



ANNUAL REPORT

2022/23

Welcome to the Town Council's Annual Report for 2022/23

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.

**Vivien Little
Town Clerk
April 2023**

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

Clr David S Burn	7 Grange Park, Keswick CA12 4AY	07859 140 291
Clr Allan D Daniels	31 Lakehead Court, Keswick, CA12 5EU	017687 44531
Clr Alan Dunn	St. Johns House, St. John Street, Keswick, CA12 5AP	077125 91469
Clr Louise Dunn	Sunnycroft, Penrith Road, CA12 4LJ	-
Clr Steve Harwood	3 Browfoot, Penrith Road, Keswick, CA12 4LQ	017687 80708
Clr Sally Lansbury	The Grange, Manor Brow, Keswick, CA12 4BA	078779 71609
Clr Tony Lywood	Shu-Le-Crow, 7 Penrith Road, Keswick, CA12 4HF	077898 86015
Clr Duncan Miller	Linthwaite, Manor Brow, Keswick CA12 4AP	017687 72295
Clr Jean Murray	33 Wordsworth Street, Keswick, CA12 4BZ	017687 75078
Clr Adam Paxon	Toll Bar Cottage, Penrith Road, Keswick, CA12 4JR	07989 386599
Clr Paul Titley	32 Penrith Road, Keswick, CA12 4HA	078022 11496
Clr Peter Walter	Penfold, Braithwaite, CA12 5SX	07775 566005

THE COUNCIL

The Town Council consists of 12 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 six gardening and maintenance staff employed in Keswick Parks):

Ms Vivien Little, Town Clerk
Mrs Catherine Parker, Responsible Financial Officer
Miss Ania Mlynczak, Administration & Finance Assistant

The Council meets 12 times per year, 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. A copy of the agenda and reports for each Council meeting can also be found on the website and at Keswick Library.

The public are welcome to attend meetings and to ask questions or make comments during the public forum. Both the Town Council and Trust meetings are held at 7pm in the Council Chamber, 50 Main Street, Keswick.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 2022-23

Councillor Steve Harwood – Town Mayor

This has been a significant year for the Town Council as we gain promotion from the 4th tier to the 3rd tier of Government with the advent of the new Cumberland Council. Let's hope that Carlisle United have the same success. The year started with the town showing the first signs of recovery from the impact of Covid with the whole community rallying round to support individuals and businesses.

The year has been tinged with sadness at the loss of Peter Terry shortly after his mercy mission delivering much needed medical supplies to the front line in Ukraine. We have also enjoyed moments of happiness with the recent opening of the restored wooden bridge in Hope Park with little Ava in the company of Kerry Irving, his wife Angela, and their dogs Paddy and Harry. Kerry also remembered that it was one year since the passing of Max 'The Miracle Dog' whose statue sits proudly in the park. Ava had been part of a life-saving rescue involving the Great North Air Ambulance Service and the event drew a huge crowd on a sunny day, sporting the adopted colour 'Orange', raising further funds to be shared jointly between Hope Park and the Air Ambulance.

There have been a number of ongoing key issues which has focussed the attention of all Councillors throughout the year :-

- Challenging the National Park Authority's policy of approving a proliferation of applications seeking to change from Bed & Breakfast / Guest Houses to Holiday Let accommodation with no on-site management and concerns of increased anti social behaviour. This remains an ongoing concern.
- Challenging the closure of the swimming pool in the Leisure Centre by Allerdale. This has resulted in the formation of a Friends of Keswick Leisure group drawn from the local community. A detailed Feasibility Study and Business Plan has recently been completed by Allerdale proposing a new swimming pool and associated leisure facilities to be developed on the existing site. This has now been passed to the new Cumberland Council to decide how this will be progressed.
- With local needs housing being such a key issue, a group formed of Town and Allerdale Councillors together with members of Keswick Community Housing Trust has been investigating breaches of local occupancy conditions involving Second Homes, Holiday Lets and Airbnb's. This has resulted in some positive outcomes and we continue to challenge the National Park and indeed Central Government policies on these issues.
- Raising the profile of the Town Council with the aim of encouraging more people from diverse backgrounds to stand in the forthcoming elections on 4 May 2023. This is particularly relevant as we are losing the skills of 6 of our long serving Councillors who have done so much to contribute to the well being of the town.

I would personally like to thank the Keswick Reminder for allowing me to do a monthly report to inform the townspeople of current issues throughout the year.

