Steve Ellis
[redacted]

Town Clerk
Kirkby Stephen Town Council
Local Links
Vicarage Lane
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Statement supporting co-option application for town councillor

Kirkby Stephen really is a town that feels like a village. Even after just over two years living here, it's almost impossible to walk from North Road to South Road without meeting someone who has already become an acquaintance, often a friend.

It helps of course that my wife Kathy and I joined a thriving u3a and the Upper Eden History Society. Somehow, I also found myself volunteered to become editor of the council's *Community News*. That, itself, provides a wonderful opportunity to get involved, discover what's going on, and meeting an array of locals.

We all know that with population growth, more people will eventually live in Kirkby Stephen. There will be more housing, hopefully with enough affordable homes for local young people and retired agricultural workers. Public transport has already improved and will continue to do so. More townsfolk will have access to better broadband connectivity. High Street trading has faced the challenge of online sales, but it's good to know many residents want to support local, independent retailers.

My aim, if accepted as a town councillor, will be to work towards keeping Kirkby Stephen a friendly, welcoming, safe, interesting place to live, work and visit.

Having regularly attended town council meetings, I know the quality of existing councillors and how committed they are. I would like to work alongside them to maintain and further improve the lives of all Kirkby Stephen residents.

Regarding experience for the role, for many years I was a journalist, starting on the *Journal* in Newcastle. Following several years in "Fleet Street", including time at the *Mail on Sunday, Sun* and *Sunday Times*. I was head-hunted to become a launch editor of *Bella* and *Take a Break* magazines. As a journalist I worked in several countries, including India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Iran.

For nine years I was managing director for communications training in Europe at then Britain's largest public affairs company, Burson-Marsteller, before establishing my own training and counselling firm. In both I advised the most senior people in organisations such as the Advertising Standards Authority, the BBC – including the director general and station controllers – and the Central Office of Information. Clients included well-known companies such as Coca-Cola, Marks & Spencer, Mirror Group Newspapers, Legal & General, L'Oréal, Total and Unilever.

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