



Member of



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**"ENVIRONMENT
& COVID-19"**

TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE TOWN AND CITY CENTRES

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In thinking about the future of our town and city centres, we need to work out the implications of environmental sustainability.

Many town and city centres face a crisis of vacant or underused buildings as a result of changing patterns of retailing and may soon face another crisis as a result of increased home working. The response to the crisis must not be short-term, however. We need bold visions that go beyond 'business as usual' to embrace a sustainable future. The preparation of visions and plans, even idealised or outline plans, has the potential to generate new ideas, to act as an educational device for a local community and to involve the local community. Civic societies have likewise a responsibility to promote public education and to work with other local voluntary associations in the promotion of ecological alternatives.

Planning for a sustainable future also implies a new concept of urban space, as an *assemblage* of different elements. A typical urban street provides a good example of an assemblage with its varied elements of shops, houses, road, pavement, traffic flows, pedestrian flows, occasional trees or green landscape and advertisements. Some of these elements are human; some are non-human and some, such as motor vehicles, involve a combination of human guidance and non-human technology. Some elements are part of a property market and therefore affected directly by market trends such as the decline in retailing: some are outside the market and provided or managed by public agencies: some are based on the most recent technology and others on old, possibly obsolete technologies. Some are coherently linked together, such as the existence of advertisements, shops and shoppers. Other elements, such as the motor traffic and the pedestrians, have no obvious functional relationship and conflict with one another. Yet they all coexist with one another in the same place.

The functioning of an urban assemblage requires a degree of co-ordination, collective support and collective protection, whether this is against a disruptive threat, say an incompatible development or against an existential threat such as flooding or unhealthy levels of air pollution. Equally, however, planning for a sustainable future means minimising the external impacts of local activities and behaviours, including the impact on resources, global pollution and greenhouse gases.

A sustainable urban assemblage therefore requires an exercise in eco-management and eco-modernisation. The routines of eco-management are easily ignored, but to give a leading example from Wakefield: over the past few years, the employees of Trinity Walk shopping centre have gone to great lengths in a voluntary capacity to reduce waste and to reduce the use of damaging cleaning chemicals and in doing so have won an international Green World

Award. (1) Eco-modernisation is more dramatic and has two major elements - improving the thermal performance of buildings and reducing car dependency and motor traffic.

The improvement of the thermal condition of buildings means, above all, reducing the loss of heat in the winter through insulation and controlled ventilation. The necessary measures are long-term and expensive and are unlikely to be capable of full application to listed buildings. Given that gas fired heating will be phased out as a result of national carbon reduction policy, some alternative will be necessary and the example of cities elsewhere in Europe is that district heating systems offer the best alternative, so long as these use renewable sources. Sheffield city centre already has an extensive district heating network, based on a combined heat and power system from a low carbon source, in this case the incineration of waste. (2) Other sources of heat and of renewable energy are also available. Plans for city centres should incorporate, from the outset, a recognition of the likely requirements of district heating, well in advance of the facilities being constructed.

.....Finally, a sustainable city needs green spaces. The spaces do not need to be large.....

Reducing car dependency means the use of extensive measures to slow down or exclude cars- including speed bumps; reduced speed limits; increasing the space for pedestrians and cyclists, with continuous cycle lanes; the creation of car free districts; parking restrictions and the conversion of car parks to other uses. The widening of city centre pavements or the pedestrianisation of a few streets in the centre are a start but do not go far enough. Once traffic is calmed, investment in public transport is more likely to result in an increase in use. Public transport must in this context be protected against the economic threats associated with the current pandemic. The city of Freiburg in southern Germany is the best known international example of long term planning to reduce car dependency, going farther than UK examples. Freiburg also contains examples of eco-districts that use a combination of solar panels and biomass district heating. (3)



Photo courtesy of
"Incredible Edible"

Finally, a sustainable city needs green spaces. The spaces do not need to be large. 'Pocket parks' provided on the sites of demolished buildings are one alternative. In addition, once the space devoted to motor traffic is reduced, new opportunities will arise for tree planting and gardens. Local voluntary groups have a particular role in the conversion and maintenance of vacant land as gardens. A notable example from Wakefield is a project undertaken in 2019 jointly by Incredible Edible and The Ridings Shopping Centre to use part of the roof car park as a mini-allotment (4) (left). There are surely other similar projects elsewhere.

Assemblage planning requires a combination of regulation, selective financial incentives and public investment and that this means bringing together many different local and central government departments and agencies, businesses and voluntary groups. It is, therefore, a complex process influenced by numerous and sometimes conflicting interests- between the supporters of traffic calming and the advocates of road building and car parks, between those

who favour more intensive development and those in favour of open space or conservation, between traditionalists and modernists in design. Economic factors such as the scale of demand for alternative land and building uses and the cost of remedial and modernisation work are also constraints and will, no doubt, be particularly severe in the immediate aftermath of the present pandemic. There will be compromise and blending, with a mixture of policies in different areas. Nevertheless, environmental policy priorities deserve to be clearly stated and pursued.

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Barry Goodchild, Wakefield Civic Society

Barry Goodchild is Professor (Emeritus) of Housing and Urban Planning at Sheffield Hallam University

VIEW FROM THE CHAIR

Well, it has only been three months since I wrote my ‘View from the Chair’ piece for the spring edition of *Society Insight*, yet it seems *much, much* longer: that’s what lockdown does to you. A lot has happened in those three months and yet it feels very much as if nothing has really changed.

