

Connecting Cumbria's Hidden Coast Programme: Update Sept 2020

Our Connecting Cumbria's Hidden Coast initiative is still progressing well, with work continuing during lockdown to maintain momentum with the programme and provide a base for economic recovery in our tourism industry:

- Silecroft Beach café: the project achieved full planning permission from LDNPA for the café in May. Following this success the architects have focused on creating detailed drawings and costings in preparation for the tender process to procure the main contractor for the construction. The invitation to tender for the construction phase went live on the Chest on Friday 4th September. We anticipate that following the appointment of a contractor in early October that actual building work should commence in early November.
- The public art projects are being progressed by our art curator who has invited a number of international well known artists, including several Turner Prize winners to create art for the Coastal Art trail and the landmark art competition. A few of them are working on proposals at the moment but unfortunately several of the artists have not been able to travel to the area due to the COVID related travel restrictions and this may delay the preparation of commissions in the short term

In the meantime we have also commissioned a website to create a graphic identity and showcase for the art programme as well as hosting some new film and photography showcasing the area focusing on the coast

- Our Challenge Event to be held in march 2021 was officially launched in August and there has been encouraging signs of ticket sales so far.
- About 30% of the planned footpath route infrastructure work has been completed by CCC (around St Bees and Beckermest) but further work may not take place until 2021. Planned improvements to signage at numerous footpath locations around St Bees and Beckermest have been fully completed by Cumbria County Council.
- Cycle route improvements which have been delayed for numerous reasons are now being reviewed in collaboration with Sustrans who have identified work on the existing Route 72 coastal route, which needs reinstating having been washed away in one section. Some of the funding we had allocated for cycle route improvements will therefore go to help deliver the repairs and reinstatement of an alternative route to ensure that the existing infrastructure remains intact.
- Following various delays associated with COVID19 the application deadline to the Rural Payments Agency for Phase 2 Coastal Programme has been extended to

31st October. This is to allow time for further work with contractors get on site and to develop detailed costings for the submission.

Best Regards

Eric Barker
Coastal Programme Officer
Eric.barker@copeland.gov.uk