



YORKSHIRE & HUMBER
Association of Civic Societies

Member of



SOCIETY INSIGHT

"HOUSING"

DOWNSIZINGOR DOWNGRADING??

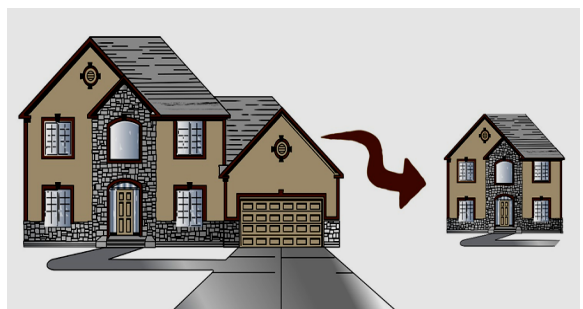
To begin this article I would like to pose a series of rhetorical questions;

Hands up if you are currently in the 55+ age bracket? Own your own house and car? Enjoy pottering in your garden? Live in a pleasant environment and enjoy having family and friends to stay? Are you now thinking about your future housing needs and wishes?

In our 30s and 40s, with a growing family and a career, our thoughts and energy were centred on the present, with retirement and old age on a distant horizon and not uppermost in our minds. Did we even think about the future? Now suddenly 'the future' is the present and decisions need to be made.

Many people dream of retiring to a rural community or a sleepy seaside village where they can escape the hustle and bustle of their working lives and live out their remaining days in peace and tranquillity. Whilst this might sound very attractive, it is not practical. As the ability to drive decreases, the need for more easily accessible amenities grows, be it transport, day-to-day shopping, entertainment or medical facilities. We are perhaps comfortable where we are but conscious that the family home is not really suitable in the long-term for our ageing needs and ability.

I am occupying a home the size of which I no longer need and the upkeep and maintenance of which will eventually become more challenging. I am surrounded by elderly people in similar circumstances, many of whom are widowed and lonely. I do not know at this stage whether I shall be able to manage stairs indefinitely, but I do know that, having been used to indoor and outdoor space in a city suburb, excellent public transport, congenial neighbours and all amenities locally, I would find it hard to forgo these. I, like many others, am aware that practically I should downsize to a more manageable home but I do not relish moving to an unimaginative little box with no space for my treasured possessions. I do not want to live in an apartment block in the middle of town, with maybe only a view of neighbouring buildings and no outside space of my own. I do not accept that downsizing should actually be downgrading!



There are many barriers to moving house – practical in terms of actually doing it, financial – the cost of moving, legal fees, stamp duty, refurbishing of a new home

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etc. and emotional – leaving a familiar environment, good neighbours and a comfort zone. So maybe I look at adapting my home to better suit my future requirements? In theory this sounds a great idea but there are many problems associated with it; the difficulty of retro-fitting maybe a stair lift or a wet room, widening doorways to accommodate a wheelchair and installing a ramped access, not to mention the associated expense of such alterations. Many homes are simply not suitable for adaptation.

House builders, quite naturally, are keen to make a profit to satisfy themselves and their shareholders. High density housing - multi-storey apartments, two or three storey town houses and small starter homes, all with a small footprint, are obviously the most profitable. With pressure on them from Government and the scarcity of available and affordable land, Local Authorities, needing to fulfil their quota of new homes and at the same time avoid encroaching on the Green Belt, are happy to go along with this. But is this what older people actually want?



Photo ex Wikipedia, courtesy of M der Preusse

I and many others would much prefer to move to a bungalow in the suburbs but they are in very short supply. Ironically, local councils do build bungalows, but these are for the social/affordable sector (housing benefit). How many private sector bungalows in mixed housing developments are being built? The answer is very few.

High density housing - multi-storey apartments, two or three storey town houses and small starter homes...But is this what older people actually want?

Another attractive model would be a retirement complex, much favoured in the Western

Cape of South Africa. Just a few of these exist in various forms in the UK. The owner occupiers living in detached bungalows or occasionally apartments, with a communal building known as the 'club house'. Here there are dining and bar facilities, a range of activities and visiting services organised by a coordinator, together with varying degrees of 'frail care'. The latter cater for those taken ill or convalescing and are bought into as need arises. The big advantage of this is that the person remains within their community and therefore does not feel isolated.

Maintenance of gardens is managed centrally together with other services. This model affords a high degree of independence in a community of residents of similar age and interests and with additional support when required. Naturally it comes at a cost.



