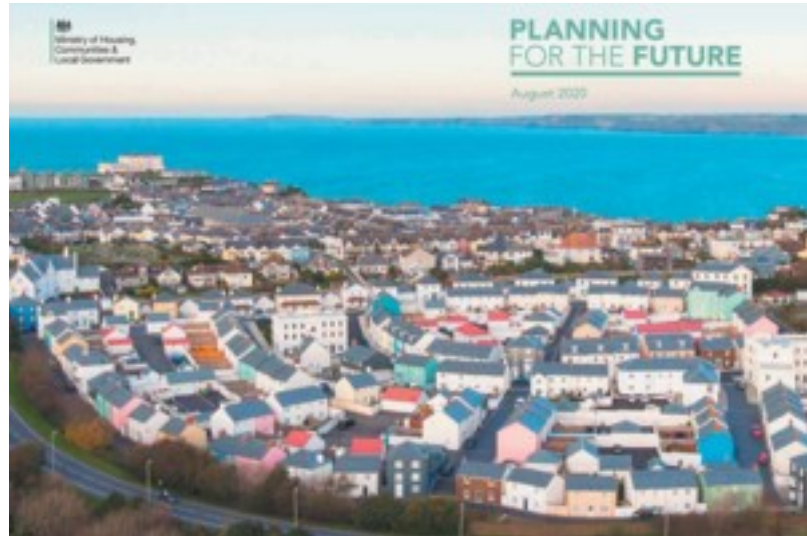


PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE?



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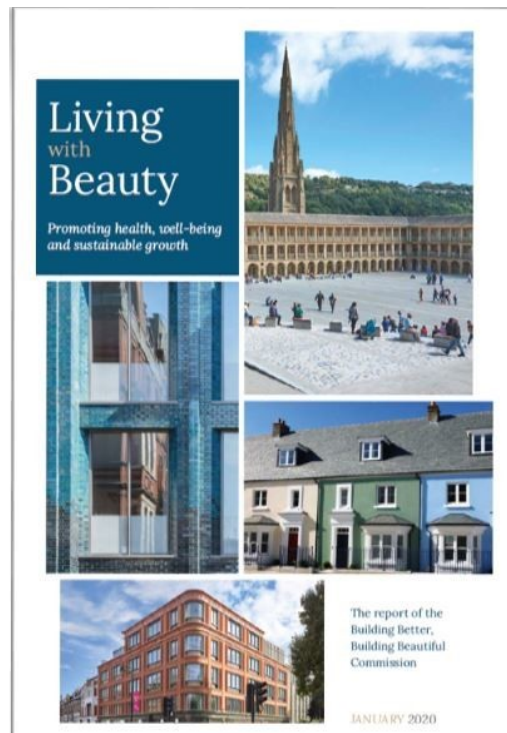
*Future Events.....*19

The Government's planning white paper "Planning for the Future" claims to be the biggest reform to the local planning system for generations. It moves from "planning control" to a rules-based system that intends to free up developers to build as long as they meet publicly declared planning objectives. Inevitably, this article can only scratch the surface of what is proposed, but these are some of the key areas which are included in the proposals:

The local plans process would be streamlined and shortened, with standard ancillary policies determined at a national level rather than locally as at present. Local plans will be expected to be in place within 30 months and housing need would be determined by central government according to a single nationally-applied formula. A central feature will be the identification of zones within which development can take place.

Areas designated as **Growth Areas** - new settlements, urban extensions and large sites will be given automatic outline planning permission subject to the production of an up front masterplan and design code setting out local requirements (e.g. density and height). Detailed applications will be required but will not be subject to community consultation with a presumption that they will be approved as long as they comply with the local plan and design code.

Renewal Areas will allow some development including "gentle densification" – a term used by Create Streets which has filtered through into the white paper. Here, there will be a presumption in favour of particular uses. Permitted Development Rights may be used. If Design Codes requirements are met, approval may be granted through development orders.



Protected areas – for example green belt and conservation areas. These will continue require approval by planning application. Local plans may identify key local features which need to be taken into account.

The “*Building Better Building Beautiful*” reported at the start of the year. Caricatured in the Architects Journal as “*fast track planning for beauty and fruit trees for all*”, many of the recommendations in this report feed into the white paper. In practical terms, fast-tracking beauty seems to include the introduction of an overarching national design code from which local design codes would take their cue. Local authorities would be required to appoint a Chief Officer for Design and Placemaking, and a “son of CABE” – a national design body would be established to support this process.

