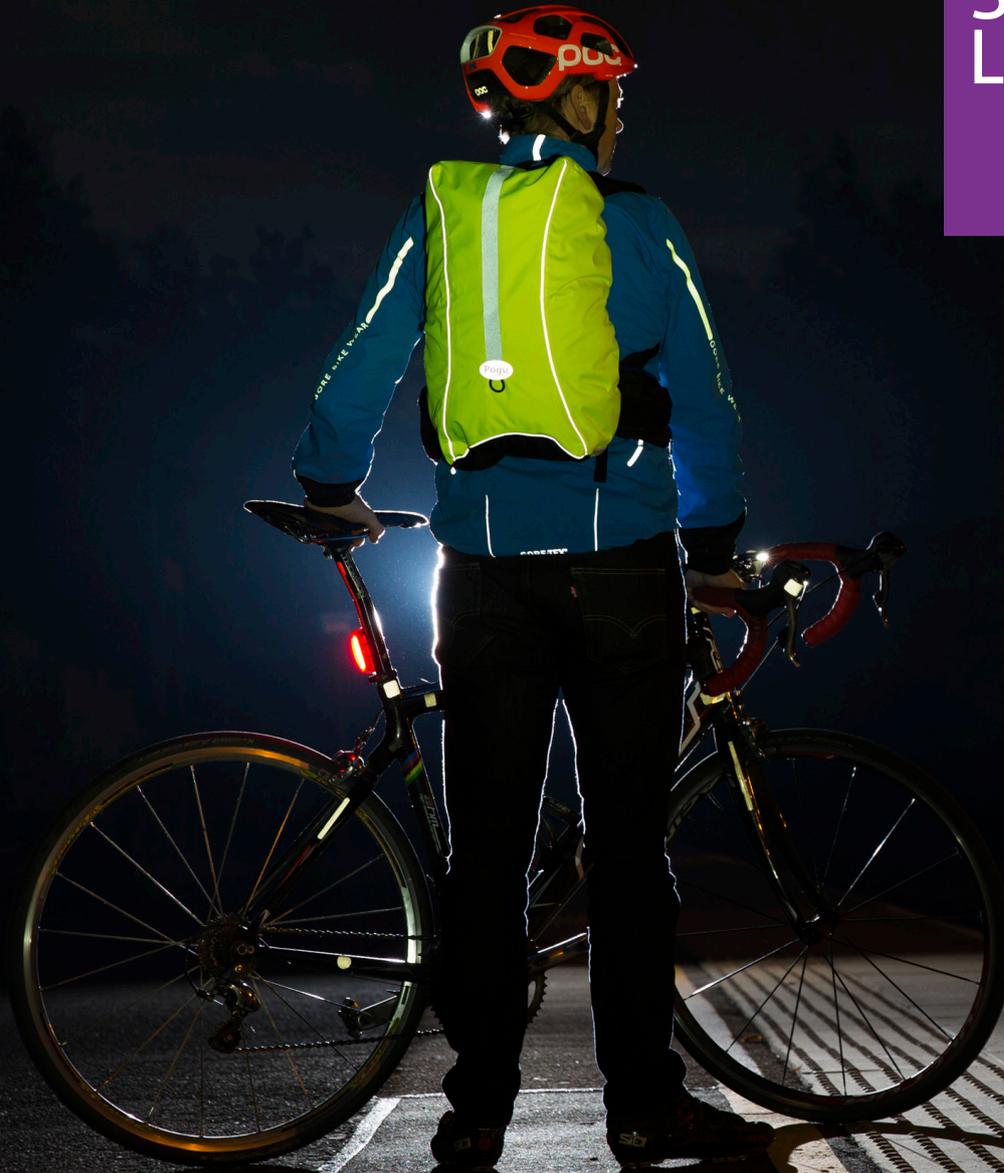


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The move from Brixton in London to South Lakeland in 2008 was, as you can imagine, a big step for Tiffany Solender and husband Neil, but theirs was always destined to be a sure-footed move and one which reflected their personalities.

The village of Staveley was their ultimate destination; every inch an iconic Lake District village and one which became somewhat 'sleepy' once the main A591 (the main route for the vast majority of visitors to the National Park) by-passed it in 1990.

