Landscape in a Changing Climate Conference Report

9th October 2025

North West Regional Flood & Coastal Committee

CiFR Cumbria innovative Flood Resilience

Department for Environment Food & Rural Affairs

Environment Agency

Cumberland Council

Westmorland & Furness Council

Landscape in a Changing Climate Conference
9th October 2025

Hosted by:	Cumbria Innovative Flood Resilience (CiFR) & Cumbria Flood Partnership
Time:	1000 – 1630hrs
Location:	The Castle Green Hotel, Kendal
Reporting and facilitation:	3KQ facilitators

Summary

Aim and Objectives
The aim of the conference was to bring people together to share learning around how the landscape is being affected by a changing climate, and how we can respond.

A wide range of organisations and people came together for the day to:

1. Build collective understanding
2. Share learning, offering inspiration
3. Connect with others and collaborate

Attendees
108 people attended from 53 organisations (listed on pages 14-16). When asked what type of organisation they were representing, most respondents were from Government departments/Agencies (34%) Community groups, organisations or NGOs (26%) or Local Authorities (24%), followed by Businesses (9%) and Academia (6%).

Presentations
After a welcome by Adrian Lythgo, Chair of the North West Regional Flood and Coast Committee, there were nine short presentations by a range of organisations. Topics ranged from the impact of climate change on flood risk, to changing forestry practices and the re-naturalisation of watercourses to provide a range of benefits. Stakeholders were invited to ask questions via Slido[1], and these were ranked by the number of people who indicated their support for each question. Questions and answers are listed on pages 3-4.

Workshop sessions
Stakeholders were invited to join one of five workshop sessions. These comprised sessions exploring flood risk in four communities in Cumbria (Wigton, Ambleside, Maryport and Dalton in Furness) and one session on "What role could the RFCC plan in enabling and facilitating better collaboration?". A short summary of each discussion can be found on pages 7-12.

At the end of the event, 98% of participants stated that they had found the event "Very worthwhile" or "Quite worthwhile" and cited knowledge transfer as a key benefit of the day. They also valued the opportunity to network and make connections.

[1] Using Slido - www.slido.com – online polling software

1. Presentations

Each speaker gave a 10-15 minute presentation, with questions collated via Slido.

1. Long term planning for the impacts of Climate Change on water systems. **Adam Lechmere**, Head of Sustainability, United Utilities.
2. Impacts of climate change on flood risk for Cumbria. **Richard Knight**, Area Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Manager in Cumbria, EA.
3. Response of Cumbria headwater catchments to climate change: geomorphology, extreme events, impacts and response. **Professor Jeff Warburton**, Department of Geography, Durham University.
4. Impacts of climate change on rail infrastructure: working with the landscape to mitigate impacts. **Michael Norbury**, Climate change adaptation specialist and **Olivia Devan**, Senior Asset Engineer, Network Rail.
5. How the Environment Agency is innovating to combat the threat of climate change. **Christine Dulake**, Senior Advisor, EA.
6. How Forestry England is changing its growing and felling practices in response to climate change. **Gareth Browning** MBE, Beat Forester and Wild Ennerdale Partner, Forestry England.
7. Ensuring natural flood management investment mitigates floods. **Dr Nick Chappell**, Lancaster Environment Centre, University of Lancaster.
8. Use of natural processes lead land management to secure water resources. **John Gorst**, Lead Catchment Partnership Officer, United Utilities.
9. The Upper Duddon Landscape Recovery Project: partnership working and landscape benefits. **Professor Dominick Spracklen**, School of Earth and Environment, University of Leeds.

Questions and answers following the presentations, organised by speaker (the answers below are 3KQs summary of what was said on the day. Any mistakes are ours):

Q: General question. The first poll had 5 options, but no option for 'farmer'. Without farmers in the room (and involved in ALL discussions) not much will happen!
A (Dave Kennedy, CiFR): Absolutely agree with the importance of engaging with farmers. Farming representatives were invited to attend, but unfortunately diary clashes meant this was not possible. Farms are businesses, so they would fall into this category in the first poll.

***Adam Lechmere**, Head of Sustainability, United Utilities*
Q: Will the Northwest be expected to support other areas of the UK which are experiencing more acute water shortages? How is UU planning for this?
A: No, there are no plans to supply water outside the Northwest area.

Q: Are you going to need extra reservoirs to grab water in the winter?
A: No. We have not built any new reservoirs since 1962. Owing to loss of major industries, increased water efficiency and leakage reductions, our water demands in the region have actually decreased. Our modelling shows that we do not need more water, we just need to be able to move it around and store it more effectively.