Another key focus for the white paper is on public engagement. The big idea is that the public are consulted at a macro level (local plans, design codes, masterplans) but not in respect of the detail as at present. The new local planning regime would be completed within 30 months (not up to 7 years as at present.) with a 12-month consultation phase. As mentioned earlier, the quid pro quo would be limited opportunities to comment on individual planning applications – potentially only those that varied significantly from agreed uses, design codes etc. would remain open for public comment. Neighbourhood Plans would need to reflect the local plans and their scope appears to be narrower than at present. Digital technologies are trumpeted as a key public consultation tool.

The final key area is a replacement of the current infrastructure levy regime with a flat rate calculated on the final development value at occupation which would be set nationally.

What should we make of it?

Here at Leeds Civic Trust, we are in the process of finalizing our comments.

Our view is that the current planning process is one with which we all have gripes and concerns. We should therefore judge these proposals on whether they address our (sometimes conflicting) concerns about the planning process. We think that there are clearly some positives to draw from what is being proposed, but equally have concerns about some of the elements included.



An overarching criticism of the White Paper is that it lacks an overall strategic vision for planning. It also reads more like a “green paper” – a lot of the detail is lacking and would need to be worked up and presented before a final view could be taken on the implications of the proposed reforms. The consultation period for the white paper ends on 29th October, but there needs to be a mechanism to further refine the proposals and then re-consult on them in the coming months – the legislative timetable (approval next autumn) seems tight to us. We have a number of specific comments and concerns (for which I thank our Planning Committee member Peter Baker who is co-ordinating our response in Leeds):

The risk of prioritizing growth over placemaking. The starting point should be that the local authority is given the power to set out its vision for development across the district rather than responding reactively to a call for sites. The risk is that issues such as accessibility, community facilities, green infrastructure and employment become an afterthought (some would say plus ça change). Only when these issues are considered can any conclusion be made as to the sustainability of a proposal for development.

Accommodating new conservation areas. The additional protections afforded to conservation areas is welcome, but the proposals do not explain how new conservation areas could be accommodated into an area which has been defined as “growth” or “renewal.”

The dangers of uniformity. The current planning system is unwieldy and can be costly, but a one size fits all approach seems to us to be overkill. The system should allow local authorities and neighbourhood plans to set development management policies unless they duplicate the NPPF.

We do not support the proposition that public consultation should be excluded from detailed design considerations.

Favouring the South East? We think the proposals for a nationally agreed approach to housing requirements is a sound one, this should not be allowed to perpetuate a situation where investment is driven to the south east to the detriment of the regions.

The need for detail. Our view is that as long as local authorities retain full control of the location of growth areas, there is case for allowing outline planning permission as long as the requirements for permission in principle are sufficiently detailed. An area allocated for housing should not be able to become an out-of-town retail park for example.

Involve the public at all stages. We do not support the proposition that public consultation should be excluded from detailed design considerations. Design Codes can only ever be a starting point which are subject to interpretation – it is vital that proposals remain open to challenge. They should be flexible enough to allow for truly innovative design solutions that might not necessarily

comply with the published design code. We also wonder how compliance with a design code – a subjective consideration – will be handled and how appeals would be considered?

Son of permitted development? We have concerns that predetermining forms of development – proposed under the renewal areas – is permitted development by another name. The recent UCL report to government on office to residential conversions showed how this approach can be detrimental to health and wellbeing, and certainly do not contribute to the beauty agenda and space standards. This could only be resolved by a much more comprehensive set of requirements for schemes to meet before approval is granted.

The computer says no. We agree that digital technologies have their place in speeding up the planning process as long as there isn't an over-reliance on algorithms to make what should be subjective judgements on design and beauty.

Tight timescales. We have our doubts that the timescales proposed are feasible for the development of the local plan. If public engagement is to be "front loaded" to support this part of the planning process – allowing 6 months for public consultation seems to us to be too short.

Wither neighbourhood plans? We are concerned that neighbourhood plans will have a diminished role in the new regime – effectively limited to contributing to design codes. We consider that they should continue to have force in considering a much wider range of issues.

...it is important that we as civic societies ensure that our voices are heard loud and clear.

Why don't we build houses? We feel that the proposals set up the planning process as the main reason why housing is not built quickly enough. No explanation is given as to why more than a million homes have permission but have not been built or how these proposals will address this. Taken as a whole, the White Paper will not significantly change this reality.

Design is important. We support the proposals for a national design body and the idea that personnel with the local authority should have this function though precisely how this is done (and funded) is an open question.

So, very much a curates egg. As the implications of the proposals are being thought through, there has been kick back from a number of professional bodies, civic societies and even Conservative politicians. There has to be a doubt that the White Paper in its current form will see the light of day as a piece of legislation. Nonetheless, we must assume that many of the key elements – simplification, speeding up the process, the importance of design and (arguably) more centralization and standardization of aspects of the planning process will happen, so it is important that we as civic societies ensure that our voices are heard loud and clear.

