



YHACS
YORKSHIRE & HUMBER
Association of Civic Societies

Member of



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**"HIGH STREET
REGENERATION"**

STREETLIFE PROJECT YORK

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In November 2021 the University of York and York Civic Trust received a grant of almost half a million pounds from the Government's Community Renewal Fund.

The Streetlife project aims to bring the history of Coney Street (below), one of the main shopping destinations in York and amongst the city's oldest thoroughfares, to the fore in order to give the iconic street a new and vibrant post-pandemic future.



Coney Street has been chosen as an example of a modern shopping street with a series of rich historic narratives including music and printing which, like many such streets, today has 29% of the street's retail units standing empty. But it is also a street with a potentially strong future, as local pro-active developers have recently heavily invested by purchasing large swathes of commercial property on the street from inactive large pensions funds.

The project will bring a rich blend of cultural activity to the street to act as participatory and developmental opportunities for the public, businesses and stakeholders. This activity will act as a spur for workshops to develop new approaches and ideas to regenerating the high street.

As it is part of the Government's Community Renewal Fund, the project also has a direct positive economic and upskilling impact. The project will create nine fixed-term jobs running until the end of June 2022, bring business for local

companies, and provide development and training opportunities for a wide range of people.

The inter-disciplinary project brings together academics practitioners and local stakeholders. It is led by Professor Rachel Cowgill, (Department of Music), Dr Kate Giles (Departments of Archaeology, and History's Heritage360 research centre), Professor Helen Smith from the Department of English and Related Literature, Chris Sheringham, York Music Venue Network, and Andrew Morrison, Chief Executive of York Civic Trust.

What will the Streetlife project deliver?

The project will be based on Coney Street - one of the highest footfall streets in the city of York. Several thousand people will have the opportunity to participate in music, printing and heritage activities and workshops. The project will see empty premises transformed into an innovative pop-up printing press, museum and gallery, and adapted for live and digital performance and heritage activities.

Local businesses will be invited to explore new ways of understanding their history and heritage and to use these insights into the past to develop creative and commercial opportunities.

York Civic Trust will organise four workshops that will involve around 200 people from a diverse range of backgrounds to contribute their views on how the street should develop. The workshops will be themed on subjects that will be familiar to civic societies:

Public Realm: 24 hours in the life of Coney Street – Various activities have shared Coney Street for centuries. Today its 7am deliveries, daytime shoppers and weekend nightlife. How could the public realm be enhanced whilst meeting the needs of many stakeholders?

Connectivity: Back to the River - Coney Street has turned its back to the River Ouse, but this wasn't always the case. How could reinventing the relationship to the river benefit the city?

Sustainability: A healthy heart to the city – Historically, where was the green space in Coney Street and how would a healthier environment be designed into the street now?

Adaptive Reuse: After the shop – Shopping has long been part of Coney Street, but with online retail coming to the fore, how might spaces – including vacant shops and upper floors – be adapted for sustainable future use?

The University of York's digital, interpretation, research and strategy unit – Heritage 360 (<https://heritage360.org.uk/>) will digitally record and disseminate all this activity to create a legacy for the project. They will also utilise new digital technologies to create exciting and innovative recreations of the street and its history to allow people to imagine what the street could be like in the future.

It is hoped that the project can be a blueprint for other cities facing similar challenges of finding new uses for historic high streets and bringing more people back to city centres – problems made more urgent by the pandemic.

Why Coney Street?



Photo by Keith Laverack, CC BY-SA 2.0,
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=14336514>

From historic coaching inn The George, where John Vanbrugh and the Brontës once stayed, to the majestic Guildhall and bustling waterfront, Coney Street has been the site of many important buildings and businesses, representing so much of what makes York unique.

Coney Street (the King's Street) was the site of the Roman bridge; the centre of civic governance following the construction of the Guildhall and a place of residence for York's medieval Jewish community. In later centuries, the street was known for its great coaching inns, including The Bull, The George, and the Bagnio Turkish Baths. During the eighteenth century the street became known for its craftsmen, banking businesses and printing industries and was home to the York Courant, the Yorkshire Evening Post and York Herald.

In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries it housed local and national retailers, including piano and organ warehouses and the department store Leak & Thorp (built on the site of The George in 1869) as well as the Ebor Hall, Picture House Cinema (later City Screen) and The Willow Café & Nightclub.

Although the street was heavily bombed in 1942, its reconstruction reflected the resilience and entrepreneurial spirit of the City.

Historic High Streets like Coney Street are repositories of powerful heritage stories for businesses to draw on to create authentic and enriching experiences. We look forward to working with the University of York to think about how we can bring people together to debate the future of historic High Streets like Coney Street.

The project hopes to achieve long-term benefits including helping York to reach virtual visitors and convert them to real tourists, aiding post-pandemic recovery and renewal and piloting carbon-zero approaches to sustainability in transport, adaptive reuse and city-centre living and working.

Andrew Morrison
CEO, York Civic Trust



VIEW FROM THE CHAIR

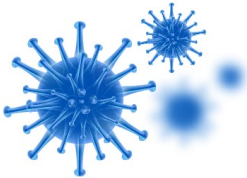
It's the end of the world as we know it...

It feels as if the World has tilted. What with climate change, the Covid pandemic and now war in Ukraine, old certainties have at best been shaken. For the people of Ukraine, facing unspeakable atrocities, words can barely express the disgust that many of us will be feeling, but the challenges they are facing affect us all: we cannot just shrug and think that because it's happening 'over there', we are immune from its impacts.