Back in April, we were just beginning to adjust to the implications of lockdown; as individuals, we were getting to grips with the new quotidian routine and, as civic society representatives, we were trying to work out what on earth we could do to keep going during this period of isolation.

Now in July, the rules around lockdown are being eased and we are being encouraged to ‘get back out there and enjoy whatever you’ve missed’, albeit to do so safely, of course; but does it *feel* safe? Hand in hand with exhortations to ‘eat out to help out’, the government added the new doctrine of masking up when in shops to the existing requirement to wear them on public transport. If you’ve been out recently and seen people wearing masks while walking along streets marked out with signage urging you to ‘keep two metres apart’, it might feel anything but safe and that we must keep up our guard.

Assuming there is no return to lockdown, whether on a national or a local level, the extent to which we are each prepared to venture out is very much going to be a personal decision. As individuals, we can try to assess the risks we might encounter and take action to mitigate those risks where we can: some level of risk exists in just about everything we do – even sitting at home on the sofa all day carries implications, and therefore risks, for our health and wellbeing. We have to weigh up the risks and decide what is best while taking account of our



own personal circumstances.

Some people have no choice, of course, they have to go out to work because their jobs cannot be done from home – and we should be very grateful that they do. Others maybe are caring for friends and family so have to go out to look after their needs. But what of voluntary groups such as civic societies: should we be trying to resume our usual activities? Should we be organising our regular talks and walks, etc? What are the implications if we do? Would we be better, in fact, delaying a return to ‘normal’ until we are certain that ‘normal’ has truly returned?

I had to go to the building society a few weeks ago. We had to queue outside and only two people were allowed into the branch at a time – one to go to the counter, one to the inside cash machine. After each person had completed their visit, the counter and cash machine were sanitised by a member of staff wearing a mask. While impressed that such measures were being taking to try to ensure everyone’s safety, it was all slightly unreal and even unnerving.

.....should we be trying to resume our usual activities? Should we be organising our regular talks and walks, etc? What are the implications if we do?

If civic societies are to resume their meetings, then committee members are going to have to assume responsibility for sanitising equipment, seats, tables, door handles and so on. They will have to ensure people remain socially distanced – which could significantly reduce the number of people who can attend your talks.

If, having come to your event, your audience members are to be seated in a socially distanced way, there’s a chance they will be sitting further away, not just from each other but also from the speaker and any screen you might be using. What are the implications for the acoustics and sightlines? Will your audience be able to see and hear what is going on? What are the expectations of your venue’s owner or landlord? Have they imposed any requirements on event organisers?

This all assumes that your event, having been planned and advertised, then actually goes ahead. If there were to be another lockdown imposed, would you still be liable for any fees and costs promised or incurred? Could any money already committed be recouped?

I don’t know about you, but I find all this rather troubling for small voluntary organisations to contemplate at present. My own society’s committee and also the YHACS committee share my trepidation about organising face-to-face events at the moment so, somewhat reluctantly, but, I think, realistically, both organisations have decided not to organise any such events, or even committee meetings for the foreseeable future. We may be playing it very safe, but given that alternatives are available, the rationale of safety-first is one which, in my view, has to be followed, especially when you take into account the age profile of many of our members.

So, what are these alternatives?

Well, I’m sure, by now, you will have heard of Zoom video conferencing – and you may already be using it. Other video conferencing options such as Skype

and Microsoft Teams are also available of course, but Zoom does seem to be the one that most people have taken to. If you want to use Zoom, there is a free option but it is rather limiting as each meeting can last no more than 40 minutes – which, after allowing time for people to log-on, join in, check their cameras and microphones are all on the right settings and then say their hellos, can, in fact, be closer to 30 minutes. If you want something more professional, then you are going to have to pay. If you want to be doing events that are open to the general public, you might even think about using the Zoom webinar ‘add-on’, although that is an extra cost.



To use Zoom, you need to download some software and that means opening a Zoom account. I know that some people are uneasy about that and not everyone wants to do it. However, you can record your Zoom meetings and put the recordings onto a video-hosting platform such as YouTube or Vimeo. Again, you can open free ‘starter’ accounts, or you can pay for something a little more professional, but the advantage is that they can be watched by anyone without the need for special software.

YHACS has opened a paid-for Vimeo account (as has Wakefield Civic Society). This enables us to upload videos and presentations to the account which can then be watched by anyone at any time. It is possible to restrict access by setting passwords, as we have for the YHACS summer event. This means that only people who have the password can watch the films that are posted, although you can’t really stop people sharing your passwords with others. Or you can make your videos publicly available. And once on Vimeo (or YouTube), you can embed them into your own website should you wish so that people can watch them there rather than having to go to the Vimeo site.

As I say, there are costs associated with the above – but you can charge an ‘entry fee’ by taking bookings in advance and only allowing people to watch live events on Zoom or seeing password protected videos on a channel such as Vimeo (the latter not foolproof as people can pass the passwords around), or you can simplify things and absorb the cost. You may well be saving money anyway because you will not be paying rental fees for venues for example. We are all on a steep learning curve here. I have had to learn new skills myself over the last few months, sometimes by trial and error (and I have made quite a few of the latter!). But the advantages are obvious. Both at YHACS and at Wakefield Civic Society, we have been able to keep things going. We have held committee meetings, planning meetings and now members’ events on-line.

