt like she had a purpose.

By the end of the three-month placement, Kay had made such an impression she was offered a position as a full-time Health Care Assistant. This is an amazing achievement, and we are all enormously proud of the progress she was able to make over a 4-month period.



Work related experiences

"The support I have received throughout my time working with Inspira and my journey to employment has been great, I am thankful to all the Inspira Advisers who helped me feel I am a better person than I was just a few months ago."

- Kay





Advice, guidance and planning

As a leader in career management Inspira works with young people and adults to help them understand the careers available to them. By being embedded in our local communities, our team draw on local labour market intelligence and excellent relationships with educational institutions and employers to ensure people have the best chance of success in life and work.

The targeted careers information, advice and guidance contract (CIAG) on behalf of Cumbria County Council is a classic example of Advice, Guidance and Action planning in practice.

Getting your life back on track after a setback or a change can be challenging especially for young people. Inspira is well known for its work with young people. Our advisers are highly regarded for their patience and diligence, the relationship they build can really turn a young person's life around.

Work experience opportunity helps Arran decide on career path

Through Inspira, Arran, a young person looked after by the care system gained valuable work experience to help further his understanding and knowledge ready for a career in IT.

Arran is currently in year 12. His ambition is to go to university or perhaps apply for a higher or degree level apprenticeship. He is doing well in school, has already undertaken some voluntary work but also wanted to gain valuable work experience in a computer-related environment.

One of our Careers Advisers spent time with Arran to find out more about his future career ambitions and aspirations, and about his wants and needs from the work experience. It was important to narrow down what aspect of IT work he would like to pursue and explain that it might be problematic to find him a placement due to the specialist nature of the work.

However, working with The Link project and Cavendish Nuclear, a local employer partner who has supported Inspira in the past, we were able to secure him one week's work experience in their IT department. Arran had paperwork to complete ahead of the placement so that the employer could fully understand his level of competence. We also worked with his school to ensure that this was completed on time to make certain Arran was successful in securing the placement.

Arran thoroughly enjoyed the work experience saying "Tony and Mark were great and were happy to help with anything that I struggled with. I have gained a greater understanding of how databases work and how to create reports from them. I would like to thank the team from Cavendish Nuclear for allowing me to do my work experience with them".

Opportunities for young people to learn from employers and discover the skills that are valued in the workplace and the career choices available are so vital. The work experience opportunity reaffirmed to Arran that his future career definitely lies within the IT sector.

* name changed for confidentiality



Advice, guidance and planning

Our work in pupil referral units and special schools

As well as working in mainstream schools and colleges, activities have taken place in Pupil Referral Units (PRUs) and special schools. This work has been differentiated to take account of the needs of the voung people in attendance. Employer volunteers have been carefully selected, for example, Disability Confident employers have been approached, and in West Cumbria staff have been recruited from the Sellafield Site Autism Support Network. Work has been individualised to align with the interests of pupils which has been possible due to small group sizes compared to mainstream schools and colleges. A lot of work has been experiential in nature to allow pupils with poor concentration or communication to be able to engage and to stay involved. During COVID-19, online activities took place including employer talks and

a careers evening for Special

school and college students.

Educational Needs (SEN)

The differentiated activities with SEN and PRU pupils have ranged from specialist careers days and employer talks to mock interviews and animal handling.

The activities have been well received by students, educators and employers. We have opened the door to the world of work for some of the county's most vulnerable young people, it's an aspect of our work that we plan to further develop in the years ahead.



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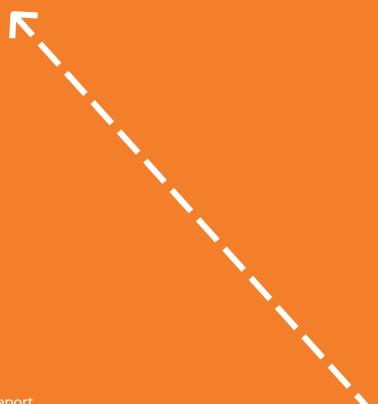
Practical support

Taxi Driver Recruitment Course

When people face challenging times in their lives, sometimes they need a combination of help, including practical support. The start of the COVID-19 pandemic saw many taxi drivers quit their jobs as demand for their services plummeted due to the hospitality and leisure industry shutting down and people staying at home. Many drivers opted to switch to high demand roles with delivery firms.

One city struck up a forward-thinking partnership to help get drivers back into cabs and help businesses bounce back. To help get drivers behind the wheels of Lancaster city taxis, a fully funded training initiative gave the area a welcome economic boost.

Lancaster City Council working in partnership with Inspira, Lancaster & Morecambe College (LMC), and others funded free practical help and advice to help drivers start, or restart, their careers The free Taxi Recruitment Course, which is also supported by the Department for Work and Pensions, offered drivers fully funded support with DBS checks, medical, advanced driving test, licence fees and providing help with CV writing and applications for vacancies.