I have also used this to provide an update on progress of my personal challenge to find 365 “different” ways to the summit of Latrigg over my mayoral year to raise funds for local causes. The first target has been reached to assist with a shortfall in funds to enable a path to be formed in Lower Fitz Park meandering through the newly planted “Elizabeth Wood Project” initiated with a substantial team of committed volunteers from Sustainable Keswick. Any surplus raised towards the end of the challenge will now be used to support the continuation of the new initiative called “Tuesday’s Tonic” which is promoted by Keswick Museum for people living with dementia (+ their carers) and those experiencing loneliness.

Our year will end with the Coronation of King Charles III on 6 May with the Town Council Events Team organising a “Picnic in the Park” for families to come together and watch a big screening of the day in Fitz Park.

It has been a privilege to represent the Town over the past year in over 100 meetings and special engagements. I have tried not to delegate to our illustrious Deputy Mayor, Allan Daniels, as he has had an equally busy schedule acting as the last Mayor of Allerdale. To conclude I would like to express my personal thanks to the Office and Parks Teams, and my fellow Councillors, who do so much unrecognised work on behalf of the town and for keeping me on track throughout the year.

PARKS TRUST CHAIRMAN’S REPORT 2022-23

Councillor Adam Paxon

Well another year has gone by and it is time to rejoice at the splendour of our parks, as they flourish and bloom anew; giving such great pleasure for those of us fortunate enough to call this town home and visitors alike. Thanks as ever go to Christine, Matt, and all parks and office staff for all that has been achieved over the past year.

Several developments are worthy of mention in both parks. Hope Park has benefitted from much work on the woodland path creating a wonderfully tranquil and secluded route. Christine has replaced the bridge over the stream and has resurfaced several footpaths sprucing up and rejuvenating what was already wonderful into something even better.

The machinery store in Hope Park will require significant work or replacement in the coming year as it is suffering subsidence. Finances as a whole remain a concern as costs are rising for everything and we remain unsure about the long term receipt of the yearly grant which we have traditionally received from Allerdale, and latterly Cumberland Council.

We are indebted to Hope Leisure for their financial contributions and stewardship in Hope. Donations from the Max The Miracle Dog statue have been a real life blood too and have funded the footpath work which along with all efforts by Christine and staff have made everything feel fresher. We have signs for gifting through QR code in both parks which are starting to generate funds too.

In Fitz Debbie’s endeavours at Cafe HNW have rejuvenated the cafe and surrounding area turning it into a destination for regular locals and visitors and also injected energy into the games in Upper Fitz. Cycle racks have been installed at the cafe and the path to the bridge

will shortly be resurfaced. We are tremendously thankful for Debbie's drive and enthusiasm and creativity.

Fitz has also seen the development of Elizabeth's Wood with new tree planting, fencing and a new path linking the car park with the pump track area of the park. A table tennis table has been erected adding to the games offering and also acting as flood resilience and Christine has installed several new benches utilising the felled timber from trees in the park. It is so sad to see cherished trees come to the end of their lives and have to be felled but we should remember that the parks are constantly in transition and Christine continues to plant for future generations to enjoy.

As the weather improves we will be repainting the PUPS shelter and in the coming year we will be looking to greatly improve staff accommodation and equipment storage in Upper Fitz.

The ever popular play area has benefitted from regular upgrade and replacement of parts and edging has been replaced to keep it spick and span. More investment will be required here over the coming years though.

Special mention needs to be made of the sports user groups in Fitz for their role in the upkeep of Fitz. We couldn't do it without you. The football season has kept the park alive over the winter with matches and training and we will soon see Fitz teeming with sporting life. There is the Picnic in The Park on May 6th to look forward to too.

Adam Paxon
April 2023

FINANCIAL REPORT

Catherine Parker – Responsible Financial Officer

GENERAL FUND SUMMARY

1st April 2022 – 31st March 2023

Expenditure	£
General Admin (Including Salaries)	80,856.00
Mayors Allowance	2,000.00
Grants Awarded	17,466.00
Christmas Lights*	30,300.00
War Memorial	1,495.00
Townsfild	800.00
Open Spaces	1,000.00
Fitz Park	180,267.00
Floral Displays	578.00
Town Events inc Scruffs	13,464.00
Allotments	146.00
Advertising	206.00
Audit Fee/Accounts Preparation	25.00
Contingency Sum	1,031.00
Annual Parish Meeting	368.00
CCTV Annual Maintenance - PCC	3,000.00
Total	333,002.00

Income	£
Precept	307,054.00
Grant to Fitz Park (ABC)	20,000.00
Walker Park – Rent	14,130.00
Allotment Income	940.00
Townsfild & Bank Interest	18.00
Keswick Events Contributions	4,024.00
Christmas Lights Contributions	200.00
Total	346,366.00

