

Kirkby Lonsdale and District Civic Society: Chairman's report for 2017

This year saw major changes in the membership of the committee, with all four officers changing and two new members being co-opted. This brought us to full strength, but inevitably we felt the loss of so many years' experience and dedication to the Society by Ken, David, Sue and Judith. While settling in our focus was on the basic purposes of the Society rather than initiating any new projects or activities. We intend that next year will be more active and look forward to involving members in that activity.

Overall membership was similar to recent years at about 250. However the average number of members attending the seven winter talks increased for the third consecutive year, up 20% to an average of 75, with a capacity audience of 120 for John Hamlett's delightful film 'Remembering Kirkby Lonsdale'. Thank you to everyone for supporting these talks, the last ones to be organised by Peter Stockdale, who also did all the technical support. We thank him warmly for so many entertaining and educational evenings.

The planning sub-committee reviewed, brought to the full committee and monitored where appropriate about 100 new planning applications across the Rainbow Parish. We agreed that we should respond to twelve, nine to object or suggest improvements, and three to support, typically for good reuse of a building at risk. These numbers are similar to the previous two years. Some responses now go to the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority, rather than South Lakeland District Council, but otherwise our process is unchanged.

The website, new last year, was developed with improved navigation, very regular updates and new information such as the reports for the AGM. In future we wish to share much more committee information such as the background to our planning decisions.

Members may already be aware of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) which becomes law across the EU on 25th May 2018. This is a major overhaul of data protection law affecting all bodies which keep personal data, however small, and hence our Society. The winter newsletter included a simple statement about what personal data we keep about members; how we use it; and how members can change that. However we have a little more to do to ensure that we satisfy the Regulation e.g. asking permission to contact members in particular ways.

Anne Burgess
Chairman
March 2018