**Martin Hamilton
Leeds Civic Trust**

VIEW FROM THE CHAIR

Do you hear voices? I expect that, if you're anything like me, when you read a book you develop in your mind a picture of what the characters might look like. Sometimes, this will be as a direct result of clues provided by the author – she had blue eyes, he had black hair and so on. The actual vision you hold in your mind is, however, one of your own making and personal to you.

But what happens when you watch a film or a TV series that is based on a book before you've read the book? Do you find, like me, that when you turn to the book, the characters come already 'filled in', taking the shape and physical characteristics of the actors who portrayed them on screen?

It's a bit like that when I read a letter or, and more likely these days, an email. If it's from someone I've never actually met or scene, I can only imagine what they might look and sound like. However, when it's from someone I know, then, as I read their words, I see their face in my mind and I can 'hear' their voice.

Now, in running an active civic society, I have met a lot of people over the years. I see them at our events and sometimes we mingle at events organised by others. Occasionally, we might even bump into each other in the street. Regular physical contact enables us to chat about the work of the Society, about things that are happening in Wakefield and even things that are happening elsewhere. I get to know what they are thinking and, in this way, our members provide a useful and important 'feedback loop' on what Wakefield Civic Society has been doing and even what it should be doing. The comments I receive from members help to inform the strategy the Society should adopt on certain matters.

Quite often, members will email me about an event – whether it's just offering their apologies for not being able to attend or, as frequently, picking up on something that was mentioned at one of the events they have just been to. I also receive emails from members in response to my emails to members and, overall, I quite enjoy the exchanges, although it can be demanding. When I send out an email to nearly 300 people, they receive just one email from me, but I open myself up to receiving, potentially, 300 separate replies which I then have to write in response.

...Have we grown so accustomed to lockdown isolation that we've stopped communicating with each other?

Fortunately, it's never quite happened like that – if ever it did, I'd need an assistant. However, what I have noticed in recent months is that the number of emails I receive from members has dropped off markedly. I'm still sending out emails to keep in touch with people and we've been organising events on-line, but I'm not getting much back by way of comment. It's also noticeable that the audience for the on-line events we've run so far has been made up in large part of people who are *not* members (I even had someone from Ottawa tune in for one of my webinars recently).

This has set me wondering. Is it something I've said? Something I've done? Am I alone in noticing this change or is it in fact something about the mood of our members and perhaps, therefore, reflective of what might be called the national mood occasioned by six months of lockdown? Have we grown so accustomed to lockdown isolation that we've stopped communicating with each



other?

Now, I'm not saying that I've forgotten what our members look like; I can still conjure up their faces and, indeed their voices, but, after six months, their voices are growing fainter and I'm beginning to wonder what will happen if we are faced with another six, or even 12, months of restrictions on our movements.

Civic societies are membership organisations at heart. We run events and, all being well, a good proportion of the members will turn out to support us, yet now we're doing nearly everything on-line, that relationship is starting to change. Yes, some members who haven't been able to attend our events in the past (perhaps because of disability or geographical distance) are now able to participate in on-line events (which rather makes me think we shall be running events on-line to some extent even when lockdown ends), but many of our regular attenders at our physical meetings have so far failed to engage with the on-line programme as far as I can tell.

...Could it mean that we start to place less emphasis on membership in future and more emphasis on providing content and information for the general public?

As an example, we've just run what I regard as a very successful programme of Heritage Open Days 'events' (more on this on pages 16-17). Everything was on-line and we've had a lot of 'hits' on our social media pages showing that people were attracted by the content we were providing. But the stats are, by and large, anonymous; I don't really know who the people are that have been watching – both in the sense that I don't know exactly who has engaged, and also in the sense that when they do reveal their identity by leaving a comment, they are often people whom I don't know – ie, they are not members. Even though we have recruited some new members in recent weeks – people who have seen what we are doing on-line and decided to join as a result, which I take as a positive sign – I'm not getting to meet these new members in person so I can't put a face, or a voice, to them, at least for the time being.

What, then, does this suggest will happen in the future? Could it be a trend that changes the nature of civic societies should lockdown measures force us to continue operating on-line? Could it mean that we start to place less emphasis on membership in future and more emphasis on providing content and information for the general public? Where will our income come from in the future if we can't fall back on membership subscriptions? Will there be opportunities for us to 'monetise' our on-line activity in some way?

Perhaps I'm worrying unnecessarily. I certainly hope so! Maybe the fact that my members at Wakefield Civic Society aren't emailing me is actually a very positive sign – a sign, in fact of contentment with what we are doing? If that is the case, then, great; proof will no doubt come when subscriptions fall due again in January and we see how many of our members renew for another year.