If you’ve been following the ‘In Conversation with’ interviews that I’ve been doing for Civic Voice over the last couple of months, you will also know of another benefit: when you turn to on-line events, geography need not constrain you! I have interviewed people from all around the country and even had two guest speakers from the USA. Audience members have also come from different parts of the UK and even from abroad (you can watch the recordings now, along with other material, on the Civic Voice Vimeo webpage - <https://vimeo.com/civicvoice>).

So, don’t be timid! If you haven’t already done so, be prepared to give these new-fangled ways a try. Experiment! I know many of your colleagues already have.....I’ve been giving them advice! Richmond Civic Society even invited me to join one of their talks – and very good it was too.

Kevin Trickett, MBE

AGM IN THE DAYS OF CORONAVIRUS

Having been encouraged by Kevin Trickett and the article in the last YHACS newsletter I tentatively suggested that Knaresborough Civic Society should run an online Annual General Meeting via Zoom.

We put the idea to members and received mostly favourable responses, though one or two were against it. Our constitution requires us to have an AGM within 15 months after the last AGM which for us would have meant by 2 July 2020. It seemed unlikely that the 'social distancing' rules would permit this and so it has proved.

So, with some trepidation, I went ahead with booking a meeting on Zoom and contacted members in the usual way which means by e mail or, with a diminishing number needing paper contact, by personal delivery within the town or by post. My previous experience with Zoom is of spending a proportion of the time discussing the technology – no sound or no picture or other problems. Thinking that we might be cut off after 40 minutes (a feature of the free use of the facility), another committee member suggested scheduling two meetings with one to follow the other. We normally arrange a speaker to talk to us after the formal business of the AGM, partly as an incentive towards attendance. Not wanting an outside speaker to be rudely cut off in mid-stream, we asked a friendly local councillor to give us an update on progress with our Neighbourhood Development Plan and he agreed to do so. He was content with the unusual meeting and that he might be cut off. So, we were all set to go, and I copied the details to members including an agenda and the link details for the Zoom meeting(s).

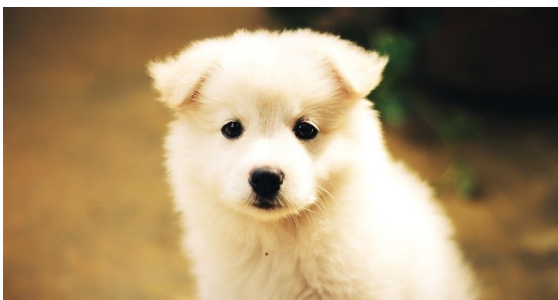
The evening arrived and I logged on and set up the meeting. We managed an attendance of 11 people with some sharing a single computer. It has to be said that we had one AGM in recent years where we had fewer people attending than this. No-one interrupted and there were minimal problems with technology. Formal voting by a show of hands worked faultlessly. Conscious of the time, we managed the formal AGM business in 20 minutes (Kevin would be proud of us). Our speaker took over and gave us a succinct and useful update on our NDP before taking questions. Sadly, during questions, the guillotine fell leaving a question without an answer. With only a slight hiccup most of those present logged onto the second meeting and we continued until all the business was complete.

All those present declared the meeting a success and we are now talking about our next committee meeting being on Zoom as well. With lockdown having eased somewhat we should be able to ensure that the less tech savvy members of our committee are able to share premises with another member.

So, in short, we recommend the process.

Ian Wright

NOTHING SAYS "I LOVE YOU" MORE THAN PICKING UP MY POOP – A TAIL OF TRUE LOVE



The above words are taken from a very endearing and heart-warming video by The Dogs Trust who want to see dog owners take responsibility by picking up after their dogs and reduce the number of resulting poops in public places. A lot of work has been done with Keep Britain Tidy and local authorities to try and change the mind-set of the small minority of irresponsible owners who fail to Bag it and Bin it.

There are estimated to be 8 million dogs in the UK producing over 1,000 tonnes of waste each day. That weighs as much as 200 elephants or 100 double decker buses. A lot of poop!

The Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005 Part 6 Chapter 1

detailed all the new Dog Control Orders, one of the offences being the fouling of land by dogs and the removal of the dog faeces. It applied to any land which is open to the air and to which the public are entitled or permitted to have access (with or without payment).

It laid out what primary and secondary authorities to this were and what powers they would have. If an offence had been seen to be committed, a Notice would be given offering the opportunity of discharging any liability to conviction for the offence by payment of a fixed penalty. This would be the amount specified by the authority which made the order or if no amount specified, £75.

The system of controlling dog fouling under public spaces protection orders was introduced by the **Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014**, replacing the old system of dog control orders above.

It is a legal duty to clean up every time your dog messes in a public place.

NB Those with restricted sight or mobility are exempt from fines and working dogs unlikely to be penalised. Most local councils require dog owners to carry a poop scoop and disposable bag whenever they take their dogs out to a public space. Dog bins are provided to dispose of the dog bag and if none is near, people are required to double wrap the dog bag and place it in a normal litter bin. There is no excuse to leave it.

