



# KENDAL ECONOMIC GROWTH ACTION PLAN 2015 -2025

FINAL REPORT

**Douglas Wheeler Associates Ltd**

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**Douglas  
Wheeler  
Associates**



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# FOREWORD

On behalf of the Kendal Futures Board, I am delighted to present the Kendal Economic Growth Action Plan 2015-2025. The development of the Action Plan has been led by Douglas Wheeler Associates Ltd (DWA) and is based on research, fresh analysis, consultation and involvement with the Board and stakeholders and two Workshops held in June and September.

The Action Plan highlights what Kendal Futures has achieved since 2007 as a respected 'neutral forum' discussing emerging economic development opportunity, challenging the status quo, providing leadership and, as a proactive partnership vehicle, co-ordinating economic investment. The policy review highlights that there is a clear commitment to economic growth in Kendal, to the delivery of high quality jobs, long-term, sustainable development and to the promotion of training opportunities.

The Action Plan identifies a series of eight economic challenges that face the Kendal economy over the next ten years. In a wider context, the global economy is continuing to evolve, the pace of technological change is creating new opportunities while making older business practices obsolete and the competition for the brightest people is intensifying.

Undoubtedly, Kendal and its wider area now offers a business friendly environment, a strong tradition of innovation, a highly skilled and connected workforce and a reputation for world class arts and culture. It also punches above its weight as a premier town for delivering

quality events. All this is underpinned with an excellent quality of life. Therefore the Kendal Economic Growth Action Plan 2015-2025 has to build ambitiously on these strong foundations and so attract external investment, stimulate economic activity and, most importantly, create new jobs and business opportunities. Crucially Kendal will need both more strong new businesses and the overall infrastructure to support them; the two are mutually dependant.

The Action Plan identifies four interrelated themes namely:

- i. Business specialisation and diversification: continue up the value chain
- ii. Attract and retain working age talent
- iii. Establish a brand/USP for the wider Kendal economy and focus on quality of life
- iv. Deliver economic infrastructure and place making investment

In the next decade, Kendal Futures fundamental role must be to build consensus around strategic projects based on the Kendal Economic Growth Action Plan 2015-2025. We will then encourage and assist other public, private and third sector partners to deliver these projects on the ground. This is a task we relish.

We are grateful for the contribution of all our partners to the preparation of the Action Plan.

*Peter Hensman*

**Chair, Kendal Futures**

**November 2014**

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## Background

The DWA Team was commissioned, after competitive tender, in early June 2014 by Kendal Futures to revisit and update the 2007 Kendal Economic Regeneration Action Plan (KERAP). This new Kendal Economic Growth Action Plan 2015-2025 has been based on consultation and involvement with Kendal Futures Board (KFB) and partners. A Listening Workshop was held on 3 June and a second Action Plan Partners Delivery Workshop on 3 September, with businesses, agency representatives and local community organisations attending both events.

### Kendal Futures Structure and Role

KFB was established in 2007 as the body responsible for leading the delivery of the original KERAP. The Board is made up of fifteen representatives from the public, private and third sectors and is responsible for co-ordinating and implementing projects to improve the economic vitality of Kendal. The Board have played a fundamental role in championing the economic development agenda in Kendal since 2007, driving a longer term vision through what has been a very challenging economic recession. The consultations have highlighted the importance of Kendal Futures as a respected 'neutral forum' providing leadership and as a proactive partnership vehicle co-ordinating economic investment. Undoubtedly Kendal Futures should continue in the future.

### New Action Plan: Economic and Policy Context

Chapter 2 highlights the very different economic and policy context and just how much has been achieved in delivering the economic agenda in Kendal since 2007, through what has been the depth of global economic recession. A significant number of projects have been delivered under the original KERAP four themes and new projects are continuing to emerge. Leading the work to secure the successful Business Improvement District (BID) ballot in October 2013 and seeing the BID formally launched in March 2014 were significant achievements. The launch of the BID means that Kendal Futures can play much more of an arm's length approach to short to medium term economic development initiatives targeted at the town centre and this is reflected in the new Action Plan.

The adoption of the Local Plan means that a significant brake on the economic development of Kendal has been addressed. SLDC's **long term intention** is to bring together the suite of Local Plan documents into a single local plan which will cover the period from 2021 to 2035. Kendal Futures will have an important role here in continuing to lobby for appropriate land allocations and targeted public, private and third sector investment to help deliver the new single local plan.

## Kendal's Significant Economic Challenges and Refreshed Economic Growth Vision

Chapter 3 highlights the eight significant economic challenges that Kendal now faces. Chapter 4 summarises the refreshed economic growth vision for Kendal founded on a clear updated, evidence based economic development agenda for Kendal and shaped by the research, analysis, consultations and workshops.

### Kendal's 2025 Vision

In ten years the wider Kendal area is:

*'An economically dynamic, diverse and culturally vibrant place, with strong new and established businesses in growing sectors with competitive infrastructure to support them. The businesses provide quality jobs and higher value employment opportunities. Kendal itself is a contemporary market town with an intriguing focus on culture, arts and the creative industries set in a thriving distinctive town centre within one of Europe's greatest landscapes.'*

*The wider Kendal area is now achieving its potential to deliver sustainable wealth, health and well-being for all its residents and admired for its flourishing business, educational excellence, enterprise and ambition, the quality of its built heritage and its low carbon economy.'*

Chapter 5 summarises the new Kendal Economic Growth Action Plan 2015-2025 and **sixteen priority projects** under the **four themes** of:

- Business specialisation and diversification: continue up value chain
- Attract and retain working age talent
- Establishing a brand/USP for the wider Kendal economy: focus on quality of life
- Deliver economic infrastructure and place making investment

The Action Plan 2015-2025 can be used as a strategic framework to coordinate project delivery, to lobby for public, private and third sector intervention and to serve as a reference document to support bids for external funding.

### Delivering the Kendal Economic Growth Action Plan 2015-2025

Very clearly Kendal is one small part of a much larger local, regional, national and international economy. It is simply not big enough to think of economic development purely in local terms. Kendal's businesses need a larger customer and supply chain base, its residents need access to a greater range of job opportunities and Kendal College for example needs to appeal to a wider student market.

The economic development field however, is a crowded one and a review has identified around twelve different local partnerships and agencies in Kendal, in addition there are agencies with wider South Lakeland and Cumbria roles. Therefore, there are risks of duplication and

wasted resources if Kendal Futures relationships are not carefully managed and this includes the 'arm's length overview' relationship with the Kendal BID. Investing in developing strong links within and beyond Kendal is well worthwhile as is pooling resources when it makes sense to do so. Kendal Futures is ideally placed and still the most appropriate agent to lead delivery of the Action Plan 2015-2025.

Kendal Futures cannot grow the local economy alone, but in leading the delivery of the Action Plan and working with private, public and third sector partners, it can help support Kendal towards a more resilient and therefore sustainable economic growth. In the next decade Kendal Futures fundamental role will be to build consensus around strategic projects with significant economic impact and the Kendal Economic Growth Action Plan 2015-2025 and assist other partners to deliver the projects on the ground.

### Funding and Investment from New Development

New opportunities to use funding and investment from new development (e.g Community Infrastructure Levy, Community Benefit Agreements, Section 106, New Homes Bonus) means that the Kendal Futures Board working with partners like Kendal Town Council will have more scope to develop new innovative approaches to facilitate local economic development, invest in improving infrastructure and other projects in the Action Plan. This will require additional dedicated project development resources.

## Recommendation

The Kendal Futures Board is invited to:

- Approve the Kendal Economic Growth Action Plan 2015: refreshed vision, strategic themes and priority projects as the basis for future investment decisions in Kendal over the next ten years
- Reconfirm the role of Kendal Futures and review the membership to ensure it meets the needs of the new Action Plan.

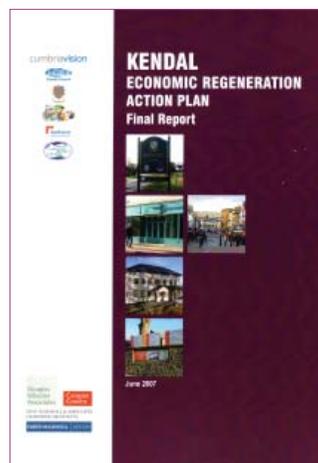
Chapter 5 identifies a series of next steps.



# 1 INTRODUCTION

## Kendal Futures: Background

Kendal Futures is the regeneration partnership for Kendal, made up of fifteen representatives from both the public, private and third sectors, and is responsible for co-ordinating and implementing projects to improve the economic vitality of Kendal. The Kendal Futures Board (KFB) is chaired by an independent private sector representative and supported by a part time project coordinator. Kendal Futures has limited resources and therefore works through other agencies to achieve its aims and objectives that align with the Kendal Economic Regeneration Action Plan (KERAP: see Chapter 2) that was prepared by the Douglas Wheeler Associates Team (DWA Team) in 2007.



The main activities of Kendal Futures are to: lobby, influence and inspire politicians and public, private and third sectors; champion Kendal and enable and deliver projects using the resources of partners.

## Brief for KERAP Refresh

The DWA Team was commissioned, after competitive tender, in early June 2014 by Kendal Futures to revisit and update the 2007 KERAP. In particular the brief required the commission to answer the following questions and establish:

- What has been achieved and delivered from the original 2007 Plan?
- Are the current priorities still appropriate?
- What actions still should be addressed?
- What new priorities and initiatives are required that could maximise synergy and value for money?
- Is the Vision for Kendal still relevant and appropriate for a further ten years?

## DWA Approach

THE DWA Team approach was based on nine tasks and undertaken over a ten lapsed week programme that is summarised below.

	Task	Weeks	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1	Commissioning Meeting		█									
2	Review of Strategies and Stakeholder Consultation			█	█							
3	KERAP Refresh: Listening Workshop					█						
4	Existing Regeneration Partners Delivery Capacity					█						
5	Economic Baseline: Kendal 2014 Profile Report				█	█						
6	Summary Evaluation of Delivery of KERAP Projects					█	█					
7	Property Market Appraisal				█	█						
8	'Towards A Refreshed KERAP': Action Plan						█	█				
9	Refreshed KERAP: Partners Workshop								█			
10	Refreshed Kendal Economic Regeneration Action Plan: Draft and Final Report									█		

The Kendal Economic Growth Action Plan 2015-2025 has been based on consultation and involvement with KFB and partners and a Listening Workshop was held on 3 June with twenty five attendees. The Listening Workshop began with an outline of the changed strategic and policy context since 2007, a profile of the Kendal economy in 2014, emerging opportunities and a discussion in four groups on positive and negative aspects of the local economy and on what Kendal could be like in 2025.



A second Action Plan Partners Delivery Workshop was held on 3 September with eighteen businesses, agency representatives and local community organisations attending. The main focus of the Partners Delivery Workshop was to discuss the emerging vision and Action Plan programmes in four informal groups. The presentations, notes and attendance lists from both workshops can be found in the separately bound Appendix 1. This Report reflects the outcome of the discussions at the two workshops.