My concern is that I'm really missing my members as I have no way of knowing how they feel about what we are doing and I really want to hear their voices again.

Kevin Trickett MBE

HISTORIC MILE AND BOUNDARY POSTS IN ADDINGHAM

We've been very busy over the last few months refurbishing these five Grade 2 listed 'buildings' (as described by Historic England!) in and around the Village, as you can see from these excellent photos.

They do look smart, but pride of place must go to the Milepost situated at the junction of Turner Lane and Cocking Lane (on the way up to Addingham Moorside) which dates back to 1750!



We've a couple more on our list to renovate although they are located rather too close to the roadside for comfort, so we'll see how we get on! We have a very popular Blue Plaque Trail leaflet and we are now planning something similar for these wonderful historic landmarks, when we've done a few more, that is!

As a matter of interest, the Parish of Addingham has 120 listed buildings, 2 of which are Grade 1 listed.

It is amazing how many thank-you's, Social Media 'likes' and WhatsApp messages we've received from delighted and appreciative residents.

Makes it all worthwhile!

Jim Robinson

RAIL TRANSPORT ISSUES HIGHLIGHTED BY HUDDERSFIELD CIVIC SOCIETY

Civic societies routinely comment on some transport matters, such as proposed new road or cycling schemes, but why has Huddersfield Civic Society's interest in transport matters recently extended to actively supporting improvements to its main through rail service?

Firstly, some background.

On 24 June Kirklees Council formally approved its 'Huddersfield Town Centre Blueprint' (<https://www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/huddersfield-blueprint/index.aspx>), a ten-year vision to regenerate six key areas of our town centre. This is now a formal Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) intended to guide future development in the town centre. Huddersfield Civic Society supports the Blueprint and very much welcomes the plan for its 'Station Gateway' component, this essentially being to improve (and bring back into use) numerous historic listed buildings, some in front of the Grade 1 listed station and some in the former warehouse area behind the station. We badly want more than just empty buildings in front of, and car parking behind, the grand Victorian gateway to our town centre.

So far so good.



The facade of Huddersfield Railway station in 2019

Photo from Huddersfield Civic Society website

Secondly, there have long been proposals to improve the Transpennine rail line through Huddersfield that links Manchester and points beyond to Leeds and many other towns across Yorkshire and the North East. Over the last year Network Rail has run initial consultation exercises on its proposed scheme to reduce delays, improve capacity and build a lower-carbon railway for just the central section of the line, ie between Huddersfield and Dewsbury.

Huddersfield Civic Society has commented (largely positively) on Network Rail consultations to date, whilst being concerned that the heritage Huddersfield station building environment be properly considered. On 23 July the

Department of Transport announced £589m of funding “for work to upgrade and electrify the Transpennine main line”. This might appear positive news. And you might wonder why this has led Huddersfield Civic Society Committee’s Transport sub-group to become heavily involved in this subject.

The challenge we have is that many decisions regarding Station Gateway plans depend on clarity regarding the plans for the station itself. These include changes to the number and location of tracks and platforms and also a desired additional station entrance. Yet, the government announcement itself is very unclear and simply announces an amount of money stated as intended to be spent on (unspecified) rail improvements between Manchester and York with more specific plans and budgets yet to be produced. That is all.

The Society now fears prolonged planning delay blight. Not only might there be no substantive improvements to train services, but uncertainty may prevent regeneration around the station starting. Hence we have become involved in local lobbying effort to help progress the Transpennine scheme through Huddersfield, starting with a letter from our chairman to the Yorkshire Post in July and now being followed by further work with our Council and with other local groups, such as the local business-based group, Huddersfield Unlimited.

The Huddersfield Civic Society wants both an improved, lower carbon transport system and a clear framework for regeneration around our town centre’s rail transport hub - the future success of the town depends on the “full” Transpennine upgrade proceeding from Manchester to Leeds and beyond.

Geoff Hughes

THE IWHARFE PROJECT

Together with the Yorkshire Dales Rivers Trust, the Ilkley Clean River Group and the Environment Agency, the Civic Society’s Environment Group has been co-ordinating a major citizen science project to draw attention to problems of water quality in the River Wharfe.

The River Wharfe Big Health Check
24th August 2020

Improving water quality on the River Wharfe from Oughtershaw to the Ouse: a citizen science project

Yorkshire Dales Rivers Trust | Ilkley Clean River Group | Addingham Environment Group

Taking and analysing water samples from Oughtershaw to the Ouse on one day to obtain a snapshot of water quality conditions along the full length of the River Wharfe

We want to draw attention to the problem of river water quality and help to find solutions.