Climate change is creating unique challenges for the planet. I appreciate that there are climate change deniers, people who seem to think that we are just going through a cycle, that it's nothing to do with manmade carbon emissions, and that the world will tilt back on its axis and all will be well. I find such thoughts of little comfort. What if they are wrong? Can we afford to just sit back and hope on the off chance that things will return to 'normal' (whatever that definition of normal is the natural state is for our planet)? I think not: it behoves us all, as I have said before, to do what we can to reduce our impact on the planet just in case this is not a blip. Tread lightly where we can, re-think some of our lifestyle choices and just be less wasteful of natural resources.



Covid presented a different sort of challenges. It brought fear and suffering to our doorsteps. In March 2020, a national lockdown was announced in the UK – and we were not alone; other countries were imposing similar measures. There was no vaccine back then and little was known about the virus and how it was spread but we knew it was bad – and, if I'm honest, frightening. Many people stayed at home, venturing out only when absolutely necessary and all the while they were out, trying to avoid close contact with strangers wherever possible. No one, not even the experts, could have predicted that, some two years later, we would still be in the throes of a calamity, which, although much ameliorated by the vaccines, still runs rampant through our communities.



And now we have the invasion of Ukraine: a war that is drawing in other countries, some sympathetic to Russia, at least politically, while others step up to oppose the Russian hegemony with sanctions, provision of weapons, money and, no doubt, other resources. Who knows how much longer it will continue or how it will end? Even if the fighting ends, it's unlikely to be the end of all hostilities; wars have a habit of breeding animosities that last for generations even if shots are no longer being fired. Trust is lost to be replaced by loathing and hatred.



Assuming you are still reading at this point, is there any reason for optimism in any of this? Well, being a naturally 'glass half-full person', I'd like to think there are reasons to be hopeful without coming over all Panglossian. Much of my optimism comes from the way people in the west have come together – offering sanctuary and help to refugees (and not just from Ukraine, although it is perhaps for the latter that the help has been most manifest). I think there are other reasons to be positive as well.

Before you can tackle a problem, you first have to recognise that a problem exists. What had been the threat of climate change is increasingly turning into reality of climate change; news bulletins regularly carry footage of storms, floods, droughts and fires with all the concomitant distress and upheaval, not just for human beings but for nature and wildlife. It does seem though, that governments are beginning to wake up to the need for action: I think there is still time to take preventative measures to mitigate some of the worst effects

but it needs the public to not only support the necessary changes but to demand they be introduced.

Covid has shown that new ways of living are possible: working from home, spending more time outdoors, living our lives on-line are changes whose introduction has been accelerated greatly by the pandemic. The impact of less commuting, the closure of factories and so on appeared to have at least a short-term beneficial impact on pollution around the world – although the gains are being reversed now. I know people are keen to ‘start living’ again, to meet up and perhaps even to return to the workplace, but the changes brought about by Covid have, for many, at least raised the question of how life might be different and some of the changes may yet be permanent.

The invasion of Ukraine has brought more changes. Sanctions are not just affecting Russia and its allies; they are also affecting countries in the west. So far, the discussion has been mainly about energy supplies but there are also concerns about food production: the world places huge reliance on Ukraine for grain and other foodstuffs. The war is already disrupting supplies of grain and if crops are not planted for the current growing season, things will only get worse – and it is likely that the world’s poorer countries will suffer most.

Politicians are now discussing these problems in earnest. Can the west wean itself off fossil fuels, off Russian oil and gas? Possibly, but it won’t happen overnight. And even if the west stops buying their energy from Russia, in the short-term at least, the search will be on for supplies of oil and gas from other sources. There is already much talk in some circles of the UK re-opening coal mines, drilling for more oil and gas in the North Sea and even of allowing fracking on UK soil – even though such measures contradict the concerns posed by climate change.

What the invasion of Ukraine has shown is a willingness among many countries in the west to work together. If the west (and the rest of the world for that matter) is to achieve energy security and food self-sufficiency, we will need to see such co-operation continuing. No country exists in a bubble – we have to work together to ensure an equitable distribution of the world’s resources.

So, I hear you asking, what has this got to do with civic societies?

Well, just as no country can exist in a bubble, neither can the civic movement. We may need to adjust our own thinking.

Is the preservation of a picturesque view more important than building more wind turbines? Should we campaign against solar panels on listed buildings and in conservation areas or accept that such modern accretions are in fact now essential and campaign for them? Should we campaign for or against more parking spaces in our town and city centres? Should we campaign to reduce traffic and for better public transport?

I think there are things that civic societies could and, indeed, should be demanding more of in the future: improved insulation standards on all new homes, retrofitting better insulation in existing homes, no new house to be built without solar panels, better ventilation of all buildings, improved space standards that allow for people to work from home, re-purposing rather than demolishing older buildings, more green spaces in our towns and cities, no tree anywhere to be chopped down unless a new one is planted somewhere, and so on and so on (this list is only illustrative!). We need to draw up our lists for a different sort of world, one that helps to guarantee our survival, (including how

to avoid nuclear Armageddon, although that might be a bit beyond the purview of a typical civic society constitution!).

[It's the end of the world as we know it, and I feel fine](#), sang R.E.M. in 1987.....Are you feeling it yet?

Kevin Trickett MBE

BEVERLEY
CIVIC
SOCIETY

PROBABLY NOT THE OLDEST GAS STREET LAMP POSTS IN THE WORLD

The first city in the world to have street lighting was London.