Q: Which reservoir is older than the US constitution?
A: Upper Chelburn reservoir (near Rochdale) built in 1775.

***Richard Knight**, Area Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Manager in Cumbria, EA*
Q: How are these datasets/scenario models shared between organisations to understand similarities and differences, and how they inform project delivery?
A: The data is widely shared between organisations and there are lots of effective partnerships operating in this area. The EA, UU, Local Authorities all integrate risk profiles based on the data that we share.

Q: Do we understand the additional per capita cost given the disproportionate impact on the county? We need this quantifying to lobby and work with new MCA
A: Probably not, but we are conducting a piece of research that might help with this. The costs calculated for implementation of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) will also be relevant here.

Q: Are planning authorities considering this info in the Planning assessment process? Both for location of developments & building design for resilience.
A: Yes. Developers need to access online databases which calculate flood risk. These now incorporate a climate change uplift. The Westmorland and Furness local plan also uses this data, so it will be embedded in their 25 year plan.

Q: What can we do collaboratively to minimise the impact of these flood events on properties and infrastructure as they become more frequent and intense?
A: Today is a good start. We want to do this sort of event more. Organisations cannot do this alone, and it's important to highlight the scale of change – individuals also have to be involved.

Links included in Richard Knight's presentation:
Flood risk assessments: climate change allowances - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
Climate change allowances for peak river flow
Flood and coastal risk projects, schemes and strategies: climate change allowances - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
The Met Office climate data portal

***Professor Jeff Warburton**, Department of Geography, Durham University.*
Q: Brilliant to see natural re-vegetation with minimal restoration, could you clarify what grazing was operating on the site over this time?
Q: When you spoke about vegetation recovering without restoration, were you talking about without physical interventions or grazing management?
A: There has been long-term grazing on the site. It's on a National Nature Reserve, so the grazing has been light to moderate over the time period studied.

Q: Positive soil management and changes in vegetation cover on farmland are such obvious ameliorations....so is anyone calculating what's possible?

A: Good work was done as part of the Pont Bren project in Wales, showing water infiltration rates up to 70 times higher in hedgerows than on grazed pasture. Other evidence from peat soils.
Additional answer provided by Lu Webb, NE after the Q&A: Yes, we have explored the impact of soil compaction on flood risk – see Palmer and Smith, 2013 – and there is widespread evidence that improving soil husbandry leading to better structure and condition can reduce peak flows by 10% and delay flooding (e.g. for 2 hours). BUT potential reductions relate to the soil type (sandy can have better impact than a heavy clay) and antecedent wetness. Vegetation changes relate to land use change, we need to be able to integrate all the objectives to allocate best land use change. LNRSs do attempt to do this. But it's also about land management and habitat quality. Far better storage capacity (surface) and frictional resistance in rough varied vegetation. Sheep removal from uplands is key.

***Michael Norbury**, Climate change adaptation specialist and **Olivia Devan**, Senior Asset Engineer, Network Rail*
Q: Network Rail - are you directly committing funds to NFM solutions?
A: Yes and no. There is no specific work bank for NFM solutions but from 2030, resilience work may include dedicated NFM options.

Q: I understand you are funding only capital work. What is the plan for landowners/farmers to support the maintenance into future - are Network Rail funding annual payments?
A: Annual payments are not possible for us, so instead we set higher upfront costs to compensate for this.

Q: What would be the impact of government roll back of net zero commitments?
A (Network Rail): We are not rolling back on net zero commitments. It is now cheaper to use renewable energy and all of our re-fits are done with renewables.
A (UU): We do a lot of work with investors. When Trump rolled back on net zero, investors doubled down on them in response, Delivery time might increase, but there are many advantages of net zero, not least financial savings.

A link to the Climate change adaptation - Network Rail website was included in this presentation.

***Christine Dulake**, Senior Advisor, EA*
Q: Whose responsibility is it to help keep rivers cool'? will the EA be investing in 'keeping rivers cool' type projects e.g. tree shading?
A: Everyone's. Whenever we do projects, we are always trying to improve river health and the environment. There are lots of different sources of funding for this type of project and there are temperature predictions for rivers here.

Q: What can we ask UK Government to mandate in policy that will give us the biggest benefit to climate adaptation?
A: It is already mandated. If every government agency used the same RCP and timeframe that would help. Also, the same dataset and models. Issues around data resolution – we need more consistency and guidance.

