The Futures Group of Leeds Civic Trust images what transport could look like in the middle of the twenty-first century in Leeds. Leeds in 2056 is the hub of a comprehensive rapid transit system serving the entire city region, stretching from Todmorden to York and from Skipton to Sheffield. The backbone of this system is a fully electrified network of heavy and light railway lines. Extensions to the early twenty-first century network constructed since the late 2010s filled in the gaps left by Beeching and responded to new patterns of development. This unified rail-based system links all the major towns and suburbs of the city region. Some of the new light railway lines tunnel under commercial centres to avoid street-level disruption, while others travel alongside wider highways. On this system, travel between destinations as far apart as Heckmondwike and Roundhay, Selby and Halifax or Ossett and Knaresborough require no more than a single change. A publicly-regulated, high-frequency bus network completes the system, serving corridors and settlements where building a rail link proved impractical as well as lower density suburban areas. Bus services are integrated with the rapid transit system and inter-change is seamless.

The city region’s transport system links up with the key nodal points in Britain’s expanded inter-city rail network, to which Leeds Station is the chief gateway. This network, consisting of high speed and classic lines, conveys people across the country and to destinations in continental Europe more rapidly and in greater comfort than the car ever did. Following the model of city regions across Europe, this transport system is planned and co-ordinated by a single public agency, accountable to citizens through the city region’s directly elected legislature. Payment for all forms of transport, public and private, is integrated into a single account. A high proportion of the funding for the system is derived from regional income and corporation taxes, which gives the city region a high degree of autonomy. Fares are kept low to ensure affordable mobility for all and the under-18s and over-65s travel free. The transport agency is responsible for ensuring that the planning of all new developments is orientated around public transport, walking and cycling. Growth is truly sustainable.

In mid-twenty-first century Leeds, then, the car sits in its rightful place: as a servant of the city, not its master. Cars fulfil certain crucial functions – such as facilitating mobility for disabled people or enabling travel to more remote rural areas – but they are no longer the dominant mode of transport. This transformation in the car’s role required the city to replace and re-structure the infrastructure that made Leeds the (self-proclaimed) ‘Motorway City of the Seventies’. The inner ring road was dismantled, its concrete canyons covered over, creating space at surface level for new streets and a network of small parks and squares. The tunnels were given over to the rapid transit system. Across the city region, motorways were reduced in size, with particular sections of road removed entirely. The vast road interchanges that once circled the centres of Leeds as well as Bradford, Huddersfield and Wakefield – in which the pedestrian felt like an intruder and the cyclist was rarely seen – are barely recognisable, having been re-cast as modest intersections in a fine grain network of city streets.

(Cont’d on page 2)
This process of transformation released hundreds of acres of urban land for housing and open space. Highways like East Street, Hunslet Road and Kirkstall Road, where dual carriageways once carried fast traffic past defensive architecture and patches of unused space, have been re-structured as boulevards lined with mature trees, generous pavements and buildings with active frontages. Inner suburbs like Sheepscar, which were devastated by roads in the 1970s, have been re-imagined as mixed use communities. Holbeck and Hunslet moors have been restored and these southern neighbourhoods are knitted back into the fabric of the city. Across the city region, space once allocated to vehicular traffic and parked cars is used to create a compressive network of segregated cycle lanes, modelled on Danish and Dutch principles. A revolution in highway design – entailing the removal of pedestrian rails, the tightening of junction radii, the reduction of speed limits, and the widening pavements – signal that streets are designed principally for walking. The lion’s share of city and town centre streets are pedestrianised. Redundant surface car parks have become playing fields, schools and nurseries. Former parking structures are now offices, flats and creative space.

Driving into central Leeds and other towns is as unthinkable in 2056 as taking a car into the centre of London or Copenhagen already was by 2016. Indeed for the vast majority of residents of the city region, driving is an uncommon experience. For local journeys shorter than two miles, walking and cycling are the pre-eminent form of mobility. For longer journeys or when active modes are less practical, the city region’s public transport networks meets people’s needs. For forty years, the housing, schools, employment centres and public services have been developed around public transport networks. As a result of these shifts, the proportion of households owning a car has declined from its peak of 70% in 2000 to less than 20%. Car ownership is largely confined to motoring enthusiasts, tradespeople and residents of more remote rural areas. Similarly, the proportion of trips made by car has fallen from its peak of about 65% in 2015 to 15%. The vast majority of car traffic consists of taxis and hire vehicles, rented by the hour or day, making short journeys.

