

YORKSHIRE AND HUMBER ASSOCIATION OF CIVIC SOCIETIES

Minutes of the Meeting held via Zoom Video Conference on 25th July 2020.

1. Present

Over 40 members and guests were present, representing 24 YHACS member societies. A full list appears at Appendix 1.

1a. Apologies for Absence

See Appendix 1

2. Welcome from Kevin Trickett, YHACS Chair

Kevin welcomed members and guests to the meeting, the first YHACS members' event to be held by Zoom and explained how it would run. This would be a shorter meeting than usual, just 90 minutes. At the end of the meeting, members would be invited to submit comments on how things went and whether things could be improved while video conferencing is being used. The original plan was, of course, to meet in person in Addingham when the day would have begun with a guided tour of the village and the meeting would have included a number of presentations about the work of Addingham Civic Society's Environmental Group. As that was not possible, members of Addingham Civic Society had been asked to put some short video presentations together, including an overview of the village, and these had been loaded onto a new Vimeo webpage that YHACS had opened. YHACS members were encouraged to look at the films if they hadn't already done so. Kevin thanked Addingham Civic Society for their help with this and expressed the hope that YHACS would be able to visit the Society in person at some future date.

3. Minutes of the meeting at Pontefract on 26th October 2019

Kevin requested errors and omissions via the Chat facility. There were none. The minutes were then treated as being proposed by Helen Kidman, seconded by David Moss and, as there were no comments or objections, they were approved by the meeting.

3a. Matters Arising.

There were none.

4. Chairman's report

Kevin explained that using Zoom for a YHACS main meeting with 40+ participants was something of an experiment and that members' comments on this format would be welcomed so that the YHACS committee could make any changes to the format for future events held in this format.

During the Emergency, Kevin said that he had continued to be busy, hosting several of the 'In Conversation' events for Civic Voice webinars which, not being constrained by geography, had achieved international exposure for Civic Voice and enabled lots of people to make contact via the 'Chat' facility. Kevin said he had also been doing a lot of research – it seemed that many organisations had been producing reports during lockdown – and he would be saying more about these later in the meeting.

The West Yorkshire devolution deal had been circulated for information and YHACS had submitted comments. It is likely that devolution will be rolled out further across the region in due course.

Kevin had continued to provide advice and support to societies via phone and Zoom – it was clear that many societies were now experimenting with using video conferencing for their committee meetings and events. He had sat in on a talk hosted by Richmond Civic Society which had been both informative and enjoyable.

5. Treasurer's report

Alan Goodrum advised that YHACS funds totalled £7925.03 including a sum of £454.40 for Market Weighton CS, which continues to tick over having held its AGM earlier in the year (by Zoom) but was not organising any other events until local residents took over.

6. Our changing high street – what can civic societies do? Kevin Trickett

Kevin posed this question to members and made a short presentation on the main issues.

High Streets were in decline in many places, with shops closing and unoccupied offices. These changes were expected to accelerate post Covid 19. What was the role of the community in shaping the future? How could central business districts be re-purposed? What temporary changes were likely to become permanent?

How could societies become fully engaged in this debate?

A number of reports had been issued by a range of organisations to engage with these questions. Kevin outlined just some of these (all of which he had read!) and advised that a reading list and links to the various documents would be attached to the minutes (see Appendix B).

Members were invited to contribute ideas and cite examples of good practice, possibly as articles for the next YHACS newsletter.

7. Master Planning – Paul Cartwright will talk about how Pontefract Civic Society engaged with the local master planning exercise

Paul's slides and a copy of the MOU are circulated with these minutes.

8. How can civic societies survive Covid? Kevin Trickett

Kevin said that it was important for civic societies to keep going during these difficult times. He appreciated that some societies would be better prepared than others and more readily able to switch to running on-line events, but he urged everyone to give some thoughts to what they could do as it would be some time before anything like 'normal' would return.

In particular, Kevin advised civic societies to consider the following:

- a) Think about the bottom line – where is your income going to come from? Can you afford not to raise funds?
- b) Collect membership subscriptions where possible – you may have to waive some subscriptions?
- c) Seek other forms of funding – donations/grants etc
- d) Keep in touch with your members!
- e) Move activities on-line – committee meetings, members' events, Heritage Open Days
- f) On-line can include:
 - Video and telephone conferencing – Zoom, Skype, Microsoft Teams, etc
 - Webinars (via Zoom, etc)
 - Video hosting – eg YouTube/Vimeo
- g) Offer limited outdoor activities within the rules – but be prepared to cancel at short notice
- h) For indoor events, you will need to think of being 'Covid-safe' – sanitisation, face coverings, social distancing, etc
- i) Follow Charity Commission guidance on annual returns and AGMs etc

9. News from Civic Voice – Helen Kidman

CIVIC VOICE UPDATE JULY 2020

Helen reported that Ian, Sarah and Sophie at Civic Voice are keeping well and send their best wishes. They are not yet back at the Coffin Works, but expect to be so soon. The Civic Voice board is meeting via Zoom on 29th July.