Q: Adaptation - have you looked to use AI for decision making with adaptation?
A: We don't use AI at the moment – partly because we still don't know about a lot of things in the natural world. We haven't yet got the data for large language models to produce meaningful results. But when we have, this could be a useful tool.

Q: Cumbria has recently held a citizens assembly about climate change. Should we have a water assembly to involve citizens in water governance?
A: As part of the Adaptation Pathways Programme, we are trialling best ways to involve citizens. The learning from that should be very helpful. We also have a new water engagement hub online.

***Gareth Browning MBE**, Beat Forester and Wild Ennerdale Partner, Forestry England*
Q: Why is it so hard to plant trees in the uplands when we need them to keep water cool?
A: Just because we need something, doesn't mean it is easy to do. Only 12% of our landscape is wooded, and 100 years ago, only 3% was wooded. 80% of our forests are less than 100 years old. Scots pine doesn't produce viable seed until it is around 120 years old, so this is still a developing knowledge base in the UK. Large parts of the uplands are out of reach of natural regeneration or are heavily grazed. Most trees need protection, and vegetation to help them get through the first 5 years without succumbing to a Spring drought. We also have cultural challenges – it's hard to find examples to show people that trees, scrub and woodland can look good, be accessible, and good for biodiversity.

Q: Can we create a system where small areas of trees on farms have monetary value as a cash crop? Would a local initiative build the supply chain needed?
A: The costs involved in harvesting trees mean that small woods are often not a viable option in terms of timber production, but they can be useful if grown as biomass, e.g. short rotation coppice willow.

Q: Why has continuous cover Forestry taken so long to take off in the UK, along with increased species diversity planting?
A: We only have a 100 year old forestry industry in the UK. It is much better established in Europe. To us, continuous cover forestry can feel complex and difficult and academic, but we can keep it simple and accessible. For example, our strategy is simply: thin, thin, shoot deer, thin.

Q: How do you choose the functional diversity of the species that are planted, particularly for biodiversity, flood risk, disease resistance, etc?
A: Use the Forest Research Climate Change Hub online. Choice will depend on whether you are growing for timber or biodiversity. We are still learning about which mixes work well together, and we are trialling different combinations rather than planting single species forestry. At the moment we try to create instant woodlands for biodiversity with lots of different species. We should probably mob plant pioneer species first where soil is denuded and compacted, then other species later.

Q: Please can you highlight the processes that you went through to restore the spruce woodland back to bog/mire. Difficult to sell to the "regulators" at the moment…

A: We felled the spruce, and blocked the drains. It was very wet, so the spruce hasn't come back. It has taken decades but the site is more diverse than we expected.

***Dr Nick Chappell**, Lancaster Environment Centre, University of Lancaster*
Q: Please give us a wee bit more about wet canopy evaporation in trees and woodland. How effective are forests in reevaporating water in storm events.
A: It is dependent on water balance – in windy, drizzly conditions, the water evaporates back off the complex canopies of trees. As long as the humidity is not 100%, some water will evaporate back from the surface area of the trees and this can take 10% off peak floods. With the proviso that this works best in the rain shadow.

***John Gorst**, Lead Catchment Partnership Officer, United Utilities*
Q: UU own a lot of land but are reliant on other land to help ensure surface water doesn't impact Combined Sewage Overflows. How will UU invest in catchment management elsewhere?
A: We are looking at clean water prevention, but we are now looking at sewage outflows too, we are always trying to learn and improve.

Q: Is there a way we can achieve what you are advocating and still retain jobs and cultural value? Is it an either / or can we have our cake and eat it?
A: Yes, you can have everything. At Haweswater, when we started it was a 3000ha site employing 4 FTE people. Now we have 22 people working there, living locally, sending their children to the local schools and supporting the community owned pub.

***Professor Dominick Spracklen**, School of Earth and Environment, University of Leeds*
Q: What payments are tenants/landowners getting now - before the year 6 'payments for outcomes'?
A: The project receives flat-rate payments for year 1-5. Then payment is by results, but tenants receive the same payment over the 20 years of the project.

2. Workshop sessions

Wigton

Iwan Lawton (Environment Agency) explained the geography and layout of Wigton, supported by displayed maps. It is a historic town on the edge of the Solway Plain, in a conservation area and is a meeting point for Wiza Beck, Flosh Beck, Speet Gill and Black Beck. Wigton was impacted by Storm Desmond in 2015, with 22 properties affected. An earlier flood in 2005 impacted more properties, c. 30-40. The number of properties is considered low in comparison to flood impact in other locations.