If your street is littered with dog mess, you can ask your local council to clean it. Fines and criminal offences changed too. People can face an on-the-spot-fine of up to £80 as a fixed penalty notice. Refusal to pay means they can be taken to the local Magistrates Court and fined up to £1,000.

As almost 75,000 complaints were made regarding dog mess in scenic spots in 2015 alone, the regulations do not appear to be a particularly effective deterrent.

Innovative tactics



Various tactics have been employed by councils to try and improve matters.....for example:

e-fit images of offending dogs in an attempt to identify and then fine the owners; and the possibility of deploying drones to monitor canine activity in public areas.



Some councils have attempted to shame owners by spraying dog poo a bright colourthe idea being that the owner's attention will be drawn to it on their return.....

I have to say that I have rarely seen the problem for a long time.

But as soon as lockdown happened, we started to notice more and more poop – everywhere.

Not just in the bags left there presumably for someone else to collect, because that's what happens to litter is it not? or hung in silly places like in the branches of trees – what a hoot! No. This was poop in the raw. In its many shapes, sizes, colours and form. And the problem worsened as the weeks went by.

The really sad thing about this is that it is obviously locals committing the offences. We were on lockdown. Could not blame it on incomers.

Then it became apparent on social media that this was not just a localised issue. Neighbouring villages were experiencing the same problem and calling for people to please stop it. Then I started to read that this was happening in other areas. A report in the Derby Telegraph reported the same problem and people getting angry at the increase in dog fouling during lockdown. The article gave an email address where people could report others not picking up after their dogs.

All such a shame when we should all be pulling together. When we should be ensuring that with more people and children taking walks, the environment is spoiled with a mess which can harm. It can lead to Parvo – a potentially fatal disease which is transferred between dogs.

It can lead to toxocariasis in humans.



Dog mess left near farmland can have devastating consequences for cattle. The faeces can contain a parasite called neospora which can cause cattle to give birth to stillborn calves when nearly full term. It is unsightly and potentially lethal. Which is why we have the laws to try and protect us all and our environment.

The sad thing is that it is not the dog's fault. It is that of the humans who take care of them.

Judith Blackburn
Yorkshire Dales, Roving Reporter

NOTES FROM RURAL FRANCE



In March this year we found ourselves on the wrong side of the channel, although whether you agree it's the wrong side will perhaps depend on how much you like red wine.

We have an old, rambling property in the Aude, not far from the Spanish border, that we ran as a small holiday business for many years. We were travelling this time in order to arrange essential roof repairs, oh the glamour! With all frontiers rapidly closing in front and behind us, we found ourselves three cancelled ferry bookings later, adjusting very nicely to a slower pace of life in rural France where the church clock marks the gentle passing of each day.

Things certainly seem easier in our little village than in the towns, with few people and so much open space, although lockdown here appears to be stricter than the UK. The right papers are necessary to even go for a walk, though I'm uncertain to what degree the gendarmes are enforcing this, even the most dedicated officer is unlikely to be lurking in the hills and forests, at least one would hope.

There hasn't been the binge buying in the French supermarkets that was experienced in the UK, plenty of loo roll, pasta, etc. The only bare shelf has been the boxed red wine, Nick was distraught, we tend to go for quantity rather than quality here. The French also must be distraught, no more handshaking and all that kissy kissy, the introductions would often take longer than the meetings.

Speaking of meetings, with a dodgy internet connection, continuing my role as secretary has been challenging. My first experience of a virtual meeting was not pretty. The internet signal, such as it is, is unable to penetrate the meter thick walls of the old stone house and as John, our Chair, chose the only rainy day in six weeks to hold the Executive meeting, I found myself outside, umbrella in one hand, waving around my mobile phone in the other with the hope of attracting some passing satellite. I swear one of our neighbours came out to ask if I was alright muttering something about, "Crazy Eeenglish!"

Well, I think that's enough for now. Take good care everyone and hope to get back to Whitby sometime.

Cordialements,

Carolyn Curr
Secretary, Whitby Civic Society



BEVERLEY CIVIC SOCIETY IN THE TIME OF COVID-19

Beverley Civic Society has, like all of our societies, lost the Society's summer programme for 2020 to Covid-19.

A highlight was to have been the Spring meeting of YHACS at Beverley planned for 25 April: we hope this will go forward safely in 2021. In the spring of 2021 Beverley will be commemorating a double anniversary, the death and burial of St John of Beverley in 721, whose sanctity was the basis of the future town, and also the visit of Henry V in 1421, to give thanks (rather belatedly, but the king rarely came to England at all) for St John's help in winning the battle of Agincourt. This might add extras to the YHACS visit.

After a month's pause for re-planning our work, we resumed our monthly Executive meetings by Zoom and this has proved quite effective and showed some benefits in terms of efficiency which we might carry to the future. We have enjoyed the electronic contributions from other organisations and allied societies such as YHACS and Civic Voice webinars. Much of the work of the Society in planning and projects continued electronically, although furloughing of council officers meant some matters had to be 'parked.'

Zoom ...has proved quite effective and showed some benefits in terms of efficiency which we might carry to the future.....