Another model gaining in popularity here is Cohousing; intentional communities, created and run by their residents. Each household has a self-contained, private home as well as shared community space. For people on their own there are many advantages to this. The issues of loneliness, isolation and the detrimental affects on physical and psychological well-being have been highlighted this year and for many older people this lifestyle would be an ideal compromise. It affords independence yet companionship if required and a knowledge that there are other people around in an emergency. Much has been documented about the links between housing and health and where people feel safe and supported they tend to have fewer medical issues and care needs. Given the crisis in GP and social services provision, models like this deserve a much higher profile.

Having done some preliminary research I find little evidence of Local Authorities researching the wishes and needs of the increasing number of elderly people. Over the next 20 years the projected growth in older population requires an increase of between 40% (200,000) and 70% (350,000) 'specialist' homes (restricted to over 55s). This term covers a wide range of provision but essentially is tailored accommodation to suit older persons' needs. Research indicates that throughout the country only 7% of older households live in specialist housing with varying degrees of support and care. This means that 93% continue to live in mainstream housing. However, only 23% of specialist housing is for sale with 77% rented and not surprisingly, many people are reluctant to move from freehold to leasehold or rented property.

Not everyone wants to live in a city centre with the justification that it affords convenient and easy access to services, amenities and café culture. Whilst doubtless there are some successful models, we probably all

The majority of Town Planners are in that mid-life bracket where considerations of comfort and space for the retired are not uppermost in their minds....

know of people who have bought a modern urban apartment only to find that their neighbours are transient - renting from buy-to-let landlords and usually not there long-term. Many are young people with a lifestyle not necessarily compatible with that of the more mature purchasers and there will be few families. Whilst at face value this might be considered 'mixed housing', in reality it can lead to loneliness and isolation.

The majority of Town Planners are in that mid-life bracket where considerations of comfort and space for the retired are not uppermost in their minds and where their preoccupation is to provide the maximum number of homes on the minimum amount of land. It is hard for them to recognise the needs of those in a stage in life they have not yet reached and the wishes of those who have still got considerable life expectancy beyond retirement and have diverse needs and requirements. These comparatively young people will be of 'that age' themselves in due course and perhaps regretting that more was not done to exert pressure on house builders to think beyond a 'one size fits all'.

The following extracts are from the **Commons Select Committee Inquiry and Report on Housing for Older People, published 9th February 2018.**

<https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201719/cmselect/cmcomloc/370/37003.htm#idTextAnchor000>

Recommendations are in **bold**.

The NPPF asks local authorities to assess the quantity and suitability of land potentially available for housing development (a Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment). Many developers said their policy was to use brownfield land because it was "in well-connected urban areas" where their customers prefer to live²⁹⁵ and close to existing homes.²⁹⁶ As discussed earlier, living in well-located housing close to local services and amenities makes an important contribution to older people's health and wellbeing. The Chartered Institute for Housing said that the Government should encourage local authorities to identify suitable sites, particularly "small infill or brownfield sites well located within existing settlements and well connected to transport and with local facilities".²⁹⁷



Housing and Care 21 were critical of the way local authorities assessed need through their Strategic Housing Market Assessments, saying their assessments were “sporadic and inconsistent”²⁹⁰ and some did not adequately consider older people’s housing—they “ignore it completely or solely assess the need for rented or affordable options”.²⁹¹

With people over 65 growing by 155,000 every year and accounting for 74% of total household growth to 2037, the current 2.8% of retirement housing under construction as a percentage of all housing under construction would require an unprecedented and likely to be unachievable rise.

Appropriate accommodation can therefore only be created in the general housing stock both existing and under construction.⁵⁸



A personal response from a survey; I have considered downsizing but not worth it! Cost of moving physically, legally, estate agent’s commission, refurbishing new home, general hassle and above all having to pay a huge amount of stamp duty on new home, having paid all my life—simply not worth it! Also cannot find property with light and space required—all new flats and retirement homes are too small, overpriced with many “strings attached”.

✦ **The National Planning Policy Framework should be amended to emphasise the key importance of the provision of housing for older people and the new standard approach to assessing need should explicitly address the housing needs of older people.**

✦ **To facilitate the delivery of new homes, specialist housing should be**

All new homes should be built to the Category 2 Building Regulations standard so that they are ‘age proofed’ and can meet the current and future needs of older people.

designated as a sub-category of the C2 planning classification, or be assigned a new use class. Councils

should publish a strategy explaining how they intend to meet the housing needs of older people in their area and, in their Local Plans, identify a target proportion of new housing to be developed for older people along with suitable, well-connected sites for it.