## Role of Action Plan

The early consultations and experience from elsewhere in the United Kingdom indicate that Kendal Futures is a successful, well established and proactive economic regeneration partnership. In discussion with the KFB it was agreed that the main objectives of the refreshed Action Plan 2015-2025 were now to provide:

- An evidence based business case to reinforce and continue to build consensus and support action to assist the Kendal economy
- An economic focus with a strong fit with Cumbria LEP, Cumbria CC, SLDC and BID strategic priorities
- Support for funding bids, in what is traditionally a difficult location, both to make the case for public sector funding and to enable exploration of alternative funding sources
- The case for joined up/linked projects that maximise benefits from emerging opportunities
- Clear actions and priority projects capable of delivery in the short, medium and longer term and delivered through evidence-based tactical economic interventions

## The Kendal Economic Growth Action Plan 2015-2025 Structure

The Kendal Economic Growth Action Plan 2015-2025 is presented in the following five chapters:

- Kendal Futures: the new economic and policy context
- Kendal: the economic challenges
- Kendal's economic future: Where we are going
- Kendal growth and investment action plan: priorities
- Delivering the action plan: conclusions



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## **2 KENDAL FUTURES: THE NEW ECONOMIC AND POLICY CONTEXT**

This chapter outlines Kendal Futures progress in delivering the 2007 KERAP and the current economic and policy context. The policy context is reviewed at the national, county and Kendal levels.

## 2007 KERAP: Themes and Delivered Projects



The six Kendal Futures Annual Reports 2008/9 to 2013/14 highlight the wide range of projects that Kendal Futures has helped to deliver through close partnership working. The main projects are summarised below and structured around the four themes of the original KERAP.

### *Theme 1: Adding value: moving businesses up the value chain. Including:*

Working with businesses to encourage growth and inward investment and increase the number of better paid, higher level skilled jobs. Improve Kendal's image as a destination for visitors and support the development of further and higher education opportunities.

*Successfully delivered projects include:*

**The Kendal Festival of Food, tourism promotion, leaflets, guides, orientation and fingerpost signage and the Kendal Courtesy Toilet Scheme.**

### *Theme 2: Investing in Kendal town centre: strategic projects. Including:*

Working to support, promote and strengthen a thriving town centre based on a diverse and resilient cluster of independent retailers.

*Successfully delivered projects include:*

**Leading the work to secure the positive Business Improvement District (BID) ballot in October 2013 and the formal BID launch in March 2014, Kirkland and Highgate public realm enhancement and signage improvements.**



### *Theme 3: Boosting enterprise and business birth rate. Including:*

Supporting business to launch, develop, diversify and grow and encouraging more businesses to relocate to Kendal.

*Successfully delivered projects include:*

**The roll-out of superfast fibre optic broadband to many areas in Kendal by the end of 2012/13 three years ahead of schedule, the establishment of [www.investinkendal.com](http://www.investinkendal.com) to promote the town as a place to do business, a creative/digital enterprise centre: pilot incubator units are being developed with Kendal College.**



### *Theme 4: Promoting excellent economic infrastructure. Including:*

Influencing the development of suitable employment sites, supporting transport and access initiatives and improved connectivity based on parking, walking and cycling projects.

*Successfully delivered projects include:*

**Lobbying for appropriate land allocations to support business focussing on SLDC's recently adopted Local Plan (this includes the strategic employment site Scroggs Wood), promoting car parking priorities which simplify parking and access to the town.**

## What's Changed Since 2007?



### Economic Outlook

The 2008/09 financial crisis significantly changed the economic and business environment. Investor confidence fell, lending conditions tightened, public spending has been cut, and many households have been left with levels of indebtedness that are difficult to service. Sustained economic recovery remains elusive although the latest IMF outlook is more promising, forecasting 3.2% real GDP growth in 2014.

The UK Coalition Government is committed to re-balancing the economy, so that it is less reliant on financial services and public spending in the future. The UK Government wants to see sustainable, private-sector led growth and an expansion in international trade. It has a deficit reduction programme that includes continued significant real-term cuts in public spending; a welfare reform agenda aimed at incentivising work; and an approach to further and higher education aimed at raising the status of vocational education and

making providers more responsive to learners and businesses.

There is a strong commitment to devolution, localism and customer choice in public services. A raft of centrally controlled targets has been removed; new providers are being encouraged to enter the public service market; and new financial mechanisms are being put in place to provide greater flexibility for local authorities to raise their own revenue. The financial constraints place significant responsibility on local authorities to find new, more innovative ways of working; to be clear about what they can and cannot do; and to develop strong partnerships so that effective interventions are made by the right organisations at the right spatial level. This requires a new relationship between citizens and local authorities where local authorities adopt a facilitation role to ensure and enable, rather than 'do' as in the past.

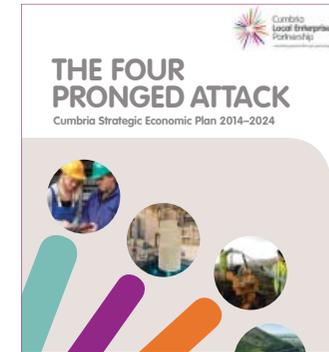
### Policy Context

At a national level the Regional Development Agencies, including NWDA who were an important funder of Kendal Futures in 2007-2009, were abolished in 2010 and in their place new organisations like the Skills Funding Agency, Careers Service and Local Enterprise Partnerships were established.

The **Cumbria Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP)** was established in 2011 with a Board comprising six representatives from the private sector, including the Chair, and six from the public sector.

### *The Cumbria Strategic Economic Plan 2015-2025*

Cumbria LEP's 10-year Strategic Economic Plan concentrates on FOUR strategic priorities with



intervention through FOUR economic drivers. This 'four by four' approach aims to deliver the maximum benefit for Cumbria and drive economic growth at a county, national and international level. Cumbria's business, public and voluntary sector

partners, working through the Cumbria LEP, have identified the following priority themes:

- Advanced manufacturing growth
- Nuclear and energy excellence
- Vibrant rural and visitor economy
- Strategic connectivity of the M6 Corridor

The FOUR economic drivers are business support, skills development, infrastructure improvements and environmental sustainability. The LEP has identified Cumbria Business Growth Hub as the focus of business support across the county. The Growth Hub provides a one-stop-shop, making it simple to access the support business needs. The Edge has also been established as a Skills Support for the Workforce project, funded by the European Social Fund and Co-financed by the Skills Funding Agency.

The LEP's Regional Growth Fund programme is in place and already provides support to promote private sector investment, with a focus on manufacturing and SME businesses within the county. Local workforce skills and supply chain growth will also be vital to fuel and support the ambitions of advanced manufacturing companies.

The Strategic Economic Plan also highlights the vital importance of infrastructure investment in order to maintain the current momentum. There is a need to increase take-up of employment land and to address the barriers to developing allocated employment sites. The barriers are a combination of up-front infrastructure costs making investment unviable and a lack of financial investment confidence. The Strategic Economic Plan emphasises that continued investment in priority employment sites to secure business expansion opportunities and to attract private sector investment in Kendal will be crucial. Further unleashing the potential of the M6 corridor will also be crucial to Cumbria's future prosperity.



The visitor economy, including business tourism, is also highlighted and although already the highest value sector in rural Cumbria, it nevertheless presents significant growth potential. *'The Lake*

*District: Cumbria'* is an international brand thanks to the unique combination of cultural heritage, landscape, and adventure opportunities it offers. The Strategic Economic Plan highlights that currently only 8% of Cumbria's 38 million visitors come from overseas. Critically the brand needs to be strengthened to be recognised in the rapidly expanding tourism markets of South America, China, Japan and India. Overseas visitors are worth £68 per person per night compared with £54 for a domestic visitor.



The Strategic Economic Plan highlights the strong correlation between successful economies and places with a diverse and vibrant cultural, education and leisure offer. Good quality higher and further education institutions are recognised as being key drivers of local economies.

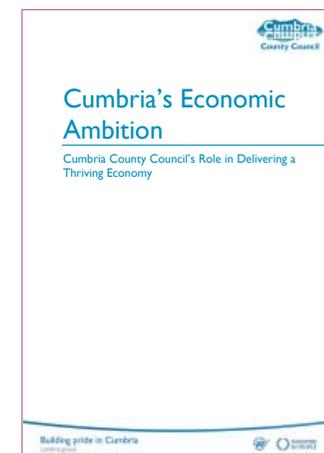
## Cumbria County Council: Cumbria's Economic Ambition 2011-2014

The Plan has three clear aims:

- Challenging poverty in all its forms
- Ensuring that the most vulnerable people in communities receive the support they need and
- Improving the chances in life of the most disadvantaged in Cumbria.

The five key priorities for action are:

- The excellent north south communications enjoyed by the main towns along the M6/West Coast Main Line corridor.
- West Cumbria's global reputation and expertise in nuclear and clean technologies.
- The County's strengths in the growing advanced manufacturing sector, particularly in submarine construction, biopharmaceuticals and LED clusters.
- The world class rural landscape and strong Lake District tourism brand.
- Opportunities to improve Cumbria's workforce skills.



## Cumbria Tourism: Destination Management Plan 2014 - 2016

As well as major investment proposals and projects the Plan includes a range of supporting initiatives and programmes required to transform the visitor economy in Cumbria and contribute more fully to economic growth and regeneration.



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The initiatives include:

- Further improvements to accommodation and attractions to raise standards throughout the county, with a view to attracting overseas markets.
- Marketing, image building and brand strengthening.
- Sustainable transport connections into and around the county with a particular emphasis on West Coast Rail and public transport services around the county.
- Investment in the public realm and access infrastructure, targeted towards town centres

and popular visitor destinations and key footpath networks.

- Enhanced co-ordination and promotion of Cumbria's rich arts and cultural offer and quality accredited food and drink [via Taste].
- Continued development and investment in growing outdoor activity markets - particularly the adventure walking, water sports and cycling sectors [via Adventure Capital].
- A targeted approach to skills and business development within the tourism sector.
- Rapid introduction of superfast broadband and mobile phone /4G.
- Raising environmental standards and resource efficiency within Cumbria's visitor economy - particularly in terms of accommodation and transport services.
- More robust support and financial underpinning of the Destination Management Organisation from public sector bodies.

### South Lakeland District Council (SLDC)

The SLDC Local Plan was adopted in December 2013 and sets out the development strategy for South Lakeland outside the National Park areas up to 2025. It is a long-term plan and draws together the strategies of SLDC and other organisations whose activities have implications for the development and use of land. The Local Plan seeks to create a sustainable district that is the best possible place to live, work and explore. The Local Plan earmarks land in South Lakeland for 5,277 new homes and 20 new employment sites and will encourage the creation of at least 1,000 new jobs

and more than one third of the homes built will be affordable.

The Local Plan Land Allocations document that SLDC has adopted will play a key role in delivering much-needed affordable homes as well as more and higher quality employment sites and buildings. This is the most significant local policy change since the original 2007 KERAP. As an outcome a significant brake on the economic development of Kendal has been addressed. SLDC is now also committed to preparing Development Management



Policies, the Kendal Canal Head Local Plan and fifteen Development Briefs, to be produced in two phases in order to deliver appropriate

housing and employment sites. The development briefs will now be drawn up for the largest sites in close liaison with local people.

