



YORKSHIRE & HUMBER  
Association of Civic Societies

Member of



# SOCIETY INSIGHT

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**"TOWN & CITY  
CENTRES"**

## GOING LOCAL? THE IMPACT OF COVID ON OUR ECONOMIES

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During the winter of 2019, when we were digesting the results of the General Election and looking forward to 2020, nobody could have predicted that the major topic of conversation in our newspapers would not be an (as then) unnamed virus called Covid 19 rather than the B word. And who could have imagined the profound changes to our every day live that this virus would cause?



*Tomatoes – a casualty of lockdown, the Hamilton household has industrial quantities of tinned tomatoes. We are waiting for the end of restrictions to hold a “chilli party”!*

Covid has been a human tragedy – the death, the isolation the fear. But amidst all of this, there are some positives to hold onto. At the start of our enforced “isolation” we had a very good early Spring weather you will recall. I enjoyed precious time with our one year old son (who could no longer go to nursery), our one allocated walk per day was fun as was trying to achieve a 10,000 per day step count – I certainly got fitter. We spent time in the garden and being inventive with whatever food we could get (we still have two 2.5kg tins of tomatoes, incorrectly ordered last year – I’ll be cooking chilli for 30 people once the final restrictions are listed – please come round!) In between all of this setting up a makeshift workspace and working from home – being inducted in the delights of Zoom (I have also ticked off Teams, Google Meet, Facetime, Skype and many others from the menu of virtual platforms). At the same time, as we clapped our NHS workers and remembered those who died during the pandemic there was perhaps a renewed sense of community – certainly we have talked far more to our neighbours in the last 12 months. We had to stay local, and we made the best of it.

But what did all of this mean for our local economy?

Over the last year, I have walked more and driven less but this has meant using local services (buying fresh bread and curries from our local post office, ordering local takeaways). In Calverley where I live, a whole recycle and re-use industry has developed. Do you have a number of books you wish to pass on? – leave them in a box on the wall. Do you have old children’s toys that you wish to recycle to another local family? – pop them on Facebook for a few quid. And our local traders have been kept very busy – every other house seems to have had an extension built or a their garden landscaped.

So the enforced need to “stay local” has seen the development of new community ecosystems. But there were downsides too: “Zoom” cannot recreate the dynamic of a team meeting round the table. Google Meet doesn’t facilitate those chance conversations that spark an idea that leads to a new project. Skype doesn’t cause you to bump into an old acquaintance, leading to a coffee and a catch up.

Although I am now spending two days a week working in the city centre, I continue to work at home for the other three. These are three days where I don’t buy sandwiches from Pret a Manger, three days where I don’t buy my flat white from the café around the corner, three days where I am not visiting Kirkgate Market to buy fresh fruit and veg or a lunchtime curry from Manjit’s Kitchen – in short, three days when I am not contributing to the city’s economy.



*Debenhams – From department store to student digs – this new development in Leeds city centre is one example of how our towns and cities are changing*

So what do my rambling reflections say about how my area is changing and what should we do about it? At a very local level, I would suggest that things are better than they were. Calverley never had a proper high street (shops were dotted about the village), and they have gradually closed over the decades. But now we have a new café planned, artisan pizza and our two community shops selling a range of local produced goods. In neighbouring Farsley (which does have a high street) we even have a new bookshop. All of this is a positive.

As far as Leeds city centre is concerned, the situation is much more complex. Leeds should be thriving – Channel 4 opens in its new offices at the Majestic on City Square in the next few weeks, the National Infrastructure Bank has just opened in offices near the station. All the while, on-going works to our city centre streets promise better public transport corridors and pleasanter areas for people to sit, walk and cycle: a new setting for the Corn Exchange, City Square closed to traffic by 2023, a new public park south of the river on the former Tetley site. But shops are closing - the Arcadia chain has left a big hole in Briggate, our main shopping street, and helped by the relaxations in planning rules, Debenhams is becoming student flats. Retail – one of the most obvious magnets for the city centre, is retrenching and the office worker – who supports this sector, is no longer in the city centre full time.



*Meadow Lane – an artists impression of new public realm in Leeds City Centre converting a car park into greenspace – making our towns and cities more attractive is more*

This goes back to my initial comments – lockdown was forced upon us, and we had to adjust accordingly. But if the lure of online retail combined with a resurgent community economy, not to mention the obvious environmental benefits of staying local are irresistible, should we be insisting that people “return to the office” or “shop in the city centre” or should we accept that our local economies are changing and not try to return to the old ways? This may mean a different role for our city and town centre, but that is a whole other story.