Like the archaeology of earlier industrial epochs, certain relics of the apogee of the automobile age have survived in 2056. Concrete pillars that once supported an overpass stand in the centre of a new park. A few short strips of pedestrian guard railing lie forgotten on a quiet side street. A handful of unconverted multi-storey car parks lie abandoned in the inner city. These structures serve as reminders of an age with different transport and spatial priorities. They have become objects of curiosity for a younger generation, born since the late 2020s, who never knew Leeds as a car-dependent city. Bands of enthusiasts for the Motorway City – among them some members of the Civic Trust – seek to preserve some of these artefacts, not so that they can be used for transport, but for the same reason we preserved mills and stable blocks in earlier centuries: because they are now part of the city’s history.

While it would be easy to dismiss this as an idealistic vision for a city so dependent on the car in a period of public austerity, we must remember that this sort of transport infrastructure is being designed and created in cities around the world today. The culture of urban transport – the way people expect to move around in cities – is being transformed by bold, far-sighted decisions on infrastructure and planning. Leeds does not have to be a prisoner of the choices the city has made in the past. While funding and national government support are critical, it is never too early to make a start – to outline the vision. None of what has been described is predicated on new technology, but on a different approach to the way the city is planned and managed. Just as the city region was shaped around the car in the twentieth century, in this century we can re-forge urban mobility according to radically different priorities. The benefits of this approach will not be confined to the 2050s: they will be felt as soon as we begin to truly change course.

Understanding how we would like the city to develop over the course of the twenty-first century – a timeframe that surpasses the scope of most existing plans for the city region – allows us to make wiser decisions about how we plan transport and new development. The Civic Trust’s Futures Group, which meets fortnightly in the city centre, is exploring how Leeds should change over the lifetime of someone born in the early years of this century.

Our goal is not to predict the future but to help to shape it.

We welcome new members and contributors.

David Ellis
Futures Group, Leeds Civic Trust
Looking into the future

I recently met with the committee of Grimsby, Cleethorpes and District Civic Society to discuss ideas for rejuvenating their Society and attracting new members. It was a very enjoyable outing where I was able to suggest some ideas that they could incorporate into their strategy and they offered tea and cake: fair exchange!

I regularly find myself in conversation with people wondering what the future holds for their societies and how they can keep things going in the medium to longer term, not just for the benefit of their existing members but also as a way of attracting the next generation of committee members.

Now, I make no claims about being able to see into the future but one of the characteristics of successful organisations (and individuals for that matter) is a capacity to consider what the future might hold for them so that they can develop strategies to ensure they can cope with whatever the future might bring. Later in this newsletter, I’ll be examining some of the changes that are shaping the future of our towns and cities but there is a technique that I have used in the past and could be used by any civic society to help plan for the what lies ahead - Horizon Scanning.

Now, there are many management books that you can buy if you want to study this concept in detail – they’ll certainly do the subject more justice than I can here in the space available – but bear with me while I outline the principles.

Let’s say you want to work out what might lie ahead for your civic society. Get together a few people who really understand what your society is about - this is most likely to be your committee but could also include people from the wider membership or people who have recently stood down from the committee.

Now, here’s a tough one, how up to date are the members of your group? Are they trend setters and trailblazers or do they just tend to wear nice blazers? Ideally, you need one at least a few people in the group who are knowledgeable or have given some thought to what is happening in the wider world. If you don’t have them, go out and see if you can find them.

Now, ask them to start thinking in a structured but uncensored way (we all tend to censor our thinking - or at least what we say out loud - when in groups) about the changes likely to happen within society over the next 10 to 20 years. You can ask them to use a STEP analysis (Social, Technological, Economic, Political - add Environmental if you want to make it STEEP). Ask them to think of best case and worst cases - from the best of all possible worlds to a dystopian nightmare. Get them to write their thoughts of what could happen - best and worst - under each STEP topic on separate Post-It Notes. Next: take everyone’s Post-It Notes and see if you can arrange them in themes to develop possible scenarios. The idea is to develop coherent visions for what might happen to society at large.