The Local Plan also introduces a new Community Infrastructure Levy giving SLDC new powers to ask developers to help fund improvements to essential facilities. Other emerging opportunities to use funding and investment from new development (e.g. Community Benefit Agreements, Section 106, New Homes Bonus) means that the Kendal Futures Board working with partners like Kendal Town Council will have more scope to develop new innovative approaches to facilitate local economic development, invest in improving infrastructure and other projects in the Action Plan.

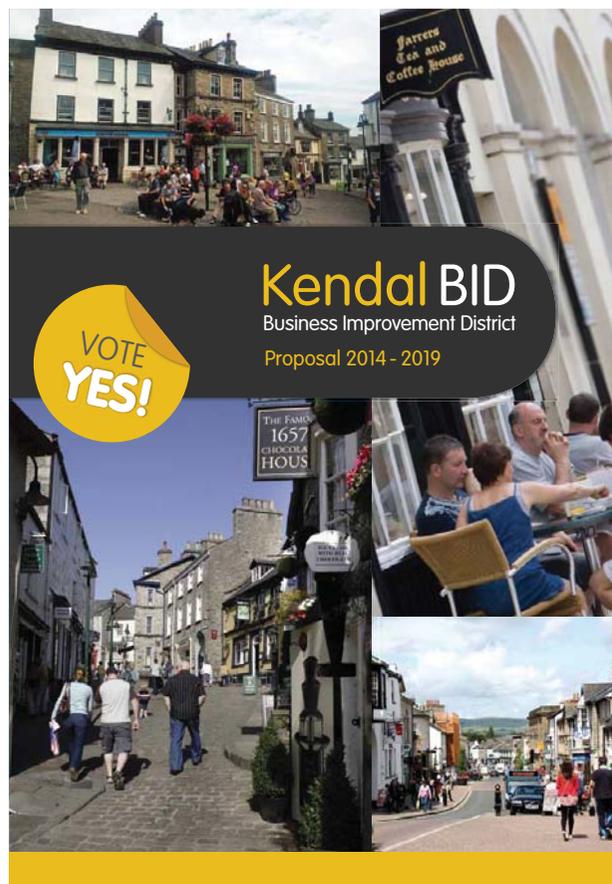
In April 2014 South Lakeland District Council (SLDC) also committed to a **new Strategy for Economic Growth** that has been developed in response to SLDC's recently adopted **Local Plan**. The Strategy for Economic Growth has been prepared in parallel with Cumbria LEP **Strategic Economic Plan** (SEP: see above). Through its **Strategy for Economic Growth** SLDC is committed to working with employers, partners and investors to deliver high quality jobs, development and economic growth and promoting training opportunities in South Lakeland.

**The vision and economic purpose is to make 'South Lakeland the best place to live, work and explore'.** Activities to deliver these strategic outcomes are grouped into five strategic priorities for action namely to:

- Secure improvements in productivity and employment through business growth and new enterprise
- Achieve a more flexible and highly skilled workforce
- Ensure that investment in infrastructure stimulates growth
- Promote a low carbon sustainable economy
- Attract and promote business investment in South Lakeland.

The **long term intention** is to bring together the suite of Local Plan documents into a single local plan which will cover the period from 2021 to 2035. The Plan will contain site allocations, development management policies and area specific policies for the whole District, apart from National Park and AONB areas, in a single

document. This document will be the means by which broad locations identified in the Local Plan - Land Allocations are brought forward. Kendal Futures will have an important role in continuing to lobby to ensure the take up of appropriate land allocations and targeted public, private and third sector investment to help deliver the new single local plan.



## Kendal BID Business Plan 2014-19

The Kendal BID will deliver on five key objectives, namely to:

1. Brand, market and promote Kendal as a centre for retail, services, leisure and tourism, including better use of digital and mobile technologies, and extending cultural activities, festivals and events.
2. Take pride in Kendal by creating a more attractive town centre for workers, residents and visitors.
3. Make it easier and more affordable to access Kendal town centre by introducing measures to incentivise car parking during quieter periods of the day, week or year, and wherever possible, encourage alternatives to the car.
4. Invest in people and businesses to develop a more competitive Kendal that builds on its reputation for choice and customer service.
5. Build, through the BID, an effective partnership between the town's businesses, organisations and local authorities for the benefit of Kendal businesses, residents and visitors.

The priorities and programme for Kendal's BID can be summarised as 4 'C's':

- Confident Kendal
- Clean Kendal
- Convenient Kendal
- Competitive Kendal

## Kendal Town Council Vision and Action Plan: Draft December 2014

The purpose of the Vision is to inform future actions of Kendal Town Council, to act as a basis for influencing other tiers of Government and to give the residents of Kendal a guide as to what Councillors hope to achieve. Kendal Town Council's emerging 2015 Vision and Action Plan for Kendal highlights four aspects and more than twenty five emerging actions. The four aspects are:

- Kendal: the best Arts and Culture centre in the NW with a focus on making better use of existing assets including arts, sports and culture, as well as other attractions.
- Kendal: a vibrant and successful market town, with vigorous enhancement and promotion of the market
- Kendal: a place for creative and innovate businesses, with a focus on industry/jobs.
- Kendal: an age and disabled friendly town with facilities and services that accommodate the needs of the elderly and infirm.



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## Policy Review: Conclusions

The policy review sets a high level but consistent context for the new Kendal Economic Growth Action Plan 2015-2025. The SLDC Local Plan was adopted in December 2013 and sets out the development strategy for South Lakeland outside the National Park areas up to 2025 and will play a key role in delivering much-needed affordable homes as well as more and higher quality employment sites and buildings. This is the most significant local policy change since the original 2007 KERAP and the adoption of the Local Plan means that a significant brake on the economic development of Kendal has been addressed. Kendal Futures will have an important role in continuing to lobby to ensure the take up of appropriate land allocations and targeted public, private and third sector investment to help deliver the new single local plan.

The policy review also highlights emerging opportunities to use funding and investment from new development (e.g Community Benefit Agreements, Section 106, New Homes Bonus) so that that the Kendal Futures Board working with partners like Kendal Town Council will now have more scope to develop new innovative approaches to facilitate local economic development. Overall the policy review highlights that there is a clear commitment to economic growth in Kendal and to deliver high quality jobs, sustainable development and to promoting training opportunities. In Kendal there have been successes in growing manufacturing e.g. Gilbert Gilkes and Gordon and Mardix (see Chapter 3). Continuing to support manufacturing and the digital and creative industries will be crucial in the future, as well as a clear focus on the visitor economy, arts and culture.





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## **3 KENDAL: THE ECONOMIC CHALLENGES**

## Socio Economic Profile

The 'Kendal Economic Profile: June 2014' was prepared by the Cumbria Intelligence Observatory/ Cumbria County Council and is available as a separate Appendix 2. This chapter highlights the main conclusions from the Economic Profile, under the headings of population, worklessness, economic activity, labour market and housing affordability and goes on to highlight the main challenges facing the Kendal economy.

### Kendal's Population is Growing but Ageing

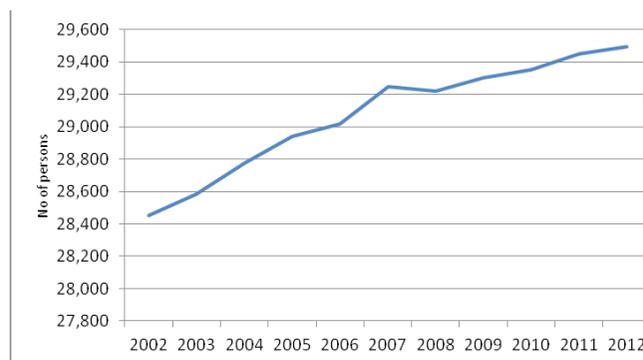
According to the ONS's mid-year estimates, the population of Kendal stood at 29,495 persons in mid-2012. Just over half of residents are female (51.5% female v 48.5% male) which is in line



with the national average. Overall, the town's population has increased by 3.7% since 2002 which is half the rate of increase for England and Wales (7.5%). However, Kendal's population grew faster than that of South Lakeland as a whole and Cumbria.

Figure 3.1 plots the estimated total population of Kendal each year from 2002 to 2012. Apart from a small fall in 2008, there has been steady annual growth throughout the period.

**Figure 3.1:**  
*Kendal, Mid-year Population 2002-2012*



Source: Office for National Statistics

The projected changes in South Lakeland's population are not spread evenly across age bands. Numbers of 0-14 year olds in South Lakeland are projected to decrease by 1,200 persons (-8.3%) by 2037. Of England's 326 district/unitary authorities, South Lakeland has the ninth greatest projected proportional decrease for this age group. While this decrease is in line with the projected county trend (Cumbria -11%), it is contrary to the projected national trend (England +9.4%).

The number of 15-64 year olds is projected to decrease by 10,300 persons (-16.5%) across the district by 2037; the sixth greatest projected decrease in this age group out of all district/unitary authorities in England. Again, this is in line with the projected county trend (Cumbria -16.6%), but contrary to the projected national trend (England +5.4%) and, if it came to fruition, would have major implications for the labour market.

In contrast, the number of residents aged 65+ is projected to increase by 12,500 persons across the district by 2037 (+47.5%). This projected trend is in line with county and national projections, although the projected county and national increases are more substantial (Cumbria +50.9%, England +65.1%).

### Worklessness is High in Some Areas of Kendal

Although less widespread in Cumbria than elsewhere, levels of worklessness in some areas of Kendal are still high. Worklessness in this instance is defined as those claiming one of the following out of work benefits - JSA, Incapacity Benefit/ESA, Lone Parents, Other Income Related Benefits.

In November 2013 there were 1,240 people claiming out of work benefits in the Kendal area, a rate of 7.2% of the working age population. This rate is below the county and national averages of 9.7% and 10.6% respectively but above the district average of 5.6%. Within Kendal there are wide variations with a rate as low as 2.2% in Heron Hill ward but as high as 13.1% in Kendal Kirkland and 12.5% in Kendal Fell, both of which are above the national average.

## How To Sustain the High Levels of Economic Activity in Kendal

All economies are predominantly reliant on the wealth generating capabilities of those who are currently in work. As was shown earlier, there has been a decline in the number of young people in Kendal in recent years which will impact on the potential working population in the future. It is therefore important to maximise the proportion of people who are economically active (defined as employed, self-employed or not working but actively looking for work). It is not possible to get reliable economic activity data for small areas on an annual basis so the analysis below is drawn from the 2011 Census.

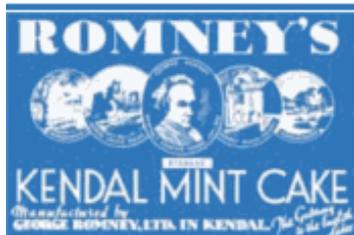
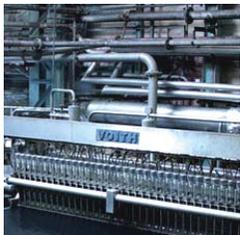
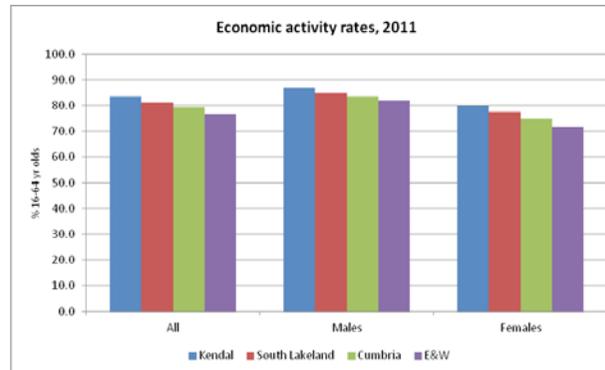


Figure 3.2 shows that economic activity rates in Kendal are higher than nationally with 83.5% of 16-64 year olds classed as economically active in 2011 compared to 76.8% nationally. Males are more likely to be economically active than females with 87.0% of males in Kendal economically active at the time of the Census compared to 80.0% of females. In both cases this is higher than the district, county and national average.