In response to Storm Desmond flood, an appraisal package was established with an estimated price tag of circa £4M, but a lack of resource and financial backing of only circa £1M limited the opportunities to improve flood defences. Spittal Farm was a positive flood scheme, where Cumberland Council refurbished some existing flood embankments. Iwan suggested that there was currently no engagement with the local community, and asked what could make a difference.

Participants shared their knowledge of the catchment:
– this is a town where there a are multiple water courses and once the water gets to the town, it's too late. It feels like the right time to revisit the modelling.
- Wigton Emergency Response Group have a general plan that has been registered with Resilience Direct.
– There is funding available from a consortium who provide farmers with advice on small scale interventions. The consortium is applying for funding for e.g. nature-based solutions or rainwater harvesting.
– there is a recent Landscape Scale bid being progressed through National Lottery funding.
- Work with Solway Partnership Group has highlighted that the flood risk to Wigton isn't recognised in the Town Plan (2020-2025) – this is being revised.
- the main concern with surface water flooding is blocked drains rather than rivers.
– there is a Network Rail prioritisation project in the north of Cumbria. Dock Ray, north of Wigton, is second on the list.

Some ideas for actions that could be taken to reduce flood risk included:
– Investigate semi natural water storage. Estimated cost £20k-£30k. Could delay flooding.
– Check whether Wigton area is included in the LNRS.
– Work with farmers through siting water storage facilities on their land (reduce their water bills). Use of a CaBA structure to allow strategic oversight and a sub-group for delivery.
– Dean Parish and Dean Moore Solar Farm are working on a community led plan. The Parish is just outside the catchment area, but there is an opportunity to collaborate.
– the combined sewer overflows overlap on the EA map could be looked at further.
- Network Rail are looking at the line at Spittal Farm/Spittal Cottage area south of the railway, that is currently impacted by Wiza Beck.
- Housing expansion is planned for the Wigton area. Contributions from Network Rail and developer investment could provide the opportunity to radically change the course of the Wiza by relocating it.

Ambleside

Colin Parkes (Westmorland and Furness Council) and Chris Evans (Environment Agency) gave a short introduction to flooding issues in the catchment, supported by displayed maps. Despite serious flooding in 2015, hard engineering works were not deemed economically viable, so they did not go ahead. There are many small watercourses on steep slopes, constrained through the urban environment which contribute to flooding in high rainfall events.

Participants shared their knowledge of the catchment:

- Many farmers are already signed up to agri-environment schemes, and there are opportunities for more activity through adjusting grazing levels, planting trees, blocking ditches and re-wriggling rivers. The right advice to farmers is vital.
- Water courses are heavily modified in the town, so upstream interventions will be important to reduce flooding. Many of the smaller watercourses aren't even mapped.
- The high level of political interest in the catchment, and Windermere itself, should offer opportunities for work that might not otherwise be possible. Actions to improve water quality can also help reduce flood risk.

Some ideas for actions that could be taken to reduce flood risk included:

- Urban Natural Flood Management schemes – e.g. de-culverting.
- Working with upstream farming to make small interventions in micro-catchments.
- Working with planning and development teams to ensure areas that could be useful for water storage upstream are not built on.
- Large-scale catchment-wide land management change – e.g. removal of sheep grazing, or working with farmers to re-wriggle rivers and support positive change.
- Work with households to make flood-prone homes more resilient. Support a mindset change, that flooding will happen, just need to be able to deal with it when it does.
- Make use of natural features higher up in the catchment – e.g. bunded tarns.
- Involve the younger generation through education – build resilience through knowledge sharing.
- There is an active community group in Ambleside – Ambleside Action for a Future. Could a conversation with them help identify risks and solutions?

Upcoming/current activity:

- Friends of the Lake District (FLD) woodlands at Ambleside and Grasmere already help with slowing flows.
- The Love Windermere Partnership is planning farm clusters but has no funding to support this.
- University of Cumbria has a large quantity of historical data including documentary and landscape history of watercourse change, sediments in catchments and community disaster risk reduction.

Dalton-in-Furness

Jason Harte (Westmorland and Furness Council) and Matt Marshall (Environment Agency) introduced flood issues in the area, supported by displayed maps. Three main rivers impact Dalton and Barrow, with Poaka Beck being the main risk, but water dynamics aren't well understood in this catchment. This complexity is exacerbated by the presence of mine workings.