To keep in touch with our membership during lockdown, we issued special newsletters at approximately 2-week intervals from 1 April - to entertain and to illustrate some little known features of Beverley. We have had good feedback on the newsletters as 'cheerful,' 'educational' and 'difficult' (the quizzes) . The project also encouraged us to make all our circulations electronic, for with very, very few exceptions that we can work around, all our members now have email. So we can have colour, video, any number of pages, all without cost. All our newsletters can be seen on our website, <http://www.beverleycivicsociety.co.uk/> accessed under the last page of the tab 'Home'.

An example of one of these (No.5) can be viewed through the link below:
<http://beverleycivicsociety.co.uk/assets/civic-society-newsletter-special-5.pdf>

We hope to resume some form of public meetings in September, and are also going ahead with our Heritage Open Day programme, the national theme being 'Hidden Nature' which allows us to concentrate on gardens, much easier to make low-risk than buildings.

**Barbara English (Executive Member)
and Chris Burrows (Honorary Secretary)**

DIVERSE ORGANISATIONS BACK THE FIRST EVER NATIONAL HOUSING DESIGN AUDIT



With the drive to deliver more homes across the country has come a loud call for those developments to be of a high standard of design in order to deliver high quality, liveable and sustainable environments for residents. Research has consistently shown that high quality design makes new residential developments more acceptable to local communities.

To measure this, the Place Alliance (UCL) and CPRE, with the support of Home Builders Federation, Urban Design Group, Civic Voice, Academy of Urbanism, Design Council, UK Green Building Council, and Institute for Highways and Transportation have joined forces to support the first ever national housing design audit. The work is also supported by professional input from Arup, JTP, Spawforths and URBED and a network of specially trained volunteers across the country.

Housing design audits represent systematic approaches to assess the design quality of the external residential environment. The new audit will assess at least 100 large-scale developments across England and will provide enough data for comparisons to be made between regions and different approaches to the delivery of new housing.

Using broadly the same methodology as earlier housing design audits conducted between 2004 and 2007 (see notes), the intention is to look back and see how the design of housing developments has changed over the last decade. It will also provide a baseline against which to measure progress on place-making in new housing development going forward. The audit will be completed in the autumn and will feed into the work of the Government's Building Better, Building Beautiful Commission.

UCL's Professor Matthew Carmona, who is leading the research, said *"We know much about the numbers of houses we are delivering nationally, but almost nothing about their quality. This housing design audit represents an ambitious attempt to address that gap and provide a baseline from which to make more informed judgements in the future about the standard of housing design that we should be expecting, both nationally and locally"*.

Paul Miner, who leads on strategic planning at the Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE), said, *"We are pleased to be supporting the first ever national housing design audit. We need to build many more new homes, but we should also expect future housing developments to meet high design standards, not just in terms of appearance but also in helping us to move towards a zero carbon economy. We are particularly delighted to see the strong cross-sector support that this important piece of work has received."*

The audit is being conducted by a team at the Bartlett School of Planning, UCL, led by Professor Matthew Carmona – m.carmona@ucl.ac.uk
The work is funded by the Place Alliance (see <http://placealliance.org.uk/>) and Campaign to Protect Rural England (see <https://www.cpre.org.uk/>). Paul Miner is leading the work at the CPRE – paulm@cpre.org.uk

The last design audits were conducted on a regional basis by the Commission for

Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) before it was disbanded in 2011, see: [ARCHIVED CONTENT] [Housing audit | Housing | CABE](#)

The design quality of the external residential environment will be measured against seventeen topics:

1. **Community facilities** – Does the development provide (or is it close to) community facilities, such as a school, parks, play areas, shops, pubs or cafés?
2. **Housing types** – Is there a mix of housing types to meet varied local needs?
3. **Public transport** – Does the development have easy access to public transport?
4. **Environmental impact** – Does the development have a low environmental impact?
5. **The locality** – Is the design specific to the scheme?
6. **Existing and new landscape** – Does the scheme exploit existing landscape or topography and create a new bio-diverse landscape?
7. **Character of the development** – Does the scheme feel like a place with a distinctive character?
8. **Street legibility** – Do the buildings and layout make it easy to find your way around?
9. **Street definition** – Are streets defined by a well-structured building layout?
10. **Highway design** – Does the building layout take priority over the road, so that highways do not dominate?
11. **Car parking** – Is the car parking well integrated and situated, so it supports the street scene?
12. **Pedestrian friendly** – Are the streets pedestrian and cycle friendly?
13. **Connectivity** within and with the surroundings developments – Does the street layout connect up internally and integrate with existing streets, paths and surrounding development?
14. **Safety and security** – Are open spaces, play areas and streets overlooked and do they feel safe?
15. **Public, open and play spaces** – Is public, open and play spaces well designed and does it have suitable management arrangements in place?
16. **Architectural quality** – Do the buildings exhibit architectural quality?
17. **Storage and bins** – Are storage spaces well designed and do they integrate well within the development?

Article reproduced from Civic Voice website 29/5/20

<http://www.civicvoice.org.uk/news/diverse-organisations-back-the-first-ever-national-housing-design-audit/>

ADDINGHAM COVID-19 SUPPORT GROUP



During the first half of March it became apparent that the COVID-19 virus was going to affect all our lives in ways we had never imagined. Questions began to be asked, plans changed, meetings were cancelled and life seemed to be about to be put on hold. Supermarkets were swamped with shoppers, shelves emptied and supply chains struggled to meet demand. The unfolding events in Italy and Spain heralded what might be heading our way; even here in Addingham life was about to change. With a higher than average percentage of older residents Addingham needed to be prepared.