**Martin Hamilton**  
**Leeds Civic Trust**



## VIEW FROM THE CHAIR

### Re-making our towns and cities for a post-Covid world

Much has been said and written over the last year or so about how Covid has changed things and possibly changed things for good. Entering lockdown in March 2020 created new challenges for businesses, for local authorities, for the voluntary sector and, of course, for individuals.

Overnight, things we had taken for granted ceased to be available; rights and freedoms were curtailed and a big 're-think' was required. How could businesses keep going? How could local authorities continue to deliver their services while also being required to take on a raft of new demands? How could the voluntary sector keep going with volunteers themselves often being subject to lockdown? And what about the ordinary day-to-day necessities of life for individuals?

One of the most obvious changes was, of course, the move to on-line working and shopping. Covid may not have caused this, but it certainly accelerated the trend. Suddenly, we discovered just what could (and in some cases, could not) be done effectively on-line. For some, it was life-enhancing – being able to work from home meant no more commuting, no more time wasted in travel to meetings which could now be run on-screen. On a personal note, I've enjoyed watching lectures and theatrical productions from around the country (and sometimes further afield) and moving from one Zoom meeting to another throughout the day has saved a huge amount of time (and money) in not having to travel. I've spoken to people all over the country – and even the US – all from my dining room. And, like many others have discovered, there's a demand from civic society members for on-line content, particularly from members who might not, as a result of age, disability or just geography, be able to take part in actual face-to-face events at 'proper' venues.

But does this move on-line sound the death knell for our town and city centres?

I think not. Certainly things have changed, and probably changed permanently, but not everyone is on line and not everything can be done over a computer screen. Throughout history, our towns and cities have proved to be remarkably resilient as places to meet, to exchange ideas and to spark creativity. Our towns and cities have had to reinvent themselves constantly – but they have survived fire, flood, pestilence and plague and I'm sure they'll come out of this crisis – still strong, still open and still resilient – but they will be different.

After 15 months of my own lockdown, where I've not once been out of Wakefield, I've recently had occasion to spend time travelling to and from Leeds. The top deck of a bus is a great place from which to observe some of the many changes that have been taking place in the city centre as Leeds prepares itself to be much more pedestrian and cycle friendly. In the future, public transport rather than the private motor vehicle will be given greater priority. Pavements have been widened, bus routes provided and cycle lanes segregated from motor transport laid out. As someone who used to work in Leeds, and therefore familiar with the pace of change that big cities take for granted, I have rather had my breath taken away by the physical changes

that are taking place in Leeds. Empty sites used as 'temporary' car parks are being developed, major roadworks are underway and a smart new park and ride facility is being created at Stourton on the south side of the city centre. It certainly looks as if Leeds has been able to use the lull in activity during lockdown to reinvent itself. But that's not the end of the story – if our town and city centres are to flourish in the future, they need to 'up their game' – many people have been able to take advantage of working from home – and some quite like the benefits that modern technology has enabled. To encourage people to visit town and city centres, whether for work or leisure, those centres need to be able to offer great facilities and an attractive public realm. Some of those changes will be about flexibility and adaptability of buildings – temporary work spaces, smaller retail units, more residential accommodation and so on – but it will also be about improving landscaping and planting to create green spaces that are as good for pedestrians as they are for nature and the climate.

Tatty shop fronts, poorly designed and inadequately maintained street furniture, an absence of landscaping and planting, and streets that prioritize traffic over pedestrians just won't cut it in the future.

### **What are Civic Societies for in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century?**

If you are a member of Civic Voice (or your society is a member), you should have received details of their newly launched Membership Monday webinars. I was privileged to kick the season off with a talk about what I think lies in store for civic societies.

My concern is that with increased permitted development rights and the prospect of zones and design codes being introduced as flagged in last year's white paper, *Planning for the Future*, we could find ourselves, if not actually being locked out of the planning system, having to accept a very much reduced role. If these predictions come to pass when the government introduces the Planning Bill announced in the Queen's Speech, then what does the future hold for the civic movement.

Well, in my view, there will still be a role for us. It may well be that we have fewer opportunities to comment on individual planning applications but it doesn't mean we should call it a day and shut up shop. On the contrary, I think we will still have a very important role in stimulating a debate about town planning and development. We'll be able to use our experience and expertise to hold governments to account, to show when things have gone wrong and to create a vision for how things could be. If we don't take on responsibility for encouraging that debate within the community, who will?

