# Esk Valley Together partnership event

## Summary Report

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**Background**

The following report summarises the Esk Valley Together event that took place on Friday November 8th 2019. The purpose is to provide a context, to share the learning and messages delivered through the event, to summarise the outcomes and learning from the workshops, and to share and understand the feedback harnessed on the day. The ultimate aim is to identify, through this, opportunities to support activities and social action that will improve the wellbeing of the people within the Esk Valley.

The Stronger Communities team aim to work in conjunction with local communities and stakeholders to empower social action contributing specifically to the three overarching outcomes of the Stronger Communities programme (SCP); Reducing Inequalities, Improving Social Connectedness, and Improving Wellbeing. SCP have been working in collaboration with Community Catalysts (contracted by Camphill Village Trust, Botton Village) with a focused piece of work in the upper Esk Valley. This has involved many of the local Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) organisations and begun around the start of 2019. The project aligns geographically with an existing SCP digital inclusion social action project in Sleights at the eastern end of the Esk Valley. The initial rationale for this was based around the particularly rural nature of the Esk Valley and understanding more around the strategic and collaborative opportunities of the local community groups and VCS in supporting the communities there.

Community Catalysts (CC) have been contracted by Camphill Village Trust (CVT) at Botton Village to develop stronger links between Botton and the wider community, particularly those within the upper Esk Valley. Two key aims of the project are for people who live and work within Botton to use their skills to benefit the wider community and for CVT to use its resources to help address local issues, such as the lack of local amenities. In order to achieve this a group of Community Champions has been established, who meet monthly, using co-production to find solutions to local issues. The Community Champions project is developing partnerships and activity in the area which provides a strong foundation for an SCP 'Achieve Together' project and it was agreed with the Champions (both local

residents and organisational representatives) to develop an Achieve project to support the shared ambitions.

The Esk Valley Together event was held to both showcase the work that had taken place already and also to build on this foundation engaging wider statutory and VCS partners to gage their input and involvement.   The event showcased activity locally and wider inspirational community initiatives to share good practice including chair-based exercise with Anne from Esk Moors Caring, Thornton Le Dale community Hub and Craven's Asset Based Community Development approach and a therapeutic singing session with Rebecca from Flash Company Arts CIC.  Vitally the event provided the space and opportunity for participants to network, contribute feedback, ideas and commitments to the area.
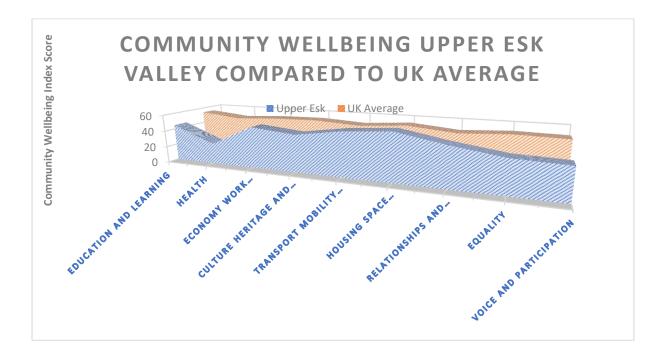


**Local Demographics Summary**

The upper Esk Valley communities bears similarities to North Yorkshire as a whole with some specific characteristics. Young people have limited career and employment opportunities leading to above average numbers leaving the area, whilst an ageing and disproportionately elderly population put increased pressure on sometimes quite difficult to access community health and social care systems. Access to a cars, child poverty, crime levels, and overall neighborhood satisfaction are all higher than the national average but this is countered by reduced levels of people gaining qualifications, reduced levels of people in full time employment and higher levels of people with a life-long limiting illness (https://local.communityinsight.org/).

Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) is the most comprehensive measure of multiple deprivation available. The concept of multiple deprivation upon which the IMD 2015 is based is that separate types of deprivation exist, which are separately recognised and measurable. The IMD 2015 therefore consists of seven types, or domains, of deprivation, each of which contains a number of individual measures, or indicators.  Two domains in the Danby ward ranked among the most deprived 20% of neighbourhoods in England on IMD 2015, these are the 'Barriers to Housing and Services' domain and the 'Living Environment' domain.

