

# **YORKSHIRE AND HUMBER ASSOCIATION OF CIVIC SOCIETIES**

**Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held at The Cedar Court Hotel,  
Harrogate on Saturday 30th January 2016.**

## **1. Present**

Over 60 members and guests were present, representing 27 YHACS member societies and Civic Voice. A full list appears at Appendix A.

## **2. Apologies for Absence**

See Appendix A

## **3. Minutes of the AGM 31.01.15**

These were proposed by Peter Spawforth of Wakefield Civic Society, seconded by David Winpenny of Ripon Civic Society, and approved by the meeting.

## **6. Matters Arising.**

There were none.

## **7. Annual Report.**

Kevin Trickett presented the annual report, which had been circulated in advance, together with a forward look for YHACS for 2016.

## **8. Treasurer's Report**

The accounts for 2015 were explained and questions of the Treasurer invited. There being none, the Annual Report and Treasurer's Report were proposed by Adrian Perry from Scarborough Civic Society and seconded by John Culpan from Brighouse Civic Trust and approved by the meeting.

## **9. Election of Officers**

The following officers were nominated and elected unopposed by the meeting:

Chairman: Kevin Trickett  
Vice Chair: David Moss  
Treasurer: Richard Ward  
Secretary: Helen Kidman

## **10. Election of Executive Committee**

The following committee members were nominated and elected unopposed by the meeting:

Paul Cartwright  
Margaret Clarke  
Kevin Grady  
Tony Leonard  
Jim Robinson  
Malcolm Sharman  
David Winpenny

Any potential executive committee members are invited to express their interest in serving to any existing member of the committee, at any time during the year.

## **11. Election of President**

Peter Cooper was nominated and elected unanimously by the meeting.

## **12. Any Other Business**

Peter Spawforth offered thanks to the committee for their efforts throughout the year.

## MEMBERS' MEETING

### 13. The work of Historic England in Yorkshire, Trevor Mitchell, Planning Director for Yorkshire, Historic England.

As Historic England approaches its first birthday, Trevor outlined details of the organisation's work and talked about HE's priorities in the region. He pursued the possibilities of more local involvement in heritage. HE is funded by DCMS but, like all public sector bodies, their funding was less than in previous years. The chairman is Laurie Magnus and the chief executive Duncan Wilson. HE deals with listed buildings, providing advice on LA planning and growth to government and others and research into key heritage issues. They support new ways of delivering heritage services including Heritage Action Zones. HE now charges for some services.

- In Yorkshire HE is concerned with eight strategic engagement priorities:
- The textile industry and mill buildings in West Yorkshire
- The industrial legacy of the Dales
- Hull City of Culture 2017
- Metal trades of South Yorkshire
- Ancient landscapes (archaeology)
- Designed landscapes of South Yorkshire
- Yorkshire City Regions
- Local plans and some neighbourhood plans

HE continues to produce Heritage Counts and local authority profiles which allows comparison between LAs in respect of heritage, on the HE website.

In working together, a number of projects are being taken forward:

- 1<sup>st</sup> World War memorials
- Assessing post war public art
- Enriching the list – (which will enable members of the public to update the listed buildings record)
- Grade II listed buildings at risk – Pilots for voluntary assessors to review buildings using a standard template in Leeds, Kirklees and the North York Moors with a roll out if funding is obtained.
- HELM training course on conservation areas next Autumn, covering management and appraisal techniques.

Questions followed on Heritage Action Zones, Controls on public amending listings records, how HE choose which planning applications to comment on, overseas war memorials (Bradford Pals, Somme Battlefield 1916 – no HE remit), problems with urgent 'spot' listing, threatened mills, Wentworth Woodhouse (urgent repairs are underway) and how HE can comment on Local Plans.

### 14. Latest News from Civic Voice, Ian Harvey, Executive Director

Ian brought members up to date with the latest developments at Civic Voice and reminded everyone why it was important for societies to support the national body for the civic movement.

CV was demonstrating its influence through activities such as the All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG), helping to link societies into the bigger picture, while making maximum use of Griff Rhys Jones.

A workshop on the Historic Environment and civic societies' role is coming up in Leeds on 16<sup>th</sup> March 2016 – details can be found on the [Civic Voice website](#).

The Sandys lecture will be given by Terry Farrell on 31<sup>st</sup> March and can be seen live on line. Details will be available shortly.

There is work shop on war memorials in Hull on 18<sup>th</sup> February 2016. If you wish to attend please contact Michael Reeve of Hull CS at [m.j.reeve@2015.hull.ac.uk](mailto:m.j.reeve@2015.hull.ac.uk)

Design Awards event is on 25<sup>th</sup> March 2016

Civic Day launch will by John Bercow, Speaker of the House of Commons

## 15. A Strategy for Growth Kevin Trickett

With two member societies saved from closure in 2015, and a former member society having closed, Kevin reviewed what societies can do to engage their local communities and to ensure their own survival. As YHACS portfolio holder for Strategy & Growth, Kevin explained how YHACS can support member societies and set out some thoughts on what societies might do to help themselves.