Factories had been lit, royal and lordly houses had been lit. But the engineer Fredrick Winsor believed city streets should be lit for everyone, not just the rich, and in 1807 he amazed Londoners with a line of gas street lights in Pall Mall, fed with gas pipes made from the barrels of old muskets. On Winsor's memorial in Kensal Park cemetery is the epitaph *'At evening time it shall be light.'*

Gas lighting really took off, and by the 1820s most towns had acquired street lights of cast iron standards with copper lanterns. Their designs differed: but as far as we can discover, only Beverley in East Yorkshire had lamps that recorded the engineer (I MALAM), the foundry (THORNCLIFFE IRONWORKS) and the date (either 1824, 1825 or 1826) cast on the bases. There are still 19 of these Georgian lampposts in use around the old streets of Beverley, converted to electricity after the 2nd World War. We have not found any earlier street lamps in the UK, nor even any others dated. The UK led the world in gas street lighting, and British engineers were employed to light European cities such as Hamburg in 1844, a Malam project run from Hull with Yorkshire hardware.

The lamp posts are not just metal cylinders, but carry a wealth of symbolism. We think all the lanterns are replacements, but of an old pattern, often called Winsor after the man who lit up Pall Mall. The base has a lion's mask on a shield, with a victory wreath, as well as the founder's and the engineer's name (I Malam for John Malam, good new-Classicism as the Roman alphabet did not include J). Of the two parts of the column, the lower is the fasces device of ancient Rome, a design with a long international history. The upper part is said to be a copy of a bronze lamp from Pompeii, with collars of classical leaves. The whole has been thought to represent victory over the French in the Napoleonic wars. A political lamp post.

John Malam and his brothers provided gasworks and street lamps for more than 50 towns and cities, and although no one person invented gas lighting, he was one of the earliest gas engineers, inventing and patenting technical improvements. Beverley's lamps astonished people when first lit, and their survival for nearly two centuries is astounding. Other places seem to have scrapped all their early lamps: through this newsletter we would love to hear of other Georgian street lamps, surely surviving somehow, somewhere?

If Beverley probably has the oldest surviving gas street lamp posts in the UK, it probably also has the oldest in the world.

Barbara English
Artwork by Klosk Tyrer



“HIGH STREET” REGENERATION – WHY?

Historically, the High Street was a common street name for the focal point of businesses and they grew from about the 17th century onwards. We all know why. In the latter half of the 20th century, it saw a downturn and decline. Again, we all know why.

But the need by the Government to consider and come up with initiatives to invigorate and preserve it, with so many millions being agreed and allocated for “levelling up” (to what may seem to some, absurd reasons and places – Millom for one), has me for one, wondering why?

Why do we need to keep our “High Streets”? What for? For whom? After all, many are not special, never were and quite simply lacked character. Some of those which were, have already been massacred. I’ve been visiting old towns that I’ve never had the time to seek out and explore before. Been upset to see massive ring roads and by-passes. Town centres demolished for them and for huge ASDAs and Aldis erected in their place. Their sense of identity, along with many old architecturally beautiful buildings, both commercial and industrial, gone.

What do we need them for?

If we look around different cities, towns and villages, both here and abroad, most do have a recognisable “High Street”. But there are many different types. And in the main, the successful ones aren’t really high streets. They are places.

Places which attract visitors and crowds have something special to offer.

CHARACTER. Whether it is cobbled streets, artisan shops, restaurants, cafes and bars, tempting bakeries and unusual crafts and arts. They might have green spaces like parks, where you can sit and eat, meet up and chat – or, just be. Or to watch or listen to, some local performers. Agreed that sunshine does help this kind of ambience, but these things can be accommodated with some thought.

Places such as market towns – which abound in Yorkshire – are usually vibrant and very busy no matter what time of the year. They may have a Co-Op or similar, but in the main are full of individual, locally owned shops and with stalls selling produce and shrubs and flowers. Some are known to specialise in specific things, like books or a local delicacy. They attract the senses. They are places to go to enjoy yourself; where you want to spend time, away from home.

Places where you want to spend money; where you can help enliven and promote the local economy. And...there are pubs still open! Not only that, but for example in Thirsk, you have to smile at Easter and Christmas when you spot the bollards and post boxes covered in hand-worked crochet animals and the like, by yes, local townsfolk wanting to make their place somewhere special and fun.

It’s not just market towns. There are places in big cities, such as Portobello Road in London, which have become famous over the years with their regular street markets, attracting locals and visitors alike. Soho – a village with character! Sunday markets elsewhere bring people in for some enjoyment and street food at the weekend. And they don’t have to be “High Streets” - and in many cases, aren’t. The smaller “go to” spaces can be anywhere, just parts of towns or villages where people congregate. Perhaps they’ve been built around a local



attraction, like a place of interest. Much more pleasant than some vast and impersonal out of town shopping centre or Mall. Online shopping is now a thing which we have become used to and, in my case, much more preferable than getting in the car to spend time driving miles and hours spent frustratedly trying to find what you are looking for. I actually made the effort to visit High Street stores before Christmas to discover that they didn't stock what I wanted and to be told that I'd be better off shopping on line! I did and I was.

Who are the “High Streets” for? Do we need them?

Perhaps not as daft a question as might first appear. To get footfall, whose is it? Why? The last decades have seen huge changes in demographics of all types. What suited then, doesn't now.

Teenagers are not so different in many ways from what they've always been. Still highly influenced by friends, rather than family; by music and its current genres providing them with their own uniqueness. They still experiment with sex and substance abuse. But they are much more centred on relaxed activities, such as internet use and video games. Culture change, media influences, social ideologies and family structures influence the interests held by them. Social networking (Facebook, Instagram, MySpace Twitter ...the list goes on) is a key interest. They are the places where they hang out and chat, share information and socialise. Blogs are very popular, individual and can focus on so many different topics to share and discuss with others. So, do they need a “High Street”?

