

Kirkby Lonsdale and District Civic Society: Chairman's report for 2021

Membership was 206 compared with 215 in 2020. However 10 members had joined through attending the previous spring course and while their non-renewals were disappointing, they were not unexpected.

David Pelter and Colin Boothman stepped down from the committee; both were active members of the committee and led important projects. Working with the Christopher Robins Charitable Trust David ensured the successful launch of the Kirkby Lonsdale archives website; COVID and other priorities have meant little progress on further uploading data to the website, but we are committed to doing this. Sadly, Colin died recently, but we remember with gratitude his energy and can-do approach, particularly in the bench refurbishment project completed in spring 2021.

The seven talks booked for 2021 were thoroughly disrupted by COVID, but we were able to rearrange most of them, running talks on Cumbrian corpse roads, the lost hamlet of Thorns and 'the Kirkby Lonsdale letters' on Zoom, and on the Washingtons of Sedbergh, road development around Morecambe Bay and lost inns of the Dales in the Lunesdale Hall.

Unsurprisingly, fewer people attended the Hall talks than usual, about 25-30 instead of 40-45, but we averaged about 50 logins and 65 attendees on Zoom, with more guests due to increased promotion outside the Society. We will be investigating options so that those who cannot come to the Hall can still join us e.g. live-streaming, while recognising that this risks reducing Hall attendance further.

The planning sub-committee considered 73 new applications, 49 in South Lakeland and 24 in Yorkshire Dales, taking key ones forward to the full committee. This was a more typical number than the 49 reviewed in 2020.

We responded to 8 applications, objecting to two on grounds of over-development of the site; one on over-development and significant loss of original features; one on poor design for new builds; two on inappropriate window design; and two on commercial signage. We continued to post regular summaries of new applications and any responses on our website.

11th October 2022 will be the 50th anniversary of the 'First General Meeting' of the Society when the first committee was elected and the draft constitution adopted. We will be celebrating then, but have other special events in mind too. We look forward to telling you about them.

Meanwhile I would like thank you all, and especially the committee, for supporting the Society in another difficult year, but also to ask if you could support us further by joining the committee or helping in other ways. We are well under our constitutional full strength of four officers and eight members, which does limit our ability to undertake special projects. Please do consider this.

Anne Burgess
Chairman
March 2022