

Case study: Local Ambassadors for Cumbria

The Ambassadors Team went up to Carlisle to speak about Cumbrian Ambassadors with the MDM, District President, District Commissioner, Development Officer and an Explorer Scout young spokesperson.

We went through the national strategy and looked at how that can be applied locally. We then looked at which people were supporting them already, and who they had been in contact with.

We also discussed logistics of how many people they should bring on board, how to approach them and the sort of things they could be engaged with.

The team in Carlisle then went away and came up with a shortlist of three people they wanted to bring on board who they had already had positive contact with:

- Helen Skelton – Blue Peter presenter
- John Stevenson – MP
- Fred Story – Businessman

Top Tip: *These people all have a strong connection with the area, and are a good mix, with a range of different backgrounds and expertise. They also each appeal to different audiences.*

What happened next in Cumbria?

An approach was made to Fred Story explaining what the commitment was of being an ambassador for Cumbrian Scouting, and asking if he would consider the role. He was delighted to say yes, and was officially announced at a reception hosted by the Mayor of Carlisle.

Top Tip: *This is a great example of taking an existing event and adding something extra to it by using it to announce a new ambassador. Cumbria was very pleased with the amount of press coverage it generated. This is one example of the [coverage](#).*

The next person to be approached was Carlisle MP John Stevenson, who was then announced at the Reivers District's Raft race.

Top Tip: *This is another excellent example of using an existing event to announce an ambassador, and also a great way to give him some firsthand experience of the fun and adventure to be had through Scouting. See the [press coverage](#)*

The 3rd person on the list was Helen Skelton, who was first approached at a local event by some young people. She said she'd be happy to be a Local Ambassador for Cumbria, with the permission of Blue Peter.

Contact was made and permission obtained by Blue Peter that Helen could be a Cumbrian Scouting Ambassador. Unfortunately, following this, Helen's agent was particularly tricky to pin down on the matter, despite much gentle chasing.

After several months of no response, a contact was found for Helen directly, and she was duly emailed. After this there was finally a response back from her agent, which was declining the role. Helen is too busy at the moment with her work and other charitable commitments.

Top Tip: *Don't be disheartened. This is a case where everything was approached the right way by going via the BBC and via the agent: just unlucky timing. There is no reason not to approach again in the future when you get a no.*

What can Local Ambassadors give?

'Our ambassadors have been a great success. Following the boost from the initial publicity, they have continued to provide support and help to raise profile. We have missed out on a couple of opportunities due to their busy workloads, but they continue to be more than willing to give their support.

'As well as attending events we have called upon them for quotes to back up work in the press. There is an obvious link between them and myself as MDM. We created a story about the Scout Entrepreneur Badge due to Fred's business background. John Stevenson MP attended the Scout Speak Up event at the Conservative Party Conference and we were able to do some good press around that. Both ambassadors attended the County AGM. We have had two spin off's from Fred's appointment in that our Scouts will be featured in a series on ITV4 about his apprentices. Furthermore he is working with our Explorer Scouts on a project to improve the wetland area on our District campsite.

It is good to have ambassadors from various walks of life in order that they can advocate for you in those circles, for us so far that is within the business community and within the political spectrum.'

**Eddie Ward, County Media Development Manager, Cumbria
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