



# Solway Buzz

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## Solway Mexico Link

The 6<sup>th</sup> of July was a momentous occasion for all involved with the Solway Mexico Link, when the Mexican staff and pupils from our partner school, Manuel Hayser Jimenez in Mexico City, arrived for the start of their first visit to Silloth.

The Golf Hotel, flying the Mexican and UK Flags in honour of the occasion, provided a welcoming atmosphere for those involved to meet and greet their Mexican counterparts. This was the start of what was to be an incredible fortnight.



Visiting the Roman Wall at Housteads

link pupils in Keswick, visiting the Pencil Museum, Crossthwaite Old Church and Honister Slate Mine. The local business people of

King", a flight on the "London Eye", and a visit to the "Tower of London".

The following week our Mexican visitors



Meeting the crew at Silloth Fire Station

The Welcome Ceremony in Solway Community School the following morning was attended by many important figures in our county: amongst them were, Mr Bill Allison, Mayor of Silloth, Mrs Lillian Baldrey, Mayor of Allerdale, Mr John Nellist, Director of Education and Mr Arthur Capstick, Cumbria Development Education Centre.

Traditional Cumbrian songs were sung and poems written especially for this occasion were read to welcome our Mexican friends to our school and community. Following the ceremony a welcome reception was held at the Golf Hotel, our thanks to Silloth Town Council and both Fausto and Christine for making this occasion special.

The next day saw the

Keswick had given many gifts for our counterparts which were collected and distributed by Mr Roe, our thanks to all who gave so generously.

Thursday, thanks to the Silloth Rotary Club, saw all the current

took part in "Olympic Week". Activities including working with the Fire Brigade, the Life Boat Crew, Norman Hammond, Rose Wolfe and Graham. On the Friday a goodbye ceremony was held in



Visiting Gretna Green

link pupils visiting the Roman Army Museum, Housteads Fort and the Wet and Wild.

Over the weekend, we travelled to London for an action packed two days. Highlights included, seeing "Lion

school.

Different visits and activities were arranged after school during the week, including a visit to UCB Films, who make the film that is used to make the Mexican money! cont'd on Page 3

## Broadband Internet is coming...

Solway Rural Initiative Ltd. (SRI) has received funding to install wireless broadband into five locations and then across North Allerdale. The whole scheme is a major step forward for businesses and communications in the area.

Solway Rural Broadband offers fast Internet access, quick data transfer with an "always connected" service for a single fixed monthly fee. No telephone is needed. Because the scheme does not rely on telephone links, broadband connections will now be installed to the towns of Aspatria, Maryport, Silloth and Wigton. Links to villages and surrounding areas such as Kirkbride and Ireby will quickly follow depending on how fast users sign up to the new scheme. Only 60 users are needed per town or 20 per village. The faster these numbers are achieved, the quicker broadband can be made available.

SRI, "a not for profit" regeneration company, already has over 300 registrations of interest. The first wireless broadband centre will be established at Aspatria, home of SRI's economic regeneration unit. Maryport, Silloth, Wigton and Kirkbride will follow soon after. The whole operation will be installed, controlled and then serviced by local firms and SRI's specialist staff.

Businesses involved in SRI's SolwayPages directory had asked why no one was looking at helping the area get broadband. None of the local towns had at that time even been set a trigger level by BT. Support for a pilot scheme was formally granted by the NWDA's North West Broadband Fund at the beginning of July. Formal bid tenders were sent to suppliers across the UK and as far as Norway with the first service due to commence in September.

UCB at Wigton have already supported the scheme by allowing the community broadband equipment to be mounted on one of their tall buildings. This will enable broadband services to be supplied far beyond the scope of BT's ADSL telephone broadband.

SRI's policy is to "Keep Local Money Local" their highly successful SolwayPages directory and web site is at: [www.solwaypages.org](http://www.solwaypages.org) helping local people

identify and buy from local businesses. Bill said, "We applied for funding to benefit rural businesses and communities. I would like to thank all those who provided letters of support and the many small businessmen and residents who support our activities. The revenue from this new and exciting technology will benefit local people, not remote multi-nationals. Rural North Allerdale will be able to support existing and new businesses with community broadband up to a speed of 2Mb. This is forty times faster than telephone modem connections and 20 times faster than an ISDN line.

Even if a telephone exchange is enabled, telephone broadband service is regarded as only reliable along the first 5km of copper phone wire. In reality the service has a geographical radius much less than this and may well be non-existent if aluminium wire has been used anywhere along its route. Couple this with a possible shared speed of 512kbps or less



Bill Knowles with the Aspatria satellite receiver

and no easy or cheap speed upgrade and wireless broadband wins hands down! Especially if Solway Rural Broadband can deliver a good service at competitive prices!"

Mark Sullivan, North West Broadband Fund Project Manager, said:

"The NWDA is keen to make broadband access in Cumbria readily available and at reasonable cost. Solway Rural Initiative breaks the mould that has, in the past, hindered broadband roll-out across the UK, in its simplicity, affordability and much more."

Solway Rural Broadband starts in August with location surveys of businesses and home users who sign up for the service. Rates with special terms for businesses joining the scheme early can be found on: [www.solwaypages.org](http://www.solwaypages.org) and further information at: [www.ruralinternet.co.uk](http://www.ruralinternet.co.uk) Place your order now, order forms can be obtained from SRI's office at Aspatria on 016973 22620 or 0870 020 1696.