But, if we want to succeed, we have to be capable and present something to the public which is attractive and engaging. People of all ages have less spare time these days; many of our relationships are transactional – people will come to one of your events in the expectation that they will get something out of it, that it will be well run, efficiently organised and even fun to attend. They will expect information to be presented to them via multiple channels (including social media) – they are unlikely to spend time digging around the back end of a poorly designed and out of date website. If civic societies expect to shape the future, then first we must shape up as a movement.

**Kevin Trickett MBE**

## A VIEW FROM THE OTHER SIDE.....

**The theme for this newsletter is Towns and Cities.**

**Populated area with fixed boundaries and local governments: large or important towns. Urban areas.**

But what about the geographic areas which sit outside these areas of England? The rural ones, which (source: Defra) account for over 80% of the land area and around 20% of the population.

Many are small communities in small villages or hamlets. Others have expanded in size for various reasons and are considerably larger than they started off. But most still very much a community. Some are in the middle of nowhere, others nearer to the hustle and bustle of increasing conurbations. Do they have Civic Societies? In the main, no, for obvious reasons. But most have Parish Councils which do their best to protect the interests of their inhabitants.

I have found it very interesting since joining the YHACS committee as an Independent Member, to see just how the burning issues for the cities and larger towns very often don't really affect those of us in our rural settings. For example, Transport. A hot potato at the moment. I can read about and hear all the arguments for and against HS2; the need for more trams in towns and cities; better rail and more rail services; better and more bus services.

But I have to admit that for me, it's hard to be very concerned about the issues of trains and trams in the metropolis when we don't have any rail transport at all. We would have to use the car, as in our case, to get to Ilkley, Skipton or Harrogate to catch a train – depending on which direction in the country you'd like to go in.

A better bus service. Well, to get out by bus is limited to going anywhere other than into Skipton. The last bus from Skipton is at 17:55, so a night out there or beyond wouldn't be possible! Neither would a trip in for an evening meeting or getting home from a day's work, especially if you worked shifts. But at least they operate hourly to two-hourly daily. 7 days a week. For those villages up the dale, the various service providers offer services which can vary from only on a school day, to Sundays and Bank Holidays from April. There are sometimes more services run on a Saturday and school holidays. Confused?? Hmm.

I read that the calls for better trains, trams and bus services, are also apparently to encourage people away from using their cars. To have safer places for walking and cycling and to encourage people to keep healthy. Admirable! If you live in a town or a city.

But where services are poor or non-existent, cars are still very much a necessity to get anywhere. Lots of people need to get to work using the only mode of transport which will get them there, sometime before close of play and on time. A car.

Also, I am not sure what the "safer places" are which are to be planned for walking and cycling, but I do know that our roads are continuous streams especially in the warmer months and especially at weekends and Bank Holidays, for trippers and holiday makers alike. They come in cars, towing

caravans, in mobile homes, on motorbikes and yes.....on cycles – not racing, but still usually in pelotons and effectively blocking the single track and narrow B-roads to locals, caravanners, mobile home drivers, tractors.....

People escape to the countryside and always have. Because it is an escape from busy cities and towns and because it's quiet and beautiful. With lockdown, the escapees have increased and it's not quite so quiet.

But the argument that using public transport is to encourage people to stay away from their cars? An interesting thought and no doubt highly commendable to cut down road users, pollution and more pressing factors in the urban areas.

But folk will still flock to the rural areas in their various forms of vehicular transport, causing all the problems the cities are trying to avoid.

A conundrum?



*...Quite the reverse when it's holiday time ...and no regard given to the road signs!*

**Judith Blackburn**

## **GOOLE CIVIC SOCIETY MAKING MUSIC**



**Goole Civic Society has been helping to make music in a national celebration of local communities.**

Goole-born composer Gavin Bryars contacted the society after he was commissioned to compose a piece of music for the Sound UK project, **'A Song for Us'**, celebrating our communities and the power of music to bring us together in Lockdown.

Leading singer-songwriters and composers across genres created a series of 15 County Songs inspired by the people of their county. Gavin was asked to compose a song for the East Riding and chose to base it on his hometown of Goole.

He teamed up with lyricist Blake Morrison, who took some of his inspiration from 'Reflections on Goole', a film the Civic Society produced about the town and its people. Many of the words and recollections of local people interviewed in the film are repeated in the song.