Here's our story so far....

This initiative came about on the 16th March at a meeting between the Civic Society, Good Neighbours and the Parish Council. It was resolved to form an Addingham COVID-19 Support Group for those who would be in need during the pandemic.

As a result the Civic Society along with Good Neighbours created a Steering Group comprising, The Civic Society, Good Neighbours, the Parish Council, The Health Centre, The Pharmacy, our 'Totally Locally' Business Group and a local Addingham Moorside resident.

Over the next week funding was agreed for the printing and distribution of an Information Leaflet, a formal Letter of Authorisation was provided for each volunteer and the services of the Parish Clerk and her Assistant were secured to forward enquiries to the group.



Within days a Society volunteer had created a secure database which has been managed on a daily basis since day one. It holds the information for each volunteer and each household requesting support. Volunteers and households can be matched geographically, by type of support required and by the specific skills and abilities of the volunteers.

So, we were up and running and these are some of the things we've been up to over the last three months.

- 33 Volunteers hand delivered 1,600 Information leaflets.
- 1 Volunteer designed a secure database for all the information.
- 3 Volunteers wrote and updated guidelines.
- 4 Volunteers handle all incoming communications.
- 2 Volunteers allocate all support and liaise with individuals.
- 144 Volunteers are offering practical support, such as shopping, errands, dog-walking, gardening etc.
- 23 Volunteers are offering Telephone Befriending.
- 5 Volunteers (Addingham First Responders) are offering prescription collection and delivery.
- 2 Volunteers offer occasional prescription delivery from beyond Addingham.
- 3 Volunteers made 3 paper patterns for scrubs.
- 4 Volunteers made Scrubs for Addingham Health Centre.
- 3 Volunteers made contact with shielded residents.
- 12 people researched the need for an Addingham Fresh Food Bank.
- 38 cheques have been exchanged for cash.
- A resident's beautiful prints have been gifted to volunteers and clients.
- Transport was provided for a key worker.
- Many dogs have been walked many miles.
- Many lawns have been cut.
- And gardens have been gardened!!
- And last but certainly not least, many new friendships have been forged.

And what next?

After a hectic start, routines were quickly established and all has been quiet for a few weeks, so we are beginning to look to the future. Lockdown has eased, shops are opening, those who have been shielding have a new timetable and Boris changed the 2-metre rule. Some of our volunteers have been recalled to work and some residents are now confident enough to do their own shopping. We'll be here as long as we're needed but it is now a scaled down operation. We are currently doing a bit of long-term planning to make sure we could leap back into action without delay should the need arises, but we really hope that won't be necessary.

Next week will, no doubt, bring something different!

PONTEFRACT GOES VIRTUAL IN LOCKDOWN



Following a slight pause at the end of March, our Vice Chair and Citizenship Coordinator, set about turning an 11 day programme of activities for the 75th Anniversary of VE Day into a virtual event, which also supported and promoted a number of socially distanced and independently planned street parties.

VE Day 75th Anniversary – Sat 8th May

This was a massive undertaking, not simply to shift physical and online activities into a condensed online programme as a Facebook event, managing the release of pre-planned posts throughout the day, with additional sharing onto numerous community Facebook pages and groups, and onto Twitter – this was a full time job from 10:30am to 9:30pm!

Having already set up a dedicated Facebook page VE Day/VJ Day, this has also added to our usual civic society audience, and ultimately our reach and engagement as we encouraged members of the public with a connection with Pontefract, Knottingley, Darrington, Ackworth, Featherstone, and Castleford to add their memories of WW2 and tributes to those from all conflicts; that **reach extended to numbers in the region of 100k – 130k.**



- 11:00 The Nation's 2 minutes silence
- 11:30 Photos and posters of WW2 Part 1
- 12:00 Local WW2 news article and WW2 advert
- 12:30 Churchill Victory speech
- 13:00 Photos and posters of WW2 Part 2
- 13:30 Local news article and WW 2 advert
- 14:00 Coming in On a Wing and a Prayer
- 14:30 Photos and posters of WW2 Part 3
- 14:55 Last Post - Royal British Legion
- 15:00 Nations Toast for Peace by Pontefract's Town Crier
- 15:02 Battles O'er
- 15:30 1940s song by "Wor Vera" - A Nightingale Sang in Barclay Square
- 16:00 Photos and WW2 advert
- 16:30 Local news article WW2 Poster WW2
- 17:00 "Wor Vera" -White Cliffs of Dover and WW2 advert
- 17:30 Kings Speech
- 18:00 Photos and posters of WW2 Part 4
- 18:00 Selection of Photos of VE day and WW2 posters (part 5)
- 18:30 1940s song and WW2 advert
- 19:00 Nation's Cry for Peace by Pontefract's Town Crier
- 19:01 Nation's Peal of Bells for Peace
- 19:30 1940s song and posters
- 19:45 Tribute to the Fallen and conclusion
- 20:00 VE Day 75: The People's Celebration, BBC One



With tremendous proven success, this has gone on to become the model for future events using a mixture of content from information, poetry, band, singing and acting performances to slideshows, and static written content and photographs.