**Plus £2,300 from Christmas Lights Fund and £4,080 from Events Fund*

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

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 2022/23:

Citizens Advice Allerdale	£500.00
Great North Air Ambulance	£1000.00
Keswick Community Emergency Recovery Partnership (KCERP)	£5,825.00
Keswick & District First Responders	£120.00
1st Keswick Scouts Group	£1,500.00
St Johns Church	£2,454.00
Keswick Youth Centre Services	£1,666.65
St Herbert's CE Primary and Nursery School	£600.00
Theatre by the Lake	£2,500.00
Two's Company Keswick	£500.00
Rotary Club – Winter Warmth Fund	£800.00
Total	£17,465.65

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

No report submitted

KESWICK IN BLOOM

Council Representative – No representative

Keswick in Bloom have continued to work towards our aims to encourage the improvement of our surroundings through the imaginative use of trees, shrubs, flowers and landscaping and we hope also to have played a part in creating an attractive and sustainable environment.

1. General Maintenance.

Last year we toured the businesses in town asking them to keep an eye on the planters and beds outside their establishments and left them a note with contact details. Though we were very well received in the main few of them actually did any watering and no one contacted to say areas need attention, despite issues cropping up. The problem is unless you are a gardener you just don't see that the plants are in need of some tender loving care. This year, apart from a cold spring and the very hot spells rainfall has been around average hence watering has not been quite the issue it has in recent years. We have also looked at the number of areas that we are responsible for and shared out the tasks so people now have a nominated area to keep an eye on. We have been able to maintain our areas but could always do with more regular volunteers, particularly at Lake Road. Christine Fawcett has helped out and the Rotary once again answered our call and were brilliant at helping us plant the box hedging KESWICK sign at the junction of Chestnut Hill with the Hawthorns.

2. Planting Displays.

A planting group was formed this year and we have had some productive meetings discussing plants and planning displays. We have had some problems with the plastic Amberol planters that have a water reservoir. In the main they are an excellent solution for the town; however, they do have their limitations and over time they can block, the drainage system stops working and they fill with water damaging the plants. The company supplied new matting where the old ones appear to have been at fault but they insist that the best compost to use is peat based; they claim that it is anything else that leads to blockages. Peat based compost is no longer an option, but having recently emptied various planters it is clear that eventually roots will clog up the system. This is a shame as we are trying to move to a more sustainable system with more perennial planting and less replacing of plants and soil on a regular basis. For the ten mangers on Bell Close car park, where roots from the Tete-a-tete bulbs were a real problem, we are investing in new liners so that it is far easier to swap over the summer and winter displays. That way we can keep plants going from year to year and bolster displays with hardy annuals. The two planters at the end of the market square have also had a spruce up with some tough new plants. We would like to do a more colourful display there but people

love sitting on them so much that we have to use plants that can withstand regularly being crushed. Unfortunately, after a reasonable year the final severe and sustained frosts resulted in some casualties. Like many gardeners Phormium and Cordyline plants were badly hit. These are good structural plants but we are still hopeful that they may still produce some growth. The other major loss was the Tete-a-tete daffodils that usually give a wonderful display in the mangers on Bell Close. Sadly they all rotted away after being frozen solid for so long. The winter bedding we planted in October also didn't cope with the winter so we have had to top them up with some pansies. The other disappointment is the graffiti that has just appeared on the end of each of the mangers! On the positive side the bulbs in town, particularly the Hyacinths have been wonderful.

3. Lake Road.

Once again, the Lake Road Underpass area has been assessed by Cumbria in Bloom as part of the RHS's national award scheme "It's Your Neighbourhood". Cumbria in Bloom's judges visited Keswick on a warm day in July and spent time viewing the beds either side of the Underpass. We were pleased to be joined by a student representative from Keswick School who have been working with us this year looking at the environment and sustainability on the site. One excellent initiative was the installation of a "bug mansion" which was built from recycled materials by Keswick year 10 student practicing their technology skills. The group achieved the highest grade "Outstanding" and were also awarded a Certificate of Distinction from the RHS. Their latest project is well under way and is a feature bed representing the Fairtrade Logo which is being created in conjunction with the Keswick Fairtrade Society.

4. Finances.

After 3 years of managing without a grant from the Town Council we have this year applied for support. As well as money for maintenance and annual displays we are hoping for support for a project at the Underpass and the purchase of the new liners for the Bell Close mangers.