Couples always the same. Wanting time out away from work and chores to be together sharing an interest or hobby, going to the gym, cycling, travelling, going away on a romantic weekend, out to dinner or just relaxing staying in.. Do they need a “High Street”?

Families

I looked at the “65 Fun Activities and Best things to Do with kids”. Family games nights. Baking. Camping. Bowling. Ice Skating. Visit a Farm. Have a picnic. You get the picture. Do they need a “High Street”?

The Retired

Many of those lucky folk are, again, different to previous generations. Not content to sit at home, they want to keep healthy and take up all kinds of non-sedentary activities. Charity work, holidays abroad and going on cruises. Spending time with grandchildren. Visiting places they never had the time to see. Art classes. Gardening. Singing. Getting a pet! Cooking. Joining your local Civic Society. Do they need a “High Street”?

So...The damage has been done to many town centres and high streets over past years.

Perhaps the question should not be regenerated, but reimagined? An intelligent repurposing of the buildings already there. With thought. With care of what is already there and what needs to be there. For those who will live there in the future.

Judith Blackburn

ROPERGATE – PLANTERS AND NO PARKING



Having got to March, we've now certainly been challenged by the council's implementation of the Ropergate trial project, which has been received with mixed feelings from businesses, customers, and service users of the street since some rather attractive planters have been installed, almost end to end, and the contentious issue of parking being removed.



The trial has impacted on a variety of users each with different needs; has Wakefield Council underestimated the backlash?

What started out as a laudable project aligning climate change, a healthier lifestyle, and rebuilding the growing hospitality sector has backfired into a battle royale, though some of the issues could have been tackled differently. Whilst supporting the trial, we did warn the council that the project could be implemented in a different way using the available space differently on both sides of the street relevant to businesses along its length. There also appears to be differences of opinion on the level of consultation with businesses.

Whilst off-street parking is close by, there's concern that those who used to park on Ropergate for one purpose, would also spend in a shop or two, and that behaviour has disappeared, putting some businesses at risk. It's early days, but will those customers return?

We also sought an increase in blue badge parking across the town, outside of the remit of this trial, including Valley Road which could be equally controversial if standard bays are removed, and some parking bays aren't reintroduced to Ropergate.

We'll therefore be seeking an earlier review that the six-month intervals, and some compromises in the hope of benefiting more people who wish to use Ropergate for business and social needs.



Paul Cartwright

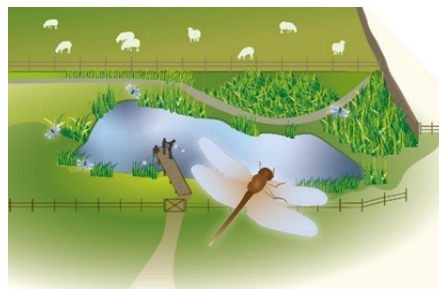
DRAGONS PLANNED FOR THE JO COX COMMUNITY WOOD!

Two years ago, in YHACS' April 2020 newsletter, Spen Valley Civic Society (SVCS) reported the official opening of one of its biggest ventures, the Jo Cox Community Wood. Since then, over a thousand trees have thrived; we've installed bat and bird boxes and we know that a greater variety of birds are making the wood their home.



*SVCS Chairman Max Rathmell explains the wildlife pond project to local MP Kim Leadbeater (Batley & Spen)
Photo courtesy of Erica Amende*

Originally, we provided three picnic tables and five benches, but the site's been so popular with local people that we've added more tables and benches. In late 2021 we purchased a small adjoining field. Part has been forested but some land is low-lying and we've now started our next project - to create a big wildlife pond. This will increase biodiversity and help wildlife in our built-up area. Our design includes a pond-dipping platform and an information board, so that local school children can visit and learn about our natural environment.



Hawker dragonfly and an artists impression of the pond

For the first time, SVCS is using crowdfunding to raise the necessary funds. We've called our project a "**Dragon Pond**" because if we can get dragonflies to breed there, it will be proof that it's ecologically successful. We have to raise £11,000 before the end of June.

Please support us by going to www.spacehive.com/create-dragon-pond-at-jo-cox-wood and pledging a pound or two.

We need everyone's help to make it happen – THANK YOU!

Erica Amende
Spen Valley Civic Society

DESIGN AWARDS 2021 ... ENHANCING PONTEFRACT



On Weds 26 Jan, after a two-year break, Pontefract Civic Society hosted its Design Awards for 2021, in the splendour of the Nelson Room of Pontefract Town Hall in front of an impressive gathering of business and property owners, trades people, representatives from Wakefield Council, and civic society members.



Civic Society Chair, Paul Cartwright said *“This is an evening of celebration following two years of hard graft which enhances the historic streetscape of Pontefract as a place for investors and visitors, against the background of a sustained 92% business occupancy, and the clear shift from retail to hospitality and activity-based experiences.”*

The civic society has presented a “Façade of the Year” award in the name of its first president, Lady Rosse from Womersley Hall, and the worthy winner for 2021 was The Printer’s Draft based on the façade’s bold and distinctive colour scheme, graphics, signage, and lighting which pays homage to the Holmes dynasty of printers and historians.