Direct reach was low (as it was a new way of working) though extended reach 50,000

Civic Day – Sat 20th June

- 08:00 Welcome from our Chair (video)
- 10:00 Instagram launch went live

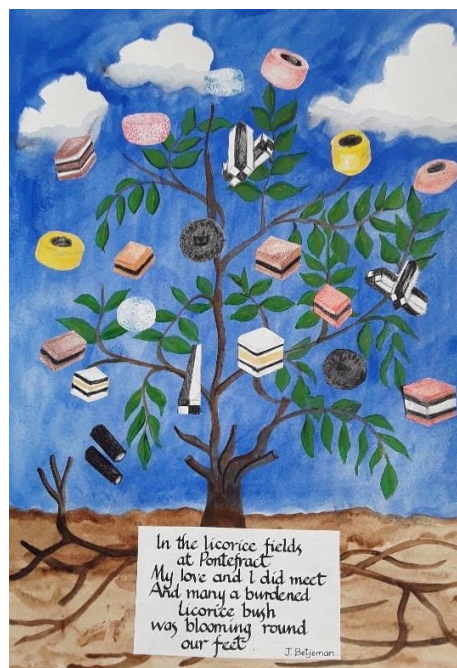
- 10:30 Child-friendly Activity Pack - town centre Blue Plaque Trail, Rachel List Mural Walking Tour, NHS history, quiz and colouring work sheets (document to download)
- 11:00 A Pontefract Poem by Jilly MJ Williams (audio recording with slideshow added)
- 12:00 Around My House litter pick and street clean (self-directed engagement activity)
- 13:00 Pontefract Folks Quiz; answers posted one day later at 10:00 (Quiz sheet)
- 14:00 The Ballot box of Pontefract (written history and photographs)

Direct reach 15,000 [www.facebook.com@PontefractCivic](https://www.facebook.com/PontefractCivic)

Pontefract Liquorice Festival – ‘A Taste of Liquorice’ – Sun 5th July

While Pontefract's annual celebration of liquorice has been cancelled, we will still celebrate our town's rich history of liquorice with this virtual event on Sun 5th July. A number of community groups have come together to deliver “A Taste of Liquorice”. This will include Performance, Facts, Poetry and more. Please feel free to join in and add your photos and memories of past years and connections to liquorice.

We also asked local businesses which were running promotions or offering liquorice-themed products to let us know, so we can add them to the event,



helping to promote them via social media.

- 10:00 History of Liquorice (slideshow)
- 11:00 The History of Local Liquorice Companies (slideshow)
- 12:00 Making Black Liquorice at home (video)
- 12:30 Friarwood Valley Gardens connection to Liquorice and more (slideshow)
- 13:00 'The Lost Liquorice' performed by the children of St Giles with St Mary's Pantomime Theatre Society (performance video)
- 13:30 Children's Activities (downloadable wordsearch, colouring etc) - **see box on left**
- 14:00 The Liquorice Fields at Pontefract - John Betjeman read by the Town Crier, John Turner (video)
- 14:30 Walking map of liquorice garths and blue plaques (heritage and health trail)
- 15:00 A liquorice-themed Art Exhibition from Pontefract Art Club with original works auctioned for the Prince of Wales Hospice (slideshow and individual images)
- 16:00 Tom Dixon, local Pomfretian, talks about liquorice (video)

To view the Schools Package click on
<https://bit.ly/3eKiZc9>

Direct reach 53,100

We also inspired Wakefield Council to do a similar virtual event, Pontefract Allsorts, which they scheduled across the week with a different theme each day. We partnered with and cross-promoted each other event, posts and activities.

Still to come**Yorkshire Day – Sat 1st August**

10:00	The Yorkshire Prayer (written text)
11:00	History of the Yorkshire Flag (online link and image)
12:00	It's all in The Batter (written text and image)
13:00	The Yorkshire Terrier (online link)
13:30	The Band and Bugle of Durham and Yorkshire ACF (performance video)
14:00	Leather, Stumps and Whites and Odd Shaped Balls - Part 1 (online link)
15:00	Leather, Stumps and Whites and Odd Shaped Balls - Part 2 (online link)
16:00	Curd and Whey - a Yorkshire Treat (online link)

Heritage Open Days – 11th – 20th Sept

We are planning a blended event of virtual content and socially distanced physical tours (host locations and tour guides permitting), the details of which are currently being curated.

Throughout Lockdown, we like many civic societies have adapted to the changing circumstances, whilst trying to maintain contact with our usual audience and dramatically increasing the awareness of Pontefract Civic Society.

Paul Cartwright

HERITAGE OPEN DAYS ARE GO!



After some hesitation because of the virus, Heritage Open Days have now been confirmed as running this year. Over 10 days from 11th to 20th September, people and organisations are being encouraged once more to put on a show to celebrate the nation's heritage.

Registration is now open and the deadline to get your events notified to the national HQ has been extended to 24th August. This year's theme is 'Hidden Nature', although that is a suggestion rather than being a mandatory requirement.

Many civic societies are, I know, actively involved in organising events, openings and activities and I hope you will be able to do so this year. However, and as if to prove the point I made in my page 3 article, on-line events are being invited for the first time ever!

