

Yorkshire & Humber Association of Civic Societies

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www.yhacs.org.uk

Voice of the Civic Society Movement in the Region

BULLETIN 2021-01 (February)

Design Codes

“All new developments must meet local standards of beauty, quality and design under new rules”

The Government has launched a new consultation on the introduction of Design Codes, pledging that “Local communities will be at the heart of plans to make sure that new developments in their area are beautiful and well-designed”.

The proposals outlined in the [press release](#) from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government and published on 30th January include:

- Changes to the National Planning Policy Framework;
- The introduction of a new national design code;
- Encouraging local authorities to publish their own unique design codes so that “residents have a real say in the design of new developments in their area”;
- Creating an ‘Office for Place’ within the next year, which will support local communities to turn their designs into the standard for all new buildings in their area;
- Opening a new Community Housing Fund to support community-based organisations to bring forward local housebuilding projects for the £11.5 billion Affordable Homes Programme, backed by £4 million of support for local plan; and
- Doubling the available funding for areas under the “local heritage listing – monuments men” campaign, with up to £1.5 million now available for communities to nominate local heritage sites including historical buildings or modern architecture, art and memorials for inclusion in their council’s local heritage list.

The proposals are a response to the Building Better Building Beautiful Commission report [Living with Beauty](#), published in 2020.

The [consultation](#) runs until 11.45pm on 27th March and seeks views on:

- Changes to the National Planning Policy Framework – [see here](#)
- Content of the proposed National Model Design Code – [see here](#)

Civic Voice has produced a briefing note on the consultation which can be downloaded [here](#). In addition, Civic Voice is running a number of consultation events:

- 4th March: North West Members' Briefing: [Register here](#).
- 5th March: Midlands Regional Briefing: [Register here](#)
- 8th March: South West Network Briefing: [Register here](#)
- 10th March: East of England Briefing: [Register here](#)
- 12th March: South East and London Regional Briefing: [Register here](#)
- 15th March: Yorkshire and North East Briefing: [Register here](#)

Some of you may have joined the [Create Streets](#) webinar held on 24th February about the new changes which featured Andy von Bradksy, Head of Architecture at MCHLG and David Rudlin, Principal and a director of URBED, commission by MCHLG to work on the National Model Design Code. If you missed the webinar, broadcast at 8.30am, you should in due course be able to watch it later on the Create Streets [YouTube channel here](#).

As ever, YHACS will be following the debate about the proposals and we would like to hear your thoughts. Please send me any comments – and, if you do submit comments in response to the consultation, please send me a copy.

YHACS Subscriptions now due!

Just a reminder that YHACS annual subscriptions are now due. Our treasurer, Alan Goodrum, has emailed our list of contacts within each society asking for payment to be made. We've had a very good response so far but there are still societies we haven't heard from. If you are the chair or treasurer of your society, could I ask that you check to make sure your society has paid, please? The good news is that subscription levels have been held at £50 for another year although we do welcome donations on top if you wish to make one.

YHACS Membership Survey

As well as asking for your money, Alan is also asking societies to provide their current membership figures.

It's been ten years since we last asked for this information and we will be interested to see what the current picture looks like. In 2011, societies in YHACS membership reported a combined membership figure of over 7,000! What does that look like now? Are civic society memberships going up, going down, or remaining static?

We're hoping that the figures returned might help us both plan the future strategy for YHACS and also help us to work out what factors underpin any changes: if a society is managing to build its membership, are there any lessons we can share to help other societies boost theirs? Conversely, if we see societies with declining memberships, what does that tell us about the society, and about society in general?

We'll report back once all the figures are in.

Yorkshire Post feature on Civic Societies

I've been contacted by Grace Newton, a reporter at the Yorkshire Post in Leeds who specialises in heritage coverage. Grace is proposing to do an over-arching feature on the role civic societies have played in preserving Yorkshire's history since they were formed and is looking for each society to give an example of their greatest achievement since formation - such as a building saved from demolition or restored. She is also looking for details of any current project that your society is working on, although this would be for a later article.

If you would like to participate in this feature, you are invited to send Grace an email with details of your story. Email her on grace.newton@jpimedia.co.uk but copy me in, please, so that I know which societies are willing to be involved in the feature and can add any YHACS comment as needed.

Grace is also looking to build up relationships with the society chairs or secretaries in the longer term to become a point of contact for future stories and queries.

Upcoming Events

As we continue to operate under lockdown – and recent easements being talked about by politicians while encouraging are not likely to change that for the time being – it would be good to share details of events organised by societies that might have wider appeal across the region.

