

Introducing SIX – Sellafield Ltd's new social impact programme

Sellafield Ltd's social impact programme has been refreshed and relaunched as SIX – social impact, multiplied.

Its first investment will be Transforming West Cumbria, a £2.2 million fund to help West Cumbria's most vulnerable communities.

SIX is a new approach to social impact which prioritises projects co-created with the community and stakeholders.

It recognises that more can be achieved in partnership and that impact can be multiplied through collaboration.

Social Impact, Multiplied

Transforming West Cumbria will take on West Cumbria's most entrenched social and economic problems. Sellafield Ltd and the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA) are funding the initiative, which will be delivered by Cumbria Community Foundation (CCF).

It aims to put local people in charge of their own futures by empowering neighbourhoods to create transformational change.

The West Cumbria challenge

- higher than average poverty rates
- more than 20,000 people in debt
- 10,000 households with an income of less than £10,000 a year
- 3,900 children living in poverty
- more children in care than in any other part of Cumbria
- teenagers achieve fewer GCSEs than the national average
- high levels of youth unemployment
- one in four people over 16 years has no qualifications
- low rates of business and social enterprise start-ups

The programme will focus on family wellbeing, financial education, community activism, and inspiring young people.

Among the initiatives are:

- a £1.3 million fund for community and voluntary groups
- £660,000 to support families
- £175,000 to fund financial education
- schemes to nurture young entrepreneurs
- and a drive to make community activism the norm for young people

It has been developed to address issues identified in CCF's West Cumbria: Opportunities and Challenges report.

Gary McKeating, Sellafield Ltd's head of community and development, said:

I believe Transforming West Cumbria can create profound and long-lasting change in our community.

It will laser focus on the causes of inequality and confront the issues holding back our most vulnerable.

Research tells us people from poorer backgrounds are not lacking in ambition. What's missing is the knowledge, skills, and characteristics required to achieve those ambitions.

Transforming West Cumbria is a package of tailored support to address this.

It's not about telling people what's best for them. It's about giving communities the tools to be independent, self-reliant, and successful in the long-term.

Andrew van der Lem, head of government relations for the NDA, said:

Creating a positive legacy for our communities is one of the NDA's guiding principles.

That means ensuring as many people as possible benefit from the opportunities on our sites.

Alongside this, we're helping our communities to build diverse and sustainable economies which can thrive long after our decommissioning programmes have ended.

Transforming West Cumbria will help achieve those aims by using an evidence-based approach that prioritises measurable outcomes in the areas of greatest need.

Andy Beeforth, chief executive officer of Cumbria Community Foundation, said:

We have a long-standing relationship with Sellafield Ltd and we are proud to be a partner on this programme.

Community and voluntary organisations play a crucial role in helping us understand the needs of our local people and Transforming West Cumbria will enable this understanding to be used to tackle some key challenges in our area.

The programme will significantly invest in community projects that

build the capabilities and financial sustainability of critical organisations, inspire and encourage new and existing social entrepreneurs and help children, young people and families to thrive by building resilience and self-efficacy.

We are looking to fund more innovative and diverse projects that offer unique alternatives and innovative solutions to improve the health and wellbeing of local people and reduce inequalities.

By working together and focusing our efforts, we will help create thriving communities and a better future for West Cumbria.

Mike Starkie, Elected Mayor of Copeland, said:

Social inclusion has been and continues to be my key focus as Copeland's elected mayor.

I'll be working closely with partners in West Cumbria to ensure we support and enable the most disadvantaged in our community.

Projects within the Transforming West Cumbria programme include:

Bedrock

This will:

- empower leaders of community organisations with skills, resource, and time to invest in business strategy and development
- support businesses to explore new ways of working, including: money making, use of digital, collaboration, sharing resource and better management of community assets/premises
- improve governance
- build the ability and future proofing, through staff development, expert volunteer recruitment and clear succession planning

#CanDo

This will:

- raise young people's aspirations and build their confidence
- provide grants to support social or environmental action projects designed by young people, for the benefit of their communities

Family Wellbeing

This will:

- improve the health and wellbeing of some of the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children and families in west Cumbria
- invite community-based organisations working with disadvantaged children and families to apply for grants of up to £50,000 against the established criteria
- partner with local charitable organisations: West Cumbria Child Poverty Forum and Children's Social Care and Health Services

Financial Wellbeing

This will:

- improve the financial capability of people on low incomes living in deprived areas of West Cumbria
- promote financial capability via existing community networks and in places where people come together and feel welcome without stigma
- break down the barriers to discussing personal financial, overcome stigma and engage people in a solution-based approach

Spark

This will:

- inspire, encourage and nurture new and existing social entrepreneurs
- work with Cumbria Social Enterprise Partnership

This will deliver 3 levels of support:

1. Think it – bespoke advice will be delivered in workshops or 1:1s
2. Try it – support to test out ideas via grant awards of up to £5,000
3. Grow it – supported for existing social entrepreneurs to build sustainable financial models via grant awards and/or repayable grant loans of up to £15,000

Young Disruptors

This will:

- provide young people (10–25 years) from disadvantaged backgrounds in West Cumbria with the opportunity to have their ideas and ambitions heard and the potential to have them realised
- challenge young people to think creatively and in more enterprising ways
- empower young people to 'positively disrupt' the status quo and to be heard

- support young people to test out their enterprising ideas
- break down the barriers for aspiring young entrepreneurs, by developing an enterprising culture based on encouragement and support