So, if for example, one of your participants imagined the possibility that there would be a surge in community spirit over the next few years on one Post-It Note, perhaps inspired by government campaigns and initiatives, and someone else had written that people would have more leisure time (because, perhaps, technology will make working hours shorter), you could group these (four) ideas together. Conversely, someone could have imagined that there would be a growing crisis of community engagement as technology enables us to lead more and more individual lifestyles where we don’t need to step outside our front doors; in fact rising crime would make it dangerous to do so.

Then, develop these scenarios, perhaps based with extra research that these days (thanks to the information revolution of recent years) can be done on-line. You only need two or three comprehensive scenarios - one very positive, perhaps, one less so and one outright depressing. The chances are that the middle one will be closest to reality but some elements from either of the other two could work their way in over time.

The trick then is to work out what these scenarios would mean for your civic society if they were to materialise and develop possible strategies to prepare the society to respond to what’s coming over the hill. For example, how would you cope with an influx of new members? If nothing else, this should get you thinking and talking.

Have fun!
No matter how different in area, character or population density, every Council across our YHACS region faces a massive challenge over the next 20 years: housing.

I think it’s a topic to which every Civic Trust/Society can and should contribute - it affects us, our children and our grandchildren.

**The challenges are:**
- How to ensure sufficient new homes to meet the needs of all council residents, not just the wealthy?
- How to resist developer pressure to build large estates of 4-5 bedroom detached/semi-detached houses?
- How to ensure we end up with sustainable communities where residents are close to services like health, education, public transport; and to their workplaces?
- For urban areas where green belt is a rare commodity, how to avoid losing most of it, when planners assume that larger settlements = greater capacity to absorb large numbers of new housing?
- For rural areas, how to expand smaller settlements, make them more sustainable for young families and working age residents, and avoid closure of small village schools?

Do you know how many houses your Council plans to build over the next 20 years? Please find out, so we can get a picture of the whole region!

**My next question is:** What do we know about population changes in the next 20 years which affect the sort of housing we'll need?

- Size of population – in some council areas it will increase by over 10%, in other areas there are difficulties sustaining rural village populations.
- Everywhere, there will be a massive increase in the proportion of elderly residents. In my council area, over-65’s will increase by 55%, from the current level of 27% of residents.
- At present, 33% of homes in my council area are occupied by older people, in excess of their proportion of the total population. What are the figures in your Local Authority?
- The total number of households will increase but their average size will fall to about 2.3 persons per household.

**So now we need to know something about the current state of housing -**

- We still have a high percentage of older buildings that are poorly insulated and expensive to heat. Many are in a poor state of repair. Interestingly, 66% of respondents to a RIBA survey said they would rather buy an old house than a new one, citing character, more space and better gardens as their reasons!
- Across England we have about 200,000 homes which have been empty for over 6 months.
- National research in 2015 estimates that 3.5 million people aged over 60 want to down-size but cannot find suitable housing that they like. If they could, about 3 million 2-4 bed houses would be freed up across the country.
- There is a lack of affordable housing for young families, singletons and couples. Most towns have lots of wasted empty space above shops, and a problematic “zone” between the town centre and suburbs, containing brownfield/derelict/run-down sites.

**What’s the answer?**

Logically we should:
- Build more 1 and 2 bed properties, half of which should have “built-in” facilities to address mobility and disability issues.
- Extend some villages and improve their transport links with towns/workplaces.
- Convert empty spaces in towns above shops into accommodation, already being done in eg Pontefract, Leeds, Halifax, Keighley, Staithes, Hull and Dewsbury using HLF’s Townscape Heritage Initiative programme.
- Build at a higher density than we do now. My council’s Local Plan assumes a density of 30 dwellings per hectare. Apparently the average density is already 36 per hectare. Could we increase that without sacrificing quality and design, say to 60 per hectare? That would save some of our green belt which faces destruction.

**Create Streets** ([www.createstreets.com](http://www.createstreets.com)) is a London-based group which campaigns for new housing in the form of terraced streets, not high-rise flats. They collate research which answers questions about what sort of housing...
YHACS AND HOUSING IN OUR REGION (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4)

Create Streets say that towns/cities which are popular to live in have the following features:
- Housing and workplaces are not segregated.
- Cars and vehicles are slowed down – residents feel their street is their space.
- Streets have high “connectivity” (ie grid pattern not labyrinths) and excellent “walkability.”
- There is good public transport.
- There are small local shops spread throughout the town/city, accessible on foot for residents.

I think we as a regional association should be able to identify some housing schemes that take all the above into account, and pool details of them. Individual Civic Trusts/Societies could then quote such examples when dealing with local housing proposals.