Gavin Richards, director, said, *“Everyone involved with The Printer’s Draft are absolutely delighted to have been awarded The Façade of the Year award for 2021 by Pontefract Civic Society; a special thanks to our designer Niki Richards.”*

Gavin went on to say, *“To be recognised by the civic society, who always have Pontefract’s heritage at the heart at what it does, is an achievement we are very proud of. They work tirelessly to safeguard Pontefract’s interests so to be awarded this is very special for us. We are so proud to be a part of Pontefract’s community, we have seen massive changes in the past months for Pontefract with help from the Civic Society. We’re looking forward to being a part of Pontefract’s growth and we can’t wait to welcome more Pomfretians through our award-winning doors.”*

Other awards presented on the night were for improvements in shop fronts, architecture & design, place-making, and the fantastic Aspire leisure hub:

- **Countess of Rosse Facade of the Year** (shop front)
- **Civic/Commercial** (a new or extended significant building)
- **Special Commendations** (complete ground floor refit)
- **Regeneration Award** (catalyst for retail expansion & footfall)
- **Residential Award** (creating attractive, distinctive, quality dwellings)
- **Heritage Award** (respecting a heritage building from the ground to rooftop)
- **Improvement Award** (attractiveness or character of the property)

2021 AWARD WINNERS



Paul Cartwright, civic society chair, said “All the award winners were very appreciative of our recognition in making Pontefract a better place for everyone, and our search for 2022 is already underway.”

For local information visit the civic society website at www.pontefractcivicsociety.org.uk or call 01977 708658 for further information.

Paul Cartwright

Ceremony Photograph: Courtesy of Medlock Photography



ILKLEY'S BLUE PLAQUE COMMEMORATES JEWISH REFUGEES

The Blue Plaque for Loxleigh House commemorates the forgotten history of Jewish refugees in Ilkley over 80 years ago.

A new blue plaque is on display in Ilkley at Loxleigh on Mount Pleasant and a new oak sapling has been planted by the Association of Jewish Refugees in nearby Belle Vue Garden. They commemorate the usage of Loxleigh House as a hostel for Jewish children escaping from Nazi Europe at the outset of World War 2.

In the Spring 1939 Jewish boys came on the Kindertransport from Germany and Austria. They were supported by Ilkley and



Bradford residents. After the war the hostel was a safe home for Jewish orphans to help them recover and decide where they wanted to live their lives.

Over 100 people gathered on 27th January, Holocaust Memorial Day, to see the plaque 'unveiled' and the tree planted. This was one of 80 oak trees planted across the UK. Those in attendance at Ilkley included the Deputy Lord Mayor of Bradford Councillor Mullaney, local councillors, members of the Jewish communities in Leeds and Bradford, local school children and members of Ilkley Civic Society.



People were welcomed by Albert King. There were moving speeches from Rabbi Gilbert, Hanneke Dye - members of whose family died in Auschwitz - and Michael Eaton whose father had been a refugee at Loxleigh.



Alex Cockshott gave details of the history of Loxleigh and some of its residents. Until recently very little was known about the hostel in Ilkley and the children who stayed there, but the Civic Society hopes that publicity surrounding this event will encourage people to come forward with more information and memories. Some of these have already come to light and will be documented. We now know where some of the boys went to school and how they went on to successful careers. If you have information or even photographs of the hostel, that you would like to share please contact localhistory@civicsociety.ilkle.org

Thanks go to Mr Michael Eaton who co-sponsored the plaque and to the Waterland family who now live at Loxleigh.

Helen Kidman
Chair, Ilkley Civic Society





KNARESBOROUGH'S MEMBERSHIP.....AND OTHER ISSUES

Here at Knaresborough Civic Society (KCS), we have a small membership and we're aware that we need to increase in size, if we are to fulfil our potential. However, we recognise that to do that, we need to give some pretty convincing answers to those who might, if approached, ask 'What's the point of a Civic Society?'

So here goes...

Q. Why would anyone want to be a member of a Civic Society?

A. We believe that residents should feel that being a member of a lively, proactive civic society is an investment in all of their futures and that having a sizeable membership gives civic societies a clear & credible mandate to act on their behalf.

And a case in point happened very recently when KCS Chair Bill Rigby appeared before the Harrogate Council Planning Committee to speak on behalf of the society against the council's own proposal to build a brand new leisure centre on the very edge of the conservation area.

Bill told the meeting that the project should be scrapped in favour of rival proposals for a major upgrade of the existing pool.

He said: *"Rejecting an extension in favour of a new build frustrates the nation's and district's own attempts to meet the challenge of a climate emergency. We are at a pivotal moment in our history as a community, nation and citizens of the world. The proposal fails to respond appropriately at all of these levels."*

He also criticised a council-run survey on where to build the new leisure centre as "flawed" and added residents were never asked if they believed there was a need for it at all. In fact Bill managed to say quite a lot in his allotted 3 minute slot, but tellingly the only question he was asked (by the council leader as it happens) was *"How many members are you representing ?"*

Suffice to say, the council did grant themselves planning permission and work on the £17m project starts very soon.

In other news, a while ago I watched a TikTok video that was posted by a very enthusiastic TikToker showing a view of Knaresborough in all its glory. It was further proof of the town's visitor appeal, but it's only one of many that are posted all over social media and elsewhere too, for that matter. In January alone for example, Knaresborough was featured on BBC's Antiques Road Trip and Songs of Praise as well as ITV's Our Great Yorkshire Life. It all goes to show that in these 'post-lockdown-stay-domestic days', the public enchantment with Knaresborough has increased way beyond all the locals' expectations.

The problem for those using and visiting the town is that it's a visitor destination for some and a market town for others. At peak times this dual role can mean that it's pretty busy with both and 'being busy' means that undue demands are put on the narrow streets and pavements in order to service both vehicles and pedestrians. If only they had thought about that in medieval times!

Anyway, the TikTok clip I referred to has now had well over 120k views, which makes me think that the narrow streets and alleys around town are going to get even busier than normal when the traditional visitor season begins!