Tricia Horner- Secretary
Jenny Forbes- Chair
Tom Rennie- Treasurer

KESWICK IN BLOOM - ACCOUNTS - 2023						
I record below in column 7, a summarised record of total bank reconciled income and expenditure to date, together with comparative figures for the previous 5 years.						
INCOME & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT - KESWICK IN BLOOM						
PARTICULARS	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
BALANCE B/F	4798.90	5442.46	5519.12	6643.62	5356.55	2889.10
INCOME						
GRANTS	5000.00	3000.00	2520.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
DONATIONS	1485.00	876.00	524.00	500.00	600.00	0.00
OTHER	0.00	0.00	50.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
ANNUAL INCOME	6485.00	3876.00	3094.00	500.00	600.00	0.00
EXPENDITURE						
PLANTS	-3274.44	-1997.42	-1119.50	-875.34	-1568.09	0.00
COMPOST	-324.00	-240.00	0.00	-836.73	-80.00	0.00
SCHOOLS COMPETITION	0.00	-84.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
FURNITURE		-1402.92	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
OTHER	-683.00	-75.00	-850.00	-75.00	-1419.36	-75.00
ANNUAL EXPENDITURE	-5841.44	-3799.34	-1969.50	-1787.07	-3067.45	-75.00
YEAR PROF/-LOSS	643.56	76.66	1124.50	-1287.07	-2467.45	-75.00
BALANCE C/F	5442.46	5519.12	6643.62	5356.55	2889.10	2814.10
TOM RENNIE HON. TREASURER.						

KESWICK COMMUNITY EMERGENCY RECOVERY PARTNERSHIP
Council Representative – Councillor Sally Lansbury

Keswick Community Emergency Recovery Partnership is a volunteer led organisation employing a project manager on a part time basis (averaging one day per week). We have a board of trustees, 7 lead volunteers and a further 81 volunteers on standby in the event of an emergency. We have an annually updated Community Emergency Plan, which is implemented at the point when a flood warning is issued by the Environment Agency which will have an impact on residential properties in Keswick.

Over the previous 12 months we have experienced a relatively dry period with one incident of river levels being particularly high. When this happened there was little impact which supports the flood defences and the positive impact they are having.

Keswick Community Emergency Recovery Partnership has an emergency plan which is updated on an annual basis and circulated to trustees, lead volunteers and statutory agencies including the Environment Agency, the Police, Cumbria County Council and Allerdale Borough Council.

Over the last twelve months Keswick Community Emergency Recovery Partnership has achieved the following;

- Successful funding bid of £4200 for new replacement radios for KCERP following advice from Keswick Mountain Rescue
- Updated annual emergency plan which has been identified by Cumbria County Council and the Environment Agency as the best that they have seen
- Annual flood advice leaflets distributed to the residents
- Emergency radio training to lead volunteers

The Partnership is grateful for the support of Keswick Town Council and the use of the council chamber in the event of an emergency. We welcomed Andy Murphie as our incoming Chair this year and we appreciate the ongoing support of all trustees including Vivien Little.

The financial support given is essential for the ongoing maintenance of the critical voluntary response and Keswick Community Emergency Recovery Partnership thanks the Town Council for the ongoing support.

Should you have any questions regarding KCERP or require further information please do not hesitate to contact Claire Peat, Project Manager at keswickfloodrecovery@gmail.com.

KESWICK AND DISTRICT FAIR TRADE COMMITTEE **Council Representative – No representative**

On Wednesday June 1st 2022, Joanna Pollard, a national Fairtrade campaigner, arrived in Keswick after walking from Garstang on the Fair Trade Way. That evening Joanna told the Keswick and Caldbeck campaigners more about the project she is involved in: “Chocolate has a name...” The aim of the project is to include chocolate making in the curriculum of schools in the heart of Ghana’s cocoa growing region. For people living and working in that region buying a bar of chocolate is a luxury most of them cannot afford. This is the result of the unjust trading system which allows us in the West to import cocoa grown by farmers, the majority of whom get an unfair price, and then make chocolate from it. Chocolate is sold at a price most people in the West can afford. “Chocolate has a name...” seeks to ensure that the cocoa growing communities put value on their produce by putting chocolate making in the curriculum of schools.

In August the campaign had a stall at the Keswick Agricultural Show and then another at the Victorian Fayre in December. Our main aim at these stalls is to remind people about the importance of buying Fairtrade. We are joined on our stalls by Fairtrade campaigners, who as volunteers run the Fair World Shop in Caldbeck. They sell a wide selection of fairly traded goods ranging from wooden toys, bags, jewellery and gifts for the home, through chocolate, tea and coffee and dried fruits, cereals, to cleaning materials and gardening gloves.