National and local planning policy should give greater encouragement to the development of housing for older people. Older people who wish to move should be able to choose from a wide range of housing to accommodate their needs and preferences. However, the evidence we heard suggested there was a shortage of desirable mainstream, accessible and specialist housing and bungalows in both the private and social sectors.

✦ **All new homes should be built to the Category 2 Building Regulations standard so that they are ‘age proofed’ and can meet the current and future needs of older people. The Government should accept the Law Commission’s code of practice and consider introducing sector specific legislation in order to promote consumers’ and lenders’ confidence in specialist housing.**

Bungalows are popular among older people, but are in short supply.²⁵⁸

Central Bedfordshire Council's survey of the housing needs of older people (600 short and 80 in-depth surveys) found that **61%** of respondents wanted to move to a bungalow. The Council said:

There was a strong preference for bungalows with all other options trailing some way behind. This is not surprising as people are seeking to overcome the perceived disadvantages of their current home (difficulty managing stairs, costs associated with over-occupation) whilst retaining the advantages that caused them to choose that type of housing in the first place (personal space, privacy and control). [259](#)

Accessible and specialist homes are a key to housing an ageing population. Specialist housing, particularly

extra care housing, can promote the health and well-being of older people and their carers. However, concerns about the costs related to this type of housing and lenders' reluctance to provide mortgage finance for specialist housing may prevent older people from purchasing this type of property.

The right kind of housing can keep older people healthy, support them to live independently and in the longer-term..... lead to savings in health and social care budgets.

The social care green paper should consider the range of housing for older people, in particular the potential for extra care housing to play a greater role in providing social care alongside home care and residential care.

The right kind of housing can keep older people healthy, support them to live independently and in the longer-term reduce the need for home care or residential care and lead to savings in health and social care budgets. The national strategy should take full account of this and be closely linked with the forthcoming social care green paper.

Local authorities should be more receptive to private developers who wish to build housing for older people in their area, and appreciate the potential health and wellbeing benefits leading to reduced need to health and social care services to be gained.

In conclusion I think it is fair to say that whilst various bodies are acknowledging the necessity for greater consideration of the housing needs of older people, this is not being translated into action. Government recommendations are just that, and until local councils have a statutory obligation to determine local need and impose tighter control on private developers, the situation will not improve.

As a society concerned with the built environment and with many older people in our ranks, we surely are in pole position to campaign for better planning and provision of suitable housing for older people; we are a significant and growing sector of society.

Alison Sykes



WAKEFIELD CIVIC SOCIETY
building interest in Wakefield



VIEW FROM THE CHAIR

VERTICAL OR LATERAL LIVING

Housing provision continues to dominate the headlines and we're continuing our focus on the housing theme with our main article in this issue and at our spring meeting in Leeds on 28th April.

In our cover article, Alison Sykes, a member of Wakefield Civic Society's Executive Committee, shares her views on the issue of providing suitable accommodation for elderly citizens looking to downsize. Is the housing market catering to their needs, she asks? ¹

As Ali points out, there's a lot to consider if you're looking to downsize in later life. Not only is it important to find the right location but you also need to think about the type of accommodation (bungalow, flat, sheltered scheme) you want to move to. Accessibility and adaptability will be important as your needs continue to change, and, with an understandable desire to feel part of a community, you'll still want to be connected socially with friends and family. Good access to local amenities will be a bonus but you'll have to weigh the costs against your budget. It's a long list of things to think about.

Some of the issues on that list could be said to apply at any age of course; they are not all exclusively associated with our 'old age' but some of our

"There's been a trend in recent years to build new 'town houses' over three, four and sometimes even more floors.

individual housing requirements do become more significant as we age. We might find it difficult to manage

stairs, for example, or it might become more important for us to live closer to family members. And, for the car owners amongst us, what happens when we have to give up our cars? We don't, I imagine, want to feel cut off and isolated, so how will we join in with and access those social and cultural pursuits we enjoy in our younger years?

How many of us, I wonder, give much thought to these longer-term issues when we first start looking for somewhere to live? Do any of us assume when we move to our first home that it will be our 'forever home' and choose a place to live which could see us through to our dotage? I certainly didn't!

There's been a trend in recent years to build new 'town houses' over three, four and sometimes even more floors. Such houses provide the floor space needed by families but organised vertically with a smaller overall footprint. This approach enables higher densities to be achieved on any given development but means that houses are taller and narrower than might have been the case a few years ago.

