

# South Lakeland District Council

Making South Lakeland the best place to **live**, **work** and **explore**



## Annual Report 2015/16

May 2016



# Introduction

The annual report is designed to provide an insight into South Lakeland District Council's performance, activities, business and finances across the financial year 2015/16.

# April

• **Training for landlords**

A foundation training course was held for landlords who rent out private properties. The course was held at Kendal Town Hall and was designed to support and inform landlords on how to manage their properties professionally.



• **Lakes Art Project**

South Lakeland District Council (SLDC) supported and funded a lakes art project. The project, called Lakes Ignite, was run by Lakes Culture who work in partnership with Cumbria's tourism and cultural organisations to showcase the county as a bright and artistic location. Four specially commissioned works were produced including a paper bridge were produced based on the theme of 'imaginary journeys'.

• **Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)**

The new Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) came in to force. Small builders and home owners, as well as larger developers, were urged to familiarise themselves with the way the charge will work. The charge will affect all new housing development in the South Lakeland district, outside of the National Parks.



• **Interactions**

• 1,908 face-to-face interactions

•  Twitter impressions  
33,100

# Our Vision

While this report looks back on 2015/16, it also offers a glimpse of the future as the council continues to focus on the four priority areas:

- Enabling and delivering opportunities for sustainable growth
- Providing homes to meet needs

- Improving health and reducing health inequalities
- Protecting and enhancing our environment

Council Plan priorities are considered and refreshed by the council each year. Strategic Development days are held where the vision is reviewed. This process is informed by data collected from the public, intelligence gathered from census data

and local partnership working. The vision is to make South Lakeland the best place to live, work and explore. The ambition is to have a prosperous and varied economy with an educated workforce to support it, a balanced housing market with enough affordable housing to meet needs, great leisure services and a cultural offer that appeals to residents and visitors alike.

# May

• Existing roof revealed at the Castle Dairy

An existing Westmorland green slate roof was revealed on the Castle Dairy, which allowed Archaeologists to collect samples from the core timbers. There is still considerable uncertainty about the dating of the original construction of the building and its subsequent alteration, with some sources suggesting it was built as early as the 12th century and while others that it was largely a construction of Anthony Garnett in the 1560s.



• New parish Charter Launch

A new Parish Charter was launched to encourage joint working and better communication between SLDC and parish/town councils. The key aims include:

- improve communications with parish and town councils,
- improve interaction, especially in the planning process,
- increase local councils' understanding of what SLDC does,
- clarify the position around local tax and financial arrangements.



• Free window dressing workshop

Independent retailers were invited to a free hands-on workshop in the art of window dressing. The Invest in South Lakeland team hosted the event to explore simple steps to turn passers-by into buyers and to encourage more business within the town centre.



• Interactions

- Call volume - 8,831
- 91.4% of calls answered within 20 seconds

# Our Values

Over the last 12 months, the council has continued to provide services and deliver its Council Plan through openness, excellence and valuing people. These values are central to the way the council operates in working for the residents of South

Lakeland, providing business-as-usual services and seizing opportunities for new activity which could be beneficial to the district.



## June

### • Free microchipping for pets

SLDC teamed up with Dogs Trust to host events across the district that encouraged dog owners to have their pets microchipped for free.

The event coincided with new regulations as part of SLDC's stray dog enforcement policy.

After April 2016, when the regulation comes into force, any dog the council handles will be scanned and, if it is not microchipped or the details are not up to date, the keeper will be served with a notice. The keeper then has 21 days to comply with the regulations or face a fine of up to £500.



### • First Sky Ride of the summer

The first Sky Ride in a series of Summer Cycling events was launched. These events were undertaken as part of a national campaign to get more people cycling for fitness and as a sustainable way of seeing South Lakeland. SLDC is working in partnership with Cumbria County Council, British Cycling, Active Cumbria, the National Trust and See More: Cumbria and the Lake District.



### • SLDC receives award for making significant improvements to its street and address database

The council received the 'Most Improved Address Data "Exemplar Award"' for its Local Land and Property Gazetteer (LLPG) at the GeoPlace Exemplar Awards 2015 held in Birmingham.