The Civic Society also provided video and images from our archive and from entries to our calendar competition for use in the video accompanying song.

'Above Water, A Song for the East Riding' was recorded remotely by the popular Goole choir Read's Warblers and <https://armthorpeelmfield.band/> It premiered on April 30<sup>th</sup>.

You can watch the performance on <https://asongforus.org/commissions/a-song-for-east-riding/>



If you look closely, you may spot Margaret Hicks-Clarke, chair of Goole Civic Society and YHACS vice-chair, and her husband John Clarke, who are long-standing members of Read's Warblers. They had to record themselves at home on their mobile phones, which as you can imagine resulted in quite a few out-takes!

The Civic Society film 'Reflections on Goole', which inspired the song, can be viewed on YouTube at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RzJAXA6js0Q>

John Clarke

## THE WAKEFIELD GATE: THE MEDIAEVAL ROUTE

**Daniel Defoe, writing in 1724, had this to say about Halifax:**

*"We quitted Halifax not without some astonishment at its Situation, being surrounded with Hills, and those so high as (except the Entrance by the West) makes the coming in and going out of it exceedingly troublesome, and indeed for Carriages hardly practicable, and particularly the Hill which they come up out of the town to go towards Leeds, and which the country people call Halifax Bank, is so steep, so rugged, and sometimes too so slippery, that, to a Town of so much Business as this, 'tis exceedingly troublesome and dangerous."*

The route described by Daniel Defoe was the only route Eastward out of Halifax at that time and it is likely that since the Norman Conquest it had been used to connect the various parts of the Manor of Wakefield, which included Todmorden and Cragg Vale. From the days of William Rufus there was a constant stream of noblemen with their attendants, travelling to the Upper Valley for the hunting; there was a Manorial Court in Halifax, and the Wakefield Gate as it became known was important in the transport of salt from Cheshire and the trading of wool and wool products as Halifax became renowned for its production of worsted. We speculate that the 'other'

Wakefield Gate which leads West from Skircoat Moor might have some relevance here.

**But In 1741 the Halifax and Wakefield Turnpike Trust** was established to build a major route to the East, and the difficult Wakefield Gate became redundant as a major commercial route. At some point probably in the nineteenth century it was renamed the Magna Via and that name stuck, though there is no early evidence that it was used before then.

**In 1984 the Committee of the Halifax Civic Trust** raised funds to restore parts of the mediaeval route and was influential in the recognition of the Dark Lane section as an Ancient Monument after it was damaged by a bulldozer. In 1987 a commemorative information plaque marking 25 years of the Civic Trust's work in Halifax was installed at the Hipperholme entrance to Dark Lane.

**In the Autumn of 2020 the Halifax Civic Trust Executive Committee** decided to review the work done 30 years ago by the then Committee, and to act if we felt there was work to be undertaken.



(Although this route together with its importance has been well-recognised for many hundreds of years, it has recently come into prominence after the TV series Gentleman Jack, with its huge impact on the cultural life and economy of Halifax. Anne Lister's use of the Halifax part of the Wakefield Gate as she walked from Shibden to the Parish Church via Old Bank is well established and of interest to the tourist, to local walkers, and to the followers of the series).

In November 2020 two of our members walked the route and took photographs of key points. What we found is a mixed bag of good maintenance and some neglect but the over-riding impact on us was the absence of signage. This is particularly important as part of the route, Dark Lane, is a rare hollow way which was damaged by a bulldozer in the 1980s. The Civic Trust pressed for the recognition of the hollow way as a Designated Ancient Monument, and this was established by English Heritage in 1987.



**And now we have good news.**

The Countryside Team of the Local Authority is already working on that part of the

route that Anne Lister used to walk from Shibden Hall to the Parish church and Northgate, so we are working with them. We will co-ordinate our signage with theirs, our work will start where theirs ends at Beacon Hill, and all we have to do is provide the cost of the timber up to that point. Signage will be consistent throughout the route and will have the blessing and the expertise of the Countryside Team of Calderdale Metropolitan Borough Council.

After a lot of thought and many versions, we have a plan for the signage and we intend to crack on with it, working with the Countryside Team. We hope to persuade the Highways Department to install a tourist sign at the Minster end of Bank Bottom, indicating this route and its historical importance as well as its appeal to watchers of Gentleman Jack.

