

South Lakeland District Council

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



Annual Report 2014/15

April 2015



2014 Introduction

This annual report gives an insight into South Lakeland District Council's (SLDC's) business, activities, performance and finances throughout the financial year 2014/15.

April

• Unveiling of economic vision for Cumbria

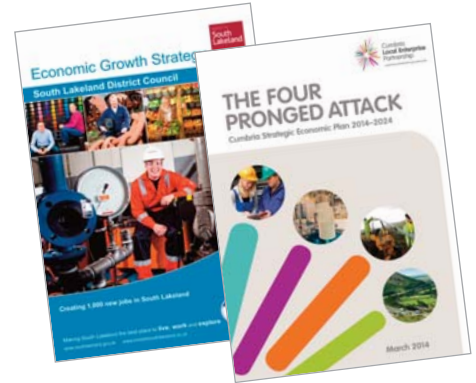
A new Cumbria-wide strategy to enable thousands of jobs and to help build a prosperous future for South Lakeland was unveiled. The Cumbria Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) announced plans to unlock the county's economic growth

potential over the next ten years. The Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) document formed the basis of a bid to government for £23 million pounds of investment that would be used to help deliver an extra 15,000 jobs and boost Cumbria's economy by an extra £600m by 2023. As a key partner South Lakeland

District Council (SLDC) supported the strategy with its own plans – to lead the way in delivering the LEP's aim in creating one of the fastest growing economies in the UK here in Cumbria.

• Charities welcome SLDC funding boost

Local charities welcomed a £60,000 funding boost from South Lakeland District Council. The Cabinet approved a recommendation to wind up the Royal Wedding Trust Fund, which was set up in 1982 to commemorate the wedding of Prince Charles and Lady Diana Spencer, with the intention of offering support to disadvantaged children. The remainder of the fund – which stood at over £60,000 – was split between three charities, Ambleside-based Brathay Trust, the Bendrigg Trust and the Leeds Children's Holiday Camp charity. All these have similar aims and objectives to the Royal Wedding Trust Fund.



Our Vision

While this annual report looks back at 2014/15, it also offers a glimpse of the future, as the council continues to focus on four priority areas:

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

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

Council Plan priorities are considered and refreshed by the council each year. Strategic planning 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 need, great leisure services and a cultural offer that appeals to residents and visitors alike.

May

• **Teenagers in the dock over alcohol awareness:**



School children from three South Lakeland secondary schools took part in a 'mock trial' at Kendal Magistrates' Court. The event was organised through the South Lakeland Community Safety Partnership to bring home the realities of alcohol-fuelled crime. The trial was based on a real-life assault case, when three drunk youths, aged 19 and 20, attacked an elderly man on a night out. The trial featured input from real solicitors and magistrates while pupils, from Cartmel, John Ruskin and Settlebeck schools, took on the key roles, including the prosecution and defence lawyers, magistrates, witnesses and the three defendants. The event showed the young people the potentially serious consequences of drunken actions and the impact that a criminal record can have on their lives.



• **Plans to extend the jetties at Ferry Nab were approved by the Lake District National Park Authority (LDNPA).**

• **Quality of Life Survey**

The survey, which will now be undertaken annually, is seen as a key indicator of council performance and is also used to help determine the authority's priorities and policies. Over 4000 households across the district were asked for their

opinions on council services. The survey revealed increasing levels of satisfaction with the way South Lakeland District Council was being run.

In the three main measures of council performance – value for money, satisfaction with the way things are run and trust – the results show that SLDC has improved on the 2012 survey.

• Two fifths of respondents (40%) agree that SLDC provides value for money, up from 29% in 2012.

• Almost half the respondents (48%) are satisfied with the way SLDC run things, which is an increase of 11% on the 2012 response.

• Over two-fifths of respondents (43%) 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.

• Around nine-tenths of respondents (88%) also declared themselves satisfied with South Lakeland as a place to live.



Our Values

Over the last 12 months, the council has continued to deliver and commission services for our community based on it's needs.

The values in our Council Plan of **excellence**, **empowering people** and

being open and transparent run through everything we do. These values are central to how the council operates. Whether it is focused services, or seizing future opportunities that will benefit every section of our community.

Every employee of the council has these values as the foundation of their individual appraisal and performance to

ensure we continue to deliver for our communities needs into the future.



