

KESWICK TOWN COUNCIL

EVENTS COMMITTEE

**Council Offices
50 Main Street
Keswick
CA12 5JS**

3 February 2026

A meeting of Keswick Town Council Events Committee to be held at the Quaker Meeting House, Elliot Park, Keswick, on **Monday 9 February 2026 at 11.00am**

Yours sincerely



**Vivien Little
Town Clerk**

AGENDA

1. **Apologies** - To receive apologies for absence.
2. **Minutes** - To agree the minutes of the Events Committee Meeting held on the 15 December 2025 (pages 12-13).
3. **Christmas Lights**
To update members on the results of the recent survey, and to decide the date for the 2026 Lights switch on.
4. **2026 Events**
To continue forward planning the 2026 events.
 - Mayday – Bank Holiday Monday 4th May 2026, Townsfield
 - Party in the Park – Saturday 27 June 2026, Fitz Park
 - Keswick Games – Sunday 16 August 2026, Fitz Park
5. **Date of next meeting**
To agree the date of the next meeting.

KESWICK TOWN COUNCIL

EVENTS COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting of Keswick Town Council Events Committee held at Quaker Meeting House, Keswick, on Monday 15 December 2025 at 11.30am

Present: Councillor Louise Dunn (Chair)
 Councillor Steve Harwood (SH)
 Councillor Natalie Evans (NE)
 Councillor Claire Houghton (CH)
 Councillor Richard Scott (RS)
 Yvonne Booth (Events Coordinator) (YB)
 Catherine Parker (RFO) (CP)
 Vivien Little (Town Clerk) (VL)

30. Election of Chair

RESOLVED that Councillor Dunn be elected as Chair for this meeting.

31. Apologies

Apologies were received from Ania Mylnczak.

32. Minutes

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Events Committee Meeting held on the 10 November 2025 be approved (page 11).

33. Christmas Lights Debrief

Members discussed the Christmas Lights switch on in depth. This year raised a number of concerns around overcrowding in Market Square, as the event has becoming more popular year on year. This is important to look at ahead of Martyn's Law being introduced in 2027, and the responsibilities on event organisers.

Discussion points were:

- As KTC pay for the lights, via the precept, it should be an event for locals, not aimed at tourists.
- Keswick however will always be busy, as the lights are a draw – it is part of the overall tourism package.
- Health and Safety of attendees must be the highest priority, with Martyn's Law on the horizon, and the responsibilities that brings on the Council.
- The size of the stage, and the band playing was a factor in regard to the crowds. Could we look to bring it back to a more family-friendly event with carols with school children?
- KCERP Trustees have agreed to lend KTC Events most of their radios for events such as the Lights Switch on, on the understanding that they will still have a skeleton service available.
- Marshalling needs to be improved, with clear, concise instructions, and people remaining at their post for the duration of the event. To bring in external marshals would be beyond what the Town Council was willing to pay (in excess of £10,000 for one event of less than 2 hours). A one way system could be looked at to be implemented as well.
- Need to liaise with Packhorse Court, as it is a separate but linked event.
- Is the market and funfair necessary? Need to gauge how much added value these bring. Need to liaise with Cumberland's market Manager (Action – VL).
- There are ways to tweak the timing and format of it, so these should be looked at – possibly have the switch on earlier, with carols afterwards.

- Terrorism is a risk – VL to contact Cumbria Police to talk to them and explain our concerns (Action – VL).
- Hotels and other agencies have been pushing the event, but without contributing to the cost of it. There also needed to be discussions with hotels about
- The only sponsors for 2025 were Hope Leisure, who sponsor the Christmas Tree, and Fibrus Broadband, who gave out free glowsticks, however it was noted that Lake District Hotels and Friars sponsor in kind with their lights on their buildings. Sponsorship is something to look heavily into for 2026 onwards.
- Councillor Dunn said that she would start to canvas opinion about the possibility of holding it on the Wednesday.
- Discussion was had over who could be involved in it – ideas put forward were local primary schools, Keswick School, the Youth Club, and KAOS.
- It was agreed that there would need to be careful publicity surrounding it, as there could be a lot of push back. LD would prepare a document which would seek to answer a lot of the questions in advance (Action – LD).

Overall, the feeling was that scaling back next year’s lights switch on as a trial, to focus on locals was the best way to approach the event.

RESOLVED that for 2026, the Christmas Lights Switch on be moved to Wednesday 18 November, and that it be a scaled back event.

34. Events 2026

Discussion was had over the other events scheduled for next year. YB was busy preparing all of them, except for Keswick Games, which was scheduled for August. Members were asked if they would like Kasios, who played at the Christmas Lights switch on to play at Party in the Park, possibly instead of the Abba Tribute, and it was agreed that YB would ask if they were free on that day.

35. Date of next meeting

RESOLVED that date and place of next meeting are yet to be confirmed.

