

Yorkshire & Humber Association of Civic Societies

Registered Charity No: 1112290



www.yhacs.org.uk

Voice of the Civic Society Movement in the Region

BULLETIN 2017 - 04 (September)

YHACS Event: Bradford, Saturday, 30th September 2017

First of all, a reminder that we have our next YHACS event in Bradford on 30th September. This will include a choice of Saturday morning tours and then the main meeting at the City Hall in the afternoon. For those able to join us on Friday evening, 29th September, there will be the opportunity to join members of YHACS and Bradford Civic Society for dinner at a local Italian restaurant. Please book your places as soon as possible.

Full details have been emailed to members – please get in touch if you haven't received them.

Do you tell your members about YHACS?

Some of our member societies email me copies of their newsletters, which I am always interested to read. They show just how varied the activities of our movement are and how much impact our members are having within their towns and cities.

One thing that strikes me, however, is how few of your newsletters mention YHACS and the things that YHACS does and this begs the question as to how your members hear about YHACS? Do your members even know that your society is a member of YHACS? Do they know what the initials 'YHACS' stand for? Do they know what we do or about what goes on and gets discussed at our events? Do you report back to them on what you learn from attending YHACS events? And do you encourage your members to attend YHACS events?

The ideal answer to all these questions should, of course, be a resounding 'Yes!' If it's not, then why is that? The YHACS committee is keen to get our messages out to your members and we encourage your members to come to our events, particularly when we hold our meetings on your home ground. Your members don't have to be on your committee to come to YHACS events: they are open to all!

So here's a plea from us to you: please, please, do tell your members about us and report back on the things we discuss and do. And please pass on details of our events to your members.

One way of doing this, of course, is to email the quarterly YHACS newsletter and meeting invitations on to your members wherever possible.

Next YHACS Newsletter

Just a reminder that the next YHACS newsletter will be published just ahead of the Bradford YHACS event at the end of September and we are looking for articles and other contributions from our members. If you have something to say and haven't already sent us your item, please email it to our editor David Moss as soon as possible, and certainly before the editing deadline of 22nd September. David's email address is damos43@yahoo.co.uk and this time, we are looking for items specifically on 'Measuring Success' – ie, items that discuss what makes for a successful civic society.

Setting up a YHACS Contact List

As I mention above, some of our member societies send me their newsletters to read. I don't circulate these more widely as to do so would have me acting as a post box and I might find myself duplicating efforts as some of you may already circulate material between yourselves.

On a related note, I sometimes receive requests from one civic society for the contact details of another society or a request for information about what other civic societies might be doing about X, Y or Z.

Still on this theme, I also receive details of events that some of our members have organised that could well have wider appeal, particularly to the members of adjacent societies and for whom travel to venues would be relatively easy. It would be good to share some of this with members across the region – partly because it could help boost turn out at your own events but also because it could act as a source of ideas and inspiration for events, speakers and subjects that you might find interesting and useful for your own society to run.

So, how do we go about sharing all this information and helping to make contact between member societies easier without (a) filling my email account up with requests from each of you to share information with others and (b) without breaching the requirements of data protection legislation?

Well, the answer we would like to trial is to set up a contact list for our member societies that we can publish: as a minimum, we would like to email this to members but we would ideally like to be able to put this on our website as well.

Now, some of our member societies are already well-placed to make their contact details publicly available: they have generic email addresses (such as info@wakefieldcivicsociety.org.uk in the case of my own society) and office or mobile phone numbers (rather than person home phone numbers). This makes sharing contact details easy – there is no personal data as such being made available. [The advantages of such generic email addresses are obvious: they also, if set up properly, should allow more than one committee member to respond to emails, thereby providing cover when committee members are on holiday. If you don't have an office, then having a mobile phone means that you can pass the mobile phone between committee members, as we do in Wakefield, to provide continuity of cover when the lead contacts are on holiday.

We would therefore like to set up a YHACS contact list made up of generic email addresses, Twitter names, and, where available, phone numbers that can be shared and published. If you don't have such an email address and/or phone number, you might wish to consider getting one! Remember that if you have the YHACS/Statement website package, you receive an info@ email address as part of the deal and a simple 'pay as you go' mobile phone can be purchased relatively cheaply.

To get the ball rolling, could I ask all our member societies to email me their publishable contact details – ie, a generic email address and an office or mobile phone number. Email the information to me at info@yhacs.org.uk – which, you won't be surprised to hear, can be accessed not only by me but also other members of the YHACS committee.

If you don't have this generic information and are willing to share your personal contact details (one set for each society), you can, of course, send that to me but you must be content for us to publish that to our members and on-line. You must also take responsibility for updating the information if there are changes of personnel in the future.

It would also be helpful to include details of your website address and your official Twitter account. So, to re-cap, the information we are requesting for each society is:

1. Email address
2. Phone number
3. Website address
4. Twitter account

Once we have the information, we will compile the list and circulate it. You will then be able to distribute your newsletters and details of your events, as well as making requests for information, etc., directly with member societies rather than routing such material through YHACS.