¹ Apparently, developers are catering for the need to downsize. According to the RIBA, Britain is already building the smallest homes in Europe, and here in Yorkshire, we're building the smallest homes in the UK. At this rate, no one buying a new house will ever need to downsize – it will be physically impossible to buy anything smaller!

Now, there's nothing new in this – many Georgian and Victorian houses were built over four, five and even six floors when attics and basements are counted. These houses were arranged domestically so that certain activities happened on each floor – kitchens in the basement, family rooms on the ground floor, reception rooms for entertaining on the first floor, bedrooms on the second floor (and third floors) and servants' bedrooms in the attic. Anyone living in such accommodation would need to be fairly agile (especially the servants).

While most of us today don't employ servants, it's not uncommon to see planning applications for new houses laid out on this sort of pattern, even if somewhat more modestly than of old. Planning applications are frequently submitted showing new properties that feature something like a utility room and kitchen on the ground floor with main living rooms on the first floor and bedrooms on the second floor and up in the attic. Moving between rooms will frequently mean moving between floors in this sort of property.

In Wakefield, for example, there's a development of new homes where the ground floor consists of a guest bedroom cum study and house bathroom, the first floor is an open plan living/dining/kitchen area and the top floor is the master bedroom with an *en suite* bathroom. (Interestingly, they are also being built back to back: how retro is that!?). Being brand new, these houses have a certain charm and appear to be selling well. Indeed, if I were starting out now and could afford one, I might even be tempted to buy one myself, particularly given their city centre location right next to the railway station.

Being of more mature years now, when I look at these modern 'vertical' houses today, my first concern is often for my knees! How would I manage the stairs if and when my knees begin to go? Could I really envisage spending my final years running up and down stairs all day just to move between rooms? And, don't forget, it's not just older people who might find stairs daunting. There's the disabled – whether they are looking for somewhere to live or just visiting friends and family – and any of us can break a leg or even twist an ankle, limiting our mobility at least temporarily.

See how easy it is then to climb up and down stairs in search of your wallet, your keys, the charger for your phone, and so on!

.....developers don't currently seem to be building for the market sector that includes older people wanting to downsize, at least not round where I live.

Now, it seems that the natural conclusion I should draw here would be to recommend the building of bungalows for all! While I accept that personal preferences and physical needs will always generate demand for bungalows, I'm not sure how practical it would be to provide such accommodation in sufficient number close to town and city centres – land is just too expensive and too much in demand. This rather suggests that bungalows, when they are built, are more likely to be located in the suburbs – and that could result in a degree of isolation for the residents if measures aren't put in place to counter it.

As I've said many times before, I consider myself something of an urbanite. I'll take the metropolis over the rural idyll every time. But if I want 'level living' in the city, that's going to mean moving to a flat – and developers don't currently seem to be building for the market sector that includes older people wanting to downsize, at least not round where I live. There are plenty of flats being built (or created out of office conversions) but they are really aimed at younger people. These flats simply aren't big enough for anyone with a lifetime of accumulated possessions.



Perhaps in the future, we'll need to copy what happens in some cities in the USA where the traditional brownstone houses – equivalent to our grander terraced houses – are knocked through and converted into flats so that each floor across two or three houses becomes a spacious self-contained apartment. That way, residents of these 'lateral conversions' can, at least after they've entered their own front door, live 'on the level' yet still have access to all the amenities of the city close by.

Or how about the European model where apartment blocks routinely include shops, cafés and restaurants at street level?

Or how about the European model where apartment blocks routinely include shops, cafés and restaurants at street level? Not only does this give city centres a resident population; it provides a customer base right on the doorstep for local businesses. And all those cafés, bars and restaurants create a lively neighbourhood community for the occupants of the flats above.

We seem reluctant to embrace this sort of development over here. What is it about the British psyche that makes us eschew such arrangements I wonder? Is it that we have no interest in living in such properties or is it that developers have no interest in providing them? Perhaps if we do want them, we baby boomers need to start exerting some pressure on developers to provide them.

And if there's no room to build the new apartment blocks we need, then maybe we need to start 'knocking through' some of our older, larger town houses?

Now, where did I put my sledgehammer.....?

Kevin Trickett



ADDINGHAM'S HIDDEN GEM JOINS STONEHENGE AND FOUNTAINS ABBEY IN HE LIST



Farfield Quaker Meeting House, Addingham has been chosen as one of 10 (yes, one of only 10!) Faith and Belief places in England by Historic England.



