



KESWICK TOWN COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT

2015/16

Welcome to the Town Council's Annual Report for 2015/16

This report gives information about the Town Council, the money it spends and the activities it carries out and also includes reports from Council representatives on voluntary organisations in the town.

A complete list of all Town Councillors is included on the next page of the report, where you will also find details of how to contact them.

**Lynda Walker
Town Clerk & RFO
April 2016**

Contact Details

YOU CAN CONTACT YOUR COUNCILLORS DIRECT OR VIA

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The offices are normally open as follows: -

Monday to Friday
9.30am –1.00pm

Cllr David S Burn	The Bungalow, Ashtree Avenue, Keswick, CA12 5PF	017687 80371
Cllr Allan D Daniels	31 Lakehead Court, Keswick, CA12 5EU	017687 44531
Cllr R Martin Jordan	Braeside, The Heads, Keswick CA12 5ER	017687 71249
Cllr Denstone Kemp	1 Vicarage Hill, Keswick CA12 5QB	017687 73490
Cllr Susan Leighton	5 Ratcliffe Place, Keswick, CA12 4DZ	017687 75195
Cllr Andrew Lysser	Apartment 2, Gatesgarth, Braithwaite CA12 5RY	017687 78833
Cllr Tony Lywood	Shu-Le-Crow, 7 Penrith Road, Keswick, CA12 4HF	017687 75253
Cllr D Miller	Linthwaite, Manor Brow, Keswick CA12 4AP	017687 72295
Cllr Adam Paxon	Toll Bar Cottage, Penrith Road, Keswick, CA12 4JR	07989 386599
Cllr Peter Price	6 St Kentigern Close, Keswick, CA12 5PE	07717 572042
Cllr M Pugmire	6 Brandlehow Crescent, Keswick CA12 4JE	017687 73409
Cllr Paul Titley	32 Penrith Road, Keswick, CA12 4HA	017686 06015

THE COUNCIL

The Town Council consists of 12 voluntary Councillors who receive no remuneration. They are appointed through election or co-option and can serve for a period of up to four years before having to be re-elected. The Town Council is the sole trustee for both Hope and Fitz Parks and the Townsfield Charitable Trusts.

The Council employs one full time and two part time members of staff (in addition to five gardening and maintenance staff employed in Keswick parks):

Mrs Lynda Walker, Town Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer
Mrs Catherine Parker, Administration and Finance Officer
Mrs Wendy Lerigo, Administration & Finance Assistant

The Council meets 12 times per year, normally on the third Thursday of each month and holds its Annual Meeting during May. It also meets separately in its capacity as Trustee of the Hope Park, Fitz Park and Townsfield Charitable Trusts 6 times per year with an Annual Trust meeting, also during May. All meetings are advertised on the Council's website www.keswicktowncouncil.gov.uk and on the noticeboard situated at the front of the Council offices.

The public are welcome to attend meetings and to ask questions or make comments during the public forum.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 2015-16

Councillor Paul Titley – Town Mayor

It is an honour and a privilege to be Mayor and my year of representing the town is nearly at an end. By the time I hand the chains over to the next mayor I will have attended almost 200 events and meetings as either the mayor or as part of my duties and responsibilities as councillor. It will come as no surprise that the floods in December have dominated my thoughts in writing this short piece. Once again, the predictions of experts and the preparations of government agencies were overwhelmed by Mother Nature. But Keswick was NOT overwhelmed, residents and friends rose to the occasion and created a huge support network for the immediate disaster and then maintained that support that is still around today. Perhaps what we didn't expect was the massive assistance from charitable groups from around the country – from the various ex-military charities (Rubicon, WWTW, and Serve-on) to the phenomenal help we received from the Muslim communities of the Midlands and North of England. One of my most memorable evenings was taking part in the Curry Night when we were all fed fresh curry dishes prepared by Muslim charities that had taken over St Herbert's school kitchen for the day. It was not the usual image of cultural mixing you might find in the tabloid press!

In the summer Keswick had the opportunity to welcome the Walking with the Wounded charity as it arrived in Keswick having climbed Scafell Pike. Unlike other towns that provided a modest handshake and a few sandwiches we blew the lid off. It literally took their breath away (and mine) as the packed Market Square roared their welcome as they walked in. Handing out free beer was the least I could do.

I was able to meet more staff from the army later in the year on the most important date in the mayor's calendar: Remembrance Sunday. That Sunday was a portent of what was to come as it poured with rain and soaked all of us who were there. Members of the Yorkshire Battalion (on holiday in Keswick on the Sunday) returned in uniform to take part in the ceremonials on November 11th.