With this in mind, here are some events that you might wish to consider registering for:

1. Huddersfield Civic Society Annual Lecture: Tuesday, 2nd March at 7.00pm

'How do we regenerate and attract people to towns like Huddersfield?' will be the theme of a presentation by Nathan Cornish, Group Board Director of the award-winning regeneration company, Urban Splash.

The presentation will be given at the annual lecture organised by Huddersfield Civic Society and University of Huddersfield, at 7.00pm on Tuesday 2 March, this year on Zoom.

Since the early 1990s Urban Splash has created more than 5,000 new homes and 1.5 million sq ft of workspace in over 60 regeneration projects in towns and cities across England. In recent years Urban Splash has also promoted design-led homes, including modular housing construction, in urban regeneration areas.

Nathan has been responsible for the delivery of some of Urban Splash's iconic regeneration schemes at Fort Dunlop and Rotunda in Birmingham, Park Hill estate in Sheffield and its 'upside down' houses in Salford. Whilst still retaining responsibility for high profile developments at the Royal William Yard in Plymouth, and New Islington, Manchester his role now also includes overseeing the group's £120m Investment portfolio. He also oversees many of the group's disposals and acquisitions.

Nathan has been with Urban Splash since 2002 and will look at what helps bring about successful regeneration and regrowth in industrial buildings and in towns such as Huddersfield. Why are some towns and cities successful in this but others not? What makes a building or a town centre somewhere that people want to come, live, work and enjoy? There will also be an opportunity to put your questions.

The lecture will be preceded by a short celebration of the 2021 centenary of the teaching of architecture in Huddersfield, led by Professor Adrian Pitts from the University's School of Art, Design and Architecture.

The event is free. To book, [please see here](#).

2. Wakefield Civic Society talk – Ed Kluz, The Lost House Revisited – Thursday, 11th March at 7.30pm

Yorkshire-based artist Ed Kluz has a fascination for the sites of lost buildings. Once-celebrated grand houses that were abandoned to ruin, burned or deliberately destroyed have become the haunting subject matter of his distinctive collages. Kluz studies old engravings, plans and descriptions in order to build a full mental picture of a house; he compares the act of creating a collage to that of model-making, with each architectural element meticulously cut from paper and pasted, layer upon layer, on a background of inks. His lost houses conjure up the vanished buildings in all their pomp, existing not in the re-created landscape, but rather illuminated by theatrical lighting. You can find out more about the artist here: <https://www.edkluz.co.uk/>

This talk, which is free, will be presented by Zoom webinar.

To book, [please see here](#).

3. Joint event organised by Leeds Civic Trust, Bradford Civic Society and Wakefield Civic Society talk – Brutal North: An Exploration of Brutalist Buildings in the North of England – Thursday, 18th March at 7.30pm

Join acclaimed photographer Simon Phipps and speakers from Bradford, Leeds and Wakefield as we discuss and debate images from his new book *Brutal North: Post-War Modernist Architecture in the North of England*.

These buildings, many of them now unloved and under-appreciated, tell a story of civic ambition and drive in the sixties and seventies. With a particular focus on Leeds, Bradford and Wakefield, we will consider what the future holds for these buildings. With many of them unlisted, often neglected and even facing demolition, we will consider their future. What makes these buildings so special and which ones should be saved? Should we care?

Simon Phipps will be joined in discussion by Joanne Harrison (architect and member of Wakefield Civic Society's Planning Sub-Committee) and Si Cunningham (Chair of Bradford Civic Society). The event will be chaired by Leeds-based modernist, David Ellis.

Simon Phipps is a renowned photographer who chronicles and photographs brutalist architecture and public art in the UK. Brutal North follows his earlier publication Brutal London and Finding Brutalism: A photographic survey of Post-War British Architecture.

This event, a Zoom webinar, is free to attend and is jointly hosted by Leeds Civic Trust, Bradford Civic Society and Wakefield Civic Society.

To register, [please see here](#).

Please remember when booking on-line events, you usually only need to book one place for each device/email account you are using. So, if there are two of you watching on one device, you only need one place. Only if you were planning to watch on two separate devices would you need to register two places and you should register each place separately with separate email addresses.

And finally, perhaps I can give a cheeky plug for my Art Deco talk on **Thursday, 25th February at 6.30pm**? It's free to attend if you're a member of the Art Deco Society UK, otherwise it will cost £3.00.

Register for **The Art Deco Reader** [here](#).

**Kevin Trickett MBE,
Chair, YHACS**