An EA report currently in draft identified two areas of opportunity – a flat valley bottom that could be bunded to hold back flood water, and a further area downstream towards Furness Abbey.

Participants shared their knowledge of the catchment:
- Ellyse Mather (EA) oversees Barrow expansion impacting local water systems.
- New funding for Flood Risk Management in development.
- LLFA manages combined drainage; up to 200 homes at risk during floods.
- Planned South Cumbria Rivers Trust (SCRT) work at Pennington Beck (2026); more possible with extra funding.
- A significant landowner lives overseas so this complicates communications.
- The A590 road frequently floods but National Highways have limited direct land control.

Some ideas for actions that could be taken to reduce flood risk included:
- Ben Wilson (EA) highlighted that there are new funding rules coming. A pipeline for Flood Risk Management is going to be developed.
- The Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) is working on surface water. This could help alleviate flooding in up to 200 homes.
- SCRT are planning work at Pennington Beck 2026 including eel passes, but are looking for further funding.
- Two reservoirs in the catchment are United Utilities (UU) assets: Pennington and Harlock. These could be used to dynamically to manage the levels in flood situations.
- Cumbria Amenity Trust Mining History Society (CATMHS) – a voluntary group who advised EA on Carrock Mine might be willing to do some free mine surveys.
- Engage communities actively for 2026 flood strategy (e.g., leaflets).
- The appointment of a dedicated farming officer.

Upcoming/current activity:
- The Barrow expansion will impact Dalton. There is an opportunity to use investment to fund climate resilience. The Rivers Trust are keen to do more of this work. Funding won't be immediate though, and £200m won't go far.
- National Highways have a social fund they'd like to use to help projects.

Maryport

Colin Riggs (Environment Agency) and Nick Rae (Westmorland and Furness Council) provided an overview of significant flooding experienced in Maryport in 2015, supported by displayed maps. The Gill Beck, a steep culverted watercourse, overflowed at Elbra Farm Close, resulting in flooding down Ellenborough Road. While six properties were reported as flooded, it is believed that the true number was higher. Similarly, the Eel Sike, another culverted watercourse with a smaller catchment, overflowed and caused flooding to approximately twenty properties in White Croft Street. No further major flood events have been recorded since 2015. Maryport remains at risk from coastal, fluvial, and surface water flooding. High-level guidance and intervention options are outlined in the Coastal Strategy and Shoreline Management Plan (SMP), but a lack of funding prevents their implementation.

Participants shared their knowledge of the catchment:

- Overwater reservoir is to be taken out of UU supply.
- The use of the railway to transport nuclear flasks by Sellafield increases the value of the line.
- There is a designated area north of Maryport where there is significant historical heritage.
- Maryport is having property boom and there is a large housing development area just off mapping area that may have a significant impact on Maryport.

Some ideas for actions that could be taken to reduce flood risk included:

- The Energy Coast is key to increasing the value of railway through commercial use to transport freight. This could be an opportunity for investment.
- The MPs office has announced Pride in Place funding in areas of depravation including Maryport. This is £20million funding over 10 years.
- Diversionary flows away from properties could be used to send surface water over land rather than towards houses.
- Forestry England currently has no land in this catchment but has a mandate to buy land to build trees.
- Grant aid (e.g. from Forestry Commission and Natural England) is available to private landowners to plant trees. These do not have to be for timber production but can be used for pasture land, carbon sequestration, biodiversity.
- Planting woodland to the north of the A594 where the tributary is within open ground will have more impact than planting south of the road.

Upcoming/current activity:

- There is a lot of interest in local councils doing work in areas it is needed.
- Network Rail is working with RSPB along the side of the line.
- The new development in Maryport also brings opportunities e.g. large-scale separation of combined sewers.
- NFM is being considered at Eel Sike: Network Rail has funding to undertake upstream NFM if there are any benefits to the railway infrastructure.
- A bid to the Open Rivers programme with United Utilities connected to Overwater, located at the very top of the River Ellen.

‘Beyond Cumbria’, “What role could the RFCC play in enabling and facilitating better collaboration?”