The Cooperative's community wellbeing index (https://communitywellbeing.coop.co.uk/) provides nine measures to quantify wellbeing illustrated in the graph below.



The key themes are clear. Critically and surprisingly all areas of wellbeing by this measure are below the national average totalling 44 versus a national average of 55. Health and voice and participation stand out clearly as particularly lower than the UK average. Transport and mobility is only slightly lower than the UK average; it is feasible the data measures are influenced by the Esk Valley train line running through it whilst not taking into account some of the challenges of the rurality. This graph uses 12 different areas covering the upper Esk Valley as detailed within the table below which provides the specific score for each area.

| Commuity Wellbeing Index | Education and learning | Health | Economy Work Employemnt | Culture Heritage and Leisure | Transport Mobility Connectivity | Housing Space Environment | Relationships and Trust | Equality | Voice and Participation | Overall |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Danby | 43 | 25 | 69 | 45 | 55 | 49 | 54 | 53 | 37 | 48 |
| Botton | 34 | 25 | 53 | 50 | 19 | 39 | 64 | 42 | 50 | 42 |
| Aithorpe | 45 | 27 | 58 | 41 | 59 | 49 | 51 | 37 | 34 | 45 |
| Castleton | 71 | 28 | 60 | 58 | 67 | 75 | 35 | 43 | 47 | 54 |
| Westerdale | 33 | 26 | 52 | 50 | 51 | 71 | 47 | 49 | 38 | 46 |
| Commondale | 36 | 30 | 41 | 51 | 70 | 66 | 47 | 39 | 36 | 46 |
| Casteleton Moor | 44 | 17 | 38 | 20 | 59 | 61 | 22 | 38 | 58 | 40 |
| Moorsholm | 33 | 21 | 16 | 62 | 62 | 50 | 48 | 46 | 22 | 40 |
| Lealholm | 55 | 24 | 56 | 40 | 61 | 59 | 45 | 24 | 43 | 45 |
| Glaisedale | 62 | 25 | 53 | 41 | 56 | 65 | 48 | 38 | 23 | 46 |
| Houlesyke | 39 | 26 | 55 | 44 | 27 | 44 | 53 | 28 | 23 | 38 |
| Lealholm side | 49 | 27 | 54 | 38 | 46 | 53 | 51 | 34 | 36 | 43 |
| Index Score | 45 | 25 | 50 | 45 | 53 | 57 | 47 | 39 | 37 | **44** |
| UK Average | 54 | 49 | 52 | 53 | 50 | 54 | 49 | 52 | 51 | **52** |

The alternate data sources provide an interesting insights and is to be considered alongside quantitative information and feedback directly from residents and service providers in the area.
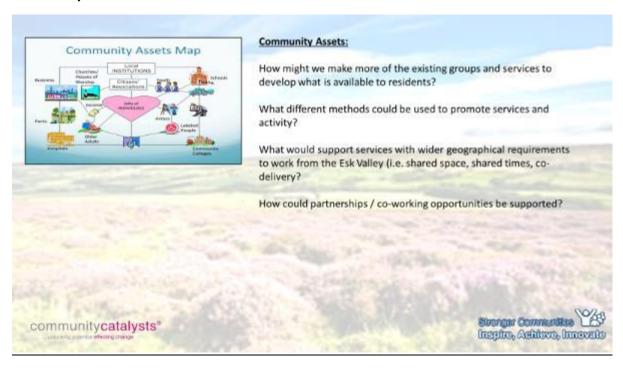
**Presentations**

Presentations were delivered by Paddy Chandler from Stronger Communities, followed by Debbie John from Community Catalysts. We then heard from Marion Tweed-Rycroft from Stronger Communities and Roger and Denise from Thornton-Le-Dale Village Hub. If you would like a copy of the presentations please contact Debbie.John@communitycatalysts.co.uk

**Workshops Table Discussions**

The interactive sessions through the day utilised the world café format and took a holistic approach to some key overarching themes that affect committees and services in the Esk Valley. The foundation for these themes originated from the Botton Village Champions group and therefore reflect both local residents and services considerations. This provided a solid rationale and also due to the ongoing new activity and developments linked to this group help provide examples of progress also. The overlapping themes were; Community Assets, Community Connectedness, Local Economy and Facilities, Transport. Tables had facilitators and were encouraged to contribute, list and collect ideas responding to select questions to prompt ideas. The questions and notes from the tables are all available in the Appendix.