Figure 3.2:  
Economic Activity Rate of 16-64 Year Olds by Gender, 2011



Source: Census 2011

## Labour Market: Little Change in Overall Numbers but Changes Between Sectors in Kendal

**Employment by sector:** According to the 2012 BRES, there were 16,600 employees located in businesses within Kendal. The highest number of these was in the retail sector which accounted for 3,000 employees (17.8%), closely followed by the health sector with 2,800 (16.5%).

**Employment change:** Since 2009 there has been little change in the overall number of employee jobs located in Kendal (+0.5%) which is similar to the picture nationally (+0.1%). However, there have been some changes between sectors with growth of around 200 jobs in both the arts and recreation and health sectors alongside decline of around 200 jobs in each of the manufacturing, construction and professional services sectors.

**Resident based industry and occupation:** When compared with Cumbria and England and Wales, Kendal has proportionately more residents employed in retail than those areas demonstrating the importance of the sector as a provider of employment opportunities for local residents in the town. Kendal has a slightly higher proportion of residents working in the manufacturing sector as nationally but below the average for Cumbria. As demonstrated by the workplace data, Kendal has a lower proportion of employed residents in the financial and business services sectors than nationally, although this is a trend seen throughout Cumbria.



Compared to Cumbria, Kendal has proportionately fewer residents employed in skilled trades and as process, plant and machine operatives (the Cumbria average is distorted by employment at BAe Systems and Sellafield). Compared to the national average, Kendal has proportionately

more residents employed in skilled trades, sales and customer service occupations and elementary occupations but fewer in professional and associate professional occupations. This is a reflection of the industrial structure in the area where, for example, there are fewer employment opportunities in financial and business services.

### Housing Affordability Ratio in Kendal is High

Combining data from the CACI StreetValue dataset with CACI PayCheck data a house price to income ratio, known as an affordability ratio, can be constructed. Based on median data, the average house price in Kendal is 6.7 times the average household income. This affordability ratio is below the district ratio of 7.6 but well ahead of the county ratio of 5.3 and the national ratio of 5.9.



### Kendal's Eight Economic Challenges

Based on this review of the economic context, Kendal Economic Profile, consultations and the workshops, a series of eight economic challenges that face the Kendal economy over the next ten years, have been identified. In summary the fundamental economic challenges are:

#### 1. Responding to The Demographic Challenge: Kendal's Growing but Ageing Population

Kendal has a growing population, currently 29,495 persons (mid-2012) and grew faster than South Lakeland and Cumbria overall. The town's population has increased by 3.7% since 2002. The number of 15-64 year olds in South Lakeland District is projected to decrease by 10,300 persons (-16.5%) across the district by 2037. In contrast, the number of residents aged 65+ is projected to increase by 12,500 persons across the district by 2037 (+47.5%). These trends could have significant implications for the Kendal economy and local labour market.

Retiree expenditure has generated wealth within South Lakeland but the influx of older working age and retired people, together with lower birth rates numbers has resulted in an ageing population. 0-14 year olds in South Lakeland are projected to decrease by 1,200 persons (-8.3%) by 2037. This ageing population will have particular consumer, cultural, health and wellbeing demands in the future and could increase demand for lower and intermediate support service jobs. *South Lakeland District 2014 Strategic Housing Market Assessment Update* points out that the ageing population means that the number of older person households will increase markedly. The ageing population and decline in working-age people could also result in a large dependant population with significant strain upon social and health services, to the detriment of overall economic prosperity.

Another important aspect of this demographic shift continues to be the 'loss' of talent and higher skilled labour, especially amongst the younger



working age population. In the future Kendal's more limited pool of labour could hamper the development of a knowledge economy and inhibit indigenous growth and the attraction of inward investment. Kendal's most pressing challenge and a priority for the new Kendal Economic Growth Action Plan 2015-2025 is to address the emerging demographic imbalance by creating the right environment and infrastructure to attract and retain more younger working age households over the longer term; to retain and grow existing successful and growth orientated businesses; and to create an environment and infrastructure that will encourage new entrepreneurs to drive Kendal's future economic success.

#### 2. How Can Kendal Secure More Higher Value Higher Wage Jobs ?

In the early 2000's Kendal lost a significant number of high value jobs in the financial services (Axa



Provincial, Scottish Provident) and manufacturing (K Shoes, Goodacre Carpets). Since then there has been some successes in growing manufacturing e.g. Gilbert Gilkes and Gordon, hydro

and renewables, and Mardix, specialist switchgear, power distribution and power management. According to the 2012 BRES, there were 16,600 employees located in businesses within Kendal with the highest number in the retail sector, closely followed by the health sector. Since 2009 there has been little change in the overall number of employee jobs located in Kendal but there have been some changes between sectors with growth in both the arts and recreation and health sectors alongside a decline in manufacturing, construction and professional services sectors.



Mardix



Clearly there is a need to create more high value and higher wage jobs, such as in added value manufacturing and service activities, which are necessary for the longer-term economic dynamism and vitality. The visitor economy, including business tourism, is also already the highest value sector in rural Cumbria and still presents significant growth potential. 'The Lake District: Cumbria' is an international brand and within that

Kendal has a unique combination of 'world class' arts and cultural heritage and landscape to offer. According to the Kendal Destination Benchmarking Research 2010 visitor satisfaction levels were high with 85% of respondents rating the range of shops and choice of things to do as very high and 82% of respondents rating the range of places to eat and drink as high or very high. Continued efforts to improve the Kendal visitor offer including focusing on the town's infrastructure, cultural and creative industries and continuing to improve the quality of the food/hospitality and retail offer will be essential to grow the number of higher spending visitors who are staying longer in Kendal.

Cumbria Intelligence Observatory/Experian UK forecast that the largest job growth numerically over the next ten years in South Lakeland is projected to be in the accommodation, food services and recreation sector which it is anticipated will recover losses experienced during the recession (around 800 FTEs). The construction sector is also projected to perform well in South Lakeland (around 400 FTEs), partly due to the construction element of the GlaxoSmithKline (GSK) expansion in Ulverston and this is also partly responsible for projected manufacturing FTE growth in South Lakeland (around 70 FTEs.) GSK are investing £350m in their Ulverston site, creating 500 permanent jobs, Trittech and Siemens (also in Ulverston) have new growth plans all of which could benefit Kendal through supply chain relationships, jobs and town centre consumer spending by employees and residents.

### 3. How to Match Skills to Business and Economic Needs in Kendal?

This projected change in occupation demand highlighted above, translates into demand for additional qualifications in the workforce and will see a projected need for around 900 extra Level 4 and above qualifications in the South Lakeland workforce. Achievement and attainment statistics show that Kendal schools performed well against the Cumbria and England averages. In 2013, 62% of pupils at Kirkbie Kendal School and 59% of those



at Queen Katherine School achieved 5+ A\*-C GCSEs which is above the average of 56.6% for Cumbria LEA as a whole. Kendal College was judged Outstanding by Ofsted in 2011 and has achieved Beacon Status for excellence and innovation. Continuing to strengthen and widen engagement with Kendal's education providers to maintain high levels of achievement and to ensure that educational outcomes and skills are appropriate to local employer needs will be essential for local economic development. Clearly there is a need to promote even stronger engagement and links between employers and schools, Kendal College and training providers.

#### 4. Continuing to Promote High Economic Activity Rates and Low Unemployment in Kendal

South Lakeland and Kendal have high economic activity rates and very low levels of unemployment; economic activity rates for 16-74 year olds in Kendal are higher (74.1%) than nationally (69.7%) and 68.8% of 16-74 year olds are in employment against 61.9% nationally. This is partly due to the prevalence of female, part-time employment, mainly in tourism, retail, hotels and restaurants, and in personal and protective occupations, such as health and care work. Many of these occupations have tended to generate relatively low earnings. Kendal's low unemployment raises challenges for local businesses in recruiting and emphasises the need to invest in continuing to improve skills and training so as to retain good staff.

#### 5. Growing the Local Business Base and Encouraging Business Start Up in Kendal

Inter Departmental Business Register (IDBR) 2013 estimates that there are 1,855 VAT/PAYE local units in Kendal, which is just over a quarter (27%) of all the local units within South Lakeland (6,850). Six in 10 local units in Kendal are companies, while



1 in 7 is a sole proprietor and a similar proportion is a partnership. Kendal has proportionately more retail units than in the district, county or nationally. There was a rise of 25 in the number of VAT/PAYE local units in Kendal between 2011 and 2012 followed by a fall of 65 between 2012 and 2013. South Lakeland and, to a lesser extent, Cumbria, also experienced a rise followed by a fall but nationally the number of local units rose in both years. The business demography dataset reveals that up until the recession in 2008, South Lakeland had a positive balance of 'births' over deaths' but since that time the number of business 'deaths' in South Lakeland has exceeded the number of 'births' with 2010 being the worst year (negative balance of 155). IDBR (ONS) data for 2011 - 2013 also shows that despite the reduction in the number of micro (0-9 employees) VAT registered enterprises (-0.6%) and local units (-1.5%) there has also been an increase in small (10-49) of 4.2% and medium (50-249) business enterprises of 6.3% and local units during this period. In this context continuing to boosting enterprise and business start-up and survival will be essential.

#### 6. Tackling the Housing Affordability Gap in Kendal

Average house prices in Kendal are 6.7 times the average household income but below the district ratio of 7.6 and well ahead of the county at 5.3 and national ratio at 5.9. Kendal's lower incomes set against relatively high house prices results in a significant housing affordability gap particularly for young people who want to remain in the area or working age households to stay or relocate and for retaining existing growing businesses and attracting inward investors.



#### 7. Promoting New Quality Serviced Employment Sites/Buildings and Tackling Underused Economic Assets in Kendal

There has been a very well-documented lack of good quality, well located, serviced employment sites and buildings in Kendal and continuing evidence of 'pent up' demand and the constrained supply of sites and premises has stifled inward investment opportunities. Industrial/business rents are very competitive but there is very little speculative development. The adopted **Local Plan Land Allocations** means that a significant brake on the economic development of Kendal has



been addressed and the allocations will play a key role in delivering much-needed, more and higher quality serviced employment sites.

Promoting the new employment opportunities, identifying how investment may be secured and making the case for public sector investment where appropriate will be essential. There is a continuing need to promote development and deliver new quality serviced employment sites and buildings, to increase take-up of employment land in Kendal and address the barriers to developing allocated employment sites. The barriers include a combination of up-front infrastructure costs that make investment unviable and a lack of financial investment confidence. Unlocking employment sites will provide the opportunity for small businesses to move up the 'employment space' ladder over time. Clearly some financial support (grants and loans) will be required to stimulate private sector confidence and plug any viability gaps. An employment sites and buildings marketing and promotional strategy will also be required.



