

Pendle Council

Annual Report 2014 - 2015

Welcome

Pendle's Annual Report for the year 2014/15.

Looking back on the last 12 months we can be proud of what we've achieved despite the challenging times we work in as funding for local councils continues to be cut.

The reduction in external grant funding for Pendle Council has totalled almost 50% over the last four years!

Thanks to everyone pulling together - staff, councillors, partners and residents - we've continued to make Pendle a great place in which to live, work, play and visit.

We are finding new ways to balance our books whilst providing the quality services our residents deserve. And we're up to the challenge of doing things differently.

It's been a significant year for us. Pendle and the Council jointly celebrated our 40th birthday.

We also marked the 100th anniversary of World War I. With help from local residents, charities and community groups we created new signs at our cemeteries highlighting the presence of war graves and 11 missing names were added to the memorial in Market Square, Nelson.

Over the year we marked up some major achievements, detailed in this report, including the start of the transformation of our iconic Brierfield Mill into Northlight, a major destination for the North West.

And we've made some significant changes. To help the Council make £4 million in savings over two years, we were one of a handful of councils in the UK to delete the post of chief executive.

Stephen Barnes, who worked at the Council from its very beginnings 40 years ago, decided to step down and we used this opportunity to make some changes and savings. Happily he left in place a very experienced senior team who've worked in Pendle for many years and share Stephen's passion and ambitions for regeneration.

We also worked on a three year plan to transfer some of our services and facilities. Community centres and public toilets transferred to a number of town and parish councils and some local councils have shown a real appetite to take on more. This means more services are delivered locally and it helps us make savings, too.

There were many high points in the year including:

- Independent external auditors praising the council for giving good value for money and managing our money well
- Reducing the number of empty homes. In the last 12 months we've brought over 500 properties back into use including ones previously ear-marked for demolition
- Pendle's re-accreditation with Fairtrade status. In 2003 we were the first ever borough in the UK to achieve this thanks to working with our community
- Our dog warden team celebrated their sixth successive RSPCA Gold Footprint award for high standards of care for stray dogs and education programmes in schools.

In the Annual report you'll see how we've put our Strategic Objectives into action:

- Creating jobs, sustaining strong economic growth and ensuring housing meets local needs in terms of quantity, quality and affordability
- Working with partners to sustain accessible services of good value at a lower cost base
- Working to improve the health, wellbeing and safety of our residents and maintaining the quality of our environment.



A handwritten signature in black ink.

Councillor Mohammed Iqbal
Council Leader of Pendle Council

A handwritten signature in black ink.

Dean Langton
Strategic Director

Our performance in 2014/15

Performance indicators are facts and figures about the services we provide. They're collected every year to help us to evaluate how much progress we're making towards our aims and objectives. They're also used to help us plan future work and make improvements to services.



Percentage of undisputed invoices paid within 30 days	98.82%	98.62%	99.02%
Speed of processing - new Housing Benefit/ Council Tax Benefit claims: in month	22.9 days	24.9 days	19.8 days
Percentage of minor planning applications determined within 8 weeks	77.4%	79.9%	81.25%
Reported number of missed collections not dealt with within 1 working day	108	148	128
Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting - rolling year %	35.88%	36.72%	33.39%
Improved street and environmental cleanliness Litter	3%	2%	1%



Tackling crime and anti-social behaviour

Pendle is part of the Pennine Community Safety Partnership and we've also retained our own community safety partnership for Pendle.

In 2014/15 the Pendle Community Safety Partnership focused on the following priorities:

- Reducing violent crime, including child sexual exploitation
- Reducing the impact of substance misuse
- Reducing the harm caused by anti social behaviour
- Improving road safety
- Tackling domestic abuse.

Things we've done 2014/15



Creating jobs and sustaining strong economic growth



Regeneration for Pendle

We've taken big strides to transform the iconic Brierfield Mills complex into a new destination for the North West called Northlight.

The huge derelict Lancashire cotton mill, occupying a seven acre site alongside the Leeds and Liverpool Canal, was bought by the Council in 2012, thanks to a 100% grant from the Government.

Our joint venture company of Pendle Council and Barnfield Investment Properties – called PEARL – is putting ambitious plans into action. These include a hotel, state of the art leisure and cultural facilities, apartments overlooking Pendle Hill and a new marina.

Over the year, five Government Ministers visited Northlight including the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government. They recognised the potential of our landmark mill for a vibrant new working, living and cultural quarter for the whole region. We successfully discussed plans to expand the Government's Assisted Area Status Map to include key parts of Pendle. This

will help small and large enterprises to invest in a new future at Northlight.