### **Funding**

We already have pledges from the Waterhouse Charity Trustees, with a matching donation from the Friends of Calderdale's Countryside, and from a prominent member of the Anne Lister Trust. Several Committee members have pledged contributions. We have applied for funds from various charities whose aims would support this work, but decisions are slow to be made. If anyone is interested in knowing more about the funding of the project and the possibility of contributing, we will be delighted to hear from you.

### **Learn More**

**More information about this project**, including the history of the Wakefield Gate and its importance to the town, can be found on our website:  
<https://sites.google.com/view/civitrusthalifax/home>

Here is our webpage Wakefield Gate link:

<https://sites.google.com/view/civitrusthalifax/wakefield-gate>

### **Contact us:**

<https://sites.google.com/view/civitrusthalifax/contact-us>

We also have a social media presence. Here is our Twitter link:

<https://twitter.com/TrustCivic>

Here is the Twitter link with the Wakefield Gate discussion

[https://twitter.com/search?q=halifax%20civic%20trust%20wakefield%20gate&src=typed\\_query](https://twitter.com/search?q=halifax%20civic%20trust%20wakefield%20gate&src=typed_query)

If you are interested in local history and enjoy a walk, strenuous in places, watch our website. We are developing a Walker's Guide with QR codes as well as the actual signage on the route.

**The Wakefield Gate Team of Halifax Civic Trust 13.06.2021**

**Gwyneth Crawley**

## TAKE A SEAT...IN LEEDS



Leeds Civic Trust’s five-year vision talks about “making a great city, better” - but this isn’t just about us. It is also about how the whole community works together to make our city a better place to live. One of the biggest indicators of this is how local communities have come together during the Covid-19 pandemic. We wanted to acknowledge the ways in which communities have come together during the covid pandemic and wanted to commemorate this time in our shared history by bringing a bit of colour to our streets.

Benches have also traditionally been used to commemorate people and events (as well as being a useful place to sit!). However, we wanted to do something bolder than the usual brass plaque, and so have funded a series of hand painted benches that will each tell their own individual stories.

Our ‘Take a Seat’ initiative which will see a colourful community of benches, from Guiseley to Beeston, Horsforth to Gipton, provide a place to contemplate what has been a very difficult time, and by their imaginative designs, allow local communities to tell their individual Covid story.



In all, 15 benches are currently being painted by a variety of local groups and arts organisations who submitted successful applications to the Civic Trust. They will be making their way into our parks, green spaces, care homes, community centres and high streets this July.

With the Trust funding the benches as well as some additional funding for the decorating; many freelance artists have been working with local groups to decorate their benches - all tasked with bringing to life the city’s story during the last 18 months. We’ve had artists work with school children, with women’s groups and a men’s mental health charity. A trail map will also be launched as part of this special project.

We have seen a preview of some of the benches, and the joy they bring is self-evident.

**Meleri Roberts**



## THE ADDINGHAM COVID-19 SUPPORT GROUP



**Many of you will remember that I told you all about the Village's COVID-19 Support Group in the Summer 2020 edition of this magazine....well we've taken the decision to 'wind down' the Group's activities, which is of course good news. So, with that in mind I thought I would bring you right up to date and reproduce an article that I published in this month's Members Newsletter. There you go:**

*The Addingham Covid-19 Support Group has now been operating since March 2020 and has provided all sorts of support for residents who have been affected by the pandemic. At the height of the first lockdown 170 volunteers were supporting over 100 households with a huge range of activities, from weekly shopping, gardening and dog walking to prescription delivery and post office visits.*

*As lockdown eased in the late summer volunteers returned to work and many clients gained the confidence to return to a more normal lifestyle, we were supporting far fewer households. However, all the predictions suggested there would be a second wave and sure enough in the autumn the volunteers were busy again supporting over 50 families.*

*Things have now settled into a routine with few new requests for help, so we have decided that this is the moment to move on. At the end of June the Support Group will cease to function and we will move to Plan B. Plan B transfers the support group operations over to Addingham Good Neighbours (AGN). In this way all the support will continue seamlessly and new requests for help will be managed by AGN. With special thanks to the volunteers who have chosen to continue their volunteering by moving from the Covid Support Group across to AGN.*

*The date for the finalised transfer to AGN is the end of June, so plenty of time for us to get organised.*

*From the 1<sup>st</sup> July the new contact details for help or support will be:*  
[addinghamgninfo@gmail.com](mailto:addinghamgninfo@gmail.com) or 01943 839425.