Kendal also has a number of significant underused assets with real economic development potential including Canal Head and the New Road Riverside. Part of the former Goodacre Carpets Yarn Store has been converted into The Factory offering workspaces for creative businesses, including studios, galleries and event venues. These locations need to be better connected with the town centre.

A number of the existing industrial estates and business locations in the town are now looking tired and in need of improvements and the conclusions from an initial review are summarised in **Table 3.1. Kendal Existing Industrial Locations: Review** in Appendix 3. This summary review of Kendal's existing five main industrial areas highlights the very variable quality. Most are looking particularly tired and give a very poor first impression and so do not help to entice/retain employees, investment and visitors. Beezon Road for example could soon reach 'tipping point' and without intervention could fall into a spiral of decline. Despite this, estates are generally popular with good demand and low voids with typical rentals at £3.50-£6.00 per sq ft with yields less than 10% to 12%.

Taking a medium term view, a Business Improvement District approach or another mechanism to coordinate, plan and deliver estate improvements would offer the opportunity to implement coordinated actions and environmental investment based on partnership. This would include directly tackling the existing pressing challenges, like improving: **infrastructure, signage, asset management, security maintenance of common areas, and branding.** The BID could be delivered by a tight business-driven and lean financial/organisation using a relatively low levy.

## 8. Investing In the Infrastructure for a Competitive Kendal Town Centre

It is now well-documented that there is too much retail floor space in the UK: changing consumer shopping habits have resulted in the need to physically change how town centres like Kendal look. The scale and nature of change in



retailing over the last five years is unprecedented. The use of the internet for price comparison, product information and home delivery has led to consumers being more demanding when it comes to their shopping experience. The change in consumer shopping patterns, from 'bricks and mortar' to the 'bricks and clicks' multichannel approach is not a short-term fad. Not only is there too much retail in many town centres, but it is often in poorly configured and designed space and based on a cost model that no longer works for a number of retail operations. Shop vacancies in Kendal town centre were 9% (Nov'13) 47 out of a total 538 units which is below the national average of 11% (*Source: amt-i*) Kendal town centre however needs to evolve to retain its distinctive character and focus on independent business and to meet the broader 'place needs' of local communities and visitors.

'*Kendal A Public Realm Design Framework*' aims to encourage and steer public sector effort, funding and investment into improving Kendal's streetscape. Kendal has a rich architectural tapestry and the streetscape needs to reflect this high quality and distinctive townscape. Public realm investment using quality design materials, lighting etc. will be essential to complement the quality of Kendal's built/ historic environment.

The Framework also highlights that 'The traffic network in the town has been stretched to capacity and there are few opportunities to alter the system, this is a significant constraint to radical public realm improvements'. The one-way system has resulted in a particularly uncomfortable environment for pedestrians and cyclists. Motorists are directed by an abundance of signage which distracts them from taking in the

distinctive townscape and reduces their awareness of the movement of pedestrians and cyclists. The highway infrastructure does not suggest the motorist has arrived somewhere but directs them as if they are on a ring-road bypassing a town. Lowther Street for example is also particularly poor public realm, largely determined by the narrow nature of the street and pavements and the heavy use by road traffic. Facades of the architecturally pleasing buildings here are badly degraded by pollution.



It is also particularly important that key links and connections to assets such as the station, east-west across the river to opportunity sites like Canal Head, Castle Mills and The Factory are improved. Public realm improvements to encourage visitors and locals to enjoy their surroundings more and increase their dwell time/ stay longer in Kendal are essential. The *Kendal A Public Realm Design Framework* includes 17 high priority long term projects, 8 low cost low risk projects and 6 strategies to identify priorities and sources of funding.

## Kendal Economic Challenges: Conclusions

The series of eight economic challenges that face the Kendal economy over the next ten years have helped to shape the refreshed vision, the new Kendal Economic Growth Action Plan 2015-2025 with key themes and priority projects that are summarised in the next Chapters.

## **4 KENDAL'S ECONOMIC FUTURE: WHERE WE ARE GOING**

The original 2007 vision for the Kendal economy and the KERAP priorities were refreshed by the KFB in January 2012. The values that underpin the vision are worth restating, namely to recognise the importance of:

- The distinctive setting, built and natural environment of Kendal and the high quality of life that the town offers
- Creativity, innovation and celebrating enterprise
- Higher productivity underpinning long term economic success
- Economic growth from within the Kendal area as a means to create wealth and well-being for existing and new residents and businesses.

## The Kendal Economy: Future Prospects

Clearly in the period from 2008 the UK economy has had to face some of the most difficult economic challenges for several decades with a period of recession in 2008/09 followed by what the Office for National Statistics (ONS) referred to as a 'bumpy plateau'. The Kendal economy has mirrored the recession, partly through the efforts of public, private and third sector partners, and has arguably now emerged stronger.

The UK economic recovery now remains on track and the IMF is projecting 3.2% real GDP growth in 2014. The recovery is being driven primarily by the services sector, but there has also been positive news over the past year from the construction and

manufacturing sectors. Business surveys for all three sectors suggest that activity should continue to grow at a healthy pace. The acceleration in GDP growth has been driven primarily by consumer spending as employment and confidence have risen. Fixed investment has also picked up from a low base over the past year, as both business investment and housebuilding have risen.

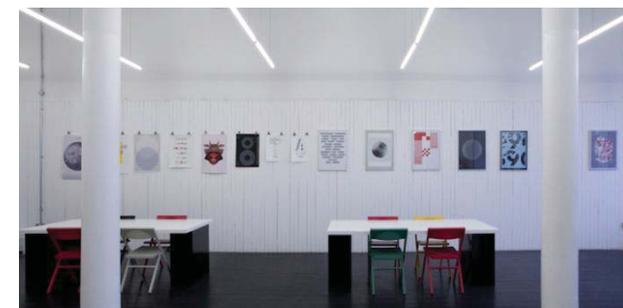


Looking to the next ten years the Kendal economy needs to respond to the challenges identified in Chapter 3. The global economy is also continuing to evolve and the pace of technological change is creating new opportunities while making older business practices obsolete and the competition for the brightest people is intensifying. Long-term economic competitiveness demands competitive businesses that innovate and create high quality jobs. The Kendal economy of 2024 will also need to take account of both promising and slightly bleaker longer term trends such as smart cars, more flexible working patterns with more working from home using superfast fibre optic broadband, and

more pressure to move to a lower carbon economy and become CO2 neutral as a consequence of climate change.

Part of Kendal Futures forward response is to recognise the fundamental economic role that both advanced manufacturing and the emerging importance of culture, arts and the creative industries can play in enhancing Kendal as a very business friendly location and a forward looking visitor destination. Crucially Kendal will need more strong new businesses and the overall infrastructure to support them; the two are mutually dependant.

Therefore, there will also be a continuing need to promote development and deliver appropriate economic infrastructure including new quality serviced employment sites and 'fit for purpose' buildings. Increasing the take-up of employment land in Kendal by addressing the barriers to developing allocated employment sites will be crucial. Attracting and retaining working age talent by further strengthening education-business networks will also be essential. As a result of these interventions the wider Kendal economy in 2025 will have become even more resilient to recessionary shocks.



## Kendal 2025 Vision

In ten years the wider Kendal area is:

'An economically dynamic, diverse and culturally vibrant place, with strong new and established businesses in growing sectors with competitive infrastructure to support them. The businesses provide quality jobs and higher value employment opportunities. Kendal itself is a very contemporary market town with an intriguing focus on culture, arts and the creative industries set in a thriving distinctive town centre and set within one of Europe's greatest landscapes.

The wider Kendal area is now achieving its potential to deliver sustainable wealth, health and well-being for all its residents and admired for its flourishing business, educational excellence, enterprise and ambition, the quality of its built heritage and its low carbon economy.'

Four themes have been identified, from the strategies and economic review, consultations and workshops, which will drive and shape the Kendal Economic Growth Action Plan 2015-2025 and help move to the 2025 Vision. The four interrelated themes are:

### I. Business specialisation and diversification: continue up value chain



### II. Attract & retain working age talent.



### III. Establish a brand/USP for the wider Kendal economy: focus on quality of life



### IV. Deliver economic infrastructure & place making investment



The four programmes and sixteen priority projects are summarised in the next chapter.

The Kendal Economic Growth Action Plan 2015-2025 includes programmes and projects that

will grow the local economy, fuel job creation and increase the wider Kendal area's long-term prosperity. It focuses on the drivers of business growth and job creation based on innovation, investment, infrastructure and skills.



CHP/KF

# 5 KENDAL'S ECONOMIC GROWTH ACTION PLAN: PRIORITIES

This chapter summarises the four programmes and sixteen projects that comprise the Kendal Economic Growth Action Plan 2015-2025.

## i. Business Specialisation and Diversification: Continue Up Value Chain

*Creating the conditions to support growth orientated business in Kendal is essential.*



Kendal has a significant business base of around 1,855 VAT/PAYE local units, which is just over a quarter (27%) of all the local units within South Lakeland but this is not sufficient to secure sustainable economic growth. Many local units are micro-businesses that are not necessarily growth oriented and will not provide higher value jobs in the future or increase Kendal's prosperity. On the other hand Lakeland has also just opened a new warehouse and logistics facility in Westmorland Business Park with around 300 jobs.

In the future, an unfocused approach to business engagement risks spreading resources too thinly and may mean that some businesses fail to grow to their full potential. Growth oriented businesses are not confined to particular sectors, but they need the right business accommodation in the right locations and high quality, up-to-date digital and physical infrastructure. The aim is to support networks in key sectors like high value specialist manufacturing (e.g. Gilbert Gilkes and Gordon: hydro and renewables, NJO Technology: specialist designers and manufacturers of LED products and LED lighting systems, James Cropper: specialist paper), artisan food and drink (e.g. Staff of Life Bakery), high value tourism (e.g. Castle Green Hotel, Abbot Hall Art Gallery) and commercial digital and creative (e.g. The Knack).

There is also an opportunity to use the 'Lakes Culture: Cultural Destinations programme Project Plan 2014-2017' with a focus on Kendal, to work even more closely with the local cultural and creative industries sector and to use the sector as a driver for Kendal's visitor and evening economies. The Brewery Arts Centre, Abbot Hall Art Gallery and The Factory all have significant capital investment plans that should be coordinated to unlock strategic funding and maximise economic impact. This investment will build on Kendal's emerging 'edgy' reputation in the creative industries, festivals and food. The aim would be to increase income generation and improve the resilience of cultural and tourism organisations. Culture and the creative industries could be at the heart of Kendal's visitor offer.