Taking his theme from the YHACS Annual Report, Kevin told members that, as volunteers, it was important that they were not only *committed* to the cause but were actually *passionate* about what they did for their societies; having that passion not only demonstrated the obvious care and concern volunteers have but was also likely to unlock energy reserves that could be used to great effect. He added that the very fact so many people gave up their time freely to come to YHACS events was an indication that the passion was there, but perhaps some committee members needed to rekindle the fire? It was particularly important that those in leadership roles had the dynamism and positive outlook to lead the organisation and to take it into untested waters by seizing every opportunity. It was not enough just to keep doing what you have always done; that way obsolescence lies and ultimate decay of the organisation.

Kevin said that an optimist will see the opportunity in every problem where as a pessimist will see the problem in every opportunity. It is really important for civic societies to do new things in new ways, to move with the times, to stay relevant and to appeal to a new and younger audience and that means looking for opportunities wherever you can. Is there something happening in your town or city such as a festival that you can join in with? Although not an arts organisation, Wakefield Civic Society had taken advantage of a recognised Artwalk event in Wakefield and had developed a programme to join in by exhibiting art work by local artists on Artwalk nights. This had brought new people to the Society, some of whom had then signed up as members. Goole Civic Society had recently been in the news when the accompanied Jo Brand at the start of on her coast to coast walk Sport Relief and Bradford Civic Society had only the day before been interviewed on TV. This was the sort of opportunity that came about because societies were good at networking and doing things, making a noise locally while making an impact on what happened within their communities.

Although not everyone was born to be a leader, and not everyone wanted to be in a leadership role, there should nonetheless be a job for everyone who wanted to help run their civic societies. However, people needed to work out what they brought to their committee; were they a Prisoner, a Protestor, a Passenger or a Participant?

Prisoner: no one should feel trapped, being no more than a prisoner looking for the earliest escape route: if you felt like that, may be it would be more honest to say so and to step down from the committee, freeing up a place for someone else?

Protestor: there are some people on committees who see their role as being one of turning up at committee meetings and complaining about everything; arguing why new ideas should not be tried and effectively blocking new ways of working. Again, if that is your sole mission in life, perhaps committee work isn't for you? Make way for someone with a more positive outlook.

Passenger: if all you are doing is turning up because you like the tea and biscuits, you're not really adding anything. All committees need people who are willing to do things between committee meetings, to help solve problems and who are prepared to devote time and energy. If you're not willing to do offer that, then ask yourself what is the point of being on the committee.

Participant: this is what every committee needs and what all committee members should be – people who will turn up, reply to emails, take part in discussions, put forward ideas and then offer to follow up on them. If there is a committee of willing volunteers, great things can be achieved! Don't be one of those people who see a problem but thinks it's for someone else to deal with it!

Civic societies need members, of course (otherwise, they wouldn't really be "societies"), but it need not be just about whose society has the most. If you have members, you will need to run a programme of events and activities to engage with the members. Most societies do this to some extent or other, of course, and having members can give some weight to your arguments when campaigning. Whether or not your society chases membership growth, however, you will need to attract public attention and this means that societies should see their role as being one where they must not only educate others but they should also enthuse them. To enthuse others, you may well have to entertain. Don't be boring – don't only talk about the rather dry subjects and get bogged down in points of order or the minutiae of planning law. If that is what you become known for, is it likely that people will want to join you?

One way of engaging with others, whether it be members, potential members or just people you need to network with, is at social occasions. Getting together for a meal is a great way of breaking down barriers and forging friendships. Wakefield Civic Society had been very successful at this with its social programme, including its monthly Dining Club.

Finally, Kevin pointed out, it wasn't just about doing things, it was also important to tell people about what you did and that meant using modern techniques. A website today is essential but it's no longer sufficient; you need to draw people in and you do that through a variety of communication and marketing routes but social media such as Facebook and Twitter had to be part of the approach.

## **16. Presentation of the YHACS/Peter Spawforth Excellence Awards**

The presentation of YHACS annual awards.

Commendations went to Hull CS, Pontefract CS, Scarborough CS and Selby CS

3<sup>rd</sup> Prize: Spen Valley CS for their heritage trails

2<sup>nd</sup> Prize: Wakefield CS for their ongoing programme of events and strategy to attract new members

1<sup>st</sup> Prize: Goole CS for their annual programme, particularly the launch of their Reuben Chappell Art Trail which was very impressive for such a new and still small society.

Congratulations to all participants.

**17. Round up of news** and developments from societies across the region:

Michael Reeve from Hull Civic Society and Civic Voice explained that he had been appointed as co-ordinator for the Hull War Memorials Project and reminded members of the workshop in Hull on 18<sup>th</sup> February.