I have been able to see the huge breadth of our cultural and sporting talents with visits to exhibitions, lectures, and prize givings. I have also discovered that North Cumbria has an amazing array of churches, and with other local Mayors I have attended civic services in many of them in the county.

The council has worked with the newly formed Keswick Community Interest Company to take over the two main public toilet blocks in town (that faced being closed) and this has shown how a seemingly simple scheme is actually dreadfully complicated, and that it can take an age to complete. As a result the town will have much improved facilities for the benefit of both residents and visitors. I hope this is followed by other similar, but faster, projects.

Our town is ready again for the flood of tourists who will come - perhaps expecting to see a struggling metropolis, but Keswick is already vibrant again with new businesses opening and others redecorated waiting for customers. However we still have the extremely wounded parks to attend to. The damage to Fitz Park in particular threatens to wipe out a sizable chunk of our sporting provision. Repairing and preparing for the future is a task that has started but I expect will continue for a few years. As residents and taxpayers we have some difficult decisions to take in order to preserve and conserve them.

CHARITABLE TRUST CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 2015-16

Councillor Susan Leighton – Trust Chairman

Back in July 2015, the conclusions I came to from frequent visits to the Parks were that there was a lot to celebrate, but also areas where improvements could be made – time and finances permitting.

At that time Wivell Bridge had recently been resurfaced, the Keswick Festival had received compliments from both 'locals' and the 'not so locals', and Hope Park was frequently receiving favourable and well deserved comments for its floral displays. There was a new Parks' Manager in place, and the big issues included parking in Fitz Park, renewing our ageing buildings and upgrading the Parks' Staff rest areas. All seemed to be going well till the very wet weather arrived in November, and then the devastating Storm Desmond which brought major flooding, damage, silt and debris. Even at this stage – 4 months on – Upper and Lower Fitz Parks still bear witness to the event, and a terrific amount of work is still required before reinstatement is complete.

Hope Park, although flooded, recovered reasonably quickly when the stream settled back within its banks. The main damage being done to the Park Machinery and Store area, and the Boules Pit surround.

Progress in Fitz Park seems slow as reports on the buildings, the damaged Wivell Bridge and the Pups Shelter were all required. The badly damaged and displaced Knights Bridge has now been removed and the Trustees are working towards a replacement bridge.

Thousands of tons of silt have been removed, and uprooted trees have been cleared from the Park. The Environment Agency has used Fitz Park for access to the River to remove silt and stones, and they will clear the area they have been using as a route through Lower Fitz.

Fortunately the Children's Play area was not flooded, so has been useable from an early stage. The bark and sand have recently been replaced ready for the better weather, and the Trust received a generous donation from the Pheasant Inn on Crosthwaite Road for this.

The Bowling Bower and Cricket Pavilion are now dry and under repair, and their greens will hopefully be ready for this seasons use, the Tennis Club Courts are to be made playable as soon as possible.

All the Fitz Park user groups have worked tremendously hard, with members working on the sites at weekends, and applying for grants for the uninsurable work to be done.

At the present time Upper Fitz remains closed to the public so that heavy machinery can be used with safety. But I am hopeful that the footpaths can be repaired and most of this area made safe for the public to use very soon.

The main area of new good news is that the Sensory Garden has received sufficient donations and grants to have work begun on the site behind the Cenotaph this May. Many thanks are due to Elizabeth Barraclough and her team for their work on this project.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Lynda Walker – Town Clerk

GENERAL FUND SUMMARY

1st April 2015 – 31st March 2016

Expenditure

	£
General Administration (inc salaries)	61,167
Mayors Allowance	2,000
Grants awarded	15,020
Christmas Lights	27,309
War Memorial	1,297
Townfield	800
Open Spaces	1,000
Fitz Park	88,529
Floral Displays	6,472
Town Events	12,015
Allotments	496
Advertising	217
Audit fee/Accounts preparation	230
Youth Projects	1,000
Contingency sum	10,130
Annual Parish Meeting	50
Total	227,732

Income

	£
Precept and grants from Allerdale BC	221,620
Interest	79
Rent	11,000
Event banner advertising space	2,727
Allotment income	963
Town Events Income	6,343
Christmas lights contributions inc ABC Market towns grant	6,086
ABC Market towns grant - other	5,000
Total	253,818

NB: Figures quoted are subject to prepayment/accruals adjustments and audit.

Interested parties and local electors are able to exercise their right to inspect the financial records before the annual audit takes place.