2014 June



• Vision for jobs and affordable homes

South Lakeland District Council stressed its determination to create 1,000 new jobs and 1,000 affordable rented homes within a decade. SLDC Leader Cllr Peter Thornton said the authority's newly-adopted Local Plan would unlock sites for business and housing to help create growth across the district. He said South Lakeland was at the centre of the recently-launched Strategic Economic Plan for Cumbria, and enabling jobs and growth remained the key priority.

Enabling and delivering opportunities for sustainable economic growth

Over the last 12 months, SLDC's Economic Development team has been continuing to support sustainable economic growth for the area. This has involved strong partnership working with the Cumbria LEP which has seen over £8.8m committed to

July

• A new champion for arts and culture in South Lakeland was appointed. Cllr Chris Hogg took on the newly created portfolio for Culture, Arts and Events at South Lakeland District Council (SLDC).



• Region welcomes £22.3m investment

The announcement of £22.3m of investment for Cumbria has been welcomed as "excellent news". SLDC is a key partner in the Cumbria Local Enterprise Partnership, which confirmed that their bid for funding boosting economic growth had been accepted. In South Lakeland several key projects are being considered, designed to support economic growth. There will also be investment to improve travel and access to destinations, in order to boost tourism, and £2.3m over two years to help deliver infrastructure improvements to bring forward sites identified by SLDC for housing and employment in Kendal.

the area over the next two years for infra-structure and flooding improvements. The business support programme has delivered 192 new jobs, 92 new businesses, 21 specialist workshops and 120 existing businesses advised through the programme. The team have also been promoting the area to the rest of the UK, using a stand at MIPIM in London, the UK's largest conference for property professionals. The team also held a Times' Economic Forum and a North West Insider



• SLDC flies the flag for armed forces

The council held a ceremony to hoist a specially commissioned Armed Forces Day flag above Kendal Town Hall. Councillors were joined by army Captain Steve Firth and armed forces representatives for the ceremony. Armed Forces Day raises public awareness of the contribution made to the country by those who serve and have served in Her Majesty's Armed Forces.



Business breakfast. Additionally, the team have supported the launch of the Rural Growth Network business hubs in Sedbergh and Ulverston.

• Council backs cycling events for Kendal

Cyclists were encouraged to harness the inspiration of the Tour de France and get pedalling thanks to a partnership involving South Lakeland District Council. SLDC joined with Cumbria County Council and the Go Lakes Travel Programme to bring six Sky Ride local bike rides and

a ride leader training course for 10 people to Kendal.



August

• Turning the lights out for WW1 centenary

Lights at landmark buildings across South Lakeland were turned off to mark the centenary of the outbreak of the First World War. South Lakeland District Council supported the national LIGHTS OUT campaign, which saw people across the UK turning off their lights from 10pm to 11pm on 4 August, 2014. A single light or candle was left on for a shared moment of reflection to mark the centenary. LIGHTS OUT was the headline project of 14-18 NOW, the official cultural programme for the First World War Centenary Commemorations.



• Young people learn more about democracy

Young people went behind the scenes at South Lakeland District Council to learn about democracy during the summer. 84 National Citizen Service students were welcomed into South Lakeland House to take part in democracy workshops during July and August. The students toured South Lakeland House to learn more about the different services and work of council employees. They took part in workshops and a discussion with councillors about the importance of being involved in the democratic process and how politics and local government affect their lives.

• A flood relief grants scheme was launched. The scheme allowed homeowners and businesses to apply for a 'repair and renew' grant of up to £5,000 to implement flood resistance and/or resilience measures to help protect them from future flooding.



• Cllr Peter Thornton was joined by SLDC Chief Executive Lawrence Conway in holding leader surgeries. The events were held in Ulverston, Kendal, Windermere and Kirkby Lonsdale.



• Low Furness and Ulverston Local Area Partnership (LAP) made progress towards creating a dementia friendly community. Five members of the group handed out over 2000 leaflets, about dementia awareness, around Ulverston town centre.

Providing homes to meet need

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

means the council is on target to deliver.

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 encourage South Lakeland's restaurants to provide healthier choices, encourage residents to make fewer car journeys and helping people save money on their energy bills. Protecting the environment continues to be a priority in the Council Plan 2014-19.



2014 September



• **New recycling containers rolled out**

Hundreds of new-style containers were introduced to recycling centres in South Lakeland during September. The changeover programme ran throughout the month and into early October at recycling centres run by South Lakeland District Council. In total some 400 of the new containers for cans, plastics and card/paper were introduced. The new containers are easier and more efficient to collect.