For more information, visit the Heritage Open Days website: <https://www.heritageopendays.org.uk/>

Kevin Trickett MBE



ADDINGHAM ENVIRONMENT GROUP PHOTO COMPETITION

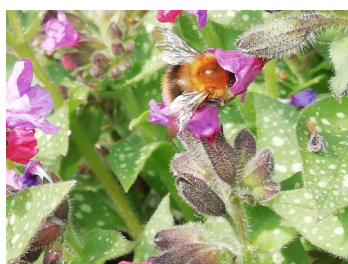
The response from the Village to the decision by Addingham Civic Society's Environment Group to hold a wildlife photo competition during the lockdown was splendid with over 150 pictures being submitted by the 31st of May deadline. Organising a competition like this was just a bit different for the Group, it was certainly a change from wading in the Village's becks, bashing balsam, planting trees, our war on waste, litter picking, etc!

The competition was primarily designed to help the Environment Group's members through a very difficult period and at the same time take advantage of everyone's enforced free time to start building a photo archive of village wildlife. The theme was "Spring" and entries were invited under seven categories: Birds, Bees, Butterflies, Other animals, Wildflowers, Landscape and photos from Children (aged 11 and under).

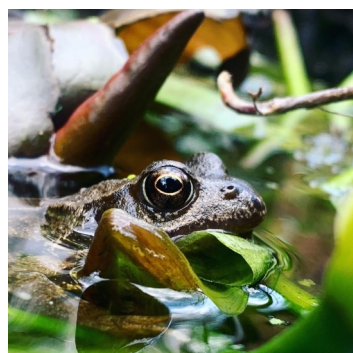
The winning picture of the "butterfly" category chosen by judge Diane Morris was taken by Mel Taylor and this picture went on to become the overall winner, judged by John Fontana and Harry Jevons. Diane commented *"the photo shows the butterfly's mottled green underwings with a hint of orange on the upper wing to identify it as a male, and captures it taking nectar from ladies smock, its main foodplant"*. A delighted Mel said *"I'm grinning from ear to ear - not something that has happened much in recent months"*.



The "birds" category was won by Anne Hodgson with a picture of a grey heron on the River Wharfe above High Mill. Judge Chris Acomb liked its composition, particularly the diagonal of the 'log perch' against the upright position of the heron.



The winning "bees" photo of a tree bumblebee was taken by Ian Benson. Judge Maurice White admired its balance of colour and shade with the tones of the bee in clear natural light.



The "other animals" category attracted a diverse range of entries including roe deer, frogs and mating hedgehogs. The winner was Mary Jenner's picture of a frog in a garden pond. The category was judged by Jan Hindle who commented *"the viewer's attention is drawn immediately to the eye of the frog at the centre of the photograph and the close image allows us to appreciate the textures, particularly of the frog's skin"*.

There were over thirty pictures submitted in the "wildflower" category. Choosing a winner was consequently difficult, but judges Nicky Vernon and Heather Burrow picked out a photo of a wood avens flower by Don Barrett as the winner. They remarked *"the photo is beautifully crisp, nicely lit and*

interesting. You can even see the shadows of the stamens on two of the petals. It repays study and tells you all you need to know about a Geum flower”.

The “**children’s**” category was also well-subscribed with pictures of wildflowers, butterflies, and landscapes, but the winning entry, by seven-year old Evelyn Klatt, was of a “little brown mouse” captured close to the Saw Mill Pond footpath. Head judges John Fontana and Harry Jevons also judged the children’s category. John said that with children as young as five in the competition, rather than technical skills, they were looking for photos that most portrayed wildlife in its natural environment, and where images were composed in a way that made the subject stand out.



“**Landscape**” was the most popular category, such that judge Geraldine Thompson opted to declare three joint winners. The rules for this category required pictures to be taken of landscapes within the parish boundaries or seen from within parish boundaries. Mike Valiant’s picture of the moon indeed followed the rules! Geraldine commented “*an unusual and striking image of tremendous contrast between the cool crisp clarity of the moon’s surface and the deep impenetrable indigo blue of the mysteries of limitless space beyond*”. On Debs Griffiths’ picture she remarked “*a rare and serendipitous opportunity to capture the extraordinary dramatic colourful light at early dawn during a narrow timeline in the short life of the cherry blossom*” and on the third joint winner by John Fontana she said “*this is a quintessentially Addingham spring scene familiar to local walkers*”.

In addition to the eight winning entries there were 40 pictures highly commended by the judges. These can be seen on the Addingham Environment Group’s website: <https://addinghamenvironmentgroup.org.uk/>. The Environment Group wishes to thank everyone for their entries and thanks especially the judges for their help, thoughtful judging and constructive comments. There may well be another competition next year, lockdown or no lockdown.

This wonderful collection of photos will be carefully filed in our archive and when we look back at them in years to come we will remember some of the more uplifting aspects of the ‘Lockdown’. Another example of the amazing Community spirit and Community engagement in this brilliant Village of ours.

Professor Rick Battarbee



YORKSHIRE & HUMBER
Association of Civic Societies

Reg. Charity No. 1112290

www.yhacs.org.uk

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

David Moss

Sat 25th July

YHACS Summer Meeting in Addingham is cancelled, but see below for Zoom replacement meeting

NEXT YHACS MEETING

SATURDAY 25TH JULY 2020

2.30 - 4:00 PM

MEMBERS' ZOOM MEETING

PLEASE REGISTER BY E-MAILING KEVIN TRICKETT

CONTACT: KEVIN TRICKETT AT 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.

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