And we won support from Ministers to ensure our plans were part of the new Lancashire Growth Deal, including improving access to Northlight from the M65, a vital step for project which will create hundreds of jobs.

An announcement in July confirmed that Pendle would get a share of a £233.9m cash windfall from the Government's Single Local Growth Fund to improve our transport and cycle links and open up key housing and employment sites.

This year we reached another landmark, this time in the transformation of a historic area of Nelson – Whitefield.

The Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government visited to see the final stages of our ten year multi-million pound plan for a neighbourhood once blighted by run-down and empty homes.

The project has included the beautiful restoration of Victorian 'tardis' terraces and an attractive new linear park for the community, opposite an 'outstanding' £9 million infant and nursery school.





Through PEARL and also partnership working with Great Places, there are also new affordable family homes to buy or rent in Whitefield, too.

First time buyers can live the dream thanks to a helping hand on deposits for contemporary new homes at Quaker Heights and Holden Road, Brierfield.

This year the Government's Help to Buy scheme was made available for new homes we've built in an attractive development, in what was the historic Lob Lane Mill.

The new three and four bedroomed homes have been developed by PEARL, Pendle Council's pioneering company with contractor, investor and developer, Barnfield.

They're in a prime position next to Northlight and new buyers will only need to provide a 5% deposit on a property and the Government can lend up to 20% of the value of a new home.

It means that contemporary homes are now within reach of people buying their first home. Some are stunning semi-detached family housing with large gardens, others are spacious three storey four bedroom homes overlooking the Leeds and Liverpool Canal. At Quaker Heights we've protected a historic mill and created a unique place for people to live in a great location.

In December we launched a unique project inspired by Mary Portas, Queen of Shops,

thanks to Nelson being selected as one of the UK's Portas Pilot Towns.

The new arts and vintage shop transformed the old post office into a creative emporium. With Arts Council funding, it added a totally new dimension to the town centre. Building on the success of a series of Arts and Vintage Markets, The Shop is a permanent feature designed to bring more people into Nelson and attract students from Nelson and Colne College, as well as selling their creative work.

Supporting local enterprise

This year we continued to invest in our Gearing up for Growth programme despite the tough financial climate. We agreed a further £500,000 investment, including business start up grants, support to help existing companies to grow and be competitive and graduate placements to encourage local companies to take on local graduates.

We also supported a Work Inspiration Event for pupils aged 13-14 from Pendle's secondary schools to try small practical activities with businesses to learn about their industry.

In April we introduced a new policy to help many local businesses, including restaurants, charity shops, pubs and clubs, with discounted business rates for up to two years. The discounts help smaller businesses and those moving into premises which have been empty for a year or more – encouraging take-up of empty buildings and helping our town centres to thrive.

Our Pendle Business Awards in May, jointly organised every two years with the Pendle Vision Board, recognised local businesses which are market leaders in their field.

With awards including Most Outstanding Business, New Business of the Year and Young Entrepreneur of the Year, it's a great platform to promote our thriving businesses and Pendle as a great place to invest in.

Every October, local business people are invited to a series of free workshops, drop-ins and seminars aimed at helping them get the best out of their business.

Focus on Your Business Month, run every October by Pendle Council and the Pendle Vision Board, brings together a wide range of business specialists covering many topics from social media, how to import safely, apprenticeships and business basics for new businesses.

And at Christmas, for the first time, we produced videos for Colne and Nelson Markets, making traders the stars and showing the intriguing range of goods and services on offer, from pet portraits to palm-reading, bookshops to locally made pottery as well as traditional market produce.

Over 1,000 people watched the videos and anyone watching had the chance to win £40 to spend at the markets in the run up to Christmas.



Things we've done 2014/15



Things we've done 2014/15

Improving the health, wellbeing and safety of our residents



We started a new programme of free and very low cost activities this year to help people in Pendle get Up & Active.

Designed to address high levels of inactivity in parts of Pendle, the Up & Active programme has been funded by Lancashire County Council to improve public health in Pendle.

It's been proven that a little activity every day – even 20 minutes - can improve people's wellbeing and even increase life expectancy. So the Up & Active programme offers people the chance to take small steps to being more active.

We've been working with Pendle Leisure Trust on a programme of leisure activities that don't all take place in sports centres and don't require any special sports kit.

Parkrun was launched as part of the Up & Active initiative in May thanks to a collaboration between Pendle Council and Lancashire County Council. It's part of an international movement that organises free, weekly, 5km timed runs around the world at 9am every Saturday!