As you all know Historic England is a public body formally known as English Heritage and it looks after England's historic environment. Amongst other things it champions historic places, helping people to understand, value and care for them.

This small, simple Meeting House is one of the oldest Quaker Meeting Houses in the world. It was built in 1689.....

Many of you will also know that Historic England has

been compiling a list of 100 places which best tell the story of England's impact on the world. There are 10 categories in the list. In the *Faith and Belief* category, in addition to Farfield Meeting House, the choice of 10 places includes Stonehenge, Fountains Abbey, Canterbury Cathedral, a Sikh temple, a mosque and others. The Meeting House is certainly in good company..... would you not agree?!

This small, simple Meeting House is one of the oldest Quaker Meeting Houses in the world. It was built in 1689, the year of the Act of Toleration which allowed Quakers and other non-conformist groups religious freedom and which meant that they could build their own places of worship. The Meeting House is owned by the Historic Chapels Trust and along with a small local committee, undertakes the care and maintenance of the building.

"We are delighted by this recognition of the importance of Farfield Meeting House" said Margaret Cody, who lives next to the building and who, with her husband Barry, has been a committee member and has cared for the Meeting House for many years. The building is open in daylight hours and is visited by many walkers from all over the world who are walking on the Dales Way in the Yorkshire National Park. Some walkers come across the Meeting House unexpectedly and the moving comments in the visitors' book reflect the impact it has on them: *"What a wonderful place, quiet, away from the stress of life"*, *"Peaceful and spiritual"*, *"A hidden gem"*. It is used regularly for Quaker Meetings for Worship and remains a place for





quiet, unhurried contemplation.

Reverend David Ison, Dean of St Paul's Cathedral and the judge of the Faith and Belief category, said 'the building represents the rootedness of Christian non-conformity in the English landscape and symbolises its influence on so much social and economic progress in the 18th and 19th centuries'. The recognition for this truly amazing little place doesn't end here.....! In June this year, it will

become the proud recipient of the Village's 10th Blue Plaque and the timing just couldn't be better. Watch out for our Village Heritage and Blue Plaque trail.

Farfield Meeting House is located on the B6160 (Addingham to Bolton Abbey) Bolton Road on the outskirts of the Village. Post code: LS290RQ.

Stop Press: Full half page article on page 3 of the 31st of March's edition of the Yorkshire Post, carries the headline; 'Meeting House that became a religious treasure' and goes on to say; 'It's a far cry from York's magnificent Minster, but in this single room lies a key part of Quaker history'. A really brilliant article.

Jim Robinson



NEW HISTORY BOARDS IN BEVERLEY

Almost a year ago members of the Executive of the Beverley Civic Society appointed a sub-group to place history boards around the town.



We had become aware that many newcomers to Beverley, both residents and visitors, had little knowledge of the history of this ancient town.

Since the death of Bishop John of Beverley in 721AD people have lived in this area, building houses, attending churches, creating streets. Over the centuries medieval timber framed houses have been replaced by brick; windows, once shuttered, have been replaced by plate glass; thatched roofs replaced by pantiles and later slate. The town itself has risen from small beginnings where pilgrims and kings came to worship at the tomb of Bishop John.

During the medieval period wool merchants and weavers sold their wares across the sea so that by the end of 14th century Beverley (after London) was the 10th



largest town in the country. During the troubles of 16th and 17th centuries the town fell out of favour only to rise again in late 18th century when it became the county town of the East Riding. Today it is frequently quoted as being one of the top ten places in Britain in which to live.

The History Group was made up of a leader with experience of the workings of the East Riding Council, two other members with knowledge of the organisation of the town and the

know-how of applying for planning permission, and two local historians.

Always we have worked together as a team, each person questioning what is proposed before any final decision is made. The streets decided upon were: North Bar Within, Saturday Market, the Minster precincts, Flemingate and Wednesday Market. Existing boards on Westwood are to be updated.

One of the problems of placing history boards around the town was finding suitable locations. In such a busy town we soon had to abandon the idea of creating any boards which would inhibit the movements of pedestrians. Vacant spaces on walls was the only option but there was not a plentiful supply of these.

The next decision was content. We have not been restricted to a particular period of time but rather have tried to present a broad spread of information. Trying to explain 1,300 years of history of a street in about 300 words was difficult. Having decided on the script we looked for suitable pictures to illustrate the message we were trying to put across. To give life to the facts we decided to describe a particular event in each street. Language has been simplified, pictures enlarged and sentences kept brief so that the viewer can quickly understand the message.