As the need to tackle the climate crisis becomes increasingly urgent, the campaign seeks to draw people’s attention to the impact climate change is having on farmers in low income countries: drought, unpredictable heavy rains and the resulting floods leading to damage and sometimes destruction of their crops. These farmers are, of course, from countries which have very little indeed to the release of greenhouse gases in disastrous quantities. Fairtrade standards are designed to encourage sustainable farming and these have formed the basis towards regenerative farming which helps farmers adapt to climate change. Farmers selling certified Fairtrade products are also able to invest the extra premium they get from to cover the cost, for example, of new methods of storing water to cope with changes in rainfall.

Following the theme of the threat of climate change, the campaign promoted the film *The Ants and the Grasshopper* at the Alhambra cinema. Anita, who lives in Malawi, has great gifts: she has helped her village grow more food and end child hunger and persuaded men to treat their wives better. To try to save her home from extreme weather, she faces her greatest challenge: persuading Americans that climate change is real in her country and will

soon be in the US. Travelling from Malawi to California to the White House, she meets climate sceptics and despairing farmers.

From January to March, 2023 the campaign contributed to an exhibition, The Wave of Love, in Keswick Museum's Community Gallery. The exhibition featured local groups all working in their own ways and together to protect the environment.

The Keswick Fair Trade Campaign celebrated Fairtrade fortnight in 2023 at three events. On Saturday March 5th we welcomed anyone to come to the upstairs room at the Moot Hall for refreshments and conversation about Fairtrade. Anne Baird, dressed as a Fairtrade banana, encouraged people in the market to come and join us. Bernadette Fagan had created striking displays: one illustrated the relationship the campaign has had with a Fairtrade Farmers Co-operative in Ethiopia; another highlighted the importance of the help Fairtrade provides for farmers to adapt to the climate crisis. There was a delicious Fairtrade chocolate cake baked by Chinty for the visitors to eat with their - Fairtrade! – coffee or tea.

On Sunday March 6th Southey Street Methodist Church held a service which focused on what we can all do to tackle global inequality, including, of course, buying Fairtrade. Joe Human interviewed Pushpanath Krishnamurthy, a global campaigner for social justice who has been spending the second week of Fairtrade fortnight talking in schools all over Cumbria, including St. Herbert's School and Keswick School. Push, as he is widely known, spoke with a passion based on a lifetime of commitment to inspiring others to use their voice and actions for fairness. He believes profoundly in the possibilities of opportunity and hope. Another opportunity for people to meet Push was offered on the evening of Saturday March 11th.

To quote Sarah Rucker, Manager of the Carlisle Fair World Shop, "Fair Trade goes beyond fair payment. Fair Trade means dignified work, it means the preserving of traditional skills alongside the development of new ones, it means care for the environment. It means all this and more."

KESWICK FLOOD ACTION GROUP Council Representative – Paul Titley

Despite the occasional storm the town has not been threatened by flood over the past few months. Thirlmere level did exceed its maximum on at least one occasion but there was no noticeable effect in the town. Flood defences tend to be observed when they don't work rather than when they do, and we should be comforted by the works in Keswick which have been completed to improve resistance to flooding.

One of the glass panels alongside the River Greta was broken - one has to ask what level of stupidity is needed to think this is funny, or a good idea. Advice received is that the glass should still provide the required protection. The delay in its replacement is due to the long lead time for supply from Germany.

The appointment of a lengthsman is applauded by KFAG. This person should ensure gulleys etc are clear of debris in times of heavy rain.

Residents and visitors are encouraged to read the content of the KFAG website www.keswickfloodactionsgroup.co.uk which contains a wealth of information on the history of flooding in Keswick, analysis of flooding, advice, and the work of the group. The focus

remains with convincing government and United Utilities to manage reservoirs in general and Thirlmere in particular to mitigate downstream flooding.

KESWICK MINISTRIES TOWN LIAISON MEETINGS
Council Representatives – Duncan Miller and Councillor Paul Titley (reserve)

The Forum meets four times a year and came about following local concern initially surrounding the move to the former Pencil Factory namely, The Derwent Project. The Forum has been extremely useful in discussing the said re-location, business in the town during the Convention, safety, noise and parking. Keswick Ministries host the quarterly meetings and invites go out to KTC, KTA, County Highways, Keswick Vicars, Keswick Museum, Cumbria Police, Cumbria Tourism along with some retailers and outdoor activity providers.