The LLPG database holds address data for the district, administered by South Lakeland and links to address records held by other departments including: Asset Management, Council Tax, Business Rates and Street Naming and Numbering Services.



Our land and address data forms part of a national database, managed by GeoPlace, that brings together data from other national bodies such as the Police, Fire and Rescue Service and other authorities.

### • Interactions

- 241,457 website page views

## Providing homes to meet need

The council recognises the disparity between household income and house prices in South Lakeland, and over the last year has been working towards increasing the number of affordable homes. The council continues to focus on delivering 1,000 new affordable homes to rent by 2025 and figures show that the current rate of completion means the council is on target.

## Improving health and reducing health inequalities

Public health benefits result from actions that promote and protect the physical and mental health and wellbeing of people to prevent illness, injury and disability. In South Lakeland we are fortunate that the majority of residents have a high level of healthy life expectancy, however there are areas of inequality within the district. There is also a

greater reliance on councils and voluntary groups to deliver public health benefits. In 2015/16 South Lakeland District Council produced a Health and Well Being Strategy which aims to ensure the continual improvement of the health and wellbeing of local residents and keep public health at the heart of what SLDC and its partners do.

## July

### • Celebrating the Magna Carta's 800th anniversary

To mark the 800th anniversary of the Magna Carta, SLDC officers held workshops for young people exploring how the Charter has shaped democracy. Students from Cartmel Priory Church of England School learned all about Cartmel's link to the Magna Carta and the charter's influence on democracy at the workshops organised by officers, Cartmel Priory Church and the Cumbria County Council Archive Service.



### • On Schedule for Housing Targets

By July 2015 SLDC had helped to deliver 209 new affordable rented homes towards its target of 1,000 by 2025.

SLDC officers looked at the importance of the Magna Carta in today's society with the students, and how it is still the blueprint for democracy not just for the United Kingdom but for other countries around the world. The students were given the opportunity to create their own modern day Magna Carta.

### • Communities to benefit from eco expertise

SLDC joined together with Cumbria Action for Sustainability (CAFs) to launch a South Lakeland Community Energy Support Project, which demonstrated commitment to community energy efficiency and renewable energy schemes. Groups are able to access one-to-one development officer time, consultancy support, funding advice and training to help them get their schemes off the ground or break through barriers to action.

### • Quality of Life Survey

The Quality of Life Survey allows the council to see what changes are needed to services and priorities, to ensure the council continues to meet the most important needs identified by residents.

In the main measures of SLDC's performance, value for money and satisfaction with the way things are run, the results show that the council has improved or remained consistent with the 2014 results:

- 40% of respondents agree that SLDC provides value for money (this is up from 29% in 2012 and the same level as 2014).
- More than half the respondents (51%) are satisfied with the way the council we runs things, up from 48% in 2014.
- 42% agree that they can trust SLDC to act in the best interests of the people of Cumbria. When this same question was asked in 2012 35% agreed.
- 88% of respondents also declared themselves satisfied with South Lakeland as a place to live, and 91% are satisfied with their home as a place to live.
- Around three quarters of respondents (72%) feel strongly that they belong to their immediate neighbourhood.



## Protecting our environment

Safeguarding and enhancing the environment for future generations has been a priority for South Lakeland District Council over the last 12 months.

Amongst routine duties such as recycling, ensuring the safety of private water supplies and carrying out food establishment inspections, the council has been working to expand the recycling service, clear up the

flood waste and improve community resilience, working with communities and individuals to improve energy efficiency and encourage active travel. Protecting the environment continues to be a priority in the Council Plan 2014-19.

## Localism and Communities

During 2015/16 the Barrow and South Lakeland Community

Safety Partnership organised many events and campaigns aimed at reducing alcohol related crime and acquisitive crime, including rural and agricultural crime. Two task groups delivered projects against agreed action plans. Projects included a rural crime awareness raising event at Junction 36 auction centre in October and the successful



# 2015 July

## • Investors in People Assessment

The council underwent a successful three-day external scrutiny against the Investors in People standard. The council was very pleased to retain the Silver standard. The next assessment will be in October 2017 at which the council is intending to maintain or improve on its current level of achievement.