*But we can't leave without a few huge thanks:*

*Addingham Good Neighbours, The Civic Society and the Parish Council have been the three organisations at the heart of the Covid-19 Support Group and so thank you to those Trustees and Councillors for their unwavering support.*

*The volunteers have been amazing, what can we say! Nothing has been too much trouble and your input has been enormously appreciated by the whole village.*

*The Parish Council has provided funding for leaflets and posters and we've had the unstinting support from the Parish Clerk, Jane Markham (recently retired) and Deputy Clerk, Wendy Green.*

*Bradford Council has also played a large part in the success of the group, from providing resources, finances and training sessions to a dedicated advice phone line, all much appreciated.*

*The Clarke Foley Trust stepped in with a loan to fund Access to Cash, a service which has been well used, thank you Clarke Foley.*

*Private donations have also allowed us to help families who were finding the pandemic a real challenge, as well as providing some Christmas Cheer for those alone. Your support was invaluable.*

*Finally for peace of mind, there is a contingency plan. Thanks to all the volunteers who have agreed to their names being kept on a "sleeping" database we know we have this army of volunteers and would be able to reinstate the Support Group quickly should the need arise. Let's hope not.*

Not a bad effort all round I reckon. A Community coming together to tackle a real problem close to home.

I echo the sentiments expressed above.... let's hope and pray we don't need this Group's services again.

**Jim Robinson**

## ROAD NUMBERS

**Editor - Roads are the arteries that feed into and out of our towns and cities, but have you ever wondered how the numbering system arose? This article explains.**

**In 1910, with the motor car making road journeys competitive and spurring improvement to the road system, action was taken to sort out the designation of roads in England, Scotland and Wales. A government body called the Roads Board was set up under William Rees Jeffries, instructed to upgrade existing roads and plan for new ones using money from the new road and petrol tax.**

One problem Rees Jeffries and his colleagues faced was in working out just which roads should be funded, upgraded or replaced. There



was nothing to tell them apart and no data available to say which roads were busy. In 1913, work began under Sir Henry Maybury, one of the Board's senior engineers. His principal concern was *classification*, categorising each road depending on how busy it was, to allow numbers to be allocated to each road for ease of reference.

To begin with, roads were said to be either Class I or Class II, but any numbering was restricted to individual counties, with numbers confusingly potentially changing at county boundaries.

Rather more pressing matters, in the form of the Great War in 1914 brought work to an abrupt stop. It was only in September 1919, as home affairs were returning to normal, that Sir Henry was invited to resume his classification work, now under the new Ministry of Transport.

As surveys of road usage came back in, maps were marked up to show which roads carried enough traffic or connected sufficiently important places to be regarded as Class I, whilst those with lower traffic density were deemed Class II. The initial proposal was to use T (trunk) and L (link) for class I and II, but this was soon replaced by the idea of a simple A and B. The roads most used were awarded grade A, and the connecting roads deemed B. The designation was entirely down to levels of usage and made no comment on the size or state of the road.

Local authorities were encouraged to put numbers on new signs and to begin adding them to existing ones as soon as the first batch of numbers were made public in summer 1921. The Ministry of Transport covered all such costs, and once the first 99 A-roads were covered they were keen to see the signposting applied to progressively smaller and smaller routes.

From this basic system, now it was just a matter of sensibly fleshing it out.

Over the following century, signage developed to inform motorists of the nature of the roads over which they were travelling and the destinations they could expect to reach, until we have arrived at the modern system. This modern system largely stems from the work of a committee under Sir Walter Worboys, that reported in 1963. An excellent discussion can be found in "From War to Worboys" on <https://www.roads.org.uk/articles/war-worboys/worboys-report>

David Lewis

## **"IMAGINE AN EXCELLENT BUS SERVICE" FOR LEEDS**



**As the largest city in Europe without a metro or a tram system, buses are particularly important for Leeds as they are the main form of public transport to get around the city.**

Yet frankly, the bus service is just not good enough. The issues are well known: tickets are expensive and complicated to understand, congestion makes the buses late and route plans make travelling across Leeds without having to go into the city centre a near impossible mission. Since deregulation in 1986 bus providers such as Frist, Arriva and TransDev have been operating on a

for-profit agenda which has resulted in services being cut and ticket prices inflated.