We are citizen scientists representing community groups from along the Wharfe working together with Yorkshire Dales Rivers Trust, The Yorkshire Dales National Park and the Environment Agency

For more information visit: <http://www.yorkshiredalesriverstrust.com/projects/iwharfe/>
For enquiries, email: aeg@addingham.info

It was called the **River Wharfe Big Health Check** and it involved five teams of volunteers taking water samples at 60 sites along the entire 124 km length of the river, from the headwaters in Oughtershaw to the confluence with the R. Ouse at Cawood, on the same day. Sites in Addingham included the main river at High Mill, the Suspension Bridge and Low Mill Weir, and three tributaries, Wine Beck, Town Beck and Lumb Beck.

The water samples are being analysed by specialist laboratories for faecal bacteria (*E. coli* and intestinal enterococci) and for nutrient chemistry (nitrate and phosphate). The faecal bacteria data will be used to raise awareness about the health risks faced by recreational users of the river, especially

swimmers, whereas the nitrate and phosphate data will be used to indicate the ecological health of the river.

The dominant pollution sources include runoff from agricultural land and direct discharge of both treated and untreated sewage from Waste Water Treatment Plants. The group hope that the results will highlight pollution hotspots along the river and will help to draw attention to problems of river water quality both locally and nationally and support the Rivers Trust campaign to make our rivers “fit to swim in”.

The project has already attracted significant media attention both from BBC Look North and BBC Countryfile. Further attention is hoped for once the results of the testing are available.

The total cost of the project was £13,000 raised mostly from local councils and charities along the valley, but the group also launched a JustGiving campaign to raise £3,000. The target was reached in less than two weeks and the Environment Group would like to thank in particular all those Addingham residents who made donations, some of them very generous.

This is the first time an entire river has been sampled in this way. Depending on results (and funding) a similar campaign will be organized for the summer of 2021.

For more information visit the Yorkshire Dales Rivers Trust:

<http://www.yorkshiredalesrivertrust.com/projects/iWharfe>

Rick Battarbee
Addingham Civic Society Environment Group



NEWS FROM SKIPTON CIVIC SOCIETY

Skipton Civic Society is pleased to be involved in the Skipton Heritage Action Zone, and has submitted its Coach Street Project, plus High Street Buildings evaluations to aid the Project.

The Society is also pleased that now in post is one full time plus one part time member of staff, with whom Sue Wrathmell meets, along with other agencies (Highways, Craven DC etc.) to further the aims of the HAZ project, which is so important to this tourist heritage destination.

On Facebook for HODS there is a virtual tour of some of Skipton's pubs, or former pub buildings with interesting histories, put together by Claire Nash and other committee members.

The Society has been keeping in touch with virtual committee meetings.

Of concern is the proposed division of North Yorkshire, and loss of Craven District Council as the Planning Authority.

Sheila Clark

BUSINESS AS USUAL IN SCARBOROUGH

I would like to be able to report that the national problem of declining town centres had passed Scarborough by but unfortunately it wouldn't be true. However, it would be true to say that Scarborough is trying to fight back and improve the visitor experience by making the town a pleasant and fun place to enjoy.

To make the changes / improvement you need money and the support of the community as well as central and local government. So Scarborough Borough Council have set up a number of initiatives to identify projects and find funding to enable implementation. Our society is involved and fully supporting these activities so when a simple but necessary project was identified we decided to get on with the project and not wait for a decision on a masterplan which may or may not find the necessary funding.



Bar Street is a very attractive part of the town with many varied and interesting shops. Just the sort of place that make a visit to Scarborough “special” and supplements the offer of national chains which can be found throughout the land. The entrance to the street has a high-level sign which on inspection had become tired and worn with age. Just the sort of thing that makes people feel that the place is rundown and to be avoided.

When we first started we thought that a few hundred pounds and a lick of paint would fix the problem but as is often the case a detailed survey by experts found the cost of restoration to be in the thousands. We were very fortunate to be offered a good slice of money from the North Yorkshire County Council Locality Budget so this will enable us to press ahead with this project.

Our society has had a good record of this kind of public realm restoration project, so it is particularly pleasing to be working on this at a time of pandemic when it seems that most things are on hold.

Adrian Perry



ROVING REPORTER IN THE YORKSHIRE DALES

In 1954, the National Federation of Women's Institutes pass a resolution to "Keep Britain Tidy."



That's 66 years ago. And the photo above, taken from the History of the Keep Britain Tidy website, reminds me very much of the state our countryside is in currently.