## • Interactions

- 63 press releases and statements


 Twitter impressions

launch of a lock it or lose campaign aimed at all Barrow and South Lakeland residents. The South Cumbria Alcohol Strategy Group targeted new psychoactive substance abuse through three very successful training sessions and zero tolerance to abuse of taxi drivers and a 'Get Home Safely' campaign was launched in the run-up to Christmas 2015.

SLDC works with Parish and Town Councils and other agencies to tackle local issues.

# August

## • Young people learn about democracy

Four workshops took place during August to encourage students to vote and learn about the services SLDC offers as part of the National Citizen Service. Students

took part in a 'Bite the Ballot' activity to encourage more young people to become involved in the democratic process and register to vote.

The afternoon session involved the students being split into groups to discuss the council plan priorities. There was an opportunity to talk to councillors and discuss what students feel are priorities and any changes they feel would benefit South Lakeland.



## • Flowers of Auschwitz

A commemorative garden was planted to mark the arrival of 300 Jewish children who arrived in the Lake District from concentration camps 70 years ago.

This was part of the Lake District Holocaust Project and the flowers were displayed at Windermere library.

## • Interactions

- 247,986 website page views
- 7,952 telephone calls


 Twitter impressions



In 2015/16 Local Area Partnerships (LAPs) have:

- Begun working on local dementia friendly communities in Ulverston and Central Lakes
- Discussed ways of improving communication with Cumbria Highways
- Run planning sessions with SLDC and the Lake District National Park to share understanding
- Attended website and social media workshops to boost

parish communications and worked with local flooding agencies to share learning for future emergencies

LAPs will continue to work together on issues of local importance, seeing the value of a stronger collective voice in achieving results.

# September

• **Hallgarth play area grand opening**

Chairman Councillor Sylvia Emmott opened a newly refurbished play area on Hallgarth estate. The new park now includes an outdoor gym area, a toddler and junior playground and an area for teenagers. The grand opening was attended by residents and children from the estate and featured refreshments, organised games, music and a graffiti art demonstration by Unity Radio. Unity Radio worked with the young people to explore design ideas for what artwork they want to see on the park's Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) as part of the next phase of improvements, as well as learning about the history and culture of responsible graffiti art. At the event SLDC staff also asked for residents' opinions about further improvements to the remainder of the recreation ground.



# October

• **Free community energy projects**

SLDC teamed up with the environment charity Cumbria Action for Sustainability (CAFs) to run a free event to help community groups save energy by making their buildings more energy efficient and generating their own energy from renewable sources.

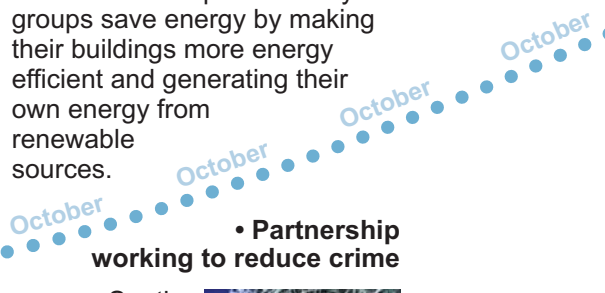


• **Partnership working to reduce crime**

South Lakeland and Barrow Community Safety Partnership (CSP) hosted two crime



prevention events to raise awareness of people's responsibilities in keeping personal belongings and properties safe. The events were held at Ulverston Auction Mart and Junction 36 Auction Mart as part of a 'Lock it or lose it' campaign. SLDC, Cumbria Police, Trading Standards and Victim Support were present at the events to offer information and advice on personal safety, safety of agricultural equipment, cold callers, illegal money lenders and a DNA property marking demonstration.



• **Council Cabinet goes 'out and about'**

South Lakeland District Council's Cabinet members hit the road as the Cabinet meeting was held in Chapel Stile, Langdale.