GRANTS

Each year the Town Council makes financial contributions to local organisations which provide valuable services that bring benefit to the local community. Grants were made to the following organisations during 2015/16:

Cumbria SPAA Foundation (Allerdale PARCS Scheme)	75
Citizens Advice Bureau Keswick	500
The Great North Air Ambulance	954
Greta Preschool	500
Keswick Carer's Forum	276
Keswick Cricket Club	500
Keswick In Bloom	3000
Keswick Museum & Art Gallery Management Ltd	1000
1st Keswick Scout Group	1500
Keswick & District Voluntary Car Scheme	300
Keswick Tourism Association	750
Keswick Youth Club	1745
St Johns Ambulance	400
Theatre by the Lake	3500
Total	15000

REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES

The Council appoints members as representatives on various outside bodies. This helps to ensure good working relationships with local organisations. The following reports have been submitted by the nominated representatives.

THE BATTERSBY CHARITY

Council Representative – Councillor Tony Lywood

CUMBRIA THEATRE TRUST

Council Representative – Councillor Martin Pugmire

FITZ PARK SPORTS PAVILION

Council Representative – Councillor Peter Price

TIC JOINT MANAGEMENT ADVISORY GROUP

Council Representative – Councillor Martin Jordan

No meetings have taken place this year.

KESWICK TOURISM ASSOCIATION

Council Representative – Councillor Duncan Miller

I, as Town Council representative, attend KTA Board Meetings in May and October each year. I follow these meetings up with a full report on their activities and marketing initiatives. KTA have been busy of late fielding questions from potential customers and getting the message over that Keswick is open for business following the devastating floods in December.

The Association is very keen to see the A591 open and see this as being one of the 'final pieces in the jigsaw' that states that we are now nearly back to normal. KTA are working with Grasmere businesses and The Lakes Hospitality Association in South Lakeland to co-ordinate an official opening. A date has still to be decided on but is likely to be in early June and is anticipated to include a champagne reception, some sort of vintage car rally, celebrity attendance and it may also get support from schools on either side of the Raise. This will hopefully be newsworthy and spread the word all over the UK that such an important artery is open which will allow locals, visitors and businesses to return to normal. (Further details can be obtained from Linda Furniss at KTA).

KTA are in the early stages of co-ordinating a 'party atmosphere' in the town for this year's Tour of Britain cycle race. The route, yet to be finalised, will hopefully pass through Keswick on Monday 5th September when the Carlisle to Kendal stage takes place. Finally, KTA remains disappointed that Allerdale Borough Council persisted with their high % rate increases on the town's Car Parks which took effect earlier this month.

KESWICK YOUTH CLUB
Council Representative – Councillor Adam Paxon

The Club

Throughout 2015 the Youth Club was still without premises but continued to meet sporadically and organise a number of trips out of town to Carlisle Youth Zone and the ever popular laser quest.

In the autumn, we put out a request for a meeting place in the Keswick Reminder and were approached in December by Tommy Quinn, the owner of the old Ferguson Print Works in Bakers Yard. He hopes to eventually get planning permission to convert the warehouse, but was willing to let the Youth Club use it rent free until autumn 2016, subject to the YC covering any outgoings.

A licence to occupy has now been granted and the club opened back in February. The club is indebted to two of the trustees Mark Stainton and Heather MacMillan who have worked tirelessly to get the premises ready and now run it each week. It looks great and young people are starting to attend regularly.

Thanks to generous grants/money-raising from/by the following local organisations

- Keswick Town Council
- Keswick Bridge
- Lions
- Rotary
- Open All Hours

and to donations of items of equipment from a number of private individuals, the club is now relatively well equipped and we can afford additional outings during 2016.

Strategy

Some further work was undertaken in 2015 on the feasibility of continuing to explore a possible joint project with the Rugby Club. Eventually it was felt that this was not the right way for the Youth Club to go because of the compromised space available/lack of outdoor space and complications surrounding the RC's licensed premises.

Other options are now being explored, including a possible opportunity in Fitz Park, maybe working with the museum. We have been joined by a new Youth Worker and are currently seeking some additional trustees to work with us to develop our idea of a dedicated permanent home.