There is no date yet for the AGM or 10th anniversary conference.

The webinar series was extremely successful both within and beyond the civic movement.

Next week, board members are discussing Future High Streets and Civic Voice's response to the latest MHCLG consultation on town centres and the impact of Covid 19. The new inquiry aims to understand what short term measures will be needed to ensure that high streets survive, and understand what long-term strategies will enable them to thrive.

Regional Forum Update July 2020

See the Civic Voice update issued 24th July for a picture of the Regional Forum on Zoom.

We last met face to face on 12th March 2020 and then by Zoom on 28th May. The Zoom meeting had a good turn-out of 12 members.

We discussed the results of the survey and how to take the findings forward. The report needed editing before publication.

It was apparent that some societies will need support with long-term challenges but almost all felt they would get through the emergency.

A large number of societies are using video conferences successfully.

Very few societies have suspended all activities.

There were concerns about the functioning of local authority planning during the emergency. Many LAs had moved meetings to Zoom and it wasn't always easy for the public to speak.

Some less well-established civic societies are suffering from lack of funds.

Some LAs were re-allocating street space in town centres and civic societies were encouraged to lobby for improvements. Not much consultation though!

The CV webinars were anticipated enthusiastically and were subsequently very well-received.

Next RF meetings are scheduled for 10th September and 5th November 2020 both on Zoom.

10. Just a Minute – a round-up of news and views from local societies (where each society present gets to speak for just one minute!)

Alan Nicholson (Grimsby and Cleethorpes CS) reported that the events celebrating the Mayflower sailing in 1620 had not taken place. They were planning their AGM on Zoom and having a talk on carbon reduction.

Susan Spibey (NW Amenity and Civic Societies) reported that NWACTS was meeting on 3rd August via Zoom and were considering holding their AGM on Zoom. She recommended that Neighbourhood Plan teams and Neighbourhood Forums should become members of civic societies.

Margaret Hicks Clarke (Goole CS) reported that the society was represented on the Town Deal Board, which had received £750k from government. They are bidding for a further £25m next year for local improvements and are optimistic about the outcome. The society had had high turn-outs at on line meetings.

Sue Wrathmell (Skipton CS) A report on Coach Street, Skipton covering safety, pollution and signage has become part of a successful HAZ application.

Caroline Curr (Whitby CS) reported that they too, were on the Town Deal Board. A Whitby CS project had been added to the action plan, renovating an old chapel as a creative industries workspace.

All contributors were invited to pass details to David Moss for the next *Society Insight*.

11. AOB

Geoff Hughes of Huddersfield raised the issue of the major improvements to the Transpennine Rail improvement programme and the issue of Huddersfield railway Station which is G1 listed. Concern was raised about the Northern Transport Acceleration Council which appears to have sweeping powers. £589m has been granted for the Huddersfield to Dewsbury section improvements. There is potential conflict with the Transport for the North agenda. The YHACS committee will add this to their next Zoom agenda as there are impacts throughout the region.

Kevin Trickett reported that there were no plans yet for the YHACS AGM in terms of booking a venue. It may need to be held on Zoom if restrictions remain in place.

12. DoNM

The next meeting, co-hosted by Halifax CS, will be via Zoom on 26th September 2020.