The North West Regional Flood and Coastal Committee (RFCC) plays a pivotal role in enabling and facilitating collaboration across the region. The RFCC Chairs convene on a quarterly basis, fulfilling essential lobbying functions and exercising control over local levy funding, which amounts to approximately £10 million annually for the North West region. Queries related to funding should be directed to the RFCC Support Officer, Sally Whiting. Most of the straightforward engineered flood schemes managed by the Environment Agency have been completed, indicating a growing importance of Natural Flood Management (NFM) in future initiatives. It is anticipated that NFM will constitute a larger proportion of main funding allocations going forward.

Barriers to effective collaboration:

- Lack of Knowledge and Connectivity: RFCC members require improved understanding of other key partnerships and their interconnections. For instance, there is uncertainty regarding RFCC’s involvement with Nature North.
- Funding Uncertainty: The future structure of NFM funding at the national level is unclear, and questions remain about the extent of local influence.
- Devolution Challenges: There is ambiguity around how RFCC will engage with devolution processes, such as contributing to Spatial Development Strategies.
- Siloed Operations: Despite considerable overlap between flood risk and land management, these areas operate in isolation and draw from separate funding sources. Improved connections within DEFRA are necessary.
- Fragmented Planning: Flood Risk Management Plans and Catchment Management Plans are currently developed separately, illustrating silo thinking that hinders integration.
- Legal and Commercial Barriers: Complex legal and commercial requirements make it challenging to commission and deliver smaller projects. Projects exceeding £50,000 need Defra Commercial approval, creating substantial bureaucracy. Smaller local organisations struggle with restrictive legal agreements and cash flow limitations.
- Funding Structure Mismatch: NFM is not well-suited to traditional capital grants and typically requires innovative approaches, as it is often categorised as revenue. Maintenance funding is vital and should align with ELMS payment levels. There is a need for stronger RFCC connections with Natural England, as they are the primary funder of maintenance payments.
- Permitting Challenges: Restoration projects face the same permitting hurdles as large housing or infrastructure developments. Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) policies are not always effective, as demonstrated by requirements for tree planting even when removal supports restoration.
- Bureaucratic Friction: The Wyre Rivers Trust has highlighted excessive bureaucracy and friction in funding, permitting, and consent systems. For example, tree planting over 0.5 hectares requires consents from three DEFRA ALBs and consultation with groups such as the RSPB and National Landscapes. The latest approach taken by Defra with the Wyre Rivers Trust may serve as a blueprint for future processes.

Potential opportunities for the RFCC:

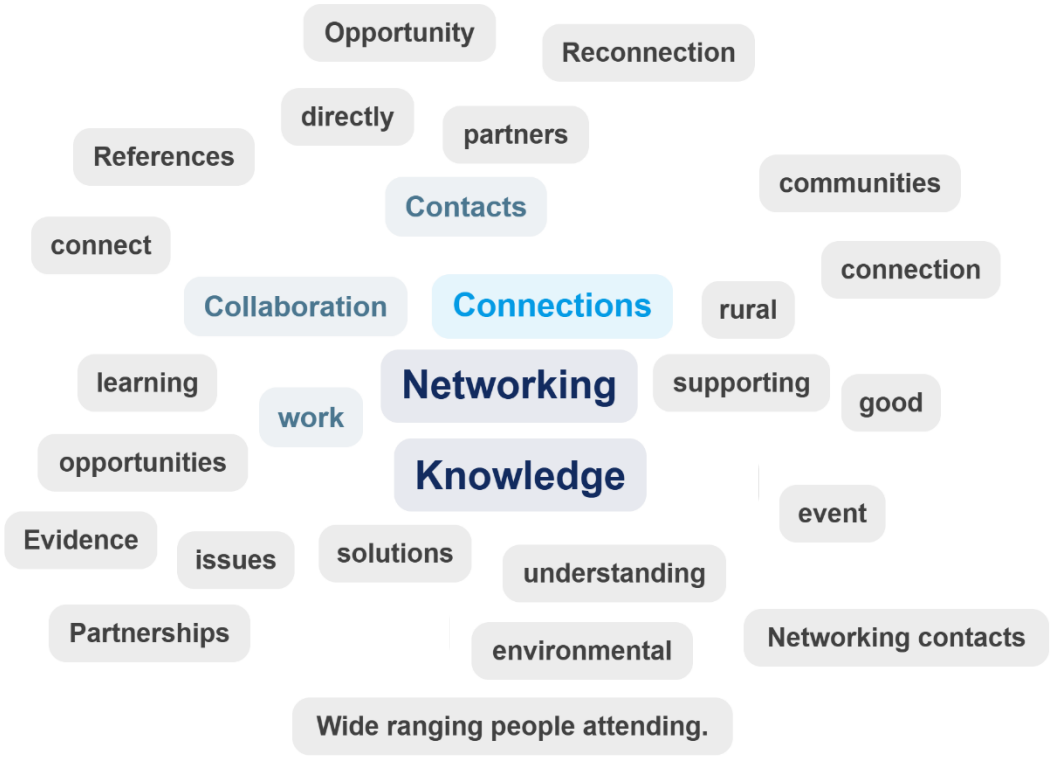
- Advocacy and Communication: RFCC should generate and clearly communicate the rationale for action, ensuring all stakeholders understand their role.
- Strengthen Key Connections: Currently, there is no formal link between RFCC and Local Nature Partnerships (LNP), which is a critical gap. Sub-regional RFCC groups and conservation sub-groups should be connected with relevant LNPs.
- Broaden Representation: Major infrastructure organisations are not currently represented on the RFCC, indicating an area for improvement.
- Two-Way Engagement: Partnerships should be represented at RFCC meetings, and RFCC should also participate in other partnership meetings. There may already be individuals who bridge both groups but have not yet made the connection. The committee needs members who operate at landscape or catchment scale, not just local champions.
- Streamline Funding Processes: RFCC should lobby for changes to Defra funding procedures to simplify and reduce friction within the system.
- Expand Communications: The committee should extend its communications to more of Defra, although this may be more appropriate as an action for Defra itself.
- Contribute to Strategic Planning: RFCC should actively contribute to and co-create key strategies and decision-making frameworks, such as Regional Spatial Strategies. An integrated approach is needed to address demands for housing, renewables, NFM, and infrastructure, alongside lobbying for devolved decision-making to ensure local decisions are not made remotely.
- Reframe Communications: Using examples such as the upper Severn catchment, RFCC can shift the narrative on NFM to emphasise economic, health, and wellbeing benefits rather than solely focusing on nature.
- Distil National Policy: RFCC could interpret national policies, extracting key points to communicate effectively with relevant organisations and stakeholders.
- Increase RFCC Visibility: For those not currently involved, more upfront information regarding RFCC's purpose, relevance, offerings, and capabilities would be beneficial.