• **South Lakeland District Council was praised by auditors**

South Lakeland District Council was praised by auditors for providing value for money for residents and the robust way it manages its finances. A report said the council is “performing well” in the way it manages public money and prioritises its resources within tighter budgets.

October



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• **Comic art festival attracts thousands to Kendal**

The Lakes International Comic Art festival created a buzz in Kendal town-centre with comic artists, graphic novelists and thousands of fans coming from around the world to celebrate. More than 50 events took place over three days of the festival, supported by South Lakeland District Council. These including: panel discussions, presentations, master classes, film screenings and watch them draw workshops. Highlights were a 24-hour comic marathon, with seven experts drawing non-stop, an appearance by Watchmen artist Dave Gibbons on the opening night, and a presentation by Dez Skinn, creator of Doctor Who Weekly.

• **Council approves £350m facility creating hundreds of jobs**

Proposals for a new £350m biopharmaceutical facility at GSK in Ulverston were approved by South Lakeland District Council’s planning committee. A report to the committee said the new facility would “deliver significant economic benefits for the area in terms of high quality, highly skilled jobs.” It is anticipated that overall the completed project will bring more than 500 jobs to South Lakeland through the construction and operation of the new site.

The report also noted: “It will also deliver a number of social and environmental benefits including the provision of new and improved sports facilities, biodiversity improvements and new and enhanced pedestrian and cycle routes.”



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 our residents have a high level of healthy life expectancy, however there are areas of inequality within our district.

There is also a greater reliance on councils and voluntary groups to deliver public health benefits. With these changes in mind, during the last 12 months South Lakeland District Council has produced a Health and Well Being Strategy. Its aim is to ensure the continual improvement of the health and wellbeing of local residents and that public health is at the heart of what we and our partners do.

Localism and Communities

During 2014/15 the South Lakeland Community Safety Partnership (SLCSP) agreed to hold joint meetings with Barrow CSP and to share a chair and co-ordinator. The agreed CSP priorities were alcohol related crime and acquisitive crime, including rural and agricultural crime. Two task groups delivered projects against agreed action plans. Projects

• Green scheme shortlisted for award

A green scheme to help South Lakeland residents to recycle their food waste was shortlisted for a prestigious national award. The project, which enabled people in the district to buy cut-price food waste digesters through South Lakeland District Council (SLDC), delivered in partnership with Cumbria County Council, was nominated for the EPIC Media Communications Campaign honour at the Chartered Institution of Wastes Management (CIWM) Awards.

• New focal point for rural business

A new 'hub' was officially launched as a focal point for business in Sedbergh and the surrounding rural district. The Sedbergh Business Hub is designed to offer services to help businesses of all shapes and sizes in the Sedbergh area. The hub provides facilities, including multi-use rooms, advice and mentoring, hot-desking stations and learning and training. It was funded through the Rural Growth Network (RGN), a DEFRA funded initiative to help businesses in rural areas.

included a rural crime awareness raising event at Junction 36 auction centre in October attended by Richard Rhodes, the Police & Crime Commissioner and bike marking events across the district in January. Through Inspira, the South Cumbria Alcohol Strategy Group targeted personal safety awareness with a campaign over Christmas aimed and keeping young people safe when they socialised.

November



• Lake Windermere Survey

A survey of Lake Windermere users has shown three-quarters of respondents are happy with their visiting experience. In answer to the question asking how satisfied or dissatisfied users are with their experience using the lake 76% said they were 'very' or 'fairly' satisfied.

• Leader attends opening of remembrance memorial

Cllr Peter Thornton attended the inauguration of the Notre Dame de Lorette international memorial. Cllr Thornton was one of 1,200 dignitaries invited from around the world by President of France, François Hollande, to attend the opening ceremony of the memorial. The Ring of Remembrance has been built next to the French National Cemetery, at the summit of Notre Dame de Lorette plateau in North France. It is engraved with the names of 580,000 soldiers who died in the Artois region during World War One. The names are listed in alphabetical order regardless of nationality or regiment.



• Key business forum heads to South Lakeland

Kendal College played host to a South Lakeland Economic Forum chaired by The Times. Organised through the economic development team's Invest in South Lakeland programme, the forum was made up of business leaders, politicians and academics who discussed the district's key business-related issues in front of an invited audience. The forum then went on to be featured in a special South Lakeland business supplement in the Times.