KESWICK AND DISTRICT FAIR TRADE CAMPAIGN

Council Representative – Councillor Adam Paxon

Fairtrade Town Status: The Fairtrade Foundation has renewed Keswick's Fairtrade Town Status. The letter they sent included this encouraging praise: "We have enjoyed hearing about everything that you have achieved since your Town last renewed Fairtrade status. It is clear that a lot of time and energy has been put in to make Fairtrade a part of the community, so we would like to pass on our congratulations and say thank you to everyone who has been involved." This includes solid support from Keswick Town Council which passed a resolution reiterating their support for Keswick's Fairtrade Town Status at their January 2016 Meeting.

Fairtrade Schools: It was reported last year that although all the primary schools involved met the objectives of the Cumbria Development Education Centre project funded by the campaign, the process of recognition as Fairtrade Schools had been altered by the Fairtrade Foundation and this had slowed down the registration of the schools with the Foundation. There are now three awards: FairAware, FairActive and FairAchiever. St. Herbert's in Keswick has now achieved FairAware and FairActive awards, and the other schools involved in the project are working their way through the steps to achieve these awards.

Events: In June last year the campaign held its annual **Strawberry Tea** when it celebrated ten years as a Fair Trade town. It was, as always, a happy event at which guests were nourished by scones and strawberries, by the playing of the Ragtime Rascals (formerly the Segretta Stompers), and by friendship. We were delighted to welcome Deputy Mayor David Burn to the event. **Agricultural Show:** It was decided that the campaign would not be able to have a successful stall at the show without help from members: only two were able to volunteer after an email appeal so we agreed not to participate.

Shared Interest: In light of the support given to two proposals put before members at the AGM in May 2015, and bearing in mind the guidance on the duty of prudence of a charity from the Charity Foundation that it "should not allow the charity's income to accumulate unless they have a specific use of it in mind", that a charity's funds should be used "only in furtherance of the charity's objects", and that "special care" should be taken "when investing the charity's funds", on June 2nd 2015, the Trustees agreed that £3,000 be placed in the Ethiopia Fund. The Committee agreed that this Fund would now be named the Ethiopia and Development Fund. The Trustees also discussed the donation to the Fairtrade Foundation Producer Innovation Fund, which was also supported by members at the AGM, and looked to guidance from the committee of a sum between £100 and £500. The Committee agreed that £250 be donated and the amount reviewed regularly.

Choche: Perhaps the most notable achievement of the campaign over the years has been the establishment of the partnership link – since 2010 involving the Rotary Club of Keswick – with the coffee farming community of Choche in Ethiopia. This is one of the very few links of its kind in the country between a Fairtrade campaign and a Fairtrade certified producer community. Frequent visits from Keswick have shown how, over the years, with growing numbers of farmers joining the co-op the investments of the Fairtrade premium have grown greatly and more and more ambitious projects have been funded.

These investments have been made in parallel with Keswick Rotary's two loan projects, of which the second – known as the **Million Birr Project** – is still running, and of that the most recent news is that a substantial loan has been made to a group of women to set up a flour mill, which they are now running.

Fairtrade Fortnight, 29th February to 13th March, 2016. This year's theme, ***Sit down to breakfast, stand up for farmers***, focused on the fact that we all rely on farmers and workers all over the world to produce so much of our food, breakfast included. The campaign ran a market stall on Saturday, 5th March, focusing on the breakfast theme, with coffee and tea, bananas supplied by Keswick Lakes and Dales Coop, and home-made banana cake. There was a Churches Together Fairtrade Service at St Herbert's, Braithwaite. St Herbert's School had a Fairtrade breakfast at the beginning of the Fortnight and held two Fairtrade Assemblies. Individual classes focused on Fairtrade for the day throughout the fortnight.

The government's new National Living Wage came into force on April 1st replacing the previous minimum wage of £6.70 with a new rate for people over 25 of £7.20. This is not to be confused with the Living Wage Foundation rate which calculates the minimum people over 18 need to live on at £8.25 outside London. This is paid by 2,300 accredited living wage employers nationally and is the subject of the Fair Cumbria campaign that Keswick Town Council has endorsed. The latest large companies to get accredited as Living Wage employers are IKEA and the energy company EDS.

Having surveyed many of the chain stores in Keswick and had a number of articles in the Reminder the group is carrying on its campaign, now getting stickers for the shops that are paying the Living Wage and continuing its campaign trying to get the local councils to extend the living wage to its contracted staff. Fair Cumbria is also encouraging them to register with the Living Wage Foundation which would mean the councils should have a plan with milestones to include contracted staff. Fair Cumbria is also selecting one or two of the larger local chains to campaign around. They are also looking at the issue of Fair Tax towns as a further campaign.