3. Review of the day

Kate Morley from the National Trust, the NW RFCC representative for conservation, closed the conference and thanked participants for their time and input.

Using Slido, attendees were asked to feed back on how worthwhile they had found the event. 98% stated that they had found the conference “Very worthwhile” (44%) or “Quite worthwhile” (54%). The remaining 2% answered “I don’t know”.

When asked what benefits they had gained from the day, participants cited knowledge, networking and connections, along with a range of benefits related to learning and collaboration.



A “word cloud” of responses on Slido to the question “What benefits did you get from today?”

When asked what improvements could be made to the day, a number of people felt that agriculture should have been more strongly represented, and would have like to have seen more farmers/land managers in the room. Some people would have liked more time for networking and small group discussions or workshops. Respondents praised the expertise of the speakers, and the facilitation.

Appendix 1: Attendees

Name	Organisation
Jozi Brown	ACTion with Communities in Cumbria
Andy Moore	Arup
Caitlin Wood	Catchment Sensitive Farming
Victoria Murray	City of York Council
Cllr Bob Kelly	Cumberland Council
Emily Nugent	Cumberland Council
Graeme Innes	Cumberland Council
Nick Rae	Cumberland Council
Shamus Giles	Cumberland Council
Steven O'Keeffe	Cumberland Council
Mary Bradley	Cumbria Association of Local Councils
Will Huck	Cumbria Association of Local Councils
Liam Ryan	Cumbria CVS
Carolyn Otley	Cumbria Innovative Flood Resilience (CiFR)
Christina Summerfield	Cumbria Innovative Flood Resilience (CiFR)
David Kennedy	Cumbria Innovative Flood Resilience (CiFR)
Emma Simons	Cumbria Innovative Flood Resilience (CiFR)
Jody Ferguson	Cumbria Local Nature Partnership
Chas Chapman	Cumbria Rivers Authority Governance Group (CRAGG)
Graham Jackson-Pitt	Cumbria Wildlife Trust
Michelle Waller	Cumbria Wildlife Trust
Steve Trotter	Cumbria Wildlife Trust
Jack Jenkinson	Cumbria Young Farmers
Jeff Warburton	Durham University
Hilary Clarke	Eden Rivers Trust
John Rattray	Eden Rivers Trust
Phil Davies	Ellergreen Estate
Alison Whalley	Environment Agency
Andy Coupe	Environment Agency
Angela	Environment Agency
Ben Wilson	Environment Agency
Carol Holt	Environment Agency
Chris Evans	Environment Agency
Christine Dulake	Environment Agency
Colin Riggs	Environment Agency
Ellyse Mather	Environment Agency
Ian Caunce	Environment Agency
Iwan Lawton	Environment Agency
Matthew Marshall	Environment Agency
Richard Knight	Environment Agency
Sarah Fell	Environment Agency
Tom McCormick	Environment Agency