The village has since re-invented itself around the Mill Yard development. Once a family-owned bobbin mill manufacturing for Lancashire's cotton industry, it is today the base for nationally acclaimed Hawkshead Brewery, Wheelbase Cycle Store, North Face (UK) and a number of iconic lifestyle businesses – altogether a vibrant hub for the village.

Pogu was established in 2009, just a year after the move from London, and it's here that Tiffany's business also has its home.

“Our passion is the great outdoors and that was the primary driver for our move to South Lakeland.” Tiffany says, “We wanted to live somewhere that we could venture out with the dog straight after work and enjoy the amazing scenery and natural environment; no need to sit in traffic to escape the city and a busy day in the office. From where Pogu are we can be in open countryside in just a few minutes.”

Pogu is a multi award-winning safety brand. In Tiffany's own words, they develop “technically leading, robust safety products born out of a desire to protect our family.”

To put this into context, the main product is the highly innovative Pogu Trail Spikes, a lightweight and pocket-sized mini crampon designed for use in slippery conditions of snow and ice.

“The idea for the Trail Spikes was simple: we had moved nearly 300 miles from London to enjoy the outdoor lifestyle and we weren't going to let adverse weather conditions stop us getting out and doing what we love – walking, running, generally exploring our surroundings.”



The Pogu Trail Spikes are certainly innovative, being easy to fit onto a shoe or boot (and take off again) in a matter of seconds and, being a compact unit, are small enough to fit into even the smallest backpack or messenger bag.

“All of our products are designed right here in the Lake District and we send them for testing to associates and reviewers worldwide.”

With Tiffany being a mum first and foremost was also a driver behind the development of the Trail Spikes: “I wanted something to give mothers confidence in slippery conditions when carrying their baby or with a toddler in a pushchair.”

This ‘family first’ approach has since led Pogu to develop their own range of reflector products for the baby market. These are self-adhesive, high visibility strips and stickers which are designed specifically for pushchairs and prams, or for clothing and accessories.

Rather than swamping you and your child with day-glo, these are discreet in daylight conditions and available in black or silver but, thanks to the 3M™ Scotchlite material, reflect bright white and are 100 times more visible than non-reflective materials in low light conditions.

Like the Trail Spikes, simple yet very smart thinking has led to the development of a product portfolio that gives confidence to the user and, potentially, could be a real life-saver.

The Pogu company strap-line is “Protect What Matters”, a phrase which beautifully embodies everything they do and their family-centric focus.

Just being here in South Lakeland gave us some clear space to think - both what we wanted from our lifestyle and bringing up a family, as well as developing the vision for Pogu.” adds Tiffany.

“Taking an idea - even quite a simple concept, which all of ours are – and turning it into a product; taking that product to market, getting retailers on-board or selling to the end consumer, it’s what we think business should be about.”

“And when you see your idea on the shelves of John Lewis or other retailers around the world, that product which was conceived on the fells and trails of South Lakeland... that’s such an amazing feeling.”

The Pogu brand is indeed a worldwide concern with regular exports to Sweden, Norway, Germany and Finland, all countries which know a thing or two about tough winter conditions and, if this weren’t extreme enough, new opportunities are opening up in Russia and Canada.

The Pogu team is still a small one with just two full-time employees, with local businesses drawn upon for specialist outsourcing. “We’ll always be a lean operation, that way we can stay competitive, agile and in a good position to develop our new products.”

It’s a safe assumption to say that Tiffany and Neil have really found their feet, both with Pogu and with South Lakeland.

And is the appetite for business still what it was? “Absolutely! If ever you might be in any doubt then a quick read through the comments and reviews from our fantastic and incredibly loyal customers just reaffirms everything that we have done.”



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Welcome to South Lakeland.

A Breath of Fresh Air for Business.

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An area known globally for its astounding natural beauty and unique vibrant culture, South Lakeland is also home for a thriving and innovative business environment where companies can become established, grow and prosper.

The entrepreneurial business spirit is strongly encouraged in South Lakeland, reflected in the healthy number of fledgling enterprises setting up each year in our region, and our work also encompasses projects designed to help make the first steps to start-up as easy as possible.

The Economic Development Team at South Lakeland District Council are an inward investment service providing information and support to businesses of all sizes, covering all industry sectors, whether you are already here or are looking to locate your operations in South Lakeland.

The Economic Development Team are here to help your business uncover the exciting potential that exists here. Should you have any questions, we are on hand to assist and tell you more about the opportunities to be found in the most beautiful corner of the UK.

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