KESWICK FLOOD ACTION GROUP **Council Representative – Councillor Paul Titley**

The reputation of K FAG continues to grow with members being consulted by agencies, universities, other flood groups, and our Chair being invited to give evidence at the Winter Floods enquiry by the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee at Westminster. We believe that our reputation also increases our influence to encourage works to be done and promises to be kept.

The works at Elliot Park are completed and should be enough to deal with a 1:75 year event (as long as the river does not over top again).

The works in Penrith Road have been the subject of endless meetings and we expect the surface water flooding 'solution' to be dealt with by a combination of permanent pumps in Penrith Road (underground – close to the bus shelter) and upstream storage in Springs Road field. The pumps that K FAG had helped purchase were ready and in place for Storm Desmond but were overwhelmed as we all saw.

The wall flaps in Penrith Road designed to let surface water fall into the Greta actually facilitated water from the river entering the road. The flaps are currently being held shut by sandbags. This is a good example of installations following one flood actually contributing to worsening the problems of the next flood. We must be careful and vigilant that a sticking plaster solution to Desmond does not jeopardize more properties should Desmond (or his siblings) return.

KFAG has met with the Environment Agency, CCC and United Utilities many times during and since the floods because they all hold keys to reducing the impact of serious rainfall in the future. The Greta has at last been dredged and we will press for this to be repeated at regular intervals. We are not pressing for raising the river defences but to improve the flow of water through the town. Advice from EA suggests that the bridge will 'never' fail and that despite a single span bridge being ideal, it is unlikely to be included in anyone's plans. However we will continue to campaign to replace it or at least introduce more storm culverts. Unblocking the outlet of Bassenthwaite at Ouse Bridge so the level is low enough to accept greater volumes is on our to-do list

We have pressed local MPs to understand that the Flood Re insurance scheme is a trifling response to the problems of flooded properties seeking reinsurance. It will only include 350,000 of the potential 6 million properties at risk, but excludes homes that incorporate businesses (e.g. B&Bs) but does include second homes (!) and so for Keswick is particularly useless.

The outlook for KFAG is for the group to be continually on the case with all the agencies to encourage them to accelerate their decision-making, to highlight poor delivery, and to keep their promises. There is still a long way to go.

KESWICK SCHOOL

Council Representative – Councillor Andrew Lysser

The school is in vibrant good health and currently has 1,230 students on roll. We continue to invest a great deal of time and energy into developing the whole student through a wide range of extra-curricular activities and opportunities. The Rotary Club of Keswick have played a particularly prominent role in helping to support this aim and I would like to convey my gratitude to them. Young people at Keswick actively participate at the highest level in an array of sports and academic endeavours and that includes a number of national champions as well as other youngsters particularly in sport, theatre, STEM and literature. It was very gratifying to be once again recognised as the top performing school in the west and north of Cumbria under many of the measures reported in the league tables in January. Our ambition continues to be the best performing school in the north of England.

The future will require even closer integration with our local community taking an active involvement in supporting the life of Keswick School, its diverse activities in the best interests and well-being of our young people. Two ways that I hope this will happen will be through local people utilising the new Judi Dench Performing Arts Theatre, continuing to take advantage of our sporting facilities and actively using the new Massif Music Recording Studio.

I also hope that the local community will get behind our campaign to raise funds for an astro turf pitch to provide young people in our communities with even more access to sporting activity throughout the year.

CHURCHES TOGETHER IN KESWICK
Council Representative – Councillor Susan Leighton

As well as the members of CTiK and Church members being directly affected by the flooding in December, a few Churches and Church buildings have also been damaged. These included the Catholic Church, St Herbert's Centre, the Sunday School Rooms at Crosthwaite Church and the Parish Room, The Rawnsley Centre (Kings Church), and The Quaker Meeting House (which had been 'tanked' to 3ft following the 2009 flood but had 4ft of water in this time). The Orthodox Church at Braithwaite had a very lucky escape thanks to tree debris diverting the torrent of water to either side of the building. Some of the above places received more damage than others and will take more time to be useable again, but clean-ups and reinstatement works have begun.

The Churches Together began a new community venture in the wake of the flood, which is called Street Friends. This is supported by Cumbria County Council (Sally Scales) and has Mrs Monica Penny as the local Co-ordinator. A number of volunteers (covered by Church Volunteer Insurance) are visiting those homes and displaced people to lend a listening ear. They will be able to direct people to specific help if that is needed. The aim is to be in contact with those who have flooded, on a weekly basis for about 6 months, and we are 2 months in to that time now.