I would particularly like to know about new housing schemes in towns which respect local styles, are compact, and within walking distance of all amenities. I suspect that lovely places such as Beverley, Skipton, York, Ripon may contain examples in traditional styles. Other places such as Leeds, Sheffield, and Hull may have modernistic city designs which still meet the “spec” in terms of density and good design.

If you know of such a scheme, please send details (including planning application reference if possible), to me via David Moss.

Erica Amende,
Spen Valley Civic Society

NEXT YHACS MEETING

SATURDAY 9TH APRIL 1:00 - 4:00 PM

MEMBERS MEETING
AT
THE MANSION HOUSE
45 HIGH STREET
DONCASTER, DN10 4PE
The Annual Pontefract Civic Society held its 2015 Design Awards ceremony at Carleton Grange on 16th February 2016.

Paul Cartwright, Chairman introduced the nominees and winners of certificates in six award categories. Paul made particular mention to the high standard of entries and expressed a hope that others would follow their lead in making Pontefract a better place for residents and visitors alike.

The awards were presented by Peter Taylor Chairman of the Civic Society’s Conservation Environment and Planning Committee.

**Improvement Award** - An altered or significantly refurbished existing building on all floors that has vastly improved the attractiveness or character of the property. This award recognises the effort of an owner or tenant to improve and enhance the building without achieving any of the awards above. This award should be presented to buildings within the enlarged town centre.

Winner: 1 Market Place. Presented to Bill Heaney and team.

**Residential Award** - A single dwelling site or multiple dwellings on a residential estate with elevations in keeping with the historical character of the town. An obvious effort will have been made by the architects to create attractive distinctive dwellings.

Winner: Hallberg House, Wakefield and District Housing. Presented to Martin Symons, Katrina Backhouse and David Thorpe.

**Regeneration Award** - A building that has undergone a change of use, and for which the new usage will act as a catalyst to improve the unique character of the town, encourage retail expansion, increase town centre usage, or facilitate tourism.

Winner: Reeds Rains, Beastfair. Presented to Stephanie Stuart, Lee Carratt and Vicky McDonnell by Paul Cartwright

**Commercial/Civic Award** - A newly designed or refurbished commercial, civic or public building as a result of a new build or significantly altered existing building.

Winner: Pontefract Squash & Leisure Club, Stuart Road. Presented to Giles Choice and Mick Todd.

**Countess of Rosse Façade of the Year Award** - A newly designed or significantly altered ground floor facade which enhances or surpasses the character and quality of the adjacent ground floor facades. This award applies specifically to the retail or office ground floor facade in a Conservation Area.

Winner: Suzi’s Boutique, Beastfair. Presented to Susan and Andrew Ayre.

**Special Commendation** - An award given to a specific property, owner/tenant, organisation or person, in recognition of the motivation, work and cost given improving or enhancing a property or public space.


Martin Lodge
One of my strategic objectives as Vice Chair of Pontefract Civic Society is to form partnerships with schools to increase interest and involvement in civic issues and, hopefully, generate potential members of Civic Society in the future.

To move this forward, we have developed a Junior Civic Society arm of Pontefract Civic Society for schools, colleges etc. This involves/includes:

- The school/college signs up to be a Junior Civic Society member (no cost).
- A section of Pontefract Voice (Pontefract Civic Society’s newsletter) is allocated for Junior Civic Society news.
- Wherever possible, we offer to provide support to schools e.g. to support National Curriculum activities, providing speakers from the Civic Society, sharing information from/with our partners/associates (for example access to over 6,000 photographs of Pontefract and the surrounding area held by Pontefract Heritage Group) etc..
- Invitations for Junior Civic Society members to be involved in forthcoming events. (e.g. the unveiling of the Pontefract Magna Carta Monument in 2016).
- Sharing information, promoting best practice etc..

Carleton Park Junior and Infant School is the first school to sign up for Junior Civic Society and was awarded its membership certificate at a special assembly on Monday 15th February.

Civic Society said “We hope that Carleton Park will be the catalyst for other schools to join Junior Civic Society. The enthusiasm of the school is amazing and I am particularly pleased that the School Council, drawn from representatives from each class, was instrumental in making the decision to join us.”

Just to give you a flavour of how Junior Civic Society can work in practice, this Term’s learning for Years 5 and 6 is World War II.