**Figure 5.1:**  
**Business Specialisation and Diversification: Projects**

Project Outcomes	Actions	Lead Agency/ Key Partners	Timescale/ Priority
<b>1.1 Focus On Supporting Growth Orientated Businesses</b>	<p>Target support to and strengthen local business supply chains to drive economic and business growth</p> <p>Focus on higher value jobs: specialist manufacturing, artisan food and drink, high value tourism and commercial digital &amp; creative</p> <p>Develop a clearly articulated inward investment offer for high growth potential sectors, including food and drink, health and social care and tourism</p> <p>Provide the right working conditions, office accommodation and infrastructure to support digital and creative enterprises</p> <p>Target 'footloose' digital and creative enterprises in partnership with BT and 'Connecting Cumbria'</p> <p>Encourage innovation and enterprise with the growth and development of new start-up companies: Support business planning by new business entrants</p>	<p><b>SLDC</b></p> <p>Cumbria LEP</p> <p>CCC</p> <p>Kendal Futures</p> <p>Kendal College</p> <p>Cumbria Growth Hub</p> <p>Cumbria Tourism</p>	<p>Medium Term: 5 Years</p> <p>High</p>
<b>1.2 Enterprise Hub</b>	<p>Promote an enterprise hub in Kendal town centre to accommodate existing businesses and provide focus as an incubator to accommodate start-ups and for young businesses trying to grow</p> <p>Provide space for business interaction, advice and support as well as a variety of temporary and flexible work space</p> <p>Enterprise Hub will support networking and interaction and provide appropriate accommodation for small businesses to locate and grow</p> <p>Co-working suite will be a shared workspace for independent professionals, start-ups and small businesses.</p>	<p><b>SLDC</b></p> <p>Cumbria LEP</p> <p>CCC</p> <p>Kendal Futures</p> <p>Kendal College</p>	<p>Short Term: 1/2 Years</p> <p>High</p>
<b>1.3 Coordinating Arts, Heritage and Creative Industries Offer</b>	<p>Co-ordinated initiative delivered locally to strengthen Kendal's arts, heritage and creative industries offer involving Kendal College, Brewery Arts Centre, The Factory, Abbot Hall Art Gallery/Lakeland Arts Trust and North Country Leisure early initiatives could include:</p> <p>Make the case for, coordinate and deliver major investment and infrastructure /facilities that are planned at the Brewery Arts Centre, Abbot Hall Art Gallery/Lakeland Arts Trust and The Factory as part of one strategic package</p> <p>Develop 'creative industries' as a key added value employment sector and with business start-up opportunities</p> <p>Provide specialist business support</p> <p>Infrastructure investment: physical focus/hub and shared retail/exhibition space</p> <p>Provide skills development by linking businesses higher education</p>	<p><b>SLDC</b></p> <p>Cumbria LEP</p> <p>Cumbria Tourism</p> <p>Cultural Destinations Project</p> <p>Kendal Futures</p> <p>Kendal College</p>	<p>Short/ Medium Term: 1-5 Years</p> <p>High</p>

Project Outcomes	Actions	Lead Agency/ Key Partners	Timescale/ Priority
<b>1.3 Coordinating Arts, Heritage &amp; Creative Industries Offer (Cont'd)</b>	<p>Promote and facilitate more coordinated creative industries events (link to cultural &amp; evening economy offer)</p> <p>Actively promote creative industries/cultural assets, events and built heritage as part of the town &amp; cultural destination marketing</p> <p>Explore using 'mint cake' as Kendal's distinctive 'unique selling proposition' to be reflected in marketing, logos, signage colours and possibly commissioning of a sculpture or installation and developing a visitor centre/attraction.</p>	<p>The Brewery Arts Centre</p> <p>Abbot Hall Art Gallery</p> <p>North Country Leisure</p> <p>Arts Council England</p>	
<b>1.4 Kendal Festivals Coordinator</b>	<p>Work with KTC and SLDC to unlock support to establish a Kendal Festivals co-ordinating organisation to lead on joint strategic development, unlock longer term corporate sponsorship (e.g. UU, National Grid) and maintain the festivals competitive edge. Key objectives would include to:</p> <p>Act on behalf of and represent the collective strengths of the different Kendal Festivals</p> <p>Explore the possibilities for longer term corporate sponsorship and more secure funding</p> <p>Develop and deliver collaborative projects and initiatives which support creative industries growth, evening economy, product development, leadership and audiences</p> <p>Help sustain festivals in Kendal and its role as a leading 'creative events' destination.</p>	<p><b>Festivals</b></p> <p>Kendal Futures</p> <p>SLDC</p> <p>Cumbria Tourism</p> <p>Arts Council England</p> <p>Cultural Destinations Project</p> <p>Kendal BID</p> <p>KTC</p>	<p>Short Term: 1-2 Years</p> <p>High</p>
<b>1.5 Improving Choice of Visitor Accommodation &amp; High Value Visitor Packages: International Markets</b>	<p>Opportunity to review the existing provision of visitor accommodation in Kendal to ensure sufficient choice of accommodation of the right quality appropriate for today's markets. Depending on the outcome of the review actively promote town centre and other opportunities.</p> <p>Work with tourism &amp; cultural organisations, local accommodation providers, restaurants and key local venues to develop co-ordinated, high value visitor packages and to increase the value of tourism and culture to the Kendal economy. e.g. targeting the forecast 73% increase in spend by Chinese visitors and rapidly expanding markets like South America, Japan and India.</p>	<p><b>Kendal Futures</b></p> <p>Cultural Destinations Project</p> <p>Cumbria Tourism</p> <p>Private Sector</p>	<p>Short/Medium Term: 1-5 Years</p> <p>High</p>

Project Outcomes	Actions	Lead Agency/ Key Partners	Timescale/ Priority
<b>1.6 Renewal &amp; Re-ballot of the Kendal BID</b>	<p>The Kendal BID Limited was incorporated under the Companies Act 2006 as a private company limited by guarantee in April 2014. The Directors have responsibility for delivering the Kendal BID 2014-2019 business plan and investing the funds raised through the 1% BID levy on initiatives to improve business trading and attract more customers to the town.</p> <p>Anticipate and action renewal and re-ballot of the Kendal BID in less than 5 years, say early 2017.</p>	<p><b>Kendal BID</b> Kendal Futures</p>	<p>Short/ Medium Term: 1-5 Years  High</p>

## ii. Attract and Retain Working Age Talent.

*The Kendal economy needs more working age people over the longer term if it is to achieve sustainable economic growth.*

The Kendal economy needs people who can fill lower and intermediate level jobs that support its ageing population and growing visitor economy and it needs to retain and attract fresh talent to enable its high growth businesses (Programme/ Theme 1 above) to expand and to attract new investment from outside South Lakeland. Kendal's housing stock is not accessible to younger working age households and its SME-dominated labour market makes it difficult for many young people to build a career locally.

Therefore a **clear long term commitment and priority** for the Kendal Economic Growth Action Plan 2015-2025 is to address the emerging longer term structural demographic imbalance by creating the right environment, quality/ diversity of life offer and competitive housing, education/training to attract and retain more younger working age households over the longer term; to retain and grow existing successful and



growth orientated businesses; and to create an environment and infrastructure that will encourage new entrepreneurs to drive Kendal's future economic success.

Clearly talent attracts investment and enables businesses to innovate and compete on quality and is a key driver of economic growth. Access to training, skills development, in-work progression and career advancement allows individuals to acquire the right skills and also gives more choices in the labour market, enabling them to command higher earnings. Schools, Kendal College and training providers are fundamental to raising aspirations, nurturing talent and supporting workplace learning. Learning providers are increasingly operating in a market environment,

where learning is seen as an investment upon which learners and sponsoring businesses expect to see a return.

The new engineering facility at Kendal College will assist in skills development, to include a graduate recruitment and apprenticeship programme focused on engineering skills development to help large employers and SMEs attract and retain staff. The Kendal College Arts and Media Campus also already hosts a very broad range of creative arts courses and includes the Box, a recent purpose-built performance space that complements the Brewery Arts Centre. The College also operates the nearby Castle Dairy building as a restaurant and art gallery staffed by Kendal College apprentices as a real world training environment for hospitality/catering students and connected to the Wildman Studios next door. Kendal College also manages Kendal Museum as part of a partnership agreement with SLDC. Kendal College will need to be supported to build on these initiatives and to find new and innovative ways of responding to local business and community skill needs, so that it can continue to make a strong contribution to Kendal's economic growth.

Figure 5.2:

**Attract and Retain Working Age Talent: Projects**

Project Outcomes	Actions	Lead Agency/ Key Partners	Timescale/ Priority
<b>2.1. Further Strengthen Education-Business Networks &amp; Links</b>	<p>Strengthen education-business networks and the links between Kendal's schools, Kendal College and training providers</p> <p>Maximise local internship and apprenticeship opportunities</p> <p>Encourage employer investment in education/training</p> <p>Maximise the training and employment opportunities afforded by new investment in Kendal to include employability services &amp; apprenticeships</p> <p>Deliver an expanded higher education curriculum locally in Kendal.</p> <p>Develop young people's business and entrepreneurial skills.</p>	<p><b>SLDC</b></p> <p><b>Kendal College</b></p> <p><b>Schools</b></p> <p>Training providers</p> <p>Employees</p> <p>Cumbria Growth Hub/ The Edge</p>	<p>Short 1-3 Years</p> <p>High</p>
<b>2.2 Kendal College</b>	<p>Work closely with the arts, media, heritage and digital industries to support creative and technical developments, and act as a driver for Kendal's vibrant visitor economy.</p> <p>Support growth and investment plans by helping to stimulate some of the conditions of a high wage economy, particularly in Advanced Science and specialist manufacturing</p> <p>Support the needs of all employers and their businesses helping them to create a highly skilled workforce.</p> <p>Develop a new training centre dedicated to dementia.</p> <p>Develop an International high quality Hotel School, based in Kendal</p>	<p><b>Kendal College</b></p> <p>SLDC</p> <p>Kendal Futures</p> <p>KTC</p> <p>Cumbria Growth Hub/ The Edge</p>	<p>Short/ Medium Term: 1-5 Years</p> <p>High</p>
<b>2.3. Respond To Working Age People's Housing Needs</b>	<p>Respond to working age peoples housing needs, attract and retain more students by increasing the supply of affordable housing stock</p> <p>Focus on existing vacant property in Kendal town centre to identify two demonstration projects using a Town Centre Development Action Plan (see Project 4.2)</p> <p>Work with Registered Social Landlords to increase the local supply of affordable social rent accommodation</p>	<p><b>SLDC</b></p> <p>Property Owners</p> <p>RSL's</p> <p>Local Housebuilders</p>	<p>Medium/ Long Term: 4-10 Years</p> <p>High</p>

### iii. Establishing A Brand/USP For The Wider Kendal Economy and Focus On Quality of Life

*Now more than ever there needs to be consensus on the brand/USP for the wider Kendal economy and this should include the Third Sector who can make even more direct impact on the growth of Kendal's economy, the quality of life of its citizens and the improvement of its public services.*

Kendal is the largest settlement within South Lakeland and has a high quality of life and is a very attractive, historic market town and Key Service Centre. It is set in a high quality natural environment on the edge of the Lake District National Park, with good strategic road and rail links to the M6 and the West Coast mainline railway. The town has a strong and extensive civic infrastructure with a large number of community and voluntary organisations. Kendal has also earned a reputation for world class arts at Abbot Hall Art Gallery and the Brewery Arts Centre and 'punches above its weight' as a premier town for delivering quality events. The settlements of Burneside, Natland and Oxenholme are located in very close proximity and an integral part of 'wider Kendal'.