• **Free low energy masterclass**

SLDC hosted a low energy masterclass on the latest developments in energy efficient homes, in collaboration with Zero Carbon Hub. The free event, held at Kendal College, was aimed at self-builders and the local development industry, to explore commercially viable and practical examples to help deliver homes that comply with current and future regulations.

• **Interactions**

• Launch of bin change roll-out in Kendal area –extensive activity including press releases and social media campaign urging residents to check new calendars.

•  Twitter impressions  
74,000

**Performance** – The council is committed to delivering high quality, cost effective services that meet the needs of residents and improve quality of life. To help achieve its goals, SLDC measure performance frequently. The performance management process helps the council demonstrate how well it is doing. Monitoring the success of the Council Plan through scorecards informs improvements and ensures council services address the needs of residents

in an open and transparent way. The Performance Dashboard on South Lakeland District Council website informs residents of how SLDC are progressing with its Council Plan.

Transparency – SLDC is committed to open data and transparency. The council has made and continues to make its data freely available to everyone in a presentable format that can be reused. Over the past year data has been added to this directory on a regular basis, including information about car

parks, grants and councillors allowances.



## October

### • Effective waste collection rounds

The Street Scene department commenced a programme to increase the effectiveness of waste and recycling rounds. This involved making changes to

approximately 65% of the district's household waste collection day, equating to approximately 34,000 households. The optimisation of the rounds involved looking at all aspects of the current routes from the number of households served and quantity of waste collected, to the distance from the tipping sites and the times taken to undertake the collections. The aim was to improve the round structures and routes to make the fleet and collection service as efficient as possible and to ensure that the roll out of the enhanced kerbside recycling collections of plastic and cardboard, alongside the other materials, could be continued as effectively as possible. SLDC has extended the enhanced recycling collection service to an additional 5,500 properties in Ulverston and 1,500 properties in Kirkby Lonsdale and are now delivering this service to over 21,000 across the district.



### • Interactions

- 14,014 telephone calls
- 244,894 website page views



### • Leader's praise for sound financial plans

Councillor Peter Thornton praised the authority's sound financial management in the medium term financial plan.

## November

### • Free business advice support for businesses

Local businesses took advantage of free advice service offered by SLDC. The sessions offered business owners advice in marketing, accounting and writing a business plan.

### • New enterprise centre opening

Kendal's first enterprise centre supporting start-ups and small businesses opened its doors in November. The MintWorks offers modern, flexible office premises and makes use of a long-standing empty building in the town centre. The initiative was led by Invest in South Lakeland and SLDC's economic development team, which supports inward investment and economic growth.



## In 2015/16, did you know?

- 35% of the district will receive plastic and cardboard collections once the service to Ulverston is rolled out.
- By 2019, the amount household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting is expected to rise to 50%.

- Sky Ride Local has run in South Lakeland, the Central Lakes and Carlisle for the past two years, with almost 1,100 people of all ages and abilities taking part in 115 Sky Rides.
- By 2019, the number of properties where plastic and cardboard recyclables are collected will increase from 13% (38% in 2015/16) to 100% of South Lakeland households.

- 75% of food premises in South Lakeland have scored 5 in the food hygiene rating scheme.
- 10 Healthier Menu awards have been issued.
- 99% of food premises have scored 3 or above on the food hygiene rating scheme.



• Tackling housing crisis

An empty homes strategy was backed by Cabinet as part of a broad approach of providing new affordable homes to rent or buy for young families and elderly residents.



• South Lakeland showcased to national investors

SLDC participated in a conference with 200 other businesses from the North West to hear about exciting new investment opportunities for South Lakeland. The day generated much interesting discussion and demonstrated the council's commitment to encouraging investment in South Lakeland. Council representatives were on hand to answer planning queries, and a number of successful local businesses were also present to talk about their experiences of doing business in the area.



• Dementia friendly communities partnership working

Central Lakes Local Area Partnership (LAP) joined forces with Age UK and the Alzheimer's Society to encourage businesses and organisations in the Central Lakes area to become a Dementia friendly community.

The launch event was held in Ambleside and was an opportunity for business owners, community groups and other organisations to get together, learn about dementia, how to recognise the different symptoms and to consider how environments, locations and communication can be adapted to support those living with dementia.

