

Keswick Reading Room Report for the Parish Council – May 2022

What went well

The Reading Room benefitted from business rates relief over the pandemic. The money has been spent in a number of ways:

- Defibrillator installed and training session provided.
- External lighting installed, triggered by motion sensors. This followed reports of people loitering behind the room after dark.
- We have a couple of new user groups.
- We have improved the garden and gathered a group of volunteers. We hope this will serve as a second “room” in the summer months and make the Reading Room more inviting.
- The car park has been re-gravelled.
- Bookings are now visible on the Parish Council website.
- Accounts are still in good shape. Balance is currently just over £12k with no outstanding bills to pay except for the gardener. Pre-pandemic balance was about £6k.
- Damp problems seem much reduced by the dehumidifier and improved guttering and downpipes.
- Installed a key safe and changed locks. Keys work better, we do not have an unknown number of keys in circulation and it is easier for users to access the store room.
- New internal lights with dimmers installed.
- Wifi has been installed.
- Lord Lieutenant’s plaque has been installed.

What needs to improve

- Committee numbers are dwindling and we are looking to recruit a couple more members.
- We have lost a couple of user groups. A choir found the room too small. Another mentioned the poor heating. We sometimes struggle to compete with other venues which offer more space at the same cost.
- The accounts have not been audited for a while. Auditing now in progress.

Future capital projects – grant applications

- Finish the garden – gate, railings etc. Install information sign for walkers.
- Set up provision for internet meetings and talks (including a projector) to attract new users.
- Apply for grants to improve energy efficiency from the offshore wind cable routing projects.

David Vail – May 2022