Four boards have now been placed around the town. We are grateful to the owners of St Mary's Manor, the Grapes Public House, and the trustees of the car park at Beverley Minster for permission to use space on their walls or railings. Finance for the boards has come from the funds of Beverley Civic Society and the generous financial support from the management of the Flemingate Centre. We have been greatly aided by the positive response of members of East Yorkshire County Council and by the assistance of the designers and printers "Print and Design". We have been

grateful for input from staff at Beverley Guildhall who have designed boards for Flemingate, Minster and Wednesday Market.

As we now walk through the town it is gratifying to see people reading the boards. So far comments have been favourable.

Pamela Hopkins
Photos courtesy of Richard Lidwell



A SAD END FOR A FINE BUILDING

Spring 2018 sees one of our important buildings being demolished entirely unnecessarily, despite a long campaign by Spenn Valley Civic Society.



The demise of the 1910 Foundation Building of Whitcliffe Mount School (pictured above) is thanks to Local Authority Councillors and Officers; Trustees (legal owners of the building); the Department for Education; and Laing O'Rourke plc, all acting under the Government's Private Finance programme for replacing school buildings. The building has been given away by the charitable trust that owns it, and is being demolished "for free" by the contractors in return for its building materials.

When plans to redevelop the school were first publicised in 2015, public anger and reaction concentrated on the loss of its Sports Centre, a valuable local public resource. People assumed the historic "Foundation Building" was protected because:

- It's a fine well-constructed building designed by an architect whose other buildings in Leeds are Listed.
- It was paid for entirely by local residents & Cleckheaton council, and was a charitable Trust.

Spenn Valley Civic Society's efforts included:

- Applying for Listed status.
- Lobbying local councillors and doing presentations at District Council Meetings.
- Talking with the Trustees.
- Objecting to the planning application and speaking at the committee meeting, arguing that conversion to apartments was financially and environmentally viable.
- Working with The Victorian Society, which also objected to the plans.
- Requesting the building is treated as a Local Heritage Asset. The Council refuses to have a Local Heritage List and does not accept such a status.
- Staging a demonstration at the school.
- Reporting the Trust to the Charities Commission.
- Getting several articles in local newspapers.

When in July 2017, the school used Facebook to invite the public to tour the building for the last time, people took notice and thousands of local residents and ex-pupils

signed a petition against its demolition. Several developers came forward, who were willing to buy the building for substantial sums of money, convert it to apartments, and reimburse the Council and builders for any penalties incurred in changing the PFI contract.

But none of the parties was willing to change course. Instead of respecting local heritage, providing much-needed extra housing, and re-investing in educational facilities at the school from the proceeds of its sale, local people will end up with a grass verge. To add insult to injury, the Foundation Building is featured in a new edition of Pevsner, just as it's being demolished.

During the process we have learned that this is not an isolated case: many fine school buildings are being demolished unnecessarily under PFI contracts. The next one to disappear in Yorkshire is at Oakbank School Keighley, where Historic England recommended Listing, but was overturned by the Secretary of State.



So if you find out that a school near you is to be re-developed under a PFI scheme, beware!

Erica Amende

2017 YHACS PETER SPAWFORTH AWARDS

The YHACS AGM in Harrogate was held at the end of January 2018, during which the Peter Spawforth Trophy (left) was presented to the Society judged to have made a significant contribution through its work over 2017. The essence of the competition was for Societies to demonstrate to the judges (the YHACS Committee) that real progress was made during the year to 30 September 2017 to entitle it to be called **“Regional Civic Society of the Year”**.



From the nine Societies that submitted entries this year - Bradford, Goole, Hornsea, Howden, Huddersfield, Hull, Ilkley, Scarborough and Wakefield Civic Societies - the judges decided that this year the Trophy and a cheque for £200 should go to **Howden Civic Society** (below, left).