Which brings us to the vexed & divisive topic of 'Pedestrianisation'.

But more significantly, to KCS at any rate, it brings us back to the subject of membership and why anyone would want to join...

Andrew Grinter

ADDINGHAM'S PLANS FOR THE PLATINUM JUBILEE

Plans are well underway for the Jubilee weekend that runs from Thursday 2 June until Sunday 5 June. There is an extra bank holiday this year to help celebrate, so Thursday and Friday are both Bank Holidays.

Richard Hunter Rowe is co-ordinating the weekend, with great support from both the Parish Council and Civic Society. All the village organisations were invited to a brainstorm session in January. From this a committee has been formed that is working with all the groups to put together a packed itinerary. It's still in the early stages but the current draft plan will try and align to the National programme of events wherever possible.

Below is a provisional guide, but things may well change.

- **Thursday 2 June** - The Devonshire Estate are hoping to light a beacon at Haw Pike. Addingham Film Club will show a film in the Mem Hall.
- **Friday 3 June**—Addingham Churches Together are hoping to conduct a service. In the afternoon there will be a tea dance in the Mem Hall with music from the last 70 years. In the evening there are plans for some of the Addingham choirs to put on a performance.
- **Saturday 4 June**—A street procession with a kings and queens theme will head down Main Street, arriving at the Mem Hall car park where there will be a street party. Marquees will be up to protect from the weather. Anyone can come down with their own picnic and either use the tables and chairs provided or just bring a rug. Addingham Beer festival will put on a bar with the scouts serving from their barbeque. We also hope to have as many stalls and games run by local organisations, along with plenty of competitions, just like at gala time. In the evening, the festivities will continue with a live band and dancing, followed by fireworks.
- **Sunday 5 June** is to be a day for families and neighbours to celebrate themselves.

Throughout the weekend, there will be an exhibition of photographs from the last 70 years. These will be displayed in the Mem Hall, with further photographs in the library and Hub.

No doubt there will be other events happening, so keep an eye out for further details. If anyone wishes to get involved or has any further ideas, please contact Richard Hunter Rowe on 07876 478380 or richard.hunterrowe@gmail.com

Jim Robinson





GRIFF RHYS JONES TO ATTEND PARLIAMENTARY RECEPTION TO SPEAK UP FOR CIVIC MOVEMENT

The All-Party Parliamentary Group for Civic Societies provides a forum to discuss issues related to the civic movement and provides a platform to raise these issues on the parliamentary agenda.

The group is chaired by Craig Mackinlay MP (Conservative), and Vice-Chairs include Sarah Olney (Liberal Democrat) and Yvette Cooper (Labour Party). We are supported in the House of Lords by Baroness Kay Andrews.



We are delighted to confirm that our first physical event in two years will hear from TV Personality and Civic Voice President, Griff Rhys Jones.

The meeting will be hosted in Parliament by Craig Mackinlay MP, who is Chair of the APPG for Civic Societies.

Griff Rhys Jones OBE will say:

"If people care about where they live, they have to get involved in their local civic society. There are some 252 Civic Voice group members, in 71% of local authorities, with 162 of these local groups registered charities in England. Did you know that 19 groups own properties and that the civic movement maintains over 700 access to land? Weymouth Civic Society even has a fort!"

"I call on all community groups to join with Civic Voice and help make the civic voice, even stronger."

May 25th: APPG for Civic Societies Parliamentary Reception

This event is by invitation only. Please contact Civic Voice at info@civicvoice.org.uk if you are a Civic Society or an MP interested in attending the event.

Article abstracted from Civic Voice Bulletin

CLIVE BETTS MP SPEAKS OUT AGAINST USE OF CLASS E PERMITTED DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS



"Housing has a role to play in mixed-use high streets but extending permitted development rights from Use Class E to residential is not the right way to do it."

Clive Betts MP, Chair of the Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (LUHC) Select Committee

Civic Voice Director, Ian Harvey, and the Chair of the LUHC Select Committee, Clive Betts MP, participated in a discussion on the Select Committee's recent report, ***"Supporting our high streets after Covid-19."***

Clive's knowledge of towns and cities' issues is second to none. He has been chairman of the Committee since 2010 and over that time, has developed a reputation as a pragmatic, informed and independent Chair of the Committee.

The discussion covered many areas but particularly looked at the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the high street and what lessons can be learned. In some ways, such as online shopping, Covid-19 has simply accelerated what was already happening, but it was interesting to hear Clive's strong remarks against the recent widening of permitted development rights (PDR) on our high streets, in particular, those allowing changes of use from Class E uses to residential.

Clive Betts MP said: *"As with our inquiry on PDRs, we heard that the changes to use classes and PDRs could undermine the development of holistic strategies for high streets in the round. Some were concerned that the ability of local authorities and communities to cohesively plan their high streets and town centres would be undermined by obviating the need for planning permission for change of use between different types of business within Class E."*

Watch the event via: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/join-ian-harvey-and-clive-betts-to-discuss-high-streets-after-covid-tickets-253022937417>

Hear Clive's comments on PDR at: <https://vimeo.com/692253410>

You can find a link to the Select Committee's report at:

<https://committees.parliament.uk/publications/8172/documents/83568/default/>

This is a must-read for any civic society involved in promoting high streets and town centres.

Article abstracted from Civic Voice Bulletin



GOVERNMENT CATCHES UP WITH CIVIC VOICE ON IMPORTANCE OF PRIDE OF PLACE!

The new Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, Michael Gove MP, launched the Government's long-awaited **Levelling Up Strategy**. Mr Gove said that he thinks the key to "levelling up communities" is twelve 'national levelling up missions', given status in law.