Practical support

"By working in partnership with Inspira to encourage people to take up a career in the industry with both financial help as well as support from our licensing team to guide recruits through the application process, the initiative has started to show signs of being a success and one where everyone genuinely wins."

Councillor Colin Hartley,
 Chair of Lancaster City
 Council's Licensing Committee



Engagement in the community

Our Future Virtual Careers Fair

Inspira is strongly engaged in the local communities where the Charity operates. As part of the Charity's employer engagement work during the pandemic, and in partnership with Cumbria Careers Hub and Hello Future, Inspira organised an online careers fair: **Our Virtual**Careers Fair

During the COVID-19 pandemic most of the year 11 students in Cumbria missed out on the opportunity to engage directly with a variety of apprenticeship providers, FE & HE provision and employers from various sectors in the county. Inspira was determined not to see this happen again this year and made the decision to host a virtual careers fair which would go ahead despite the COVID-19 situation.

The **Our Future Virtual Careers Fair** took place in October 2021, aimed predominantly at year 11 students to help them make informed choices about their future careers and their next steps. It gave them the exciting opportunity to meet employers, training providers, colleges,

sixth forms and Cumbria FE and HE provisions all in one place.

Attendees had the chance to meet over 85 exhibitors and the opportunity to network through live or video chat, discuss opportunities and attend live talks.

The Careers Fair had five main zones: apprenticeship and training providers, Higher and Further provision, sixth forms, employers, and a careers area where young people and their parents/carers could access impartial careers information, advice and guidance. The attendees also had the opportunity to attend three live talks.

The virtual event was a huge success attracting over 2,000 participants from around the county. It's hard to think of any other event (live or virtual) that has had the ability to facilitate communication between year 11 students and employers, providers and FE/HE provision from all corners of Cumbria in one place.



Engagement in the community

Lancashire Careers Hub

Lancashire Careers Hub Team responded to the challenge engaging partners, business networks, employers and stakeholders to ensure young people continued to benefit from inspirational virtual employer encounters and as restrictions eased throughout the year face to face encounters resumed.

In November 2021, Lancashire Careers Hub held its Career Leader conference online with over 100 delegates including career leaders and volunteer employer Enterprise Advisers all hearing about the plans for the year. Inspira's newly appointed Employer Engagement Enterprise Coordinator has strengthened the relationship with Business Networks across Lancashire. Business Networks are communicating the work of the Lancashire Careers Hub to their members. This has resulted in an increase in employers pledging to become an Enterprise Adviser and Giving an Hour to support Employer Encounters in Schools.

"The Lancashire Careers Hub is really important for our economy and social mobility of our young people. In terms of the economy and working with our businesses it is providing a talent pipeline to support them to grow and flourish."

- Dr Michele Lawty-Jones, Director of the Lancashire Skills and Employment Hub, which supports the work of the Lancashire Enterprise Partnership and the 15 local authorities across Lancashire

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Personal development programmes

Keep Doing Good

Personal development is a critical component of Inspira's programmes, whether getting people ready for the working world or continuing their education and training. Activities cover awareness of, and the ability to identify and develop, talents, realising potential, dreams and aspirations.

Our NCS programmes had to be adapted for a second successive year due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic however this did not stop young people saying "No We Can" to NCS. Between July and December, approximately 1,000 young people in Cumbria, Lancashire and Northumberland were inspired into action by the challenges faced in our communities during the COVID-19 pandemic.

In a fantastic effort, the young people contributed towards a total of over 8,000 hours of voluntary work and social action projects.

With a second year of their efforts being affected by COVID-19, many young people in Cumbria, Lancashire and Northumbria were again looking for ways to step up and support their local communities.

Getting involved in a huge variety of sustainable and meaningful projects, the young people cleaned up parks and community gardens, picked up litter on beaches and in woodland, helped charity shops with their post-COVID-19 donations and raised money for local causes across the Inspira delivery areas.

When schools returned in September, Inspira was able to repeat its offer of support through NCS as part of the NCS national School Support Programme delivering shorter interventions to schools that were designed to support young people re-engage with their schools and colleges.



Personal development programmes

The initiative enabled schools and colleges to give additional support to young people who had lost their confidence and ability to socialise with their peers and generally offer support to those young people who were struggling with their wellbeing and mental health. Sessions focused on employability and post COVID-19 socialisation were also part of the offer that the NCS teams were able to make. We are delighted that we are now able to deliver NCS in residential settings (Summer '22).

