

How South Lakeland District Council helps businesses to cut carbon emissions



In February 2019 South Lakeland District Council (SLDC) became one of the first councils in the country to declare a **climate emergency**.



- SLDC is a member of the Zero Carbon Cumbria Partnership, working towards making Cumbria a **net zero carbon county by 2037**.
- SLDC's ambition is to be **carbon-neutral as an organisation by 2030**.
- We believe that moving towards net zero will improve the **quality of life** in South Lakeland and help to build new **green, clean growth opportunities for our economy**.

- We recognise our role as a **direct contributor** through the delivery of Council services, as well as **influencers** of behaviour among our resident and business communities.
- In our efforts to become carbon neutral we have established a **partnership** working approach that connects local businesses, organisations and business support providers and links together **economic development and the environment**.
- We have created a Climate Change Action Plan and a key objective of this is **supporting businesses to become low-carbon**.

SLDC partners and provides funding to **three key organisations** to deliver a programme of green business support in the district

Cumbria Action for Sustainability (CAfS)

cafs.org.uk



Green Small Business

greensmallbusiness.com



Future Fixers

futurefixers.uk





- SLDC has provided partnership funding to CAfS since 2014, committing an **annual £50,000** since 2018. This funding supports all CAfS activities in the community, including business support.
- CAfS is Cumbria's **lead climate change and sustainability organisation** and a registered charity with a team of 28 specialist staff.
- CAfS delivers a range of services helping businesses to **improve their carbon literacy** and **reduce their carbon footprint** including workshops, advice, training, specialist consultancy services, and 'Cut Your Business Carbon' online surgeries.



Cut your carbon footprint

3 hands-on workshops

Book your free place now
cafs.org.uk/events



Make your business greener

3 hands-on workshops

Book your free slot now
cafs.org.uk/events





- In 2019, CAfS began supporting the town of Ambleside (Ambleside to Zero) in its efforts to become a **zero-carbon community**.
- Through this work, it created a **carbon footprint calculator**, which calculates a business's total carbon emissions and a breakdown of which areas of operations have the highest emissions – this has now been rolled out across the district.
- In 2022/23 CAfS will **increase their focus on business support** with more 1-2-1 training and peer-to-peer support targeted at businesses, which will be based on focused market research and developed in partnership with a network of local organisations.



“SLDC’s support has made a massive difference to what CAfS has been able to do. They have funded us to support both businesses and communities in South Lakeland and have done so over a number of years. We have a very good working relationship with them – both officers and councillors – who are all very committed to achieving their target of net zero by 2037 for the district.”

Molly Hogg, CAfS



- Green Small Business offers **environmental management systems** and net zero support for small businesses, helping to better manage and monitor their environmental impacts.
- **Small Business Friendly** - Provides a straightforward, low-cost (ISO14001 alternative) way to audit their environmental impacts with tailored environmental policies and plans to reduce them with green certification upon commitment to achieve these, renewed annually.
- **Planet Friendly** - Enables businesses to take practical and meaningful steps to improve their carbon and environmental performance.
- **Good for Business** - Green Small Business certification can enhance businesses reputation among customers and staff, increase the markets they can access and save money.

- SLDC launched a 2 year **pilot scheme** with Green Small Business, contributing **£2,000 a year** to subsidise the programme for South Lakeland businesses, reducing the annual cost from £300 to £150.
- **30 businesses** have taken up the offer and the majority of those who completed their initial accreditation have since renewed it.
- In 2022/23 SLDC will increase our contribution to **£5,000** with the target of **doubling** the number of businesses on the programme.



Case Study

Ginger Bakers are creators of all things cake whose aim is to bring you great products using the best ingredients whilst contributing as much as they can to helping the environment.

Key issues addressed in the Green Small Business action plan: Sourcing of ingredients, packaging, packaging waste and energy use.

“We decided to do it because it’s a good thing for the business and help saves on costs. The process is really simple, straightforward and convenient.”

Lisa Smith, Ginger Bakers





- A **Community Interest Company** based in South Lakeland, Future Fixers are a passionate group of directors and associates who share similar values to help create a greener, fairer and more compassionate world.
- Inspire and encourage participants to launch purposeful businesses using the **'People, Planet, Profit'** business model. The course explores business planning, marketing, sales, and finance but always with a focus on how the business can have a positive impact on people and planet and create a green, ethical enterprise.
- Also have a **Simply Repair Directory** where people can find a local repair business.

- Since 2020 SLDC have supported Future Fixers' **Purposeful Business Start-Up programmes**. We subsidise the cost so that South Lakeland residents only have to pay **£60** of the usual £495 fee, and it is **free for those in receipt of unemployment benefits**.
- Our financial contribution is **£5,000** for each programme, with two completed so far and another two planned for 2022/23.
- 38 people have graduated from the programmes to date, with **20 new businesses formed**.

Case Study

Bringing the woods to your home, making furniture and ornamental crafts from an ancient Broadleaf Woodland in the Lake District where Jo calls home.

“The support I received through Future Fixers has been worthwhile and will continue to be as I develop further and put new ideas and inspiration into practice.

Future Fixers places a strong emphasis on considering how we run businesses with values that respect the environment and people, including ourselves, to put us in the best position for creating a successful and sustainable enterprise”

Jo Clayton, Design from the Woods



Case Study

The Spokesman is now one of the UK's best custom bicycle wheel builders. Based in the Lake District and delivering anywhere in the world.

“I created a business focused on the needs of cyclists, because I have been passionate about cycling all my life. The Future Fixers course has been a great platform for helping me to build my confidence, and for opening up a wide range of networks for my business.”

Simon Mackereth, The Spokesman



Key Learnings

Value of linking economy and environment

Great benefit in showing how environmental measures and initiatives can be profitable and drivers of the economy. Supporting SMEs to go green is a way we can lead in putting a fairer, greener recovery into practice following the pandemic.

Take inspiration from your place

The Lake District is the UK's most popular visitor destination outside of London thanks to our natural landscape. We have a high proportion of SMEs and independents who flourish because their story (and links to the location as people and their products) appeals to customers.

Partnership working

We encourage localism by recognising expertise, empowering and trusting communities and individuals. By engaging with multiple partners, there is now a comprehensive package of business support with elements that complement, interact and amplify each other, which has resulted in an emerging network of low-carbon South Lakeland businesses.

Key Learnings

Resources and funding

The running of each initiative has been delegated to the relevant specialist organisation, making it a relatively light-touch for Council officers. We've learnt that relatively modest contributions can act as catalysts and be very impactful.

Communications and publicity

Promotion through news releases and social media has proved to be important to spread the word. Uptake can initially be slow but can soon gather momentum – it is important to champion the people and businesses who are doing things well to inspire others.

We believe in the importance of green businesses in terms of what they're going to do for our economy, our jobs and our high streets as drivers of economic renewal.

Thank you for listening.

