

# Propagating the aftermath: the Cumbrian experience of using a community development approach to build resilience to flooding



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The emBRACE Project [www.embrace-eu.org](http://www.embrace-eu.org)

BUILDING RESILIENCE AMONGST COMMUNITIES IN EUROPE

# Five Case Studies



1. **River floods** in Central Europe (Germany, Poland, Czech Republic)
  2. **Earthquake** in Turkey
  3. **Multiple (Alpine) Hazards** in South Tyrol, Italy & Grisons, Switzerland
  4. **Heat-waves** in London
  5. **River and surface water flooding combined** in the north of England (Morpeth, Northumberland and Cumbria)
- *“Building on long-standing study locations and relationships to develop an advanced understanding of what resilience to disasters ‘looks like’ in a range of different socio-economic, cultural and governance contexts”*

# Aims and Objectives

A decorative graphic consisting of two concentric circles, with the outer circle being white and the inner circle being a light blue-grey color.

## Main project aim

- Build resilience to disasters amongst communities in Europe

## Specific Cumbria case-study objectives

- a) To identify the resources and capacities required by a community to build resilience against flood hazards.
- b) To assess how social factors such as trust, accountability, cooperation, power and influence interact to influence the mobilisation of resources.

## Disaster Risk Governance

Laws, Policies, Responsibilities



## UK-Civil Protection

- Civil Contingencies Act (2004):

- Local Responders

- ✦ Category 1 (e.g. Blue lights, LA, Health)
- ✦ Category 2 (e.g. Utilities, infrastructure)

- Local Resilience Forum

- Integrated Emergency Management (IEM)

- ✦ **Response** – Police Lead

- Command & Control

- ✦ **Recovery** – Local Authority Lead

- ✦ “...supporting affected communities...”



# Actions



- **Recovery** – LRF led by Local Authority
  - “...supporting affected communities...”