Name	Organisation
Georgie Barber	Food, Farming & Countryside Commission
James Anderson-Bickley	Forestry Commission
Gareth Browning	Forestry England
Amanda McCleery	Friends of the Lake District
Karen Mitchell	Futureproof Cumbria
Jim Bliss	Holker Estate
Luke Crilly	Knowsley Council
Sean McCrystal	Knowsley Council
Sarah Swindley	Lake District Foundation
Alice Collier	Lake District National Park Authority
Celia Caulcott	Lake District National Park Partnership
David Mindham	Lancaster University
Dr Nick Chappell	Lancaster University
Ruth Forrester	Love Windermere Partnership
Simon Stainer	Lowther
Jonathan Green	Lune Rivers Trust
Cllr Mandie Shilton Godwin	Manchester City Council
Matthew Brown	National Highways
Liam Quirk	National Highways - A66
Alice Keenan	National Trust
Carrie Hedges	National Trust
Rebecca Powell	National Trust
Jean Johnston	Natural England
Louise Webb	Natural England
Mark Hesketh	Natural England
James Robinson	Nature Friendly Farming Network & Ullswater CM CIC
Olivia Devan	Network Rail
Dafydd Thomas	Network Rail
Michael Norbury	Network Rail
Ryan Barrett	Network Rail
Sally Whiting	North West RFCC (Environment Agency)
Adrian Lythgo	NW Regional Flood and Coastal Committee
Paul Barnes	NW Regional Flood and Coastal Committee - Agriculture and Land Management (Farming)
Kate Morley	NW Regional Flood and Coastal Committee - Conservation Member
Carol Rennie	Office of Markus Campbell-Savours MP
Ellie Brown	Our Future Coast - Wyre Council
Sophie Aziz	South Cumbria Rivers Trust
Christina Worsley	The Flood Hub
Lucy Crawford	The Flood Hub
Rosemary Simpson	The Rivers Trust
Peter Leeson	The Woodland Trust
Danny Teasdale	Ullswater Catchment Management CIC

Name	Organisation
Helen Waine	United Utilities
John Gorst	United Utilities
Lewis Faulder	United Utilities
Matthew Powell	United Utilities
Sophie Tucker	United Utilities
Adam Lechmere	United Utilities PLC
Harry Wilson	University of Cumbria
Molly Hale	University of Cumbria
Rich Johnson	University of Cumbria
Wilf Rake	University of Cumbria
Dominick Spracklen	University of Leeds
Vikki Salas	West Cumbria Rivers Trust
Helen Race	West Lakeland Farmer - Led Nature Recovery CIC
Ali Harker	Westmorland and Furness Council
Alison Webb	Westmorland and Furness Council
Claire Gould	Westmorland and Furness Council
Cllr Giles Archibald	Westmorland and Furness Council
Corentin Cortiula-Phelipot	Westmorland and Furness Council
Jason Harte	Westmorland and Furness Council
Megan Lindeman	Westmorland and Furness Council
Rebecca James	Westmorland and Furness Council
Colin Parkes	Westmorland and Furness Council
Ian Elson	Wyre Council
Thomas Myerscough	Wyre Rivers Trust
Rhuari Bennett	3KQ Facilitators
Jenny Willis	3KQ Facilitators
Ruth Dalton	3KQ Facilitators

Appendix 2: Exhibition stands

Organisation	Website
Cumbria Innovative Flood Resilience (CiFR)	https://engageenvironmentagency.uk.engagementhq.com/cub005-cifr
Eden Rivers Trust	https://www.edenriverstrust.org.uk/
The Flood Hub	https://thefloodhub.co.uk/
Lune Rivers Trust	https://luneriverstrust.org.uk/
Penrith to Kendal Arc	https://btob.scrt.co.uk/actions/penrith-to-kendal-arc-landscape-recovery-project
West Cumbria Rivers Trust	https://www.westcumbriariverstrust.org/