



Environment Statement

March 2012



The **environment** is one of the District's four priorities. This statement explains why, and what, the council is going to do about it this year.

Why is the environment a priority?

By enhancing and safeguarding the environment (including the air we breathe, the space we occupy and the water we use) council services impact directly on the wellbeing of our communities. Therefore we must minimise the use of natural resources, reduce our carbon footprint and protect the local ecology.

What does SLDC already do?

The council, through education and enforcement, protects people against the harmful effects of waste, noise, pests, unclean air, dirty water, flooding and contaminated land.

SLDC is working to cut its carbon emissions and helps communities and individuals to become more energy efficient, so improving local air quality.

Around 3,200 properties in South Lakeland access water from private water supplies. The council monitors these supplies, taking action when water quality standards are not achieved.

Together with the Environment Agency SLDC regulates contaminated land sites across the District, including businesses (quarries, petrol stations etc), to ensure that there is no impact on the health of local residents or the environment.

The council helps prevent homes from flooding – measures include providing sand bags to properties. It is a member of the District wide "Making Space for Water Group", and nine community Flood Action Groups.

SLDC makes recommendations on all these issues for planning and licensing applications, as well as new housing developments, to prevent problems occurring and protect public health.

Conservation

The Planning Department places emphasis upon the conservation of both designated and locally important heritage assets (eg listed buildings) so that sympathetic developments can be undertaken. Advice is provided to guide developments to this end. The Planning department also advises on modern building techniques for low carbon emissions.

SLDC promotes the national Warm Front Scheme offering discounted prices for loft and cavity insulation to householders. The council also offers funding for vulnerable householders to maintain and improve their homes.

What the council will do in 2012/13

Encourage the green economy

The council will work with partners across Cumbria to encourage:

- Local colleges to offer courses on new green technologies;





Environment Statement (cont.)



- Green businesses, focusing on sustainable technology, to start up and relocate to South Lakeland, making the District a centre for green technology.

SLDC's Planning department will request a 4 star sustainability rating (Code for Sustainable Homes) on all new builds to increase the number of carbon neutral properties.

The new "Invest in South Lakeland" website features information and links on how to make businesses 'greener'.

Protect the local environment

The council aims to take as much as it can out of the domestic waste system (destined for landfill) and increase reuse of natural resources. SLDC are considering expanding the range of recyclable materials collected from the doorstep.

Council enforcement officers will focus on educating the public on their

responsibilities for litter and dog fouling. Officers will employ a fair and proportionate approach, to improve the streets for everyone.

Community energy projects

SLDC is working with energy companies to secure cheaper gas and electricity for householders who sign up to a new scheme. This will help participating householders to reduce their energy bills as well as tackling fuel poverty in South Lakeland.

Improve the environmental quality across the District

The council has a duty to assess air quality and is working to reduce levels of nitrogen dioxide emitted by road vehicles in Kendal. The council will:

- Introduce a Park and Walk scheme in school holidays and at weekends;
- Install electric hook up points in SLDC car parks;

- Continue with cheaper car parking permits for A rated (clean) vehicles;
- Support Kendal car club;
- Require large new housing and business developments to create a travel plan for employees and residents;
- Create a fund, from new developments, to subsidise public bus route improvements;
- Encourage residents in Kendal to consider other methods of transport;
- Introduce Dog Control Orders;
- Promote recycling and waste disposal schemes.

Reduce carbon emissions

SLDC's carbon emissions have reduced by 1.4% in 2010/11. In 2012 new lighting will be installed in South Lakeland House and its car park - saving the council over £22,000 per year and further reducing our carbon footprint.

The council's vehicle fleet will be fitted with technology to monitor fuel usage, further driving down carbon emissions and costs.

SLDC will champion the Green Deal locally which provides financial assistance for household energy efficiency measures.

For further information on environment matters, the council's website is a good first port of call. Alternatively call our contact centre on 0845 050 4434.

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