# Actions

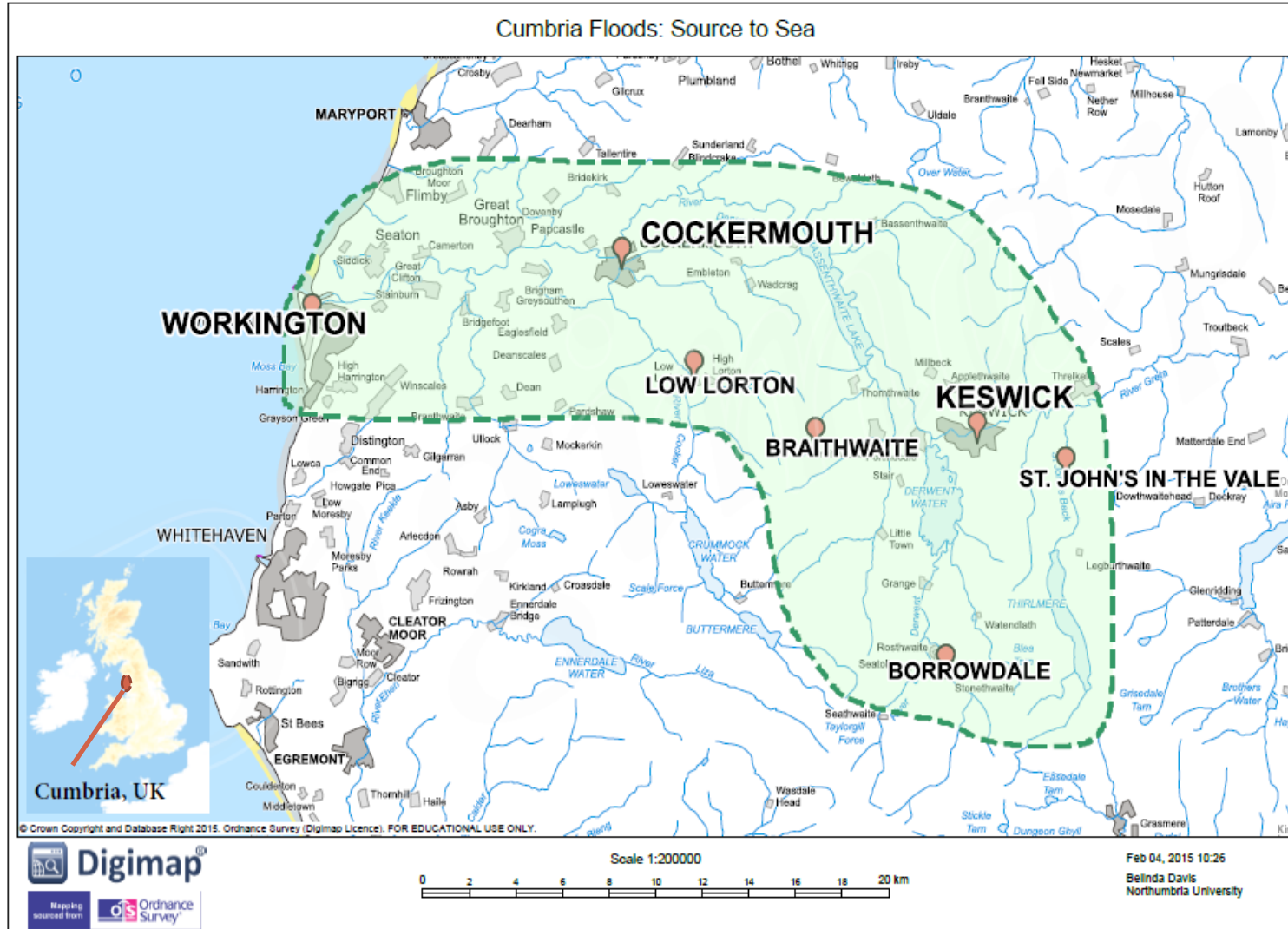


- **Recovery** – LRF led by Local Authority
  - “...supporting affected communities...”

*“...the **recovery gap** emerges during the longer process of recovery at the point where the legally-defined contingency arrangements provided to the affected community by its local authorities diminish and where the less well-defined services provided by the private sector (e.g. insurance, building industry) start.”* Whittle et al. (2010: p.120)

*...so is that **Social Protection**?*

# Context – Derwent Catchment Cumbria





# Disturbance – The 2009 Flood

## Keswick



Population: **4,984**  
Properties flooded: **300**

## Workington



Population: **19,884**  
Properties Flooded: **60**

## Cockermouth



Population: **7,877**  
Properties flooded: **800**

# Resources and Capacities



- Focus on **Recovery** Actions...
- ...and on the **Socio-political**



*“...the frontline often emerges in unexpected places”*

*Convery et al. (2008: p.114)*

# Frontline Recovery Work



- Community Development Work (CDW) is...  
*“...instrumental in setting up groups, supporting forums and networks, and organising events and activities that enable people to work together across organisational and community boundaries”* Gilchrist (2009: p.41)

# Frontline Recovery Work



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*“Our role was to coordinate the uncoordinatable”*

Cumbria Council ‘Community Team’ Member

# CDWs as Frontline Recovery Workers



- **Positive**

- ...feeling personally empowered, by the perceived success of their brokering/enabling work
- ...feeling positive about sensing themselves part of a community that was perceived to have come back stronger, more capable and more connected from the experience.

# CDWs as Frontline Recovery Workers



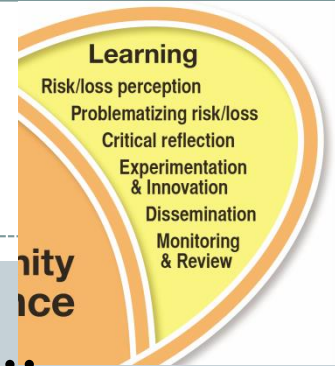
- **Positive**

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- **Negative**

- The unanticipated nature of the new FLRW role that emerged from the event, i.e. it required much more than the 'day job'
- The variety of the brokerage activity that these staff were involved in
- The length of time the activity continued after "all the other organisations left"
- The sheer intensity of the work (never feeling 'off duty' for months)
- The pressure this intense work placed on the workers' home life

# Institutional Learning



- Cumbria's 'Community Team' had operated...
  - ...with 'Control Slack'
  - ...with 'their' communities' trust (embedded social trust)
- ...and in their capacity as 'Brokers' (Wenger, 2000).....
  - .....with invisibility!

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- ...and in their capacity as 'Brokers' (Wenger, 2000).....
  - .....with invisibility!
- 'Emergency' tasks now detailed in Team 'Role profile'
  - This incentivises...
    - ✦ Employer to train and resource staff for those roles
    - ✦ Employee to seek out information and prepare
  - ...potential for innovative CP/SP crossovers





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The European Community is not liable for any use that may be made of the information contained in this presentation.

## Context – Change – Disturbance

### Disaster Risk Governance

Laws, Policies, Responsibilities



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