Aimed at people of all ages, the first run in April was a huge success and many local volunteers came forward to manage events in Pendle for future parkruns.

Also as part of the Up & Active project, families were invited to Nelson's Victoria Park to see work in progress to create characters in wood for a new **Vicky Witch Trail** to help young children and families improve their activity levels.

In June, we opened a new cycle track named in honour of Pendle's gold medallist, **Steven Burke MBE**.

Steven, alongside other cyclists, put the new cycle track through its paces ahead of our annual **Pendle Cycle Festival**. And the track formed part of his training for the Commonwealth Games in Glasgow where Steven rode for England for the first time.

Cycle Sport Pendle runs the track for us, to introduce a new generation of boys and girls to cycling. Cyclists of all abilities including beginners are also welcome to use the track including people with disabilities using specially adapted bikes, thanks to a project run by the Pendle Leisure Trust.

The new cycle track came about thanks to a great team effort between Pendle Council, cycling clubs and local schools. The group won £250,000 from British Cycling including lighting for the winter months and £150,000 from Sport England's Inspired Facilities fund. Pendle Council, our Nelson Area Committee and the Lancashire Environment Fund provided a total of £150,000 for the new facility. And in January the Lancashire Environmental Fund recognised it as one of the best recreation projects they have supported this year.





Things we've done 2014/15

We've also been doing our bit to tackle mental health, taking a lead in helping Pendle to become a **dementia friendly community**.

Training of staff and councillors to increase understanding about what it's like to live with dementia or care for someone with the condition, has rolled out into the community. In November, pupils from a local primary school became some of Pendle's youngest Dementia Friends.

We're proud to have been part of the UK's biggest ever social action movement to change perceptions of dementia. We played a part in meeting the target of one million Dementia Friends in 2015, just two years after the initiative was launched.

In January, when many local families were feeling the pinch after Christmas, we launched a competition for affordable, **healthy recipes** to feed four people, costing no more than a fiver.

Teaming up with our markets and affordable food guru, Gill Watson, we asked people to share a recipe for a meal for four costing a fiver or less.

Winners from across Pendle won £50 bags of healthy food and recipes were shared on our website.

During the year, we backed a residents' appeal through our Localities Team for a **new zebra crossing** in Nelson near to a park and games area.

Connecting with Lancashire County Council's Healthy Streets initiative – a community-led project to promote safer walking - we shared the cost of the zebra crossing with the County Council.



We played a part in meeting the target of one million Dementia Friends in 2015, just two years after the initiative was launched.



What seems like a small change has made a massive difference to the lives of people in the area, especially children and teenagers, who now feel able to cross the road in safety.

Also with safety and wellbeing in mind, we appointed a **Rogue Landlord Officer** to tackle serious hazards in rented accommodation and address issues such as homes without hot water. Their work is important, ensuring homes are safe and healthy places to live in.



Things we're doing in 2015/16



Things we're doing in 2015/16

We've introduced new strategic objectives for 2015/16 with a range of actions and exciting projects to put them into practice.

Strong Economy

This year we hosted the toughest stage of UK's biggest cycling event – the Tour of Britain. It was a hugely successful event which put Pendle on a world stage, with our stunning landscape and attractive towns seen by millions around the world. The free event attracted 200,000 spectators to our area.