Civic Voice Convention and AGM, Wakefield

– 20th & 21st October 2017

Have you booked your place at the Civic Voice Convention yet? If not, you can do so via the Civic Voice website and [Eventbrite page here](#).

As you should be aware by now, the Convention is coming to Wakefield this year so we are hoping for a really big turnout from YHACS members! Wakefield Civic Society is co-hosting the event and I can provide you with some background information about the event to help you plan your visit to Wakefield.

On Friday, 20th October, as well as talks and workshops being run by Civic Voice, Wakefield Civic Society will be organising some tours around Wakefield city centre. Details of these and booking arrangements will be made available by Civic Voice in due course. However, recognising that some people will be travelling to Wakefield on Thursday, 19th October, the Society has organised a free talk (being given by me!) at Wakefield Town Hall that might be of interest to those attending the Convention as well as to members of Wakefield Civic Society. Details of the Society's Autumn programme are attached. It would be very helpful to us if you could book your places by using the [Society's Eventbrite page here](#).

On Friday evening, there will be the Civic Voice Convention Dinner at Cedar Court Hotel. Wakefield Civic Society usually hosts its own dinner in the autumn but this year we have decided to merge our annual dinner with the Civic Voice Convention Dinner. If you are coming to the Convention, your booking will cover your place at the Dinner, including the drinks reception. However, if you, or perhaps your partner/spouse, only want to attend the dinner and not the full Convention, you can do so by booking your dinner and drinks reception place directly with Wakefield Civic Society. Please see the separate booking form if this option is of interest. There is also an option to book your place(s) for the dinner and drinks reception only [here](#) (note a booking fee applies).

On the Saturday, there will be a full day of talks, workshops and discussions at the Civic Voice Convention, which is due to finish at 4 pm. After that, your time is your own but again, recognising that some people are making a weekend of it, Wakefield Civic Society is organising a guided walk on Sunday morning. This will start at 10.30 am from outside the Town Hall in Wood Street, Wakefield. Full details will be available from Civic Voice in due course.

YHACS/Peter Spawforth Award

Once again, YHACS will be offering prizes in our annual Award contest. The overall winner gets to hold the prestigious trophy for a year and receives a cheque for £200. The runner-up receives £100 and the third prize is of £50.

The essence of the competition is for your organisation to show the judges (the YHACS Committee) that it has made real progress during the year from 1 October 2016 to 30 September 2017 to entitle it to be called "Regional Civic Society of the Year". Examples of this are:

- Running a successful campaign or carrying out a specific project
- Getting to grips with technology by having an up to date website or using Twitter, Facebook or other social media to publicise your activities
- Maximising your publicity with a successful Newsletter or getting special coverage in the local Press about your concerns or campaigns
- Keeping your members and others informed of your activities
- Arranging social activities such as on-message talks and outings
- Increasing and satisfied membership
- Having good and productive relationships with other bodies, including your local council
- Managing your funds properly, including having adequate subscription levels
- Having good management by delegation and sharing of jobs – and an up to date Constitution

You get to decide on what you enter but, as usual, we are asking you for evidence of what it is you have achieved. An entry form is attached and we ask that you return it to us by 5th November. Judging will then take place later in the year with the results being announced at our AGM in Harrogate on Saturday, 27th January 2017.

NALC Conference – 31st October 2017

Some of you may remember Ben Murray who worked until recently for Civic Voice. Ben is now Policy & Projects Officer with the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) and he has extended an invitation to our members to attend a free session on 'empowering your community' at the NALC conference on 31st October.

Ben writes:

"Over the last decade more than 250 new councils have been created by local people just like you.

Local councils provide communities with a voice and the opportunity to take control of decisions made in their local area around things such as where development should go, how local services are run and how public assets should be looked after.

NALC is holding a dedicated event for local communities on how to give more power to the people through the creation of a new local council at our annual conference and we would love to see you there!

This exciting and informative session will be jam packed with stories from people who have launched campaigns to empower their communities. You will hear about the challenges some of these groups faced, the benefits they have found since forming a local council to represent their community, along with helpful hints and tips on how to launch and run a successful campaign.

Funded by the Big Lottery, this session is free to attend and we can also cover reasonable travel and subsistence costs.

Our event is from 11.00 (10.20 registration) to 13.00 (followed by lunch and networking) on Tuesday 31 October 2017 at the Double Tree Hotel, Stadium Way West, Milton Keynes, MK1 1ST as part of NALC's Annual Conference & Exhibition; and there is an opportunity for you to stay for the whole day at no extra cost!

So whether you're from an existing campaign, Civic Society, Big Local Area, neighbourhood forum or any other community group and want to come along and learn how you can empower your community, please fill in the booking form here or drop us a line to find out more."

If you would like to contact Ben to discuss, you can do so by email on Ben.Murray@nalc.gov.uk or telephone on 020 7290 0314.

**Kevin Trickett,
YHACS Chair**



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