The Campaign became a Charity in the 1960s and has campaigned since then to influence behavioural change. In the 1970s, it started to have a huge impact on people's attitudes when it came to litter and littering by featuring celebs of the day, like ABBA. Posters such as the one of Dixon of Dock Green were published with slogans like "Litter is offensive. First offence up to £100". Perhaps that was in the day when the presence of the local Bobby still meant something and a £100 fine would cause some pain to the bank balance.....

You'll probably remember their Please Keep Britain's Beaches Beautiful campaign in 1987, with the launch of the Blue Flag Award.

People and Places was launched in 1989 with some of the cast of Corrie Street sweeping litter off those wonderful cobbles.

The list goes on.

The BBC News did an item at the end of June following the easing of lockdown measures in Wales. It reported that the increasing amounts of litter could have a "devastating" effect on health, wildlife and tourism in Wales. Crowds gathering in public places had resulted in some beauty spots being "treated like a rubbish tip" and tourist areas soiled by litter.

Volunteers said that they were struggling to cope with the clean ups. The report gave quite a comprehensive list, plus photos, of all the places within Wales – countryside and seaside alike – where litter was causing distress.

A spokesman from Keep Wales Tidy said that *“Everybody needs to take collective responsibility to stop this from happening. People need to take their litter home. This one simple change will make a big difference.”*

Anti-litter campaigners in Monmouth said they were struggling to cope with the “huge quantities” of litter left on the banks of the River Wye and had appealed for residents’ help. One volunteer said *“We are so lucky to live in such a stunningly beautiful part of the country, which we share with some amazing wildlife. Littering here is thoughtless on so many levels.”*

This was the end of June. July and August have seen many similar reports nationwide. I heard a representative from The Lake District National Park a couple of weeks ago on the Today programme, appealing for people to please stop treating the hills like festival sites and to take their tents away with them. Another report said that in June, more than 200 people were caught wild camping in the Lake District with 20 fined for having a party and others for lighting fires.

In The Telegraph on 27th July, they reported that patrols had been set up to prevent wild camping as police cracked down on “illegal” staycations. Authorities across the country had reported a rise in people camping at beauty spots without permission or parking campervans illegally. The National Trust had just said that it had seen a huge increase in so-called “fly camping”, with litter and remains of campfires left behind. In the Dales National Park here in Grassington & Threshfield and in neighbouring villages in Upper Wharfedale, we have experienced all of the above. Just down across the field from me, I have seen masses of people – not self-distancing or in small groups – having great fun for weeks now on the riverside. The rangers have been putting up new signs saying that BBQs are not permitted. They are ignored and the detritus is left all along the river banks. Locals have been litter picking all the thrown away meat, fruit, wrappers and BBQs because if they didn’t, who would?



The spectacular Threshfield Quarry is a disused limestone quarry where work ceased in 2000. Tarmac undertook a programme of site clearance and restoration ground works to prepare the site for long term access and development. In 2012, a Development Trust was incorporated to oversee the implementation of a combined economic and cultural vision for the future of the site. It was open to the public and locals and visitors were able to follow footpaths around the unique limekiln areas and up and out onto the landscape of the Dales. It was a much-loved area for

walking locally and affords many footpaths and sights, as well as the historical information and heritage trails.

One of the most beautiful things was the water collected in the basin of the quarry. It was a deep blue because of the presence of the limestone which was once extracted here. It gave the appearance of a tropical lagoon and was known as The Blue Lagoon. I sent pictures of it (amongst others during springtime) to friends as part of the scenes I saw locally during lockdown. I'm so glad I did. It has gone.

Tarmac closed the quarry to the public at the end of May after large numbers of people had gathered to hold "Ibiza style" parties at the lagoon. It was still lockdown and yet massive numbers had broken the restrictions and congregated to party, eat and drink. Photos taken of the mess left were circulated on social media and then as always, it was up to the locals to keep clearing litter from the site after revellers had left.

Young people had also been jumping into the lagoon (despite many signs warnings of the dangers) and there were concerns that with drinking and possible drug use, that someone may come to harm. A North Yorkshire public safety officer had to tweet that the quarry was closed permanently, so not to waste a journey travelling there. The lagoon was blasted to prevent further "parties."

As early as 11th June, the BBC did an environmental report on why litter was surging as lockdowns ease, in what was called the Covid-19 effect.

As Brits embraced the opportunity to throng beaches and beauty spots, images of the mounds of rubbish left in their wake have made headlines and sparked outrage. Research suggests that littering can be challenging to eradicate in the best of times and these clearly aren't the best of times. So, what is it about current circumstances which are driving this surge and what, if anything, can we do to contain it?

In general, people justify littering by saying that bins are overflowing or too far away.....although others believe that the root cause is just plain laziness or ignorance.