**Community Assets:**



The Esk Valley initiative reflected the quality of the existing assets in the area, there is a range of well-regarded local and Borough wide organisations providing a services for the communities there. However, an acknowledgement that this could be significantly enhanced through networking/mapping systems and the promotion of activities is clear. The need for a collaborative and multi-channel approach the communications of community assets was resounding. Using social media and online directories such as North Yorkshire Connect productively to promote activity is important, however the importance of non-digital means locally was equally emphasised. These included Parish newsletters, faith-based information sharing tools, Esk Valley News, and notice

boards for example. Further examples suggested 3D and community maps, GP/Social prescribing links, and through trades such as coal delivery.


*Recommendation 1:  Asset Mapping*

- *Development of quick local guide to communication opportunities for community groups and services to be developed.  Training / workshop to be considered.*
- *Development of localised digital asset mapping in conjunction with emerging initiative, social prescribing, and North Yorkshire Connect.*


Networking structures both informal; such as social media or using faith-based communications for example, and formal; such as voluntary and community sector partnerships and networking events such as this event were raised as how to maximize the existing assets.  The importance of engaging with geographically wider relevant groups was raised and the opportunities within existing and potential new networks.  The Eat Meet and Greet events that have developed in Whitby were discussed for example, alongside an ambition to develop a network in the Staithes area and explore whether a community hub network could support social action mirroring existing community driven success as per the Thornton Le Dale Speakers at the event.


*Recommendation 2: Networking Opportunities*

- *Existing networks to be promoted to Esk Valley Communities & Stakeholders*
- *Esk Valley Together Event to be developed for return event in 2020*
- *New network activity to be supported including Staithes and Community Hub Network*


A repeated theme to come from much of the discussion was sharing resources.  This was discussed from different perspectives including logistical benefits such as co-working, shared office space, drop-ins sessions, and shared travelling arrangements. There was also a drive for more opportunities to take a collaborative strategic approach to issues such as fundraising and best practice/skills sharing and structured approaches to new partnerships such as that illustrated by the Ryedale Charities Together framework were highlighted as evidencing much potential.  The ambition of Camphill Village Trust (CVT) and the partners involved in Botton Village Champions exemplified many of the ideas raised through the development of shared free office space and a community library as well as many collaborative initiatives locally.  The vital next stages are for these to be promoted and utilised along with wider community assets and resources.  The facilitation of events such as this was identified as key to create the right conditions to continue to build a culture of trust and collaboration.

*Recommendation 3:  Opportunities to collaborate*

> *Sharing resources and skills to be created and promoted building on the work of the current community capacity building role (delivered by Community Catalysts/CVT).*

**Community Connectedness & Social Action:**

In this section the participants discussed people and the sense of belonging, ownership and involvement in their communities locally as well as the communication and celebration of these strengths.

The need to ask people about their ideas and the needs of their community was key whilst overcoming potential barriers such as community gatekeepers or consultation fatigue. A recognition of the importance of acknowledging the wide-ranging types of opportunities to be involved in communities was raised such as young people volunteering, supported volunteering, community champions, and highlighting the benefits of taking a role in your community. The need to overturn perceptions around opportunities to take part in communities was highlighted as well as the benefits of utilising peer influence and examples such as the Thornton Le Dale Community Hub. The latter was put forward by their community group representatives as something tested with NYMNP previously and to specifically to explore for 2020 that could be well placed to support and influence social action in rural communities.