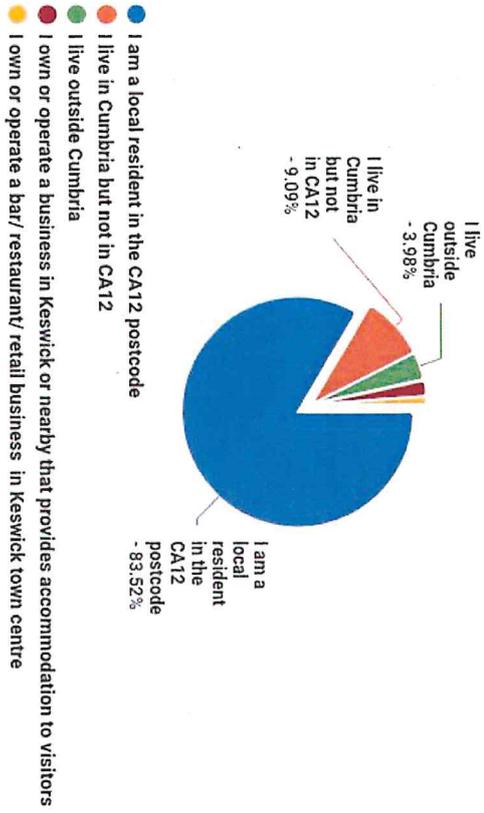
The meeting finished at 12.45pm

Chair

Date

Keswick Christmas Lights Switch on: Consultation with local residents and businesses

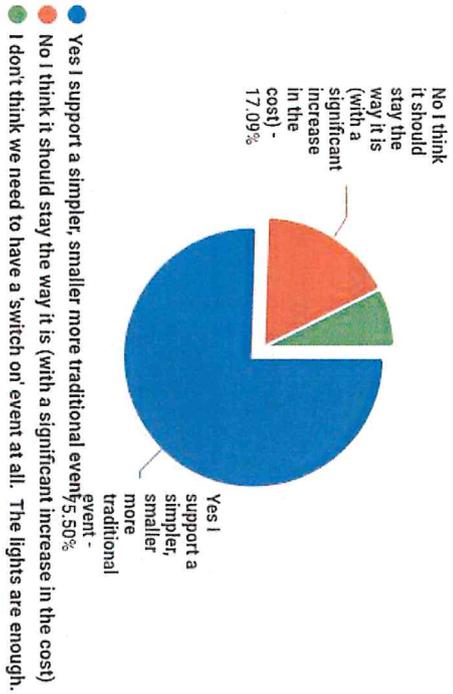
1. How would you best describe yourself?



Answer Choices

| Answer Choices | Response Percent | Response Total |
|--|------------------|----------------|
| I am a local resident in the CA12 postcode | answered | 352 |
| I live in Cumbria but not in CA12 | skipped | 0 |
| I live outside Cumbria | | |
| I own or operate a business in Keswick or nearby that provides accommodation to visitors | | |
| I own or operate a bar/ restaurant/ retail business in Keswick town centre | | |

2. We propose that the Christmas Lights switch on reverts to a simpler and more traditional, family-friendly format with local choirs, Christmas carols and recognition of community heroes. Are you supportive of this?



| | |
|----------|-----|
| answered | 351 |
| skipped | 1 |

3. Assuming no increase in funding, a number of changes are suggested. Please tick below if you support these changes (you can tick more than one box or no boxes at all if you do not support these changes).

| Answer Choices | | Response Percent | Response Total |
|----------------|--|------------------|----------------|
| 1 | Reduce numbers by moving the event to a Wednesday (i.e. not the weekend when town is busy) | 48.86% | 172 |
| 2 | Create more space by having a smaller stage | 44.60% | 157 |
| 3 | Making the event more traditional and family friendly with local choirs | 60.80% | 214 |
| 4 | Make the event more accessible for anyone with mobility challenges | 41.19% | 145 |
| 5 | Create more space by removing the small children's funfair | 48.30% | 170 |
| 6 | Create more space by removing the market stalls/ food stalls | 23.86% | 84 |
| 7 | Improve pedestrian flow by introducing a one way pedestrianised system for the duration of the event | 48.01% | 169 |
| 8 | Improve animal welfare and safety for all by banning dogs from the market square for the duration of the event | 70.17% | 247 |
| 9 | Avoid hazards from broken glass with a 'no drinks in glass containers in market square for duration of event' policy | 76.14% | 268 |
| | | answered | 352 |
| | | skipped | 0 |

EDITED

Comment: If you are not supportive of any of these changes what alternative ideas do you have that could help?

- Move the fun fair and some stalls - spread it out a bit
- Have the local school choir on the main stage first (not crammed in packhorse court).
- Ask local businesses to avoid advertising it to tourists. No advertising the event
- Enforce the on street drinking ban.
- Move the stage to the bottom of the market square where there is more space. The natural hill will help with visibility s people will stay more spread out.
- I have seen at festivals a raised disabled area further back, making it easier to access and still have required viewing/safety.
- Manage the informal stalls. Big issues were created by pubs setting up a stand outside the front of the pub blocking the walkway etc. Don't allow people to stand outside the shops around the outside, only allowing viewing in the middle area.
- Christmas markets to give it a continental feel.
- Switch the lights on at 4 without a countdown and have some choirs and bands on from mid afternoon.
- Cut the boring speeches!!
- Create tramlines with ped barriers down the side of the square for emergency ingress/egress.