Yet, Leeds Civic Trust believe that the bus service *does* has the potential to become the best in the UK, but we need *your* ideas to make this happen. Launching a unique community engagement project, Leeds Civic Trust want to hear from everyone and anyone who has a suggestion or an idea of how the bus service could be improved. Whether a commuter from Otley who works in Bramley, a football fan from Morley who needs to get to Elland Road, or someone from Wakefield who uses the bus service to visit relatives in Beeston, we want to hear from everyone! Perhaps more importantly, we also want to hear from people who are put off from using the buses in the first place - to understand what more can be done to make our public transport a more attractive option.



By a 'bus service' we mean things such as the vehicles used and the roads they run on, their accessibility and connectivity (where they go and how often), and how they are managed (who owns the buses and decides what sort of service should be provided). Going beyond the usual 'box-ticking' exercise of community consultation, Leeds Civic Trust want to encourage some 'blue sky' thinking which goes beyond the common constraints of time, budget and infrastructure to bring about some radical changes.

There are several ways people can get involved in the project, from:

- Taking part in the [Competition of Ideas](#) where your submission could win a share of the £2,000 cash prize. Entries can be submitted in any format you choose before the deadline of **September 6<sup>th</sup>** from individuals, organisations or as part of a group.
- Complete our 10-minute [survey](#) sharing your thoughts about the bus service.
- Add a comment to our new [interactive map](#) of your experiences in your local area.
- Or register your interest to take part in a discussion group by emailing [office@leedscivictrust.org.uk](mailto:office@leedscivictrust.org.uk)



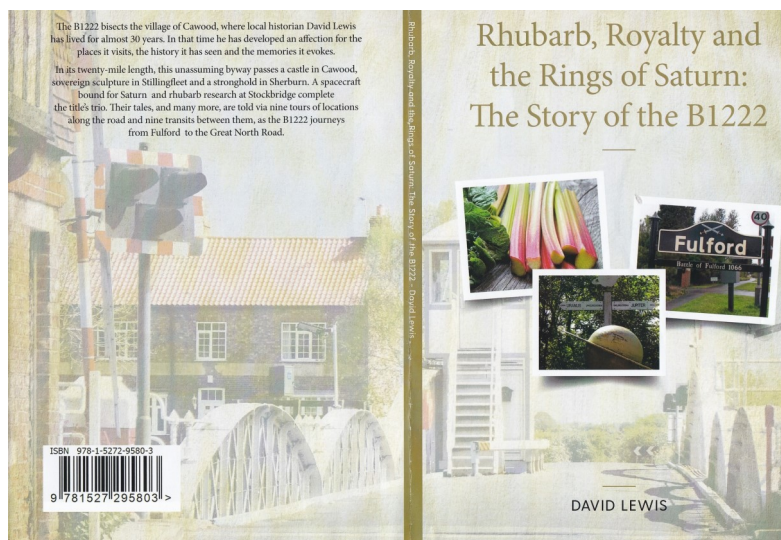
This is an exciting opportunity for change in the bus industry, with the release of the National Bus Strategy '[Bus Back Better](#)', the appointment of our new Metro Mayor Tracy Brabin who has brought new devolved transport powers to the area, and the opportunity to build back better in a post-Covid world. The aim of the project is to collate all the innovative ideas suggested and produce a list of practical recommendations of how the buses could be improved for both Leeds and the surrounding areas in West Yorkshire, by the people and communities who use them.

To learn more about the project and how to get involved, please visit our dedicated website [www.ExcellentBusesLeeds.org.uk](http://www.ExcellentBusesLeeds.org.uk)

**Gwen Thomas**  
Project Development Officer at Leeds Civic Trust

## RHUBARB, ROYALTY AND THE RINGS OF SATURN... ...WHAT'S THAT ALL ABOUT?

I've recently read a new book about a minor road between York, Selby and Sherburn in Elmet - the B1222 - and the interesting features along it. It's a fascinating story...



Back in the 1970s when he was studying Chemistry at York, David Lewis would travel in his battered old Mini from home in Brum to university in York. When he reached the crossroads in Sherburn, the sign pointing him along the B1222 to Cawood - and thence college - meant he was almost there and his car had safely made the odyssey once again.

Fast forward 45 years or so, and David's now a local historian, living in lockdown in Cawood. With opportunities for travel limited, David began looking in more detail at the history close at hand.

Cawood itself, with its castle, bridge and Garth is full of fascinating history, of course. Nearby, there's the wonderful church at Stillingfleet, with the awful Boxing Day tragedy linked to it. Anglo Saxon king Athelstan had his HQ at Sherburn, and Norse monarch Harald Hardrada fought at the Battle of Fulford in 1066. Coming more up to date, there's the Selby Coalfield, Blackburn's aircraft factory and the legendary Squires' Milk Bar at Newthorpe.