Our people

Inspira has a committed staff team and they have shown great relevance and resilience over the past 12 months. The Board of Trustees regularly receive reports and presentations about the projects the charity delivers and sees them at first hand from time to time. Once again, they wish to place on record their appreciation for the hard work and dedication shown by the team.

It was particularly good to be able to bring the full team together this year. It had been over two years since we had been able to have what is normally our annual staff conference. The past two conferences have been virtual. and whilst they were successful, the energy and motivation in the room showed the impact of bringing the team together. But we have learnt that a digital conference can work and moving forward not only will we have our annual in-person conference but also an annual virtual 'get together', meaning the full team can come together twice a year. At the conference, as well as celebrating the great work and focussing on plans for the future, we were delighted to launch a new staff benefits package designed to give added benefits to the Inspira team with access to everyday savings ranging from supermarket discounts, cheaper petrol and everyday cost of living savings. It's a time where we need to do everything we can to look after our staff as well as our beneficiaries.

Once again, the Trustees were delighted with the results of the annual staff survey. The headlines being 97% of the team felt they were kept up to date with developments and strategy. 98% are satisfied and think their work is worthwhile and 97% take pride in working for Inspira.



As well as delivering programmes, we also use them too. Through Kickstart we offered Joe a placement in our Carlisle office. This was his first office-based role, and he was very nervous and lacked confidence in his own abilities. Joe had a lot to learn about what working in an office was really like but with help and support with accredited training including first aid, safeguarding and mental health awareness, along with hard work, he soon progressed.

In November 2021, Inspira offered Joe permanent full-time employment, and he is now an integral part of the team with a great future ahead of him.

Our people

"I love working with Inspira and the team in Carlisle. It is so much more than just sitting at a computer; every day is different. I feel like a totally different person. I am much more confident, I have learned so many new skills and am very grateful for the opportunity I have been given, and Kickstart did that for me."

- Joe



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Our partnerships

The Charity works hard to develop and sustain productive partnerships. As well as our major programmes we collaborate and work in partnership to deliver a range of services to help people develop their employability skills.

We work closely with county councils, unitary authorities and district councils across both the Cumbria and Lancashire Local Enterprise Partnership footprints. This involves both contractual and noncontractual work.

In Cumbria, we currently work with Cumbria County Council alongside district and borough councils as they transition to the new Cumberland and Westmorland & Furness unitary authorities.

We work with schools and colleges, Pupil Referral Units (PRUs) and Multi Academy Trusts (MATs) to deliver outcomes to young people in varied educational settings.

The trustees regularly review the Charity's approach to stakeholder engagement and to deliver maximum impact to its beneficiaries.

Allerdale Borough Council Allerdale Work and Skills

All Together Cumbria

BAE Systems

Partnership

Barrow Borough Council

BECBC

Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council

Blackpool Council

Career Development Institute

Careers & Enterprise Company

Careers England

Carlisle City Council

Cartmell Shepherd

Cavendish Nuclear

Chorley Building Society

Copeland Borough

Council

Cumbria Community Foundation

Copeland Community

Fund

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Copeland Work & Skills Partnership Cumberland Local Partnership Group

Cumbria Chamber of Commerce

Cumbria County Council

Cumbria Education Planning Group

Cumbria LEP

Cumbria LEP Labour Supply Working Group

Cumbria LEP People and Skills Strategy Group

Department for Work and Pensions

Eden District Council

Education & Skills Funding Agency

Education Development Trust

Energus

G4S

Geological Disposal Facility Community Partnership

Institute of Employability Practitioners

ISH

Job Centre Plus

Lancashire County Council

Lancashire LEP

Lancashire Skills and Employment Hub

Maximus

Morecambe Bay Health Care Trust

NCS Trust

Programmes and Project Partners

Re: Vision

Renewal fund

Seetec

Sellafield

Selnet

Skills 4 You

South Lakeland District Council

The Growth Company

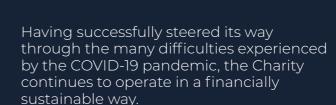
The Prince's Trust

University of Cumbria

Westmorland & Furness Local Partnership Group

Whitehaven Harbour Trust

Our financial sustainability

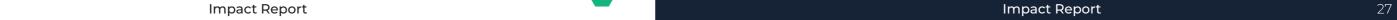


Turnover during 2021/22 increased by almost 15% compared to 2020/21 and a healthy operating surplus was achieved. Diversity of income streams continued to expand.

The senior management team, supported by the Board of Trustees, will seek new funding opportunities as the operating environment continues to develop and the organisation will ensure that all regulatory requirements are followed in order to deliver its key strategic priorities and charitable objectives.

As well as overseeing financial sustainability, the Trustees scrutinise key elements of the charity's operations, including safe working practices, safeguarding arrangements for clients and staff and social value impacts.





INSPIRA Inspiring you