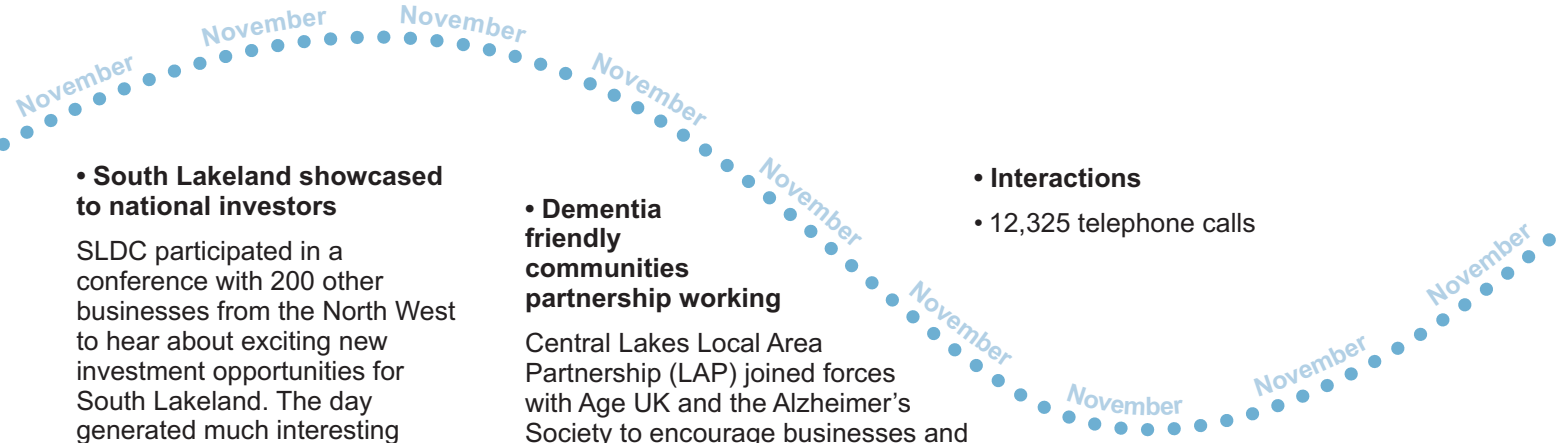
According to the 2011 census figures the Central Lakes LAP area has seen a 13% increase in its over-65 population since 2001, even though the area has seen an overall 2% population reduction over the same period.

In South Lakeland as a whole the over-65 population is forecast to increase by 11% by 2017, and by 48% by 2037.



• Interactions

• 12,325 telephone calls



# 2015/16 December - flooding



South Lakeland suffered severe flooding and disruption during storm Desmond between the 4th and 6th

December 2015, following an exceptionally wet November. In total, some 1,981 residential properties and 580 business properties were affected across 36 Wards. During the emergency, the council operated two emergency reception centres in Kendal, operated the Contact Centre 24/7, supplied over 10,000 sandbags, managed and distributed news and information and helped with the immediate housing needs of 114 families.

As the area moved into recovery, with grants from government the council were able to distribute over 1,500 householder grants, managed over 1,500 Council Tax and rate relief claims, collected and disposed of flood damaged householder property from over 730 properties and is operating the Flood Resilience Grants scheme. The council works as part of a multi-agency emergency response and recovery groups. In addition to flooded properties, impacts were

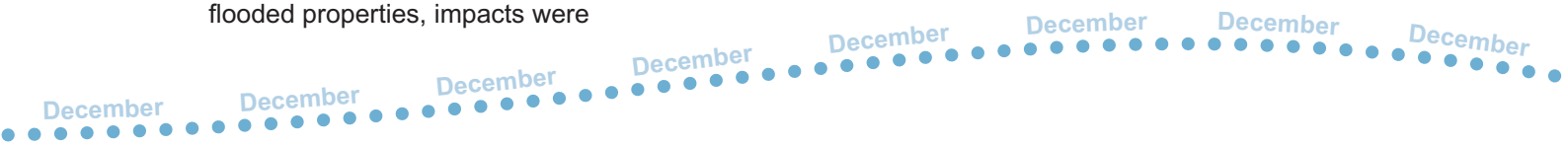


severe across many parts of the District, particularly the disruption to roads, most noticeably the A591 over Dunmail Raise and (at the time of the flood) the A590