All captivating stuff - but what could link them all together? Why, David's old reassuring presence - the B1222.

**"Rhubarb, Royalty and the Rings of Saturn"** tells the tales of nine locations along the length of the B1222, as it joins Fulford near York with the Great North Road in the parish of South Milford, as well as items of passing interest in the transits between those places, and the explanation of how the B1222 got its number.

Rhubarb is dealt with by Stockbridge House near Cawood, which used to research growing the ultimate Yorkshire delicacy. The rings of Saturn? A model of these is at Naburn on the former rail line, now the Solar System cycle path.



What of the 1970s road sign that started it all? A few years ago, David spotted NYCC workers replacing it. A quick call to NYCC highways, and now it's safely in his garage - but makes an appearance on the inside cover of the book!

The 120-page book, published on July 7th, will be available locally for £6 at the Selby Times office, Selby Library and other local outlets. The ISBN number of 978-1-5272-9580-3 means your bookshop should be able to order it, or contact the publisher directly via [rrros1222@gmail.com](mailto:rrros1222@gmail.com)

David Moss

## PLANNING REFORMS OPPOSITION

The Government's planning reforms continue to face a backlash in the House of Commons and House of Lords. MPs from all sides have participated in a debate put forward by the Labour party in a motion calling on the Government to protect the right of communities to comment on individual planning applications.

Opening the debate for Labour, shadow housing secretary Steve Reed said the proposals are “not popular with voters” because residents want a say on how their neighbourhoods are developed. However, [212 votes supported Labour's non-binding motion to 0](#), a majority 212, after the majority of Tory MPs abstained. Vice-Chair of the APPG for Civic Societies, Willian Wragg, supported the motion.

Dozens of MPs shared the Civic Voice message that we must ensure there are opportunities for local input as development schemes evolve and make their way through the planning process. Communities should be able to make representations on the detail of individual planning applications.

The parliamentary debate follows quickly on from a new report, [The future of the planning system in England](#), by the Housing, Communities and Local Government (HCLG) Select Committee, which expressed concern over “the lack of detail” in the government’s vision for a new zonal planning system in England.

Over in the House of Lords, Lord Kennedy of Southwark has been highlighting the impact of Permitted Development Rights and moved a motion that said: *'that this House regrets that the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development etc.) (England) (Amendment) Order 2021 (SI 2021/428) will remove the voice of local communities, resulting in a new swathe of poor-quality housing, and detrimentally impact the prosperity of high streets; further regrets that these changes have been introduced with insufficient parliamentary scrutiny and calls on Her Majesty's Government to withdraw the Order.'* Read the motion [here](#).

As we work towards affecting change in the forthcoming Planning Bill, we need evidence and examples to demonstrate that civic participation in planning adds value to the process. So whether it is Horbury Civic Society developing a 'Vision for Horbury' or Oswestry Town Councillors supporting future development plans presented by Oswestry Civic Society, we need you to tell us how you are positively adding value to the process.

Article abstracted from Civic Voice's “Civic Update” 25th June 2021



You can read the  
debate here



YORKSHIRE & HUMBER  
Association of Civic Societies

Reg. Charity No. 1112290

[www.yhacs.org.uk](http://www.yhacs.org.uk)

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

David Moss

<b>Tues 20th July</b> <b>11.00-12.00</b>	<b>Civic Voice Webinar - HCLG Select Committee</b> <b>"Future of the Planning System"</b> Go to <a href="https://bit.ly/3AZm7NT">https://bit.ly/3AZm7NT</a> for details
<b>Sat ??? October</b>	<b>YHACS Autumn Members' Meeting - TBC</b>
<b>Sat 29th January</b>	<b>YHACS AGM - Format and venue TBC</b>

## NEXT YHACS MEETING

**SATURDAY 17TH JULY 2.30 - 4:00 PM**  
**MEMBERS MEETING BY ZOOM VIDEO CONFERENCING**  
**IN ASSOCIATION WITH LEEDS CIVIC TRUST**

**GUEST SPEAKER**  
**JOE BARRATT, HIGH STREET TASK FORCE**

**CONTACT: KEVIN TRICKETT AT [INFO@YHACS.ORG.UK](mailto:INFO@YHACS.ORG.UK)**

### Executive Officers, Committee Members and Portfolios

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