Pontefract Civic Society has offered Carleton Park Junior and Infant School:

- Two guest speakers (who were 9 years old in 1939) to share memories of going to school during the war etc..
- The loan of a gas mask.
- The loan of a selection of British regimental cap badges.
- The loan of a selection of German medals.
- The loan of display models ranging from British 8th Army through to the SAS.

Since signing up Carleton Park Junior and Infant School, two further schools have asked to join and we hope that press coverage will generate further interest.

Martin Lodge
THE FUTURE OF OUR TOWNS AND CITIES—WHAT’S IN IT FOR US?

Kevin Trickett picks up his crystal ball (again)

I think I last wrote about the future of our cities in the Summer 2013 edition of Society Insight but I return to it now in part because we have a YHACS portfolio dedicated to Towns and Cities but also because I continue to be fascinated by the way cities work and the benefits they bring to humanity. Now, if you don’t personally care for cities and don’t live in one, please don’t dismiss this article: read on, because there’s something here to think about for everyone - especially when read in conjunction my article on page 3 of this newsletter!

Our towns and cities are organic; throughout our history, some human settlements have evolved into towns and some into cities. There is no standard, world-wide, definition of what constitutes a city - sometimes it is only the name and official status that distinguishes a large town from a small city - but over half the world’s population is now classified as living in ‘cities’ while some of the world’s greatest cities, the megalopolises, have populations of over 20 million people. London, itself an agglomeration of towns and urban areas, while undoubtedly a global metropolis, can’t quite compete on scale, with a population approaching only 9 million, although it certainly can in terms of its economic power.

For some people, living in a city, or even a large town, is unthinkable and there are some, already there, who want to leave as soon as they can: how else do you account for the popularity of the TV programme Escape to the Country which seems to be on air on some channel or other every day of the week if not actually every hour of the day? And yet, there is another phenomenon at work for which a TV programme must be there for the plotting - Flight to the City. Yes, despite the dreams of many of finding that perfect rural idyll, there are many people now living in our villages and smaller towns for whom a move to, and in some cases, a return to, the city is the future.

Now, I appreciate that we are not all the same and someone has to want to live in the country, but there does seem to be a growing trend for urban and even city centre living. My personal choice is to live in a city - albeit a relatively small one - and I enjoy visiting cities. I do like to visit the countryside on occasion, but it’s neither my natural locus or milieu - and it seems I am not alone.

According to Paul Swinney, Principal Economist for the Centre for Cities, recently released data from the Office for National Statistics shows how some of the UK’s largest cities are attracting people to them and it is the actual city centre, rather than the suburbs, where people want to live. Between 2001 and 2011, the population of our city centres rose by 37%. However, it is mainly the larger cities such as Manchester, Sheffield and Leeds, that are seeing their inner-city centre populations grow most rapidly: Manchester saw an incredible 83%, an actual rise of some 20,000 people, over that 10-year period and this was accompanied by a the creation of around 7,000 city centre apartments (for more on this, see http://www.centreforcities.org/blog/the-return-of-city-centre-living-in-manchester).

While in some cities such as Manchester, the population growth is highest among young professionals pursuing job and career opportunities, there is evidence that adults of all age groups are being attracted back to our city centres to live. People enjoy having access to the cultural and leisure facilities practically on their door step - or perhaps just a lift-descent away - while reduced commuting times must also be an attraction.

Of course, cities (and large towns) have the added benefits created by economies of scale - public transport can be more plentiful and efficient because there are more people using it; city centre shops and cultural and leisure venues are more abundant because there is not only a resident population, but also a commuter population and a large catchment area of people who will visit the city centre on a regular basis, whether it be for a spot of retail therapy or in pursuit of entertainment. There comes a point in the life of a large town or city where critical mass is attained – the size of the resident population triggers an upturn in business opportunities which in turn stimulates a demand from more people looking for accommodation to live there. Of course, not all cities are seeing such a dramatic upturn. My own city of Wakefield has had mixed fortunes over recent decades but there are genuine grounds now for optimism across both the city and the wider district (technically, we are the City of Wakefield Metropolitan District with a combined population of...
327,000). Wakefield is a member of Key Cities, a group of 26 UK cities and larger towns including Doncaster, established in 2013 to create economic opportunities for regeneration and growth outside the major cities such as Leeds and Sheffield. That such a group exists must be in itself a recognition that the major cities are posing a threat to smaller urban centres by drawing people and other resources away. But it is also about promoting the benefits of urban regeneration: together the 26 members have a combined GVA (Gross Value Added) of £164 billion and a collective population of 7.9 million. These centres play a key role in their regional economies: “some are centres of innovation, some are centres for production, whilst others may be the focus for trade” (source: http://www.keycities.co.uk/about).