The One South Lakeland (OSL) Board, a partnership of key organisations across South Lakeland, agreed a new approach to how we manage, allocate and use scarce resources and to the opportunities provided by shared commissioning. This approach involves looking beyond the price of each individual contract and looking at the collective benefit to a community when awarding a contract. A draft procurement framework and

guidance document will be presented to the next meeting in summer. Partners involved in the project include SLDC, Cumbria CVS, Cumbria Constabulary, Age UK, Cumbria Partnership Foundation Trust and North Country Leisure.



November

• **Healthy choices on the menu at Cartmel school**

Cartmel Priory School achieved the new 'Healthier Menus for Schools' award after demonstrating its commitment to tackling obesity, by encouraging pupils to make healthier and more informed food choices, picking more fruit and vegetables and less saturated fats, sugars and salts. SLDC is running the initiative in collaboration with Cumbria County Council and other local authorities. To achieve the award schools must meet a set of requirements, including how



the school lunch menu and food is displayed and the ingredients used in meals.



• **Students take over the council**

Students from Queen Katherine School in Kendal and Queen Elizabeth School in Kirkby Lonsdale staged a 'takeover' of South Lakeland District Council. Part of National Takeover Day, run by social enterprise company Inspira, the day was designed to give young people a taste of a real working environment. National Takeover Day aims to break down barriers between generations, and encourages the active involvement of young people in their communities and the working world.

• **Green Build Conference**

SLDC hosted the Green Build Conference at Kendal College. It brought together architects, developers, planning consultants and self-builders to explore the latest sustainable design and construction techniques in residential and commercial development and how to balance these with other development requirements.



December



• **South Lakeland District Council was awarded the Investors In People Silver Award**

• **Handyperson scheme supports vulnerable and elderly**

Elderly or vulnerable residents were encouraged to make use of a council-run scheme that offers practical help in the home for simple tasks such as changing bulbs, fitting curtains or moving heavy items. The Handyperson Scheme offers small-scale assistance to help householders maintain independent living and quality of life, as well as reducing the fear of crime.



Performance

The council is committed to delivering high quality, cost effective services that meet the needs of residents and improves quality of life. To help achieve our goals, we measure performance frequently. The performance management process helps us to demonstrate how well we are 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 we are progressing with our Council Plan.

Transparency

We are committed to open data and transparency as set out in the Local Government Transparency Code 2014. We are working on the way we make our data freely available to everyone in a format that can be

reused. Over the past six months data has been added to this directory on a regular basis, including information on car parks, payments to suppliers and councillor allowances.

January



• **More homes benefit from the kerbside plastic and cardboard recycling scheme**

The expansion of kerbside recycling now means around 14,000 households

receive the plastic & card service South Lakeland. Following a successful trial of a plastics and cardboard collection it was decided the scheme would be extended to include the southern and eastern areas of Kendal during 2014/15.