Kendal can be many things to different people and there is now a pressing requirement to build consensus on the distinctive brand/USP for the '**wider Kendal**' economy. In particular to determine the target audiences (growing and inward investing businesses, developers, investors, visitors, students and existing Kendal residents), for wider Kendal's competitive economic



advantages and how it is positioned to exploit key emerging economic and social trends. The USP/brand would need to be tested refined and subject to a clear communications strategy. The quality of life offered to Kendal's residents, visitors, existing and new businesses is also a fundamental part of the town's continuing competitive economic growth.

In South Lakeland there is also now strong commitment to localism, devolution of delivery to communities, and third sector organisations and to customer choice in public services. Centrally controlled targets have been removed and new providers are being encouraged to deliver public services and new financial mechanisms are being put in place to provide greater flexibility for local authorities to raise their own revenue. The financial constraints place significant responsibility on local authorities to find new, more innovative ways of working; to be clear about what they can and cannot do; and to develop strong partnerships

communities, and third sector organisations so that effective local interventions are made by the right organisations. Kendal's extensive civic infrastructure means that third sector organisations in the town could be well placed to develop innovative approaches to providing local services and facilities.

South Lakeland Local Strategic Partnership has recently agreed its approach to support the localism agenda and has become the One South Lakeland Partnership Board. Its new approach to partnership working involves key organisations across South Lakeland with an increased focus and improved efficiencies. This involves a greater emphasis on 'locality working', with a focus on empowering and building capacity within communities to enable them to do more themselves and by working in partnership with each other.

This new context raises a number of opportunities for third sector organisations in Kendal to actively contribute to the local economy and unlock funding from sources like the Big Lottery (Investing in Ideas/Awards for All) and Heritage Lottery Fund (Heritage Enterprise). SLDC/CCC should also look to continue to introduce a sustainable procurement duty that considers how the procurement process can facilitate the involvement of third-sector bodies and supported businesses with the aim of making it easier for them to tender for public contracts.

Figure 5.3:

**Establishing A Brand/USP For The Wider Kendal Economy:  
Focus On Quality of Life**

Project Outcomes	Actions	Lead Agency/ Key Partners	Timescale/ Priority
<p><b>3.1 Establishing Distinctive Brand/USP For The Wider Kendal Economy</b></p>	<p>Build consensus on the distinctive brand/USP for the wider Kendal economy, determine the target audiences (growing &amp; inward investing businesses, developers, investors, visitors and existing Kendal residents), wider Kendal's competitive economic advantages and how Kendal is positioned to exploit key emerging economic and social trends.</p> <p>The USP/brand would need to be tested, refined and subject to clear recommendations as part of a communications strategy.</p>	<p><b>Kendal Futures</b> Kendal BID SLDC Cumbria LEP North Country Leisure CCC Cumbria Tourism Kendal College Private sector KTC</p>	<p>Short 1-3 Years High</p>
<p><b>3.2 Quality of Life: Key Component Of Economic Growth</b></p>	<p>Quality of Life is a fundamental component in a competitive Kendal economic growth offer for existing and new business, residents and visitors. Actions include:</p> <p>Promote successful quality of Life outcomes including increasing physical activity levels to increase life expectancy and decrease health inequalities</p> <p>Support further investment and improvements at Kendal Leisure Centre, Kendal Climbing Centre and other sports and recreation facilities</p> <p>Support the business case for a 'Sports Village' in Kendal in the emerging Leisure Strategy</p> <p>Support the SLDC/KTC ambition for an age and disability friendly town.</p>	<p><b>North Country Leisure</b> SLDC KTC</p>	<p>Short 1-3 Years High</p>

Project Outcomes	Actions	Lead Agency/ Key Partners	Timescale/ Priority
<b>3.3. Audit Third Sector Organisations &amp; Opportunities</b>	<p>Identify specific opportunities where the Third Sector could have a major role in Kendal's economic future especially during a period of reduced public sector funding.</p> <p>Increase the capability and the capacity of the third sector in Kendal to bid for and win public sector contracts.</p> <p>Look to improve the prospects of social enterprises in bidding for public contracts, by initially encouraging SLDC/CCC to strengthen the extent of community benefit clauses on environmental, community and social grounds.</p> <p>Promote more volunteering in Kendal to include an initial audit/database of skills in the local community.</p> <p>Explore establishing a Development Trust to acquire/develop vacant public buildings as community owned assets and partnership opportunities for funding: e.g. Heritage Enterprise/HLF.</p>	<p><b>SLDC</b></p> <p>KTC</p> <p>Kendal Civic Society</p> <p>Cumbria CVS</p> <p>Voluntary sector</p> <p>Scotts Trusts</p>	<p>Short 1-3 Years</p> <p>High</p>

#### iv. Deliver Economic Infrastructure and Place Making Investment

*To facilitate economic growth, investment in infrastructure for key sectors and in place-making in Kendal will be essential.*

There is a need to increase take-up of allocated employment land in the wider Kendal area and to address the barriers to developing allocated employment sites. Table 5.1: Wider Kendal Employment Land: Target Uses and Typology in Appendix 4 summarises the range and choice of existing allocated employment sites and potential target uses based on a hierarchy of international/national, sub regional/county and district/local.

The barriers to increased take up are a combination of up-front infrastructure costs making investment unviable and a lack of financial investment confidence. Promoting a choice of employment sites and unlocking particular sites, will provide



the opportunity for small businesses to move up the employment accommodation ladder over time. Clearly some financial support (grants and loans from sources like Cumbria Infrastructure Fund and Community Infrastructure Levy) will be required to stimulate private sector confidence.

There is a particular need for high quality strategic employment sites targeted at international, national and county occupiers to accommodate technology/laboratory/advanced manufacturing type businesses - use classes (B1 & B2). This is an essential component in the Kendal Economic Growth Action Plan 2015-2025 and the priority to attract more skilled, high paid jobs. The Scroggs Wood site for example has the potential to become an attractive campus parkland setting to accommodate well designed buildings to suit a range of occupiers. Ideally, the site would suit a mixture of business sizes as part of an emerging cluster, possibly one large 'anchor' tenant and several smaller 'supply chain' businesses. There is also a need to provide more incubator space (see Project 1.2: Enterprise Hub) as part of a ladder of accommodation for growing local businesses.

Kendal's natural, built, cultural and emerging creative/cultural sector assets are also what make

the town distinct and special. This includes the charming historic buildings, a diverse network of streets and yards, a hilltop castle, views of the rolling countryside beyond and the network of cultural/creative industries facilities (e.g. BAC, The Box, Abbot Hall Art Gallery) and festivals. These assets are increasingly the cornerstone of its economy and the reason why it was voted the second best place to live in the UK by the Sunday Times and a very attractive place to visit. The natural and built assets underpin its emerging food and drink offer and creative industries sector. Kendal's high quality natural environment needs to be viewed as an economic asset, not an obstacle to securing sustainable economic growth.

Kendal town centre needs to be competitive and provide a diverse retail offer but it also needs to evolve as a destination where commercial, enterprise, public, cultural and social functions overlap with a **stronger evening economy**. In this context projects that promote enterprise, business incubation, creativity, culture, arts/music, artisan food and drink and appeal to young people will be crucial. Kendal town centre need to evolve to meet the broader needs of the communities that they will serve for the next 50 years with a focus on people and how they interact with and use places in Kendal.

This could mean a smaller retail core, supplemented by the introduction of a wider range of uses such as additional food and leisure, accessible and affordable transport, housing, as well as a greater number of small business and more public/civic functions. Town centres of the future need to move beyond retail and be proactive centres for enterprise, living, culture,

entertainment, leisure, shopping, business and civic activity. Kendal town centre will need to evolve to remain economically vibrant. Kendal BID is already committed to a five year plan to promote early investment in Kendal town centre.



In parallel with the BID Plan, a medium/long term **Town Centre Development Action Plan** also with a focus on 'place-making' needs to be prepared to ensure a successful Kendal town centre in the future. The Action Plan would be based on a clear move away from reliance upon retail. Therefore the Action Plan needs to demonstrate how Kendal town centre can accommodate a broader mix of commercial and employment uses, community services, leisure and residential. The Action Plan would aim to improve: accessibility and connectivity in the town centre with investment in east west connections, improve access to bus and rail stations, the river, shops, parking and facilities to accommodate visiting coaches. Improving

evening bus services would help to stimulate the evening economy.

The consultations highlighted the continuing requirement for the **Northern Relief Road** which would aim to relieve Kendal town centre of heavy traffic by diverting lorries and HGVs bound for Kendal's industrial estates off town centre roads by using the Kendal Bypass. Real progress has been made in **improving and better managing car parking in Kendal but a number of challenges remain**. These include further improvements in managing parking for visitors, coach parties, workers, residents and taxis as well as achieving the appropriate balance between income generation and good service provision. Promoting sustainable transport is fundamental. People should be given a 'real choice about how they travel', but patterns of development should facilitate the use of sustainable transport modes and mixed-use and 'work from home' developments should be promoted to minimise unnecessary journeys. Kendal also needs to offer more affordable housing to give people a wide choice of quality homes and to widen opportunities for home ownership and renting. Housing developments need to be in accessible locations and designed to encourage sustainable, inclusive and mixed communities.

Figure 5.4:

Deliver Economic Infrastructure and Place Making Investment Projects

Project Outcomes	Actions	Lead Agency/ Key Partners	Timescale/ Priority
<p><b>4.1. Facilitate, Develop &amp; Promote Key Employment Locations</b></p>	<p>Continue to ensure the delivery of major employment sites targeted at international, national, sub regional, county and local occupiers. The aim is to provide a real choice of locations, buildings and specification of space and to exploit M6/WCML connections. There are particular opportunities to respond to the demand for higher quality purpose built higher specification office/business space targeted at technology businesses.</p> <p>The <b>six key locations, target uses and typologies</b> are summarised in Table 5.1 in Appendix 4. In all locations the aim is to promote high quality development that follows good placemaking principles with quality landscaping and infrastructure including cycle paths and pedestrian walkways to encourage employees to arrive on foot, by bike and public transport. Overall aim to ensure the employment locations are safe, pleasant, easy to move around, welcoming, adaptable places with modern sustainable facilities.</p> <p>Promote <b>innovative approaches to help fund up-front infrastructure</b> costs that make investment unviable and are detrimental to financial investment confidence (e.g. Cumbria Infrastructure Fund and Community Infrastructure Levy).</p> <p><b>Proactive marketing and promotion</b> of the six key locations will be essential.</p> <p>The same principles should be applied to other developments at current and emerging land locations, such as Kendal Fell Quarry, which have the potential to deliver employment benefits for Kendal.</p>	<p><b>SLDC</b> Land owners Developers Cumbria LEP Kendal Futures CCC</p>	<p>Short/ Medium 1-5 Years  High</p>
<p><b>4.2. Town Centre Development Action Plan</b></p>	<p>Town Centre Development Action Plan (TCDAP) to be prepared to identify short, medium and long term placemaking and infrastructure projects to include refurbishment, new build and public realm.</p> <p>The TCDAP would be based on:</p> <p>A clear understanding of the town centre's primary functions within the South Lakeland local economy.</p> <p>The conclusions of the '<i>Kendal Public Realm Design Framework: Final Draft</i>' and the context set by the <i>South Lakeland Local Plan</i>.</p> <p>Infrastructure developments to improve the environment for pedestrians and cyclists and further improve key connections to assets such as the bus &amp; rail stations, east-west, across the river and for other public realm improvements to encourage people to stay longer.</p> <p>Improved bus services and access to the town using walking/cycling will be crucial so as to encourage people to give up using cars in the town centre and stimulate the evening economy.</p>	<p><b>SLDC</b> CCC KTC Property Owners Kendal BID Kendal Futures North Country Leisure</p>	<p>Short/ Medium 1-5 Years  High</p>