In some places, rubbish and recycling was disrupted by the Covid pandemic. It is thought that waste disposal depends on "social proof", or the copying of others behaviour. A coaching psychologist from the University of Wales said that if a place is seen to be full of litter and a mess, people are more likely to think that it doesn't matter and if you see someone dropping litter, you're more likely to drop it yourself. A large body of research backs this point and it partly explains why littering is more common among young people and people with a weaker attachment to their communities. Feeling part of a small group is especially important and it's awkward to hang on to an empty can for the recycling bin, if mates have already thrown theirs to the floor.

The pandemic may also be having a psychological effect. Perhaps caring for the environment isn't top of people's agendas right now. When people are stressed or distressed, they go into more-or-nothing thinking and also, perhaps the people quickest to head for the beach, may not be the most cautious of

people overall.

Lockdown rules have changed the way people are socialising and now many are using parks and open spaces in ways they hadn't before. It is suggested that people aren't necessarily being wilful or malicious when discarding pizza boxes and plastic cups in public, but not thinking through the repercussions of their behaviour.

There has been a historical trend towards disposability and for several reasons, the pandemic has made it more acute. There is more single-use plastic reported as being found along the Thames. In rural England, the main types of litter are fast-food packaging, confectionary wrappers and drinks bottles.

The move towards these types of portable, discardable packaging has been driven by manufacturers who, since WWII have found it more profitable to produce single-use products compared to, for example, glass bottles that were previously used time and time again.

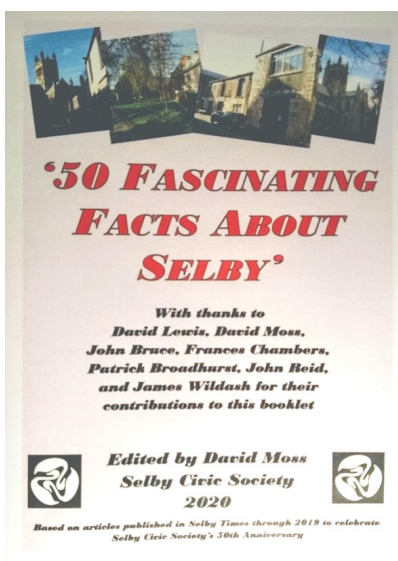
Some environmentalists argue that individual litterers aren't the problem and that the system of disposability needs to be tackled at its root. Building a culture of waste awareness also takes sustained governmental action. But litter is one thing we can all do something about.

Or, it may be as one friend's son commented recently when discussing this subject and how in Europe there are such clean cities and towns, "*England has always been a mucky nation.*"

Judith Blackburn

SELBY'S NEW BOOK

In 2019 Selby Civic Society celebrated its 50th Anniversary. As part of the celebrations of that milestone, 50 significant events - recognising people, places and events significant in the history of the town - were identified and researched by Society members and the 50 articles were published weekly through 2019 in the local Selby Times newspaper.



These were well received, and based on those articles a 76-page book is now being published.

"50 Fascinating Facts About Selby" will be available for sale to the public from October onwards - an ideal Christmas gift for those interested in the town and its history and heritage.

So this is the book to get if you want to know what links Selby to bananas, table-tennis, the American flag or cuckoos; and how a church spire was demolished by a crashing Halifax bomber ... just a few of the fascinating facts!

Email selbycivicsociety@yahoo.co.uk for more information.

David Moss



Wakefield
Civic
Society

HERITAGE OPEN DAYS ..DOING IT ALL ON-LINE

It looked at one time as if Heritage Open Days (HODs) might not happen this year. Then, just as we'd written it off, lockdown restrictions were eased and it looked as if it might be possible to do something, albeit in a limited, socially distanced way.

My own society had decided some time ago, however, that we wouldn't be offering any face-to-face activities for the foreseeable future, so we'd already cancelled HODs in our heads. But then the national HODs team announced that, for the first time ever, they would accept registration of on-line events. On its own, I doubt that

would have changed our thinking but the news coincided with an approach from Wakefield Council asking the five civic societies in the district to consider running activities for HODs and dangled the carrot of small grants to act as enablers.



I put this to my committee and a small group of us decided that we might be able to do something after all - but on-line. We had in mind the possibility of making a series of films about Wakefield's heritage (particularly, its hidden nature, which was a theme of HODs 2020) but we recognised that we would need to buy some equipment to do this – we decided on an iPad and ancillary equipment such as a tripod and external microphone. We also decided that we would deliver some talks (the sort I usually give in village halls and community centres) about Wakefield and its heritage but that to do this we'd need to upgrade our Zoom account to purchase the webinar 'add-on'.