• **South Lakeland marks Holocaust anniversary**

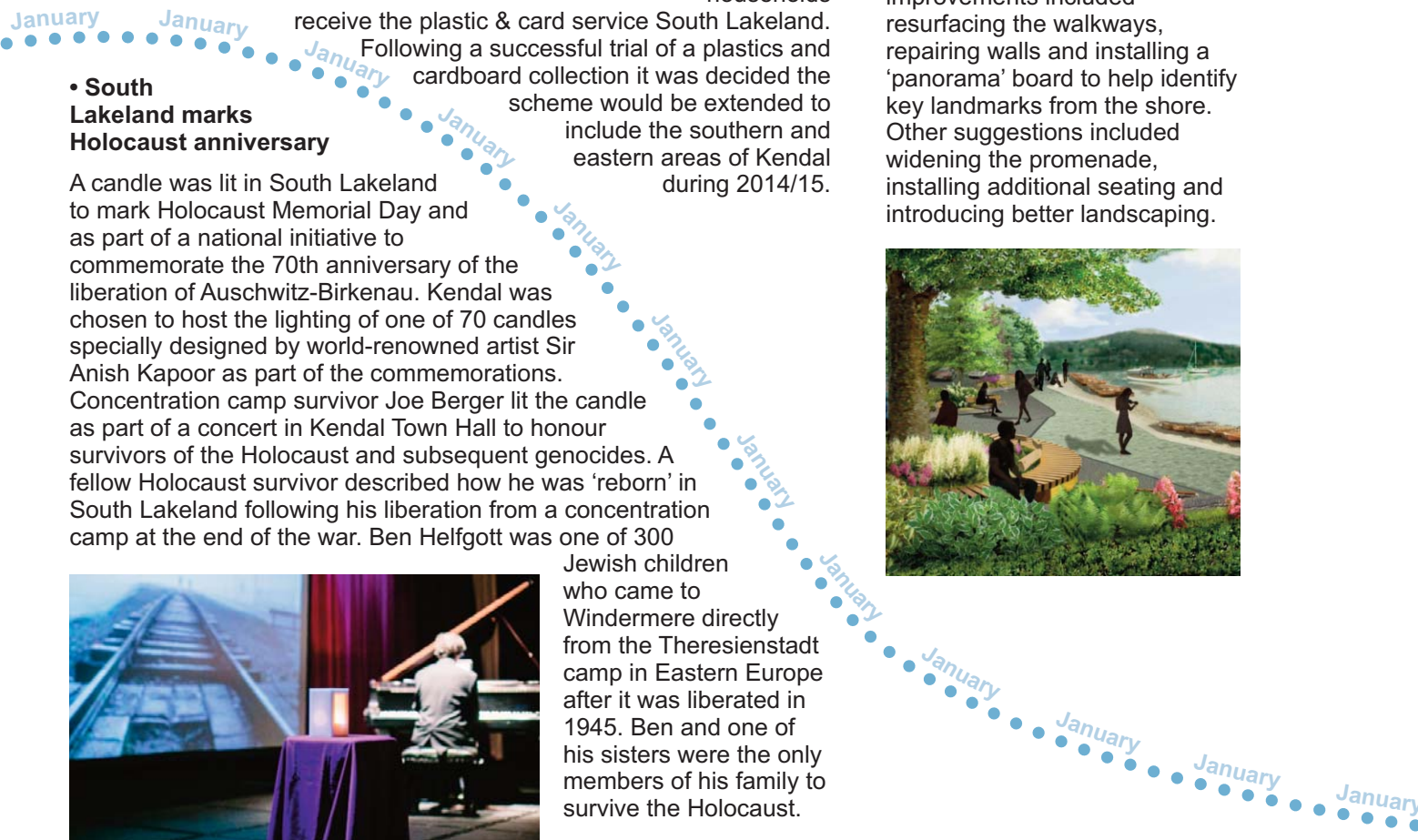
A candle was lit in South Lakeland to mark Holocaust Memorial Day and as part of a national initiative to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau. Kendal was chosen to host the lighting of one of 70 candles specially designed by world-renowned artist Sir Anish Kapoor as part of the commemorations. Concentration camp survivor Joe Berger lit the candle as part of a concert in Kendal Town Hall to honour survivors of the Holocaust and subsequent genocides. A fellow Holocaust survivor described how he was 'reborn' in South Lakeland following his liberation from a concentration camp at the end of the war. Ben Helfgott was one of 300

Jewish children who came to Windermere directly from the Theresienstadt camp in Eastern Europe after it was liberated in 1945. Ben and one of his sisters were the only members of his family to survive the Holocaust.



• **Proposals unveiled for £250K lake shore investment**

Plans for a quarter of a million pound upgrade to the northern shore of Windermere were unveiled. Residents were invited to have their say on proposals to improve Waterhead promenade, the gateway to Ambleside and the northern Lakes. Working in close collaboration with the Lakes Parish Council and Ambleside Civic Trust, planned improvements included resurfacing the walkways, repairing walls and installing a 'panorama' board to help identify key landmarks from the shore. Other suggestions included widening the promenade, installing additional seating and introducing better landscaping.



2015 January

• Following on from June's funding announcement, an additional £20.9 million of infrastructure improvements for Cumbria was confirmed. As a key member in the Cumbria Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) this announcement will see an extra £20.9 million invested in Cumbria between 2016 and 2021.

• World Heritage Bid

SLDC backed a campaign to see the Lake District recognised as a World Heritage Site. World Heritage Site (WHS) status would place the Lake District alongside destinations including the Taj Mahal, Tower of London and Great Barrier Reef in its worldwide importance.



February

• Work started to fix a leaking roof on the Grade 1 listed Castle Diary. The building, parts of which date back to the 14th century, is owned by SLDC and is currently operated as a restaurant and art gallery by Kendal College.



• Encouraging young voters

To support National Voter Registration Day on Thursday 5 February, staff visited secondary schools and Kendal College with social enterprise organisation, Inspira, to inform and promote the importance of students registering to vote. The visits to Ulverston Victoria High School, Kirkbie Kendal School and Kendal College coincided with the national Bite the Ballot campaign, which aims to increase the number of 18-24 year-olds registered. Staff delivered a presentation to students with the aim to raise awareness about how to register to vote and why they should vote in the elections in May, which this year includes, the General Election.