*Recommendation 4: Community Hub*

- *Social Action Network to be developed*

Communication and celebration of activities and opportunities was discussed in this context and aligned with recommendation 1. However, strategies to highlight and recognise community-led innovation and innovators was discussed. Ideas included awards for public and organisations, an Esk Valley Fair or community day, and better use of local media such as Esk Valley News to relay inspiring stories and information that will promote and influence an increase in awareness of opportunity and engagement with different types of social action

*Recommendation 5: Recognition/Celebration*

- *Support to be provided for event(s) that celebrate and promote community involvement / social action*

**Local Economy and Facilities:**

This section harnessed information from participants on opportunities to stimulate growth in the area as well as exploring the gaps and how communities and collaboration may support solutions.

The impact of limited housing options in an area with high house prices and a large market for holiday homes, coupled with the challenges of limited employment opportunities was a key theme economically with improving digital access and connectivity an important part of enhancing economic opportunities. Further ideas to stimulate the area economically surrounded working with Tour de Yorkshire, Wedding offers, library developments, community led enterprise such as the Staithes art group, and initiatives to support local enterprise and sales of produce such as farmers markets. Transport was discussed in this section as particularly relevant to the economy and services in the area. This is included in the transport specific summary below.

Ideas discussed involved making best use of networking community events such as today, working with local authority and national parks to support developments, providing internet access and again recognised the benefits of a shared approach to resources.

*Recommendation 6:*

*The synergy between economic challenges and communities is vital and must remain an active part of all future initiatives relating to this event as well as sharing all information with colleagues within NYMNP and Parish, Borough, and County Councils.*

**Transport:**



Transport and access to services was an important area of discussion throughout the day. Vitally this involved both the availability or not of existing public transport but also where it does exist, how accessible it is to everyone in the community. This issue is emphasised for vulnerable groups particularly at risk due to the extent of rural isolation representing an added significant challenge.

The transport section on the day whilst a particularly challenging issue provided the widest ranging ideas for solutions. Alongside the important role of understanding clearly local need and influencing of local authority there was a wealth of ideas. Promoting and exploring development of important local resources such as the Esk Valley Community Car and the Heather Hopper, carpooling, electric bikes, building transport considerations into projects and activities and collaborative approaches to solving the challenges were just some of the examples that are detailed in the full findings. The need to find ways to recruit volunteer drivers was discussed with ideas including time banking, volunteer ambassadors, reducing bureaucracy and collaborative approaches to promoting the needs and opportunities relating to volunteer driving.

It was discussed on the day that aligned with the Esk Valley Together initiative / Botton Village Champions a transport specific working group has been organised and is taking a collaborative approach to taking on some of the challenges around this.

*Recommendation 7:*

*Transport solutions proposed by the task and finish local transport collaboration to be explored and supported to support the ambitions of the Esk Valley Together initiative.*

**Attendee Feedback**

The attendee feedback is provided in full in the appendix. The following provides a very brief summary only.

55 people attended the event 60% of which completed the feedback form at the end of the event all but one of which described the event as good or splendid. Participants were a mix including representatives from local residents, service beneficiaries, commissioning, Housing, VCS, National Park, Health, and the Borough Council. The broad spectrum of attendees, promotion of previously unknown activities/services, and networking opportunities was a positive key theme in the feedback.

Participants all listed actions they will take away from the event and a number requested the event is replicated in the future. Contribution aimed at future improvements included increasing the attendance, more information about the services at Botton village itself, linking with environmental issues, and more networking opportunities. The event organisation and particularly the venue/facilities was consistently described very positively.