Bradford Civic Society won the second prize of £100 (below, centre) and third prize of £50 went to **Hull Civic Society** (below, right)



David Moss

Photos courtesy of Brian Ward



APPG SAYS ONE SIZE FITS ALL APPROACH WILL NOT DELIVER THE HOMES THE NATION NEEDS

No prospect of delivering 300,000 homes per year unless local councils given greater powers and resourced appropriately



Speaking during a meeting of the APPG for Civic Societies, Civic Voice President, Griff Rhys Jones said *“Whilst the Government wants to see ‘The right homes in the right places’ the draft National Planning Policy Framework is so lacking in teeth to ensure that the policies will be delivered, and combined with under-resourced local councils, that we are very likely to end up with the wrong homes in the wrong places.”*

Craig Mackinlay MP, Chair of the APPG for Civic Societies said, *“Does anyone genuinely believe that if you build more houses, house prices will come down?. Without knocking developers, who are part of the solution, I have to query whether they are doing all they can to help build the houses? I say to them, to get more affordable housing, we must build real affordable housing in sustainable locations where people want to live in towns and cities. If not, we have to look at other ways of building the homes we need. It is easy to think of headline figures, but we are talking about real people’s lives being impacted by the housing crisis.”*

The draft National Planning Policy Framework was published on 6th March with the consultation running to 10th May. Civic Voice and the All Party Parliamentary Group for Civic Societies held a debate on 13th March to ask the question Will the NPPF review lead to the homes, the nation needs, being built?

I say to them, to get more affordable housing, we must build real affordable housing in sustainable locations where people want to live in towns and cities.....

The panel included speakers from Royal Town Planning Institute and Campaign to Protect Rural England.

The debate highlighted issues including:

- England has not one housing market, but many. We need to be working towards having a plan-led system so that decisions are made locally as a one

Just one year ago,

policy fits all approach does not work for the whole country. Context matters. We need a solution for Alnwick, Blackpool and London. And everywhere in between.

- To ensure we get plans in place, the planning system needs effective resources, particularly at local authority level, commensurate with the important role it plays. Planning is part of the solution not the problem.
- The panel supported the inquiry being led by Sir Oliver Letwin who has been charged by the Government to investigate why there is a gap between the number of planning permissions granted and the number of homes that are then built on those sites.
- It is pleasing that despite the constant attacks on the Green Belt, the draft NPPF review retains the current green belt policies. It was felt that the test for exceptional circumstances for when Green Belt can be released needs to be clarified.

.....the planning system needs effective resources, particularly at local authority level, commensurate with the important role it plays.

- Let local authorities charge the planning fees they need to cover the costs they are spending on supporting the delivery of homes. The panel heard the example of one authority that made £500k loss on planning work in the previous year.



- The need to consider the VAT and Tax anomalies within the planning system around VAT or refurbishment. The group discussed ideas of taxation of property and how a Householder Tax could help use change and nudge behaviour.

Craig Mackinlay MP finished by saying, "We all have a role to play in finding the homes for our children and grandchildren. The APPG for Civic Societies will be

holding further debates during the consultation period to raise awareness of the issues. We will then collect the findings together and meet with the Minister and share our findings about what the draft means for communities. I call on people to respond with evidence to the draft NPPF consultation and to share your thoughts with Civic Voice."

The Next APPG for Civic Societies meeting will be on May 8th in Parliament, on the Historic Environment section of the NPPF. Civic Voice members will be sent further information to attend.



YORKSHIRE WRESTLING CARVINGS.... ARE THERE ANY IN YOUR AREA??

Selby Civic Society had a recent interesting enquiry through its website contact page:

Dear Sirs,

My name is Ruslan Pashayev, I am from Delaware, Ohio of USA.

My inquiry is about the caryatid figures under the choir pier niches (early 14c) at Selby Abbey. Among those caryatids some figures represent men wrestling.

The information is from the book "The Early Art of the West Riding of Yorkshire: a subject list of extant and lost art including items relevant to early drama" by Barbara D. Palmer; Page 260.

I would highly appreciate if you could help me to get the images of those "wrestling figures". Thanks in advance.

Kind regards, Ruslan Pashayev

One of our members knew exactly where these carvings were in Selby Abbey, so photos were taken (right) and emailed to Mr Pashayev.



Back came his reply:

Thanks so much for the images. Appreciate your time and your help a lot. I honestly am not sure whether it's those wrestlers from the book which I read or not

but looks like it could be them easily. I only had location, I never saw this images before. I just read that book which mentions them. I am trying to study the Yorkshire wrestling traditions.

First wrestling manual in England was published in Yorkshire in 1711. I was trying to locate some images of local medieval wrestling, and figured that some churches may have carvings etc. I saw many images from North Riding of Yorkshire, specifically Cowlam, Hutton Cranswick, Foston...The Selby Abbey is the only one I found in West Riding of Yorkshire which has wrestling decorations in its interior.

Maybe you know some other local church which has some as well?

I would highly appreciate any info on Yorkshire Wrestling sculpture.

Thanks again.

Kind regards, Ruslan.