From previous floods in many areas of the country it has been recognised that the trauma of being flooded can have an impact on the mental well-being of some people, and having the opportunity to 'tell their story', to be 'listened to', to 'be heard', by a neighbourly friend at an early stage can be of great help. This is the aim of the Street Friends.

ALLERDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL
Ward Representative – Councillor Tony Lywood

1. Allerdale Borough Council and Battersby Hall Charity are in the final stages of concluding the sale of the Moot Hall. The lease with the National Park remains unchanged at present and only the ownership of the freehold is affected.
2. Public Toilets. I hope to be able to announce that the two sets of public toilets (Bell Close and The Theatre Car Park) are now in the hands of Keswick Community Asset Company (a not for profit locally owned organisation) and renovation will begin immediately. The operator will be Danfo UK who operate over one thousand toilets throughout the UK and Europe. Entrance is likely to be charged but locals and market stall holders will have a token system that will make it free to use. Allerdale Borough Council has generously gifted the freeholds and a £75k golden goodbye to go towards the renovation.
3. On Tue 12th April the Allerdale development panel passed an application from Whitbread's who own Premier Inn for an 80 bedroomed hotel and 120 seater restaurant on the site of the old Sheep and Wool centre adjacent the roundabout on the A66 at Cockermouth. I noted that there is an ongoing plan to put one into Ambleside.

I asked the Premier Inn rep. if Keswick was next and he replied that they had looked at two sites and both had considerable problems attached. He did not give the impression that anything was imminent or even on the drawing board.

- 4 Health. North Cumbria Health Authority have announced, 'The Success Regime'.

'The West, North and East Cumbria Success Regime has been established to help create the right conditions for high quality health and social care to develop in this area. Its aim is to secure improvement by introducing new care models where appropriate, developing leadership capacity and capability across the health system and ensuring collaborative working.'

This is, in my view, sophistry at its best. The process will earmark areas for improvement and rationalisation which will lead to geographical remodelling and closure. The words 'new care models where appropriate' are very similar to Dr Beeching's 'The Reshaping and Improvement of British Railways'. This exercise has very little to do with 'Success' except for their budget. 'Success Regime'='Ward Closure'

In particular the target will be the 5 cottage hospitals in the West and Keswick will be one of them. Once the wards are closed or 'restructured' it is a short leap to closure of the hospital. If Keswick wishes to retain its hospital then noise must be made now.

Ward Representative – Councillor Martin Pugmire

CUMBRIA COUNTY COUNCIL

Ward Representative – Councillor Andrew Lysser

Verbal report to be given

COUNCIL ACTIVITIES

Lynda Walker – Town Clerk & RFO

The last year has been a difficult one for the Town Council. The Town Clerk was forced to take an extended period of sick leave and other staff stepped forward to take on additional responsibility to cover this. It was necessary to reduce office opening hours temporarily but these will be back to normal in the next few weeks.

Elections were held in May for the first time in many years which resulted in two new Councillors who were warmly welcomed. Another new Councillor was co-opted following the resignation of Councillor Lorraine Taylor during the year. A key member of staff retired in May and a new Parks Manager and Administration Assistant were recruited during the year. The year ended with devastating flooding in the town and the new year began with the massive clear up task which is ongoing, particularly for Fitz Park.

The Council carried out its normal activities during the year – management and trusteeship of Fitz Park, Hope Park and the Townsfield; Christmas lighting provision and Switch On event; maintenance of the War Memorial and other open spaces in the town; management of the allotment site at the Hawthorns, Penrith Road; floral displays and event organisation; issue of busking badges and car parking discs. The Council once again organised and funded a Midsummer Festival and will repeat this event in 2016. Planning applications are scrutinised and comments passed onto the planning authority, and consultation takes place on strategic documents affecting the town each year.

The Council meets every two months in its capacity as Sole Trustee of Keswick Parks Charitable Trusts to ensure the provision and maintenance of public parks and recreation grounds for use of Keswick's residents and visitors. The major part of the Town Council's expenditure supports Fitz Park, which is home to a number of sporting organisations and has a destination play area and Community Sports Area together with a small car park and BMX Pump track. The major challenge in the months ahead will be to restore Upper and Lower Fitz Parks following the flooding so that they can be enjoyed to their full capacity in the summer months. Hope Park Trust continues to enjoy a beneficial relationship with Hope Leisure Ltd, the commercial operator of the games and catering at the park.

The Town Council has continued to remain active in the Derwent 7 Parishes cluster and Councillors have also attended partnership meetings with the Borough and County Councils and the Lake District National Park Authority.

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