**Current and Emerging Initiatives in the Esk Valley**

The following is not a complete list but 20 examples to highlight some of the collaborative projects that have developed in the Upper Esk Valley in around the Botton Village Champions Group and/or Esk Valley Together. This includes activity between the Esk Valley event and the completion of this report.

| Activity | Groups / Organisations involved |
|---|---|
| Accessible community church services | Danby church and Bradbury centre |
| Activity celebration event (planning) | Esk Moors Caring |
| Botton Village Library | CVT |
| Community apple pressing | Moorsustainable at a number of Esk Valley partner organisations |
| Community Champions | Community Catalysts, CVT, Esk Moors Caring, National Parks, Stronger Communities, Esk Valley Rail, Moorsbus, Heather Hopper, Contact the Elderly, NHS plus local volunteers and Clergy representative |
| Community hub peer support initiative | Thornton Le Dale / Stronger Communities |
| Esk Valley Forget-Me Not-Train | Esk Valley Railway / Stronger Communities / VCS |
| Esk Valley transport working group | Whitby Community Transport, Heather Hopper, Esk Valley Railway, CVT, Stronger Communities, See Ahead |
| Free hot-desking space for statutory and VCS | CVT / All |
| Intergenerational activities | Bradbury Centre / Esk Moors Caring/ Heartbeeps |
| Liftshare license | NYCC/Stronger Communities, Esk Valley Transport Group |

| | |
|---|---|
| National Park volunteering | Supertasks involving many Esk Valley organisations such as EVCC clearing Cleveland Way National Trail |
| Re-Engage tea parties | Re-Engage / Stronger Communities / My Neighborhood |
| Reminiscence sessions and celebration event | Revival North Yorkshire and Musical Memories |
| Sensory play for babies/toddlers and parents | Esk Moors Caring with some sessions hosted at Botton Village |
| Sign language meet-ups | Involving Castleton school, CVT, Esk Moors Caring, Downe Arms pub |
| Station adoption | Esk Valley Line initiative. Local adopters include Castleton school, Beyond Boundaries and CVT |
| Youth provision | Esk Moors Caring |

**Links to short films about Esk Valley initiatives:**

Community Champions          https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kN8-1IP9jV8

Dementia Forward             https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=1&v=r9SSABEzarg

Esk Moors Caring             https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dMdQb08ihaw

Esk Valley Camphill Community https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R5gRJqOjEQU

Esk Valley Rail              https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/av/uk-england-lincolnshire-49610247/forget-me-not-train-service-for-people-with-dementia

North York Moors             https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_tP0KPAwRVo

Revival North Yorkshire      https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=84eKJb1zuzk


**Conclusions**

The Esk Valley Together event built on the foundation developed in 2019 by the Botton Village Community Champions Group.  The key driver behind this is community driven asset-based activities to create environments for people, groups, and organisations to progress ideas and collaborate with social action at the core.   The aim is to tackle take a collective approach to tackling the barriers that the community share. There is already some fantastic activities taking place in the area and even more emerging making this an important time to support opportunities that can overcome some of the challenges experienced by the people of the Esk Valley.

The recommendations within this report will be explored further with all those involved in the event and explicitly the Stronger Communities team, Community Catalysts and wider partners to drive them and the open Botton Village Champions group to scrutinize and advise.

A follow up event will take place in autumn 2020.


*Summary of recommendations*

Recommendation 1: Communication

Development of quick local guide to communication opportunities for community groups and services to be developed.  Training / workshop to be considered.

Development of localised digital asset mapping in conjunction with emerging initiative, social prescribing, and North Yorkshire Connect.

Recommendation 2: Networks

- Existing networks to be promoted to Esk Valley Communities & Stakeholders
- Esk Valley Together Event to take place again with support
- New network activity to be supported Staithes and Community Hub Network

Recommendation 3:  Opportunities to collaborate, sharing resources and skills to be created and promoted building on the work of the current community capacity building role (delivered by Community Catalysts/CVT).

Recommendation 4: Social Action

Community Hub / Social Action Network to be developed.

Recommendation 5: Social Action

Support to be provided for event(s) that celebrate and promote community involvement / social action

Recommendation 6: Influence

The synergy between economic challenges and communities is vital and must remain an active part of all future initiatives relating to this event as well as sharing all information with colleagues within NYMNP and Parish, Borough, and County Councils.

Recommendation 7: Transport

Solutions proposed by the task and finish local transport collaboration to be explored and supported to support the ambitions of the Esk Valley Together initiative.


**Appendix:**

If you would like the full output from the table discussions please contact Debbie.John@communitycatalysts.co.uk