• **Figures show that business is booming in Kirkby Lonsdale, with no empty shop units in the town.**



In 2014/15, did you know?

- SLDC dealt with 397 fly tipping incidents - a reduction from 2013/14, which was almost over 560.
- The percentage of households with plastic and cardboard kerbside collection has risen significantly from 13.5% in 2013/14 to 27% in 2014/15.

- Between the period April 2014-March 2015, 550 people accessed SLDC's homeless service.
- The council's recycling rate for the year 2014/15 is estimated at 44%.
- The Food Officers carried out 1113 food inspections during 2014-2015.
- Council Tax collection rate 98.38%.

- The Environmental Protection Group received 2288 requests for service during 2014-2015.
- 93% of food premises in South Lakeland have scored 4 or 5 on the Food Hygiene Rating Scheme
- More than 1 in 10 residents drink from a private water supply in South Lakeland.
- NDR collection rate 98.29%.

March

- **Free town centre Wi-Fi switched on**

A town centre Wi-Fi scheme gets up and running in Kendal, providing free internet access along the main shopping routes. The pilot project is the first of its type in the South Lakes area and will run for an initial one year period. In line with ideas put forward by Kendal Town Council, it aims to help make Kendal a social hub, encouraging people to spend more time in the town centre and supporting economic activity on the high street.



- **Green fingered scouts celebrate community garden grant**

A scout unit's community garden is one of five projects to receive financial assistance from SLDC. Xenolith Explorer Scout Unit in Ulverston have helped to transform wasteland in the town centre into a bright and vibrant natural oasis of flowers, fruit and vegetables. Scouts from the unit have led a team of 20 volunteers that put in more than 800 hours work to create the 'Incredible Edible' community garden. The project has been backed by various businesses and organisations in the town and volunteers have been awarded £2,500 from the Environmental Partnership Scheme.



- **Volunteers map town's heritage**

Volunteers are helping to map Ulverston's heritage as part of a major conservation project. Members of Ulverston Civic Society are working on behalf of SLDC to conduct a detailed survey of any structures in the town of architectural or historic interest. The project is part of the council's statutory duty as the local planning authority to prepare management plans that explain how its conservation areas will be preserved and enhanced. They have almost 1,000 buildings to look at and it is hoped that they will have completed the survey by the end of 2015.

- The Commonwealth Flag was raised at Kendal Town Hall to coincide with more than 730 other Commonwealth Flags being raised across the UK and Commonwealth countries.

- The Public Protection Business Forum was held this March. The forum which is targeted at the hospitality industry was attended by 60 delegates from 34 businesses. The forum aims to provide businesses with useful food and health safety information and to gauge what further support businesses would like from SLDC.

- **Affordable homes ahead of schedule**

New figures show that SLDC is a year ahead of schedule for delivery of 1,000 new affordable homes for rent by 2025. Recent progress, in the last six months, means that since January 2014 a total of 191 new affordable homes for rent have been delivered, which is ahead of schedule for this point in the process.



- **During 2014/15 we collected:**

-5,678.79 tonnes of recyclables from the kerbside.

-10,736.94 tonnes of green waste from the kerbside (the highest tonnage we have ever collected).

-2,497.09 tonnes of paper, card, glass, cans and plastic at recycling centres.



Finance

Budgeted income and expenditure for 2014/15 was:

	Gross Expenditure	Income	Net Expenditure
	£000	£000	£000
Neighbourhood Services	14,435.9	8,436.8	5,999.1
Strategic Planning	8,080.5	3,091.2	4,989.3
Policy and Performance	3,749.7	505.4	3,244.3
Resources	22,642.7	20,868.4	1,774.3
Cost of services	48,908.8	32,901.8	16,007.0
Financing Entries and Statutory Accounting Requirements			-3,570.8
Net Increase/(decrease) in General Fund Balances & Reserves			413
SLDC Budget requirement			12,849.2
Non Domestic Rates			-2,645.6
Revenue Support Grant			-2,388.7
Council Tax Freeze Grant			-83.5
Other Grants			-7
SLDC demand on Collection Fund			7,724.4
Special Expenses (parishes) / Collection Fund Deficit			-43.1
SLDC Council Tax requirement			7,681.3

The council's Statement of Accounts for 2014/15 can be found at:

www.southlakeland.gov.uk/your-council/council-business/finance/2014-to-2015-financial-year/

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