impassable across the Lyth Valley, significantly disrupting communications with the west of the District. Local bridge and road closures continue to create disruption. Local bridge and road closures continue to cause disruption, causing significant repercussions on the economic activity across South Lakeland. The council does not underestimate the impact and uncertainties residents and businesses face in rebuilding their properties, livelihoods and the ability to secure insurance. The council will continue to work with community and business organisations to ensure the needs of residents are understood and appropriate support and assistance is made available. As we move into spring 2016, investigations into the causes of how the flood happened are nearing completion. This will enable future plans to be made which improve the defence and resilience of the area. The council is committed to partnership working in communities to promote and enable local resilience.

**• South Lakeland is 'open for business' following floods**

South Lakeland's economic development team launched an



'Open for Business' campaign to encourage visitors to South Lakeland following the flood.

The team visited local businesses to assess how they were coping and to better understand what help was required. An SLDC business advice surgery was held at the MintWorks. More than 30 local businesses attended to speak to representatives from SLDC's economic development, food safety, building control and local taxation teams to get advice on a range of issues from grant support to business rates.

• **Free car parking in flood hit areas**

• **Flood Grant Schemes**

SLDC's Revenues team were heavily involved in the aftermath of the flooding in early December.

The team administered three schemes for Council Tax which saw over 1,500 residents receive one-off £500 grant payments. In addition, over 1,200 properties received more than £900,000 in relief from their Council Tax. In addition SLDC has provided relief to over 70 properties which were either vacant or second homes. This equates to in excess of £1.7m in assistance to

residents and home owners in South Lakeland.

Revenues have also administered two schemes for businesses that were either flooded by the events in December or impacted by the damage to infrastructure. So far nearly 300 businesses have shared in a total of over £1.1million of assistance. Relief currently exceeds £1.1m of assistance to nearly 300 businesses.

- Received 386 enquiries regarding the £5,000 flood grant
- Assessed 30 flood-hit food premises
- Provided flood waste collections for 739 properties
- Collected in excess of 600 tonnes of flood waste

# December/January

• **Congratulations to SLDC Chairman on New Year Honour**



Councillor Emmott was awarded the British Empire Medal (BEM) for public and political service.

• **Work started on £300,000 Waterhead upgrade**



December/January December/January

• **Healthy choices on the menu at hospital**

The catering team at Westmorland General Hospital's Westmorland Bite Restaurant has received a Healthier Menus Award for their work to promote healthy menu options for patients, staff and visitors. The awards are run by South Lakeland District Council in collaboration with Cumbria County Council and other local authorities.



December December



## December/January

### • Cabinet approves transfer of Ulverston assets

Councillors welcomed an agreement in principle to transfer, on short-term lease, Ulverston's Coronation Hall, Market Hall and management of the markets to a community group. The aim is for the transfer to Ulverston Community Enterprises (UCE) to be effective from 1 July 2016.

December/January

December/January

### • Pop-up shop scheme returns

Following the well-received pilot project last year the 'pop-up shop' will run again in 2016. Businesses including Ginger Bakers, Cartmel Sticky Toffee Pudding Company and 54 Floral Clothing, have tried out high street trading in the council-owned shop since the scheme was launched in March 2015.



### Interactions

• 216,326 website page views

•  354,000 Twitter impressions

## February

### • Plastic and card collections in Ulverston

New plastic and cardboard recycling collections have begun in the Ulverston town centre rounds.



February

February

### • Tour of Britain

SLDC welcomed the announcement that the Tour of Britain cycle race would return in September 2016. The council was part of a number of Cumbrian organisations that lobbied to ensure the 2016 Tour of Britain route included communities affected by the 2015 floods to help deliver the 'Open for Business' message. The Cumbrian stage of the tour will follow the same route as it did in 2013.