Attendances have dwindled of late with KTC and KTA being the prominent attendees along with the Keswick Vicars and the Ministries themselves. I feel the Forum has strong merits in local networking but now feel that a reduction to two meetings per annum may be sufficient. However I will leave that discussion/decision up to others.

I attended the Factory Tour in early February which was attended by over 200 interested local people. BBC, ITV and Radio were in strong evidence which provided excellent P.R. for the £7m plus Derwent Project. The Ministries are understandably proud of the refurbished Pencil Factory. The floor area in the former factory is enormous and it will be a real challenge for The Ministries to make the building financially sustainable outwith the main Convention period which runs from the 15th July to the 4th August this year. More and more community use would be appreciated by KTC and others and I am advised that The Ministries are actively seeking local groups through dialogue.

Finally, although it has taken some time, the Skiddaw Street Car Park is now being marketed by The Ministries with input and support from KTA and KTC. The tariff, to me, looks competitive and more importantly flexible using the transferable permit which can be managed on-line using the Ring Go app. The Ministries are also looking to increase the amount of E.V. charging points on-site.

Duncan Miller
March 2023

KESWICK TOURISM ASSOCIATION
Council Representative – Alan Dunn

Chair's Annual Report – Peter Walter

Market assessment

The last few years have been incredibly volatile so most comparisons below are between this year and 2019 – the last 'normal' pre-covid year.

- Across a standard group of attractions monitored by Cumbria Tourism, visitor numbers fell by 16% in the eight months to August 2022 compared to the same period in 2019. 670,000 visitors in 2019, compared to 558,000 in 2022.
- In the same period, visitors to Tourist Information Centres fell by nearly a third from 447,300 in 2019 to 308,000 this year.
- In the Cumbria Tourism Business Survey 73% of business reported recruitment

problems with 25% of roles un-filled.

- While many businesses expect to shrink in 2023 the longer-term future looks more promising, with the majority expecting to grow over the next five years.
- Visitors to the Lake District in 2022 are younger and more ethnically diverse than in 2019. 65% of visitors in 2022 were between 25 and 59, up from 45% in 2019. 16% of visitor groups included someone from an ethnic minority, compared with 2% in 2019.
- Half of all visitors came as part of a couple, and 35% in a three or four-person group. Larger groups of ten or more are very rare.

Finance

- The ongoing decline in membership of the KTA continues to place a strain on our financial position, with us running a small deficit in the last Financial Year.
- Growing membership and income continues to be the priority for staff and Directors.

Keswick Accommodation bookings

- Bookings on InnStyle – the booking portal included in our Premium membership package - has seen bookings surge this year. The total value of bookings has increased by 40% from 2019.
- In the 12 months to November 2022 £2.77 million worth of rooms were booked through InnStyle, compared with £1.97m in 2019. This is largely driven by a growth in bookings via member's own websites - suggesting businesses are getting more effective at driving business directly to their home page.

KTA Membership

- The number of members has fallen again this year.
- We currently have 233 members compared with 250 this time last year, and 278 the year before that.
- This year we launched a much simpler pricing policy, replacing 23 different price points and a complex range of services, with just two levels of service and two prices: Standard and Premium. This has made our offering easier to understand and more compelling. All our existing members were successfully moved onto the new system.
- We have also created a much more compelling description of what we offer on the website and on materials sent to potential members.

Marketing activity

- Our website continues to be used by huge numbers of people. It received nearly two and a half million page-views in the last year, in over one million sessions.
- This year we have carried out a refresh of the Home Page creating a cleaner more impactful look, with the addition of stunning rolling video – showcasing the best of local scenery.
- Demand for our monthly newsletter has grown 75% in the last two years, and it is now sent out to 26,500 people. 'Open' and 'click-through' rates continue to be excellent showing we have a very engaged readership.
- Our social media presence continues to grow a-pace and will become more and more important in the coming year.

- c5,000 Instagram followers (growing 100-200 per month)
- c25,000 Facebook likes a month.
- 150,000 – 200,000 Facebook reach.
- 20,000 copies of our printed A4 guide were distributed to visitors nationally and internationally by post, as well as at key locations around Cumbria, the North West and North East.
- 135,000 copies of our 1/3rd A4 leaflet were distributed throughout Cumbria, the North West and North East.
- We appeared in the Keswick Reminder 17 times as well as Cumbria Crack, News and Star and two appearances on Radio Cumbria. Vanessa will also feature in Escape to the Country airing next year.