Project Outcomes	Actions	Lead Agency/ Key Partners	Timescale/ Priority
<b>4.2. Town Centre Development Action Plan (Cont'd)</b>	<p>Car parking is also still a very important issue for the town and initiatives to make it easier for town centre users to access the town and leave again are also essential.</p> <p>Improve Kendal's image as an evening economy destination by encouraging innovation and quality improvements across the offer.</p> <p>Identifying proposals to reuse vacant and underused floorspace on the edge of the town centre e.g. Lower Stramongate, vacant upper floors, reconfigure the Westmorland Shopping Centre and tackle underutilised sites like the site adjacent to Mark &amp; Spencer, New Road and K-Village.</p> <p>Identifying primary town centre retail locations where the opportunity to change use from class A1 (shops) to B1 (business) would require planning permission.</p> <p>Public realm improvements throughout the town, including Market Place, together with proposals to radically improve the quality of the market offer.</p> <p>Series of worked up residential, business and 'work from home' demonstration projects that could be progressed with willing owners and costed with a potential approach to funding.</p> <p>Pop up/trial shop improvements and initiatives e.g Bristol Make Sundays Special: Explore traffic free streets/New Road car park for arts, music, street games and entertainment.</p> <p>Overall the TCDAP would also establish a planning policy and framework to support the growth of the town centre to accommodate some of the expected increase in Kendal's population and business expansion in the next 10-20 years. The plan would coordinate commercial, leisure, residential and mixed use development and investment.</p>		
<b>4.3. Kendal's Existing Industrial Estates: Pilot BID</b>	<p>A Business Improvement District (BID) approach or similar would deliver a sustainable financial model to a defined existing industrial estate as a pilot project. Businesses/owners would have to vote to invest collectively in local improvements in addition to those delivered by statutory authorities.</p> <p>A BID or another mechanism would offer the opportunity of additional investment to strengthen the local economy and give local businesses/owners in the estate a unified voice, helping to provide an arena for industrial estate businesses/owners and local authorities to increase their understanding of each other's priorities and to agree a programme of environmental and other improvements.</p>	<p><b>SLDC</b> Kendal Futures Estate owners &amp; occupiers BID Loan Fund British BIDs CCC</p>	<p>Medium/ long 5-10 Years</p> <p>Medium</p>

Project Outcomes	Actions	Lead Agency/ Key Partners	Timescale/ Priority
4.4 Key Link Roads	<p>The Northern Link Road is still a key aspiration which the KFB believes is as an essential part of the longer term development agenda to prevent stifling future development and growth at the north of the town.</p> <p>Upgrade road access from the A591 to support the future development of Kendal Fell Quarry.</p>	<p>CCC SLDC Kendal Futures KTC</p>	<p>Medium/ long 5-10 Years Medium</p>



## **6 DELIVERING THE ACTION PLAN: CONCLUSIONS**

## Kendal Futures Structure & Role: Summary Review

The Kendal Futures Board was established in 2007 as the body responsible for leading the delivery of the original KERAP. The Board is made up of fifteen representatives from the public, private and third sectors and is responsible for co-ordinating and implementing projects to improve the economic vitality of Kendal. The Board have played a fundamental role in championing the economic development agenda in Kendal since 2007, driving a longer term vision through what has been a very challenging economic recession.



The consultations have highlighted the importance of Kendal Futures as a respected 'neutral forum' to discuss emerging economic development opportunities, challenge the status quo, provide leadership and as a proactive partnership vehicle that can co-ordinate economic investment. This kind of sophisticated role is unusual in a town with a population of 30,000 and more likely to be found in larger cities. The Board is supported by a part time project co-ordinator and the role is currently funded by South Lakeland District Council, South Lakeland Local Committee (Cumbria County Council) and Kendal Town Council. Undoubtedly Kendal Futures should continue in the future.

## New Action Plan: Conclusions

Chapter 2 has highlighted the very different economic and policy context and just how much has been achieved in delivering the economic agenda in Kendal since 2007, through what has been the depths of global economic recession. A significant number of projects have been delivered under the original KERAP four themes and new projects are continuing to emerge. Leading the work to secure the successful Business Improvement District (BID) ballot in October 2013 and seeing the BID formally launched in March 2014 were significant achievements. The launch of the BID means that Kendal Futures can play much more of an arm's length approach to short medium term economic development initiatives targeted at the town centre and this is reflected in the new Action Plan.

A significant brake on the economic development of Kendal has now been addressed by the adoption of SLDC's Local Plan. Within the lifetime of the new Kendal Economic Growth Action Plan, this will play a key role in delivering much needed affordable homes as well as more and higher quality employment sites and buildings. SLDC then have a longer term intention to bring together the suite of Local Plan documents into a single Local Plan covering the period 2021 to 2035, containing site allocations, development management policies and area specific policies for the whole District into a single document. This document will be the means by which broad locations identified will be broad forward. Kendal Futures will have an important role here in continuing to lobby for appropriate land allocations, design briefs and land uses in the future, as well as targeted public, private and third sector investment.

Chapter 3 has highlighted the eight significant economic challenges that Kendal now faces. Chapter 4 summarised the refreshed economic growth vision for Kendal founded on a clear updated, evidence based economic development agenda for Kendal and shaped by the research, analysis, consultations and workshops. Chapter 5 summarises the new Kendal Economic Growth Action Plan 2015-2025 and sixteen priority projects under the four themes of:

- Business specialisation & diversification: continue up value chain
- Attract & retain working age talent
- Establishing a brand/USP for the wider Kendal economy: focus on quality of life
- Deliver economic infrastructure & place making investment



The Action Plan 2015-2025 can be used as a strategic framework to coordinate project delivery, to lobby for public, private and third sector

intervention and to serve as a reference document to support bids for external funding. The Action Plan 2015-2025 themes also allow for some flexibility in assessing projects opportunities that might arise in the future.

## Delivering the Kendal Economic Growth Action Plan 2015-2025

Very clearly Kendal is one small part of a much larger local, regional, national and international economy. Economic development cannot be thought of purely in local terms. Kendal's businesses need a larger customer and supply chain base, its residents need access to a greater range of job opportunities and Kendal College for example needs to appeal to a wider student market.

The economic development field however, is a crowded one and the **Economic Development Partnerships & Agencies Review** (Appendix 5) has identified around twelve different local partnerships and agencies in Kendal. In addition within South Lakeland District, there are other business representative organisations, networks and education providers as well as developers and commercial agents, housing associations, voluntary/third sector organisations and government agencies, that all have roles in supporting the development and growth of the Kendal economy.

There are also organisations and partnerships with a remit that extends beyond SLDC's administrative boundaries including for example Cumbria County Council, Cumbria Tourism and the Lake District National Park Authority.



Therefore, there are risks of duplication and wasted resources if Kendal Futures relationships are not carefully managed and this includes the 'arm's length overview' relationship with the Kendal BID. Investing in developing strong links within and beyond Kendal is worthwhile as is pooling resources when it makes sense to do so. Many of the issues in the Action Plan 2014 are common to many locations, but to be addressed effectively they definitely need a **local Kendal interpretation and focus**. Kendal Futures is ideally placed and still the most appropriate agent



to lead delivery of the Action Plan 2015-2025. The challenge for the Kendal Futures Board is to know where it should lead, where it should support or partner, and where it should contribute resources so that interventions and projects have the greatest impact.

The Kendal Futures Board needs to be committed to ensuring that the roles and responsibilities of the different partnerships involved in supporting the economic development in Kendal are clear and to use existing structures to deliver priority projects where it can. Kendal Futures cannot grow the local economy alone, but in leading the delivery of the Action Plan and working with private, public and third sector partners, it can help support Kendal towards a more resilient and therefore sustainable economic growth.

New opportunities to **use funding and investment from new development** (e.g Community Infrastructure Levy, Community Benefit Agreements, Section 106, New Homes Bonus) means that the Kendal Futures Board working with partners like Kendal Town Council will have more scope to develop new innovative approaches to facilitate local economic development, invest in improving infrastructure and other projects in the Action Plan. This will require additional dedicated project development resources.

**In the next decade Kendal Futures fundamental role will be to build consensus around strategic projects with significant economic impact and the Kendal Economic Growth Action Plan 2015-2025 and assist other public, private and third sector partners to deliver the projects on the ground.**



## Recommendation

The Kendal Futures Board is invited to:

- Approve the Kendal Economic Growth Action Plan 2015: refreshed vision, strategic themes and priority projects as the basis for future investment decisions in Kendal over the next ten years &
- Reconfirm the role of Kendal Futures and review the Board membership to ensure it meets the needs of the new Action Plan.



## Next Steps

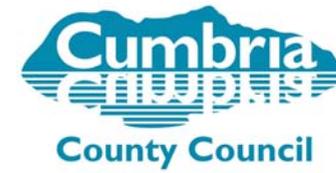
The immediate next steps are as follows:

- Kendal Town Council, South Lakeland District Council and Cumbria County Council to formally endorse the Kendal Economic Growth Action Plan 2015-2025: vision, strategic themes and priority projects as the basis for future investment decisions in Kendal over the next ten years.
- Kendal Futures to review its membership in the context of this new Kendal Economic Growth Action Plan 2015-2025.
- South Lakeland District Council, South Lakeland Local Committee (Cumbria County Council) and Kendal Town Council should continue to fund a project coordinator.
- Kendal Futures Board to publish an online illustrated executive summary/promotional brochure based on the Action Plan.
- Progress towards delivering the Kendal Economic Growth Action Plan 2015-2025 to be reviewed at a 'State of the Kendal economy' annual event to encourage public, private and third sector partners to discuss the state of the Kendal economy and suggest new ways of responding to emerging challenges and opportunities. Partners would fund the event.

# GLOSSARY

BID	Business Improvement District
CCC	Cumbria County Council
CCoC	Cumbria Chamber of Commerce
CVS	Cumbria Council for Voluntary Service
FSB	Federation of Small Businesses
LDF	Local Development Framework
KEGAP	Kendal Economic Growth Action Plan
KERAP	Kendal Economic Regeneration Action Plan
KF	Kendal Futures
KFB	Kendal Futures Board
KTC	Kendal Town Council
LDNP	Lake District National Park
LEP	Local Enterprise Partnership
RSL	Registered Social Landlords
SLDC	South Lakeland District Council
SLLC	South Lakeland Local Committee

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**Douglas  
Wheeler  
Associates**

Duncairn, Whitelea Road  
Kilmacolm, Inverclyde, PA13 4HH  
[www.douglaswheelerassociates.com](http://www.douglaswheelerassociates.com)  
01505 871975 07831 221516  
[mail@douglaswheelerassociates.com](mailto:mail@douglaswheelerassociates.com)