

# Kendal Futures



ANNUAL REPORT  
**2021-22**

KENDAL

# Kendal Vision

## Inspiration for Change in Kendal

The Kendal Vision is a call to embrace change, new ideas and innovation for the benefit of all those who live in, work in or visit Kendal.

Kendal Futures has continued to champion the Kendal Vision and progress its aims to deliver change in the town. The Vision, and a collaborative approach, is recognised and supported by our partners.

## The Kendal Vision aims to:

- Improve the quality of public spaces in Kendal town centre.
- Enhance Kendal's key assets and their surrounding areas.
- Repurpose underutilised space in the town.
- Deliver quality, affordable housing close to the town centre.
- Deliver employment and start-up opportunities in Kendal.
- Improve public transport.
- Increase cycling and walking by reducing traffic dominance and developing better balanced streets.
- Create a more sustainable Kendal.

## Priorities for the development of the Vision are:

- Kendal Station Gateway
- Market Hall, Market Place and Westmorland Shopping Centre
- Abbot Hall Art Gallery, Brewery Arts Centre and connecting areas
- Riverside Corridor
- Sustainable Kendal



## 2021 -22 highlights:

- South Lakeland District Council grant of £50,000 received (November-21) to fund a Vision Manager (part time) to progress the aims of the Kendal Vision and Kendal Town Centre Strategy.
- Nick Taylor was appointed as Vision Manager to develop Action Groups and engage local businesses, landowners and other local stakeholders.
- Community Action Groups established for 'Transport and Getting Around' and 'Placemaking' with monthly meetings held.
- Movement and Placemaking Review tested some high level, early ideas about traffic flow and Kendal's one-way system, focused on 20mph speed limits, cycling, walking and placemaking, more two-way streets, traffic calming and greening.
- Pro-actively worked with the Environment Agency to influence the detailed design and aesthetics of the Flood Risk Management Scheme in line with the aspirations of the Vision and demand better for Kendal. (The work of Kendal Town Council to secure additional glass panels on the flood walls on Aynam Road must also be recognised.)
- Joined the newly created Town Team in partnership with South Lakeland District Council, Cumbria County Council and Kendal Town Council to fund and commission a Levelling Up Fund investment plan and funding application.
- Worked with South Lakeland District Council and their consultants to develop a pilot public realm improvement scheme for Upper Stramongate, using high quality materials to create a pedestrian friendly gateway to the town centre and showcase the wider design ambitions identified in the Vision.
- Kendal Futures represented on Cumbria County Council's Northern Access Route Reference Group to steer the Outline Business Case development for this potential new road.

## What is this report?

This 13th Annual Report details the work of Kendal Futures from April 2021 to March 2022.





# Vision Action Groups

The Action Groups focus on some of the key themes identified by the public as important to them during the development of the Kendal Vision. The groups are supported by Nick Taylor, Vision Manager, and each is chaired by a local volunteer with a specialist interest in that subject area.

The groups are open to all and are attended by representatives from existing societies and organisations, as well as individuals who wish to share their views and ideas or lend their expertise.

Two groups have been formed to date:

## Transport and Getting Around

The attendees have a range of interests and expertise covering buses, trains and the railway, and cycling, and the focus has been on encouraging the use of public transport, cycling and walking.

## Placemaking

Discussions have focused on improving the overall look and feel of the town centre, encouraging more homes in the town centre and how to make better use of existing buildings and spaces.

The Vision Delivery Group has also met regularly to provide an overview of all the activities and encourage collaboration across all the Vision's themes and groups.



# Other Projects

## Visit-kendal.co.uk

(Funding: Kendal Town Council)

Kendal's destination website promotes the town's offer and quality of life to visitors and local people. Three films and new content promoting Kendal's food and drink and creative businesses have been published thanks to funding from SLDC via the Government's Welcome Back Fund.

- Ranks 1st Google for search term 'Kendal'
- Up to 14,000 visitors per month
- 111 published pages
- 58 blog posts published
- Top 10 2021 pages: Home, Shopping, Events and Festivals, Restaurants, Eat and Drink, Pubs and Bars, Plan Your Visit, Markets, Visitor Guide, Independent Shopping
- 820 published businesses in directory
- Three newsletters sent, average 48% open rate and 10% click through rate
- 1764 subscribers in database
- 1102 Instagram followers
- 3450 Instagram reach
- 22 You're Welcome articles added via the Welcome Back Fund

## Kirkland Banners

(Funding: Kendal Town Council)

Renewed and updated to create a welcoming feel and promote visit-kendal.co.uk.