Measure 9 is one that we are really interested in! This is a campaign success for the civic movement:

'By 2030, pride in place, such as people's satisfaction with their town centre and engagement in local culture and community, will have risen in every area of the UK, with the gap between the top performing and other areas closing.'

Civic societies have been champions of what makes places attractive, enjoyable, and distinctive for generations. Over the past ten years, countless improvement schemes of all kinds have been undertaken by civic societies in cities, towns and villages up and down the country. Streets have been cleaned, litter picked, trees planted, plaques erected, flowers planted, rivers cleaned, events organised, and places championed!

Civic Voice intends to share lots of what Civic Societies are doing to celebrate the pride of place with Mr Gove in the next few months. We are calling on civic societies to register for Civic Day 2022, **Saturday 18th June 2022**, a national day to inspire communities to work together to celebrate and champion where they live - to create civic pride in their place. We would love as many groups as possible to give out awards - civic champions, best new building, best keep garden - to celebrate where you live!

Although the coordinating work is done by Civic Voice, what really makes this event happen is the fantastic effort of thousands of local volunteers. These people give guided tours, put on exhibitions, arrange street parties, organise competitions and help visitors to understand the local area just a little bit more. The first ever Civic Day was held on June 25th, 2011 and involved over 200 community groups across England, who put on over 350 events to celebrate where they live. We want this year to be even bigger.

Let us know your plans for Civic Day 2022 at info@civicvoice.org.uk.

From Civic Update 4 Feb 2022

YORKSHIRE'S FIRST HERITAGE SUMMIT... ...A GREAT SUCCESS

Wednesday 23rd March, saw Yorkshire's first Heritage Summit take place at a packed Pontefract Town Hall. The event which included stalls, presentations, opportunity to network and a tour of the historic town has received much positive feedback and there was general consensus to run another event in 2023.

Phil Bell, Chief Executive of the organisers The Yorkshire Society explained "It was important to get many of the regions volunteer organisations and our heritage guardians together for the first time in one place to share ideas and work together to show the strength of their combined power."



The Summit was professionally organised in partnership with Pontefract Civic Society who were able to showcase the wonderful Town Hall and town's remarkable history with a series of guided walks.

Paul Cartwright, Chair of Pontefract Civic Society commented *'It was an honour for Pontefract to host this prestigious event as well as help the many heritage organisations see the heritage of our town.'*

The event featured presentations by author and environmental campaigner Colin Speakman on Yorkshire's unique identity, Tim Barber from Real Yorkshire Tours helping heritage organisation to identify ways of partnering with the tourism sector and the importance of the visitor experience as well as the inspirational Rachel Bice, Chief Executive of the Yorkshire Wildlife Trust talk about wildlife being an integral part of cultural heritage.

The Summit was very much a forum for debate, discussing issues relevant to volunteer organisations involved in protecting the regions unique and varied heritage. The event was attended by many Civic Societies as well as organisations such The Yorkshire Regiment, The Yorkshire Dialect Society, The Yorkshire Philosophical Society plus organisations representing national parks, local areas and sectors such as wildlife and industrial heritage.

Paul Cartwright
Photos courtesy of Peter Ferrari





ILKLEY'S 2022 DESIGN & CONSERVATION AWARDS

Ilkley Civic Society is pleased to announce the return of its Design & Conservation Awards after a break of 2 years but via a Zoom presentation on Thursday 24th March to local businesses, organisations & individuals.

This year the society presented 2 Awards and 5 Commendation certificates to a wide variety of projects all of which had succeeded in making a valuable contribution to improving the townscape of Ilkley or its surrounding landscape. Projects, selected from a long list of 25 projects from the last two years included a variety of commercial buildings, private residences and one natural environment project Chair of Ilkley Civic Society Helen Kidman commented, *'There have been some very interesting developments for us to consider over the past two years, with building work of high quality and plans which are innovative in their use of space. It is especially pleasing to see modern design successfully complementing Ilkley's older buildings.'*



Certificates were delivered to the following projects: -

- **A Conservation Award** to Fishers Developments of Keighley for the conversion of two historic farm buildings on the edge of the moor. A barn and original farmhouse now provide two modern residential units already occupied but maintaining the historic character of the original buildings visible in the repair/reuse of historic materials and skills.

- **A Design Award**, to Jeremy Newsome (Ilkley architect) and his client who commissioned the construction of a new garage attached to a Victorian villa (a'Key Unlisted Building') in west Ilkley. A traditional garage adjacent to the front elevation would have had a negative effect on the villa so it has been turned through 90 degrees, so it is not visible from the street. What can be seen is a well designed and detailed stone wall. This new building was constructed by local builder Lee Gray.

- **Design Commendations (for new build projects)** for a newbuild contemporary detached house in Ben Rhydding designed by local architect Richard Dawson for the owner occupier. This was an infill site but sufficient space existed to create this contemporary interpretation of a traditional detached house with both an interesting front and rear elevation. The second commendation in this category was for the Moss and Moor Garden Centre with an appropriate new use and design for a gateway site to the town. This independent local business commissioned local architect Nigel Jaques to lead the large design and construction team.

- **Conservation Commendation (for work on historic buildings or structures)** to Betty's for its major investment in the upgrade and maintenance of its property on The Grove. Many weeks of scaffolding to the front and rear and apparently very little to see for it, but this is the sign of good conservation of historic buildings. In fact structural maintenance of chimneys, the roof and walls took place. An upgrade of the two large bay windows to the front elevation to modern insulation standards and changes to the heating and ventilation equipment hidden on the flat roof to the rear elevation.