Members joined in conveying their very best wishes for a speedy recovery to the president of YHACS, Peter Cooper, who is unwell at present.

Helen Kidman  
2<sup>nd</sup> February 2016.

## List of people attending and apologies

	<b>Society/Organisation</b>	<b>Surname</b>	<b>First Name</b>
1	Addingham Civic Society/Horbury CS/Market Weighton CS/YHACS Committee	Robinson	Jim
2	Aireborough Civic Society	Woods	Clive
3	Barnsley Civic Trust	Barnes	Geoff
4	Barnsley Civic Trust	Barnes	Phyllis
5	Bradford Civic Society	Hall	Alan
6	Bridlington Civic Society	Oliver	Cyril
7	Brighouse Civic Trust	Culpan	John
8	Brighouse Civic Trust	Midgley	Jenny
9	Doncaster Civic Trust	Anderson	Tina
10	Doncaster Civic Trust	Coote	Peter
11	Doncaster Civic Trust	Holmes	John
12	Goole Civic Society	Clarke	John
13	Goole Civic Society/Horbury CS/Market Weighton CS/YHACS Committee	Clarke	Margaret
14	Goole Civic Society	Holmes	Gerald
15	Goole Civic Society	Walker	Rachel
16	Goole Civic Society	Walker	Steve
17	Grimsby, Cleethorpes & District Civic Society	Bassett	Teresa
18	Grimsby, Cleethorpes & District Civic Society	Bassett	Graeme
19	Halifax Civic Trust	Connolly	Eileen
20	Halifax Civic Trust	Paxton-White	June
21	Harrogate Civic Society	Amaku	Susan
22	Harrogate Civic Society	Hacker	Peter
23	Harrogate Civic Society	Neesam	Malcolm
24	Harrogate Civic Society	Pankhurst	Henry
25	Harrogate Civic Society	Siddans	David
26	Harrogate Civic Society	Siddans	Margaret
27	Huddersfield Civic Society	Earnshaw	Lesley
28	Huddersfield Civic Society (etc)/Horbury CS/Market Weighton CS/YHACS Committee	Ward	Richard
29	Hull Civic Society/Civic Voice	Reeve	Michael
30	Hull Civic Society	Sharman	Dot
31	Hull Civic Society/Horbury CS/Market Weighton CS/YHACS Committee	Sharman	Malcolm
32	Ilkley Civic Society/Horbury CS/Market Weighton CS/YHACS Committee	Kidman	Helen
33	Leeds Civic Trust	Kitching	Lynda
34	Knaresborough Civic Society	Wright	Helen
35	Knaresborough Civic Society	Wright	Ian
36	Knaresborough Civic Society	Kaye	David
37	Market Weighton Civic Society/Horbury CS/YHACS Committee	Leonard	Tony
38	Pontefract Civic Society	Cartwright	Christine
39	Pontefract Civic Society	Cartwright	Paul
40	Pudsey & District Civic Society	Depelle	Jackie

41	Richmond Civic Society	Hillyard	Carol
42	Ripon Civic Society/Horbury CS/Market Weighton CS/YHACS Committee	Winpenny	David
43	Saddleworth Civic Trust	Lloyd	Katie
44	Saddleworth Civic Trust	Lloyd	Samuel
45	Scarborough Civic Society	Perry	Adrian
46	Scarborough Civic Society	Perry	Chris
47	Selby Civic Society/Horbury CS/Market Weighton CS/YHACS Committee	Moss	David
48	Selby Civic Society	Wildash	Jim
49	Skipton in Craven Civic Society	Clark	Sheila
50	Skipton in Craven Civic Society	Wood	Anne
51	Skipton in Craven Civic Society	Wrathmell	Sue
52	Spen Valley Civic Society	Amende	Erica
53	Spen Valley Civic Society	Berry	Colin
54	Wakefield Civic Society	Holwell	Margaret
55	Wakefield Civic Society	O'Donnell	Mike
56	Wakefield Civic Society	Spawforth	Pat
57	Wakefield Civic Society	Spawforth	Peter
58	Wakefield Civic Society/Horbury CS/Market Weighton CS/YHACS committee	Trickett	Kevin
59	Wakefield Civic Society	Ward	Brian
60	Wakefield Civic Society	Wood	Geoff
61	Civic Voice	Harvey	Ian
62	Historic England	Mitchell	Trevor
	<b>Apologies</b>		
1	Addingham Civic Society	Birch	Ken
2	Bridlington Civic Society	Payne	Jane
3	Civic Voice/High Wycombe Civic Society	Fooks	Tony
4	Pickering Civic Society	Potter	Mike
5	Scalby Village Trust	Dixey	Hazel
6	Scarborough Civic Society/YHACS President	Cooper	Peter
7	Scarborough Civic Society	Cooper	Alison
8	Wakefield Civic Society	Stead	Ian