So if you know of any other Yorkshire wrestling sculptures or carvings in your area, I'm sure Mr Pashayev would be pleased to hear from you.

David Moss

NEW CHOLERA MEMORIAL DEDICATED



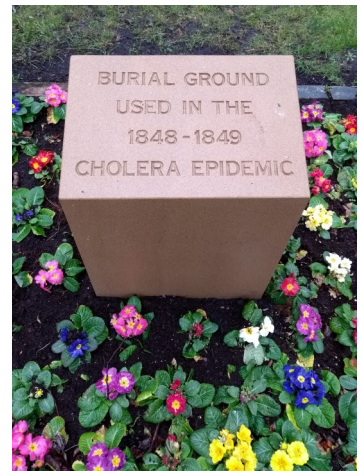
Angela Lambert -Dowell, member of Selby Civic Society, lays a commemorative wreath, watched by Cllrs Ian and Judith Chilvers, Michael Dyson chairman of the Civic Society and the Reverend Canon John Weetman.
Picture: Eric Foster

Selby Civic Society held a ceremony in Selby's Cholera Burial Ground to dedicate a new memorial stone to the memory of the victims of the 1848/49 cholera epidemic.

55,000 people died in England and Wales, with more than 100 people dying in the Selby area in that time. Millgate, Micklegate, Ousegate, Finkle Street and the residents of the workhouse in Brook Street were particularly hard hit. A nearby information plaque reports that a relief committee at the time visited hundreds of houses and provided essential supplies to 358 families. Unable to bury the victims in the overused Selby Abbey graveyard, many were interred in the land opposite the North Gate of the Abbey.

Following this devastating waterborne outbreak, measures were put in place to provide piped water to houses and decaying sewage and drainage systems in the town were extensively renovated.

The new stone (right), commissioned by Selby Civic Society and supplied by J.E. Burns Monumental Masons, replaces a damaged stone previously installed by the society in 1995. Finance for the new memorial was generously granted by Selby's Central "Community Engagement Forum" and the event was attended by Selby Civic Society chairman Michael Dyson and members, Councillor Ian Chilvers, chair of the CEF, and the Reverend Canon John Weetman, vicar of Selby Abbey, who performed a dedication ceremony, after which a commemorative wreath was laid.



David Moss

WINTER 2017/2018 NEWSLETTER VOL 13-4 PHOTO COMPETITION RESULT

The photos on page 19 were, in alphabetical order, from the following YHACS Societies:

Bradford, Castleford, Goole, Halifax, Pontefract, Ripon, Selby and York.

Question was - *How do these places lead to the number 98?*

Alphabetically, B=2, C=3, G=7etcY=25

Add 'em all up and the total is 98. QED!!

Here's another brain teaser to solve:

What's the letter associated with 8 in this series?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
P	L	T	Q	P	H	H	?

E-mail your answer to me.

Editor





Reg. Charity No. 1112290

www.yhacs.org.uk

Please send any articles, comments, letters or questions to the editor:

David Moss

Tel: 01757 268 418

Email:

damos43@yahoo.co.uk

Sat 28th April	YHACS Members meeting in Leeds Civic Hall
Sat 28th July	YHACS Members meeting in Ripon
Tues 8th May	Civic Voice, APPG on "Future of Conservation Areas"
Sat 16th June	National Civic Day
6th - 9th Sept	Heritage Open Days
13th-16th Sept	Heritage Open Days

NEXT YHACS MEETING
SATURDAY 28TH APRIL 1:00 - 4:00 PM
MEMBERS MEETING
 AT
LEEDS CIVIC HALL
CALVERLEY STREET, LEEDS, LS1 1UR
GUEST SPEAKERS:
BILL PHELPS, CHAPELTOWN COMMUNITY HOUSING LTD.
AISLING RAMSHAW, CEG KIRKSTALL FORGE
ANDREW JACKSON, CHAIR, YORKSHIRE REGIONAL GROUP OF THE 20TH CENTURY SOCIETY
CONTACT: KEVIN TRICKETT ON 01924 361180 OR [INFO@YHACS.ORG.UK](mailto:info@yhacs.org.uk)

Executive Officers, Committee Members and Portfolios

The Yorkshire and Humber Association of Civic Societies (YHACS) is the distinct voice of the civic society movement in the Yorkshire and Humber region, and our vision is to enhance the quality of life for all citizens in the region by engaging citizens not only in the protection of local heritage but also in the promotion of sustainable economic development and urban renaissance.