

**Appleby Horse Fair Pre-Fair Drop-In Event**  
**Appleby Town Hall**  
**14 May 2025 5pm-8pm**

### **Format of the drop in**

The Pre-Fair Event was organised by Westmorland & Furness Council of behalf of the Multi Agency Strategic Coordination Group (MASCG), and followed a new format this year. The opening remarks were followed by a flexible layout, where members of the public in attendance were free to move around the hall to talk to representatives from a range of agencies and council departments relevant to Appleby Horse Fair.

Cllr Graham Simpkins (Westmorland and Furness Council Member for Appleby & Brough) introduced Steph Cordon (Chair of MASCG and Director of Thriving Communities, Westmorland & Furness Council) and Detective Superintendent Dan St Quintin (Appleby Fair Gold Commander) who gave opening remarks describing preparations for this year's Fair. These opening remarks were recorded and added to the MASCG website to increase the reach and allow more people to hear – you can [watch the video here](#).

Most feedback with regards to structure of the Pre-Fair Event has remarked that the new format enabled more focused, constructive conversations; was a significant improvement; and recommended that the format is replicated in subsequent years.

### **Agencies in attendance**

- Cumbria Constabulary
- Cumbria Fire and Rescue
- RSPCA
- Highways (Westmorland & Furness Council)
- Environmental Protection including Licensing and Trading Standards (Westmorland & Furness Council)
- Street Cleaning and Waste Management (Westmorland & Furness Council)
- Safe & Strong Communities (Westmorland & Furness Council)
- Appleby Town Council
- Gypsy, Roma, Traveller Representatives
- Elected Members from Westmorland and Furness Council representing Appleby & Brough, Kirkby Stephen & Tebay and Eden & Lyvevnet Vale

### **Number of attendees**

Attendance at the pre-fair event was **approximately 50 people**.

### **Issues raised and actions taken**

#### **1. Access**

There were a number of queries in relation to access in and around Appleby. One enquiry asked whether the No Access signage at Cross Croft would be in place this year, which officers confirmed. Other queries concerned changes to the posts in place at Brampton, which will be monitored closely during the fair. The intention of these changes are to allow safe areas for encampments allowing focus to be given to the narrower sections where obstruction of the highways becomes a concern. A health and safety issue was raised regarding the use of small boulders as a means to protect private land and maintain resident



access. If moved into the road, these could pose a hazard. A W&F officer was able to confirm that the Parish Council were making changes and removing the smaller boulders. A resident raised the issue that a particular aspect of the traffic calming measures which are introduced when The Sands is closed, may pose a risk of damage to property. Officers were aware of this concern and there are plans to change the measure this year.

## **2. Parking**

The closure of the temporary Edenside Car Park was a key issue raised. This car park is a useful site whilst Broad Close Car Park is closed to facilitate the ongoing flood recovery works. A local business informed officers that they would lose access to their pre-paid permit parking for works vehicles while Edenside car park was closed. Officers were able to issue temporary permits for the Leisure Centre car park for use during the fair.

Additionally, a letter has been issued by the Environment Agency to all affected by the flood recovery works at Broad Close to advise of the temporary closure of the car park. A review of the Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) will take place following this year's Fair which will look into provisions for on street parking for the residents and businesses of the town as well as improvements for blue badge provisions.

Another resident queried the changes to parking and the bus service, and officers were able to provide an information leaflet to the resident by email advising of closures, restriction times and bus services.

W&F Officers reassured residents that the temporary parking prohibition measures which were introduced during the 2024 fair would be introduced in Murton again this year and that additional signage would be available.

## **3. Toilets**

A number of attendees were keen to raise issues relating to toilets. One issue was the number of toilets and the location on The Sands where points were made and alternatives discussed. The cost of toilets generally was also discussed. It was agreed that an additional Urinal unit could alleviate some of the capacity issues. Officers were requested to investigate the installation of temporary toilets within the extents of the public highway on The Sands, this has been considered but unfortunately cannot be progressed for Health and Safety reasons surrounding pedestrian / vehicular movements.

## **4. Nuisance**

Some local residents raised concerns of incidents of fairgoers entering the gardens of residential properties and climbing over residential fences. Officers are aware of issues and have worked collaboratively with a number of residents to trial some preventative measures. The work of the clean-up crew was praised.

## **5. Horse tethering**

The issue of horse tethering was raised in relation to access to residential properties and as a cause of mess alongside the library. The MASCG were already aware of this issue and are trialling a new approach this year, installing toilets on the car parking area of the Library and fixing tethering ropes to the bollards within the car parking area outside the library.

## **6. Concern for horses/otters**



A number of attendees were concerned about horses being worked at night. There was a perception that there was a lesser presence from the RSPCA at night. The RSPCA has increased its patrols late at night as a result.

In addition, there was concern that the fair causes disruption to otters in the river. The RSPCA advised that, although otters may disperse during the fair, they would return and no current action was deemed necessary

## **7. Urgent treatment centres**

The security of Urgent Treatment Centres around the Appleby area was also raised, and North Cumbria Integrated Care have since considered actions from a provider perspective.

## **8. Policing**

Parking and anti-social behaviour on Chapel Street was raised as an issue from last year's fair. It appeared that some people from the GRT community had parked in Chapel Street and Holme Street in order to avoid the proactive police operation at the Grammar School on the Wednesday of the Fair. Foot patrols were deployed factored into this year's deployment plan.

Several people approached police to raise various policing issues last year around Clickham, Croft Ends, Brampton and Todd's Farm. It was also highlighted that some police officers were seen in police vans and not doing much to respond to issues around them. A sergeant and 6 extra constables were deployed into this area 24/7 for the duration of the fair.