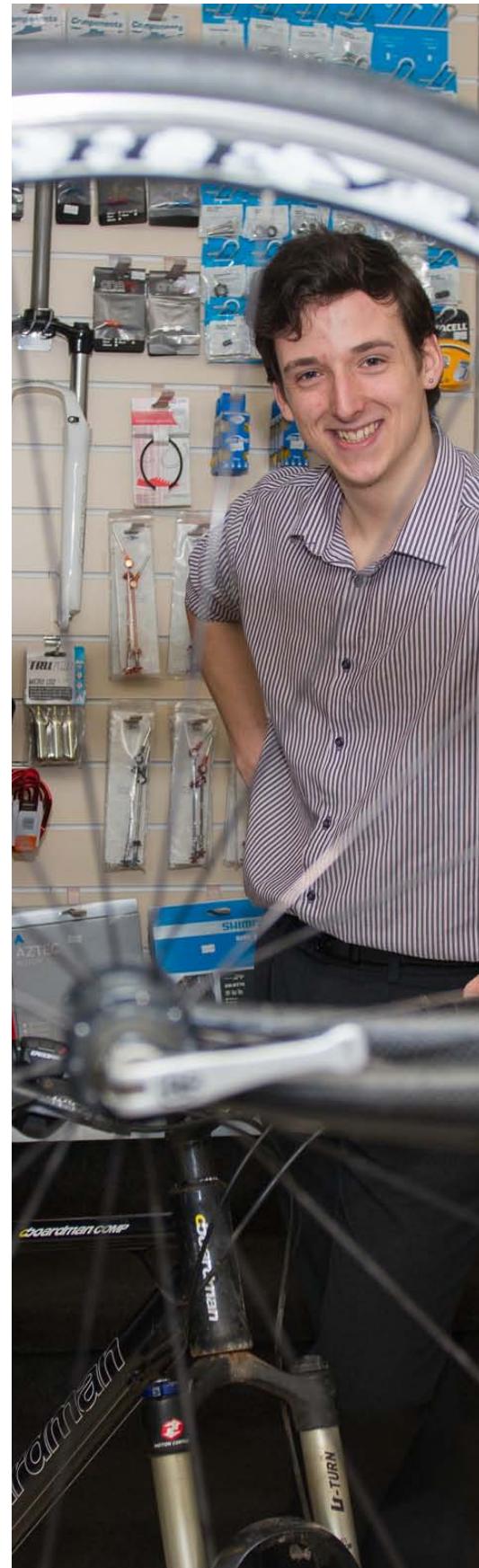
We'll be using the dynamic of this world class cycle race to continue to promote Pendle to visitors. We're working to create a strong legacy, building on our reputation as **the cycling capital of the North and an area with outstanding countryside and welcoming towns and villages**.

This year will be a crucial one for our flagship project – Northlight – as work has started on improving its access to the M65. Exciting plans for major leisure opportunities are getting underway. Work is starting on the fabric of this iconic building as it takes shape to become a **major destination for the North West.**

PEARL – our pioneering collaboration with local developer Barnfield - is working with a range of partners to buy land and properties adjoining the site. This will ensure the right setting and access for the Northlight as it develops into a **new working, living, leisure and cultural quarter of regional significance creating hundreds of jobs.**

We'll continue with our programme of support for businesses through our **Gearing Up for Growth** programme. Since April, we've already agreed nearly £500,000 support for business start-up grants, graduate recruitment and other initiatives to boost our local economy. This important work will continue, with

the Lancashire Enterprise Partnership and Regenerate Pennine Lancashire helping us to fund more start-up and growth businesses, skills improvement and retention here in Pendle.



Things we're doing in 2015/16



Things we're doing in 2015/16



Things we're doing in 2015/16

In 2015/16 we'll be adopting **Pendle's most important planning document. It will guide development, including housing and employment land, for the next 15 years.** We've made great efforts to engage with the local community throughout the development of the Core Strategy.

Our good work on reducing empty properties will continue, including the introduction of a Selective Licensing Scheme for Waterside. It's designed to tackle empty houses and poor housing standards in rented housing in this area of Colne.

Introducing selective licensing will help us address the impact of poor quality private landlords and ensure Pendle is a great place to live for everyone.

Strong Services

The challenge of reducing the cost of council services will be tackled with a new financial strategy. In partnership with town and parish councils, we'll maintain local facilities and the delivery of some important local services. **This year we aim to complete the transfer of play areas, playgrounds and multi-use games areas to our towns and parishes.**



Strong Communities

We'll make use of the powers provided by the 2014 Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act and **promote the work of our new Enforcement Officers.**

This year, we'll be reviewing the provision of CCTV across Pendle to find new ways to maintain it for community safety.

Ensuring Pendle complies with our obligations under the Prevent Strategy will be a priority, whilst working with partners to build cohesion and update our Cohesion Resilience Plan.



Strong Organisation

Work continues to change the way we deliver services to meet changing customer demands. **Our Customer Access Management Strategy** focuses on providing 24/7 access to services and digital inclusion, improving access to our services electronically.

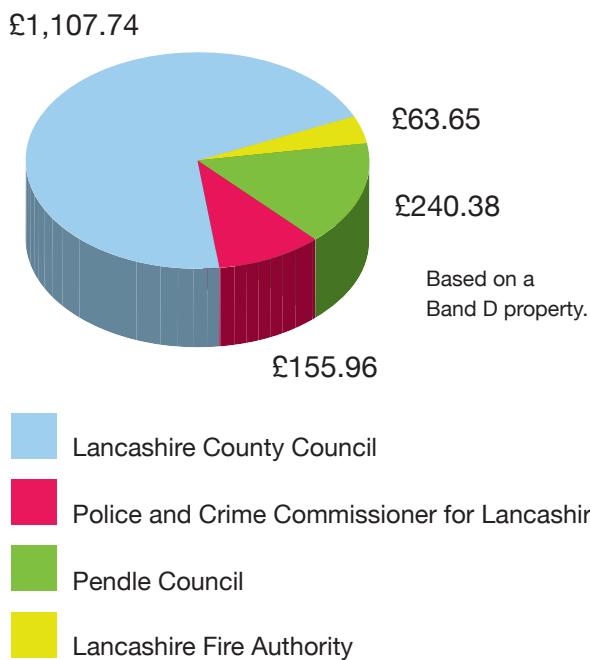
A new system will enable more efficient working across services and between front and back office systems.