A second conservation commendation goes to an innovative rear extension to a terrace house in the Railway Town. Its all too easy to opt for a single-story flat roof extension or even less appealing, a massive box dormer on the roof forgetting all the neighbours have to look at it for years to come. In this case a shallow 2 storey extension with small, pitched roof dormers at first floor has provided the additional space the client required, designed by local architect

Dan Bland.

• **Environmental Improvement Commendations (projects that enhance the townscape or surroundings of Ilkley)** One project received a commendation in this category and that was the wildflower meadow that provided a welcome to Ilkley along the front of Ashlands School on Leeds Road.

We hope that next year we can return to a live presentation and would welcome any suggestions of projects from readers to add to the 10 already on our long list.

David Blackburn

THE UPPER WENSLEYDALE RAILWAY SCHEME... ...AN UPDATE



YHACS has received the following message about the Wensleydale Railway from Mark Parry, Action for Yorkshire Transport:

The Upper Wensleydale Railway Association (UWR) scheme to 'Bring the Railway Back to Hawes' envisages the reinstatement of the Garsdale to Hawes branch of the Settle to Carlisle Line for operation by through services from Manchester and East Lancashire via Hellifield and Settle. Leeds, Bradford and the Aire Valley would be reached by change of train at Hellifield.



Photo by Mark R Harvey

UWR applied for support through both Rounds 2 and 3 of the Department for Transport's 'Restoring Your Railway Ideas Fund'. Although not succeeding in winning an award, UWR received detailed feedback to both applications that was by no means discouraging of developing the scheme to be ready to take further opportunities. UWR thus continues with its work to further strengthen the case for the railway.

On Friday March 18th, the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority announced a proposal to create a bridleway on the railway trackbed from Garsdale to Hawes, thus precluding reinstatement of the railway for the foreseeable future. This proposal was debated by Members of the Authority at their full meeting on Tuesday March 29th. The principle was approved by a large majority of the Members present at the meeting.

This link

<https://www.yorkshiredales.org.uk/views-sought-on-hawes-garsdale-bridleway-proposal/> is to the announcement of the outcome of that meeting on the National Park's website.

The announcement includes a link to a survey that seeks views on whether to continue to protect the trackbed for reinstatement of the railway or to proceed with the bridleway proposal. In essence, the National Park appears now to be seeking support to overturn its long-established policy of protecting the track bed from development that might hinder the future reinstatement of the railway.

Whilst other similarly attractive routes for a bridleway are feasible, the

railway can only follow its original alignment. Experience elsewhere shows that future reversion of a public right of way to railway use is highly unlikely, at least in any realistic timeframe. The opportunity to achieve the wide-ranging environmental, transport, social and economic benefits of Bringing the Railway to Hawes and Upper Wensleydale would thus be lost.

A LAST WORD...

It is of course good to know that regeneration of high streets in our towns and cities is a topic of concern for civic societies and that in some areas of our region real progress is being made - as witnessed by some of the excellent articles in this Newsletter.



It got me thinking though...We quite rightly are concerned when some of our high street stores close down, or a shop owner, with little knowledge or scant regard for the planning rules, tears out an old timber shopfront and replaces it with uPVC frames and a cheap plastic door....or that old pub sign that we've loved for years ends up in a skip. But then you look at the images flooding nightly into our homes from Irpin and Mariupol – places that a month ago I guess none of us could have pinpointed on a map – and you wonder how on earth will *their* high streets be regenerated?

Imagine if one of our comparable cities – let's say York – was to be incessantly shelled and bombed for a month and all its fine buildings, shops and houses reduced to rubble. It's hard to conceive it happening...and I guess the people of Mariupol felt that way when they were celebrating Christmas just a few weeks ago. Let's be thankful that we are privileged to be able to have our concerns about a few dodgy shopfronts and some boarded up high street shops....and not being worried sick wondering if our relatives are dead, or barely existing in some underground carpark near what used to be a Sainsbury's supermarket.

Just a thought....



*Some images of Mariupol buildings ...
.....before and after.*

Editor, David Moss



YORKSHIRE & HUMBER
Association of Civic Societies

Reg. Charity No. 1112290

www.yhacs.org.uk

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

David Moss

Wed 25th May - APPG Meeting with Griff Rhys Jones

Sat 11th June - YHACS Members Meeting at Woodend, Scarborough

Sat 18th June - Civic Voice's "Civic Day"

NEXT YHACS MEETING

SATURDAY 9TH APRIL 2.30 - 4:15 PM

MEMBERS MEETING IN ASSOCIATION WITH YORK CIVIC TRUST

GUEST SPEAKERS :

ANDREW MORRISON - CEO, YORK CIVIC TRUST

MARTIN HAMILTON - DIRECTOR, LEEDS CIVIC TRUST

CONTACT: KEVIN TRICKETT ON INFO@YHACS.ORG.UK

Executive Officers, Committee Members and Portfolios

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

- **Chairman**, Kevin Trickett (*Priorities for Growth*)
- **Vice Chairman**, Margaret Hicks-Clarke (*Civic Pride & Engagement*)
- **Secretary**, Helen Kidman (*Planning*)
- **Treasurer**, Alan Goodrum
- **Exec Committee Member**, Malcolm Sharman (*Heritage & Culture*)
- **Exec Committee Member**, Tony Leonard
- **Exec Committee Member**, David Moss (*Newsletter and Communications*)
- **Exec Committee Member**, Jim Robinson (*Infrastructure*)
- **Exec Committee Member**, Paul Cartwright
- **Exec Committee Member**, Martin Hamilton (*Housing*)
- **Exec Committee Member**, Alan Nicholson