Appendix A

LIST OF PEOPLE ATTENDING AND APOLOGIES RECEIVED

	Society/Organisation	Surname	First Name
1	Addingham Civic Society	Barett	Don
2	Addingham Civic Society	Battarbee	Gill
3	Addingham Civic Society	Battarbee	Rick
4	Addingham Civic Society	Hindle	Jane
5	Addingham Civic Society	Johnston	Dave
6	Addingham Civic Society/Market Weighton CS/YHACS Committee	Robinson	Jim
7	Addingham Civic Society	Sykes	John
8	Beverley Civic Society/York Civic Trust	Burrows	Chris
9	Doncaster Civic Trust	Coote	Peter
10	Doncaster Civic Trust	Mellows	Rowena
11	Dronfield Civic Society	Hinchcliffe	John
12	Goole Civic Society	Clarke	John
13	Goole Civic Society/Market Weighton CS/YHACS Committee	Hicks-Clarke	Margaret
14	Great Grimsby Ice Factory Trust	Bassett	Graeme
15	Great Grimsby Ice Factory Trust	Bassett	Teresa
16	Grimsby & Cleethorpes Civic Society	Nicholson	Alan
17	Halifax Civic Trust	Connolly	Eileen
18	Halifax Civic Trust//Market Weighton CS/YHACS Committee	Goodrum	Alan
19	Halifax Civic Trust	Paxton-White	June
20	Halifax Civic Trust	Witcher	David
21	Horbury Civic Society	Roberts	Graham
22	Huddersfield Civic Society	Hughes	Geoff
23	Hull Civic Society/Scarborough Civic Society/Market Weighton CS/YHACS Committee	Sharman	Malcolm
24	Ilkley Civic Society	Cockshott	Alex
25	Ilkley Civic Society/Market Weighton CS/YHACS Committee	Kidman	Helen
26	Leeds Civic Trust/YHACS Committee	Hamilton	Martin
27	Leeds Civic Trust	Kitching	Lynda
28	Market Weighton Civic Society/YHACS Committee	Leonard	Tony
29	North West Association of Civic Trusts and Societies	Spibey	Susan
30	Pontefract Civic Society	Cartwright	Christine
31	Pontefract Civic Society/YHACS Committee	Cartwright	Paul
32	Ripon Civic Society	Hughes	Christopher
33	Ripon Civic Society	Taylor	Richard

34	Scarborough Civic Society	Bridgewood	Glen
35	Scarborough Civic Society	Bridgewood	Pete
36	Scarborough Civic Society/Market Weighton CS/YHACS Committee	Cooper	Peter
37	Scarborough Civic Society	Perry	Adrian
38	Scarborough Civic Society	Perry	Chris
39	Selby Civic Society	Craw	Brendan
40	Selby Civic Society	Moss	David
41	Skipton in Craven Civic Society	Wrathmell	Sue
42	Wakefield Civic Society	O'Donnell	Mike
43	Wakefield Civic Society	Swift	Kevin
44	Wakefield Civic Society/Market Weighton CS/YHACS committee	Trickett	Kevin
45	Whitby Civic Society	Curr	Carolyn
	Apologies		
1	Beverley Civic Society	English	Barbara
2	Beverley Civic Society	Pane	Jane
3	Hull Civic Society	Fowler	Cynthia
4	Leeds Civic Trust	Taylor	Jane
5	Wakefield Civic Society	Holwell	Margaret
6	Wakefield Civic Society	Spawforth	Pat
7	Wakefield Civic Society	Spawforth	Peter

**Reading List for Agenda Item 6
Our changing high street**

These are the reports (with links to websites) referred to by Kevin Trickett in his presentation:

1. **The Grimsey Supplement** –
<http://www.vanishinghighstreet.com>
2. **Turning the Tide: The Seaside Regeneration Report** (Estates Gazette)
<https://secureforms.egi.co.uk/EG9HJ-turning-the-tide>
3. **Streets for Pandemic Response and Recovery (NACTO)** – National Association of City Transport Officials
<https://nacto.org/streets-for-pandemic-response-recovery/>
4. **Take Back the High Street** - Power to Change
<https://www.dtni.org.uk/news/power-change-calls-communities-take-back-high-street#:~:text=A%20new%20report%20from%20Power%20to%20Change%20%28PTC%29,measure%20of%20economic%20health%20in%20towns%20and%20cities.>
5. **Garden Villages and Garden Towns** - Transport for New Homes
<https://www.transportfornewhomes.org.uk/the-project/garden-villages-and-garden-towns/>
6. **Healthy Homes? - Thirty Examples of Permitted Development Conversions** - TCPA & UCL
https://www.ucl.ac.uk/bartlett/planning/sites/bartlett/files/tcpa_room_the_breathe_examples_-_clifford_et_al.pdf
<https://www.tcpa.org.uk/Blog/lifting-the-curtain-on-pdr>
7. **Living with Beauty** - Building Better Building Beautiful Commission, MHCLG
<https://www.gov.uk/government/groups/building-better-building-beautiful-commission>
8. **Build, Build, Build! – New Permitted Development Rights being proposed.**
See, for example
<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-laws-to-extend-homes-upwards-and-revitalise-town-centres>
<https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2020/jul/24/our-slum-future-the-planning-shakeup-set-to-bligh-british-housing>

9. **Research on existing Permitted Development Rights** - MHCLG

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/902220/Research_report_quality_PDR_homes.pdf

10. **15-Minute towns and cities** -

<https://360.here.com/15-minute-cities-infrastructure>