### • Council Plan update

An updated blueprint for SLDC's priorities was unveiled. The revised Council Plan is a key document that sets out the authority's vision and priorities for South Lakeland up to 2019 states how these will be achieved.



### • White Noise – an estimated 675 people attended the weekend festival

February

February

February

### • Assets of community value

The Community Right to Bid allows the public to nominate certain buildings or land which they think will improve the social interest or wellbeing of a community. If approved the nominated building or land is given Asset of Community Value Status.. This year the council has received 13 nominations, the most since the introduction of the Localism Act in 2011. Eight of the nominations have been successfully listed as assets of community value, with the most high profile listing being Stickle Tarn.

### • Interactions

• 10,378 calls

• 2,046 (Kendal) 962 (Ulverston) Face-to-Face meetings

## March

### • Council flies the flag for the Commonwealth

The Commonwealth Flag was raised at Kendal Town Hall to coincide with more than 850 Commonwealth Flags being raised across the globe.



### • Free Wi-Fi to roll out across South Lakeland town centres

The council is now looking to expand internet coverage and introduce free Wi-Fi into other town centres in the district. The pilot period in Kendal saw almost 12,000 people signed up to the service, which offers free Wi-Fi coverage on the main streets in the town centre.

### • Flood support and advice unit visit flood-hit areas in South Lakeland



### • Interactions

- 41 press releases
- 254,263 website views

### • Pupils enjoy a musical flight around the world

Musicians Calum Huggan and Jo Ashcroft, who were born in Kendal, were invited by Kendal Midday Concert Club to perform in front of pupils from 12 schools. The talented duo, who both graduated from the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama and have since forged successful careers within the music industry, gave the children a musical tour of the globe. Among the pieces played were an African 'nonsense' song, which the children were invited to participate in. There was also a Japanese piece named 'Sakura' and a Soviet waltz by Shostakovich performed.

### • Ulverston residents embrace new kerbside recycling

The first plastic and recycling collections have been made on the Ulverston town centre rounds and residents were praised for their commitment.

The Ulverston depot reported how residents have embraced the new service by presenting recycling at the kerbside.

The Ulverston roll-out is the second phase of an expansion of kerbside collections that will eventually encompass the whole district by March 2017.

Expanding the range of recyclables is a key step in the Council Plan which aims to increase the amount of household waste sent for recycling to 50%.



## Finance

Budgeted income and expenditure for 2015/16 was:

	Gross Expenditure	Gross Income	Net Expenditure
	£000	£000	£000
Neighbourhood Services	13,996.2	(8,976.9)	5,019.3
Strategic Planning	8,654.0	(3,551.7)	5,102.3
Policy and Performance	4,036.9	(447.7)	3,589.2
Resources	22,657.4	(20,900.0)	1,757.4
<b>Cost of services</b>	<b>49,344.6</b>	<b>(33,876.4)</b>	<b>15,468.2</b>
Financing Entries and Statutory Accounting Requirements			(3,703.8)
Net Increase in General Fund Balances and Reserves			640.4
<b>SLDC budget requirement</b>			<b>12,404.8</b>
Non Domestic Rates			(2,769.0)
Revenue Support Grant			(1,813.2)
SLDC demand on Collection Fund			7,822.6
Special Expenses (parishes) / Collection Fund Deficit			(59.3)
<b>SLDC Council Tax requirement</b>			<b>7,763.3</b>

How has SLDC's budget requirement changed since last year?

	£000
How has SLDC's Budget requirement changed since last year?	12,849.2
Reduction to net service expenditure (excluding capital charges)	(779.8)
Changes to capital charges	241.0
Changes in financing entries and statutory accounting requirements	(133.0)
Changes in general fund balances and reserves	227.4
<b>Budget requirement for SLDC services 2015/16</b>	<b>12,404.8</b>

The council's Statement of Accounts for 2015/16 can be found at:  
[www.southlakeland.gov.uk/your-council/council-business/finance/2015-16-financial-year/](http://www.southlakeland.gov.uk/your-council/council-business/finance/2015-16-financial-year/)



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