## Town Centre Footfall counts

(Funding: SLDC)

Monitored via Springboard and data shared with partners and local businesses. 2021 saw the pandemic still affecting town centre footfall but numbers were beginning to increase.

2021 - 1,517,848

2020 – 1,300,420

2019 – 1,986,911

2018 – 2,087,136

## Kendal shop vacancy rate

South Lakeland District Council's shop vacancy survey revealed there were 71 empty shops out of 438 across the town centre in February-22, a vacancy rate of 16%. There were positive signs of change, however, with reports new leases being signed in the coming months.

## Kendal Courtesy Toilet Scheme

(Funding: SLDC)

10 venues participated in the scheme during 2021 despite the challenges of the pandemic. The scheme will be relaunched and readvertised to the public in 2022.



# Future Focus for 2021

- 1 Continue to increase engagement with the community through the Action Groups to develop projects around civic pride, people and place.
- 2 Work with public sector partners to ensure that policies and frameworks, including the Local Plan, are consistent with the aspirations for Kendal set out in the Kendal Vision and Town Centre Strategy.
- 3 Commission professional services and strategic studies to bring the Vision's ideas closer to refined and deliverable projects.
- 4 Work with, and encourage, the Councils to invest in further project development to attract investment and funding into the town, including continuing investment in public realm improvements.
- 5 Bring ideas, case studies and projects from other successful places to Kendal.
- 6 Continue to champion the needs and ambitions of Kendal in the new Unitary Authority structure.
- 7 Embrace public engagement and consultation to help inform future activities which deliver for Kendal and its community.
- 8 Support South Lakeland District Council and other organisations to develop Kendal's Markets offer.
- 9 Support work to champion and achieve the recommendations of the Kendal Citizens Jury for Climate Change.
- 10 Support Kendal Town Council in the delivery of their Action Plan.
- 11 Continue to secure the position and quality of [visit-kendal.co.uk](https://visit-kendal.co.uk).



# The Kendal Futures Board

The voluntary Board provides governance and oversight to the delivery of the Kendal Vision. Their expertise and views, and that of the public and private sector audiences they represent, are essential to ensure our work is well formed and based on a broad base of knowledge and opinion. Meetings encourage good quality debate, discussion and an understanding of the issues and constraints facing the town.

The Terms of Reference were updated to better reflect the Board's role in developing the principles and themes of the Vision, while representing their wider constituents.

## Board members

and their representative organisations, groups or sectors (for all or part of April-21 to March-22)

<b>Mark Cropper</b>	<b>Chair</b>
Miriam Randall	Creative industries/innovation
Rhian Harris	Culture/events/festivals
Nick Pitt/Tina Dulson	Kendal Business Improvement District
Kelvin Nash	Kendal College
Cllr Susanne Long	Kendal Town Council
Mandy Dixon	Hotels/visitor economy
Cllr. Jim Bland	National Farmers Union
Cllr Robin Ashcroft	South Lakeland District Council
Cllr. Geoff Cook	South Lakeland Local Committee (Cumbria County Council)
Jamie Allison	South Lakes Professionals Group
Cath Purdy	Housing
John Haley	Professional Services
Graham Booth	Board Observer for Cumbria LEP
Noel Farrer	Delivery Advice and Govt Liaison

For the list of current Board members see [kendalfutures.co.uk/about](http://kendalfutures.co.uk/about)

## Funding:

- South Lakeland District Council has agreed a funding package of £50,000 per year for 3 years to support the work of the Vision Manager and Action Groups. A further £135,295 of project development funding has been agreed by SLDC (expected June-22).
- Kendal Town Council provided £5,000 to support the work to progress the Kendal Vision.
- Thank you to Kendal Town Council, South Lakeland Local Committee (Cumbria County Council) and South Lakeland District Council for funding the Kendal Futures General Manager role (part time).
- Other financial contributions from partners are noted elsewhere in this report.

## Kendal Futures CIC

Kendal Futures Community Interest Company undertakes activities that benefit Kendal and its community of residents, businesses and visitors. The not-for-profit company funds are reinvested in the town to ensure Kendal remains an attractive and vibrant place to live, work and visit.

## The CIC Directors:

**Mark Cropper**  
**Jamie Allison**  
**John Haley**  
**Noel Farrer**



Kendal Futures is a partnership that represents businesses and stakeholders. We have developed a bold Vision for the town which will guide future decision making and change in Kendal.



## More information

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[kendalfutures.co.uk](http://kendalfutures.co.uk)