Maximising the potential of our workforce is vital for us and we'll work to implement a new **Workforce Development Plan.** We aim to be recognised as a leading employer including retaining our Investors in People Gold Standard following re-assessment this autumn.



Our Finances

What goes where – how 2014/15 Council Tax is split



Here's a summary of our income and expenditure for the last financial year, compared with the previous year.

Council Tax

In 2014/15, the average Council Tax bill, before any charges for Town and Parish Councils, was £1,567.73

Included within this amount is a charge for Pendle Borough Council services of £240.38. This has remained unchanged since 2008/09 - there has been no increase in Pendle Council's part of the council tax for the last six years.

The chart (shown left) provides a comparison of the different charges made for an average (Band D) household.

Our revenue income

To pay for the cost of providing services to you, we received total net revenue income of £15.9m. In comparison we received income of £16.7m in 2013/14.

Most of our income comes from central government grants and a third comes from council tax charges.

Government Grant		2013/14
£9.9m *		2013/14
£8.5m **		2014/15
Council Tax		
£5.2m		2013/14
£5.3m		2014/15
Other Net Income		
£1.3m		2013/14
£1.3m		2014/15
Net Changes in Balances and Reserves		
£0.3m		2013/14
£0.8m		2014/15
Total 2013/14	£16.7m	
Total 2014/15	£15.9m	

* includes Efficiency Support Grant of £1.3m

** includes Efficiency Support Grant of £1.0m

Our Finances

Our revenue spending

We spend money on the delivery of a range of services. The charts below compare our net spending on these services for 2014/15 to net spending in 2013/14.

Policy Unit	£m
2013/14	£1.814
2014/15	£1.862
Central & Regeneration Services	
2013/14	£8.440
2014/15	£8.088
Environmental and Recreation Services	
2013/14	£6.397
2014/15	£5.964
Total 2013/14	£16.651
Total 2014/15	£15.914

If you want to read more about the Council's finances, our Statement of Accounts is available by visiting our website www.pendle.gov.uk/council finances

Alternatively, you can contact:

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Our services financial performance for 2014/15

At the beginning of each financial year, we set a budget (net of fees and charges) for each of our services. This is what we expect to spend during the year. The table below shows how each service has performed against their budget. Overall, we underspent by £212,000.

	Approved Budget 2014/15 £000	Actual 2014/15 £000	Variance 2014/15 £000
Policy Unit	1,882	1,862	(20)
Central & Regeneration Services	7,933	8,088	155
Environment and Recreation Services	6,291	5,964	(327)
Net cost of services	16,106	15,914	(192)
Other corporate income and expenditure variations			(20)
Net underspend in 2014/15			(212)

Our capital spending

The net spending information reflects the ongoing cost of providing services and is known as revenue spending. We also spend money, on for example, buying land and buildings and major projects which will extend the life of the Council's assets. This is known as capital expenditure and the amount spent by the Council in 2014/15 was £5.8m as shown in the table below. In comparison the Council spent £5.7m in 2013/14.

Housing Expenditure	£'000	Parks and Recreation	£'000
Bradley, Nelson	18	Facilities managed by Pendle Leisure Trust	94
Whitefield, Nelson	2,263	Steven Burke Sports Hub (cycle track)	258
Walton Street, Colne	76	Area Committees	352
Disabled Facilities Grants	750	Resource Procurement - Lomeshaye Bridge Mill	644
Warm Home Grants	53	Other Capital Projects	256
Empty Home Loans / Works	410		
Other housing related projects	187		
Environmental and Transport Projects			
Domestic & Trade Waste Collection - replacement bins	79		
Flood Alleviation Works, Earby	30		
Car Park Improvements -			
Greenfield Rd, Colne	24		
Nelson Town Centre - Parking Bays	87		
Asset Renewal			
Parks - Vehicles and Plant	67		
Information & Communications			
Technology	97		
Colne Market	39	Total	5,784



**If you would like this information in a way
which is better for you, please telephone
01282 661977.**

Pendle Council

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