We applied for the grant and were successful but we only found out in mid-August so there was a great flurry of activity then to get things sorted out and to register our events with the national website.

This is what we did:

Two committee members, Fay and Jon Dell, took the iPad out and made eight short films. I took my smart phone and filmed the inside of the Town Hall to create a virtual tour. These films were then edited, topped and tailed and uploaded to the Society's Vimeo account. They were protected by a password to keep them secret until the HODs period started on 11th September when the password was removed allowing anyone to access any of the content.



I also offered four talks (webinars) which were advertised on Eventbrite and run as Zoom webinars. The talks were recorded and afterwards they too were uploaded to the Vimeo account.

We also contacted other organisations and invited them to send us material to put on our Vimeo account. The Cathedral offered us some films of the Cathedral architect John Bailey, talking about the building (I formatted these

but otherwise they were loaded as provided); the National Coal Mining Museum (*right*) sent us three short promotional films; Theatre Royal Wakefield sent us one, as did St Peter's Church at Warmfield and the Gissing Trust, the latter two being created especially for the occasion. We also produced a short trailer that we could use to promote 'what was coming'. In total, we had 22 films in the collection, four of these being the webinar recordings that had previously gone out live.

As well as putting the videos on Vimeo, we also loaded some of them onto Instagram and Facebook and we tweeted about them as well. We even promoted them on LinkedIn!



The Vimeo stats show we had nearly 800 'views' (ie, films watched multiplied by the number of times they were watched) during the HODs period. These 'views' were by approximately 400 individual viewers in 11 countries – mainly the UK of course, but also the US, Canada, Spain, Belgium, Malta, Germany, The Netherlands, Portugal, Australia and India, while Facebook reports that we 'reached' over 11,000 people. (I haven't checked the stats for Twitter and Instagram yet.) This size of audience is, of course, far, far bigger than anything we could have attracted by doing our usual programme of guided walks and talks. We've recruited a few new members already – there's time for more yet! – and orders for our publications have come in from various places around the UK. The audience for my webinars included at least one person from abroad (Canada).

In short, this has been a phenomenal response. We now have to do a formal evaluation report for the Council. The positives have been 'the reach' and the ability to maintain our very public profile during a period when not much has been happening; recruiting the new members and selling a few books was a nice bonus. We've also learned a lot, including new video production skills (which I've been sharing with others!).

The negatives were the considerable time it took to edit and render the films (a very slow process), in part because we were learning as we went. I'm sure we'll be better next time. And things were exacerbated by the short timescale to produce the content once we'd decided to commit to the project. Of course, we now have the equipment to keep and the webinar add-on to our Zoom account runs for 12 months so we can continue to produce new content and broadcast it in this way.

We have been so pleased with our efforts and the positive feedback that we have decided to leave the films up until at least the end of September. There's every chance that we will leave at least some of them up longer or that we will retire them and then bring them back as featured content from time to time to attract new audiences.

If you would like to watch them, you can. They are available here: <https://vimeo.com/showcase/7417682> - dip in and enjoy.

Kevin Trickett MBE



HERITAGE ACTION ZONES CONFIRMED

Historic England has this month confirmed funding for nine Historic High Street heritage action zones in our region (see <https://bit.ly/3mNsfBO>):



Huddersfield	£2,000,000
Barnsley	£1,967,588
Selby	£ 500,000
Wakefield	£1,899,994
Hull	£1,750,000
Sowerby Bridge	£1,997,812
Skipton	£1,278,480
Leeds	£1,300,000
Northallerton	£ 386,480
Total	£13,080,354

The funding is subject to match funding being provided locally, so the overall budget will be more than double the total figure shown here.

Wakefield Civic Society has already engaged on a project as part of the Wakefield Heritage Action Zone – we’re going to produce a new book, put up some new blue plaques and, when it is safe to do so, organise a programme of guided walks around the area. This work will be funded by a grant from the money allocated to the overall project.

I’d be interested to hear what other civic societies are doing as part of their Heritage Action Zone projects. Perhaps we could share ideas and information over the coming months. Do get in touch if you’d be interested in this.

Kevin Trickett MBE



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:

Sat 26th September YHACS Summer Meeting in Halifax will be by Zoom.

Sat 30th January YHACS AGM - provisionally by Zoom.

NEXT YHACS MEETING

**SATURDAY 26TH SEPTEMBER 2020 2.30- 4:00 PM
MEMBERS' MEETING BY ZOOM**

AT

**GUEST SPEAKER
MARTIN HAMILTON, DIRECTOR, LEEDS CIVIC TRUST**

CONTACT: KEVIN TRICKETT ON [INFO@YHACS.ORG.UK](mailto:info@yhacs.org.uk)

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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
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