Staffing

- In May we were sorry to say goodbye to Karen who had worked for the KTA for a total of 16 years. We are delighted that she hasn't left completely and now generously volunteers in the office a few days a month.
- After Vanessa valiantly worked alone for 18 weeks, in October we were delighted to welcome Becky to the team, and we go into next year back to full strength.

KESWICK YOUTH CENTRE Council Representative – Councillor Adam Paxon

There have been several notable changes to the strategic and organizational development and function of Keswick Youth Centre Services during 2022.

Keswick Youth Centre Services has now transitioned to a not-for-profit Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) registered with the Charity Commission and retaining the previous KYC constitution within the Charity Commission recommended constitution format.

The purpose of the charity is to benefit young people 8-25 years of age, living in Keswick & the surrounding rural villages without distinction of race, gender, political, religious, or other opinions to advance their personal, social, educational, physical & mental health through the provision of recreation, advice, information, training, and participation so that they may grow to full maturity as responsible individuals physically, mentally, and spiritually.

KYCS-CIO trustees have maintained their commitment to providing a sustainable permanent Youth Centre for young people living and working in Keswick and the surrounding rural villages. The trustees are continuing to consider all options available including development of the Old Mill site, renting, or purchasing a suitable premises for youth and community activities.

The trustees can now report that progress has been made with the development opportunities for the Old Mill site.

Plans have now been submitted and approved for 2 x 2 bedroom and 2 x 1 bedroom flats plus a youth & community facility and offices above a car parking area.

A further application for a permanent car park on the Old Mill site has also been approved.

Options for renting or purchase of a suitable site are also making progress so that all options can be considered to meet our primary objective of delivering a rural youth service for young people.

KYCS has, through successful grant applications to the Better Futures Fund via Cumbria Community Foundation (three year grant) and Allerdale Borough Council (one year grant) also employs a Youth Worker to support the delivery of the youth work provision for young people.

In addition, KYCS continues to attract several volunteer youth workers who provide the majority of youth work provision for young people.

The continued development of services and the success KYCS has had in gaining grant support for these additional services has driven the development, expansion & strengthening of financial planning, reporting, and monitoring systems.

As part of this strengthening process KYCS will therefore be adopting a QuickBooks system to support our financial planning and accounting in the future.

KYCS trustees also recognize that reaching out to young people is not only centre-based and will continue to ensure that all options and opportunities are considered and explored to engage with young people.

Following a further successful grant application to the Police & Crime Commissioner, KYCS has commissioned the development of a KYCS Website which will be delivered in 2022/23 enabling KYCS to support young people through the provision of and signposting to up-to-date information on the many opportunities and issues impacting young people living in our rural community including online safety for young people.

KYCS have also been successful in developing partnerships with several charities which has ensured the continued delivery of a rural youth service for young people living in Keswick and the surrounding rural communities.

KYCS strategic planning and delivery of service has also been supported financially by Allerdale BC & Cumbria CC.

Current Position and Future Plans

KYCS are currently providing a centre-based youth service on two nights per week plus a music group and a canoeing group.

Two group sessions are delivered on a Tuesday evening and due to the increased membership, the senior group is delivered on alternate weeks on a Thursday evening!

A Junior Youth Group has been developed for Year 6 pupils (who would be moving on to senior education) to develop their transition planning and emotional resilience in preparation for a significant change in their personal and educational lives.

KYCS membership has grown over the year to 185 and is expected to be popular with young people through 2023.

A successful Holiday Program was also delivered for the first time by KYCS in 2022. A generous donation from the Keswick Co-Op enabled KYCS to provide a free packed lunch for all the young members who attended.

A further Holiday Program will be delivered in 2023 to meet the need for youth activities for KYCS members through the holiday periods.

KYCS have also delivered two POP-UP Youth Clubs at the very successful Keswick Mountain Festival (where over 300 young people and parents attended the activity centre) and at the Annual Keswick Show.

KYCS members will also be supporting the Keswick Victorian Fayre in 2022, continuing a commitment to a sustainable Keswick community by KYCS members volunteers, supporters and trustees.

The delivery of KYCS youth provision is currently constrained by the need for suitable premises and attracting more volunteer youth workers.

The development of the KYCS employed and volunteer youth workers will need to be prioritized in 2023 to meet the needs of the current membership and the demand for a rural youth service provision in Keswick and the surrounding villages.

This level of youth service support for young people living in Keswick and the surrounding rural area could not be achieved without the continuing support of Keswick Town Council, Keswick Lions, Keswick Rotary Club and many other local community based organisations and individual contributions, for which the Keswick Youth Centre Services-CIO Trustee's are very grateful.

ALLERDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL
Ward Representatives –Allan Daniels,
Sally Lansbury and Markus Campbell-Savours

No report submitted

CUMBRIA COUNTY COUNCIL
Ward Representative – Councillor Tony Lywood

No report submitted

CUMBERLAND COUNCIL
Ward Representative – Councillor Markus Campbell-Savours

COUNCIL ACTIVITIES
Vivien Little – Town Clerk

This year finally brought a sense of normality to our regular Town Council and Trust meetings with face to face meetings back in the Council Chamber.

Meetings continue to attract public attendance, with residents again raising a number of issues for the Council's consideration. Regular updates from Allerdale Borough Council and Cumbria County Councillors, with the addition of Shadow Cumberland Councillor Markus Campbell-Savours ensured good communication from the upper tier authorities.

Keswick Town Council makes most of its decisions at the monthly meeting; there are only two standing committees which cover Events and Staffing. However, there are a

number of Working Groups which do a lot of work in the background, bringing their work forward at the full Council meetings.

The Events Committee meets regularly and ‘masterminds’ the annual Keswick Festival in June and the Christmas Lights switch on in November. This year the Events Committee are also planning an event in Fitz Park to celebrate the Coronation of King Charles III, with a big screen television show the Coronation, with kids games, a mobile cocktail bar, music provided and a street party vibe. A core of committed Councillors supported by representatives from a number of organisations and businesses in the town work hard to put on these regular events, together with other ad hoc events which may arise. We were able to put on our normal Midsummer Festival in 2022, with Scruffs being exceptionally successful despite a late change of date, and the Christmas Lights switch on saw the Market Square full of people, helped by free parking in Central Car Park kindly provided by Allerdale Borough Council.

The Staffing Committee continues to meet regularly, looking after the welfare of all the staff in the main office as well as the parks staff.

Planning continues to be a major part of the Council’s remit – as a consultee the Town Council is asked to comment on all planning applications which affect the parish. A small group of Councillors (the Planning Group) ensure that all members of the Council are fully informed on applications which come before them for comment, giving their free time to research these. This is supplemented by being consulted on Licensing Applications, and due to time scales involved, the members of the Planning Group have delegated powers in regard to licensing applications, which are then reported back to all Councillors.

There are also Working Groups sets up for a number of topics. An Environmental Working Group has been established, and this year saw the adoption of their Climate Change action plan, which will be in place for both Keswick Town Council and Keswick Parks, as both work towards Carbon Neutrality.

A Visitor Management Working Group works closely with the Lake District National Park Authority, Cumberland Council (formerly Allerdale Borough Council) and the Keswick Tourism Association to ensure that the needs of both residents as well as visitors are being met. The main focus of the group is surrounding the Keswick to Threlkeld line, and especially the provision of temporary toilets at the start of the trail, seen as vital with so many visitors walking the trail. The Visitor Management Working Group is leading the fight for funding to help support this, and have contacted all the holiday let companies working out of Keswick to try and get them to put forward money, as well as setting up crowdfunding to allow visitors to have the facility to pay for using them.

The Council continues to look after the War Memorial on Penrith Road.

The Town Council is the sole trustee of Keswick Parks with all Councillors meeting in their ‘trustee’ role every two months. Town Council staff also support Keswick Parks

with Fitz Park and Hope Park having their own separate budgets. Visitor numbers to Keswick remain high, meaning the parks continue to be extremely busy, but staff keep the parks looking at their best through challenging circumstances.

We have had several changes of Councillors throughout the year. The month of May sadly brought with it the sudden death of Councillor Peter Terry, soon after his inspiring trip to the Ukrainian border to delivery medical supplies. We also had a resignation from Councillor Lewis Forsyth. Coming onto the Council we have had the return of Councillor Jean Murray, as well as two completely new Councillors in Louise Dunn and Peter Walter. They have all brought their different skills to the Town Council, and I look forward to working with them in the future.

A number of long-standing Councillors are standing down in May, as the four-yearly election cycle comes upon us. I personally want to thank all of those who are standing down for their service to Keswick, and it has been a pleasure to work with you.

We held two 'Be a Councillor' events in December and January, and hope that when nominations are published we will see some of the people who attended on the lists, as well as some familiar names. It will be interesting moving forward with a new Council.

Finally, I want to mention the move to dissolve all the District Councils and Cumbria County Council and create two Unitary Councils – Cumberland, and Westmorland and Furness Council. At the moment this won't have much effect on Keswick Town Council, but it will be interesting to see what develops over the next few years as the council gets bedded in.

Vivien Little
April 2023