Why is this? Well our urban centres are dynamic; they generate energy and facilitate collaboration; greater urban densities allow for easier exchange of ideas and engender creativity. There is a constant and continual flow of information - and you can to a greater extent choose the people you wish to collaborate with simply because there are more people from which to choose. “Cities magnify humanity’s strengths” says Edward Glaeser in his book Triumph of the City; “Cities are good for you” proclaims Leo Hollis in the title of his book on the subject.

So, “What’s all this got to do with civic societies?” I hear you ask. Well, the point I really want to make is that the future of our civic movement is tied to what is happening around us and if our civic societies are not only survive but to actually flourish, we need to think about where we position ourselves for the future. Our Canutian task must be to accept that we cannot halt progress; we cannot hide our Nimbyism under the mantle of preservationism (vide Leo Hollis). Instead we must be prepared to accept that change is inevitable and even be willing to embrace it. By being realistic about change, we stand a better chance of being included in the debate about change and how best to accommodate it. The challenge for civic societies has to be to start doing some of that horizon scanning I described on page 3. What does the future hold for your locality? If yours is a village civic society, how do you see the local population changing? Will people be leaving for the cities, or do you think there will be more demand from incomers for new houses? What sort of people will want to live in your village in 10 or 20 years? The same people who are there now, but older? Younger people; absentee landlords with buy-to-let properties; second-homers looking for a weekend retreat? And so on. What will these changes mean for the village amenities? What will they mean for the catchment pool for your potential membership? Has your civic society actually got a future in the longer term if your typical membership profile is no longer represented within your community? If that’s a possibility, do you just give in, or do you try to reimagine what your civic society needs to be in the future?

And if you live in a town or city, ask yourselves the same sort of questions. Objecting to that new supermarket over there or that new tower block over here might win you some brownie points with your membership today, but is that a sustainable policy? Might it just not be a better policy to say “come and erect your new building in our town or city but talk to us about its design and location; talk to us about the infrastructure changes” and so on? What’s that you say? You already do this? Well, that’s terrific! But have you drawn up your society’s own vision for the future of your locality so that you can be proactive in campaigning in favour of certain types of development or certain types of industry coming to your town or city rather than being reactive to each proposal? Have you got one you prepared earlier that you occasionally brush down and update, or do you have to react to each new proposal in a piecemeal fashion? Doing some of that horizon scanning, working out in advance what might be coming your way will help with this.

Wakefield Civic Society wasn’t around at the beginning of the 19th century but if we had been, I wonder how we might have reacted to Titus Salt’s ambition to build his textile business in Wakefield? The Salt family lived for a while in Crofton, just outside the city centre and Salt underwent some of his schooling at Heath School nearby. Having served his apprenticeship in Wakefield, legend has it that he looked to set up his mills here but the local traders, Nimbyists all of them it seems, made things difficult, so Salt moved to Bradford instead. Had Wakefield Civic Society been around at the time, I’d like to think we’d have encouraged him to stay. That way, we might well have seen the creation of Salt Calder, rather than Saltaire.

How that might have changed the fortunes of my city!
Goole Civic Society has unveiled its first Blue Plaque to honour a Goole cricketer whose name was immortalised by writer P. G. Wodehouse. Percy Jeeves spent his boyhood at 72 Manuel Street in Goole and played for Goole Town Cricket Club before becoming professional and playing County Cricket for Warwickshire.

In 1913, writer P. G. Wodehouse saw him play a match at Cheltenham and was so impressed he later used the name for Bertie Wooster’s immaculate manservant Jeeves.

Like so many young men of his generation, Percy Jeeves’s life was cut short by the First World War. In July 1916, when he should have been in his prime and most likely playing for England, he disappeared without trace during the Battle of the Somme.

Tom Puddings were chains of compartment boats which for more than a century carried coal from the Yorkshire coalfield along the Aire and Calder Navigation to Goole Docks. The boats were lifted by compartment boat hoists and tipped into the holds of ships to be exported. This method of transportation was unique to Goole. Only one compartment boat hoist survives - the No.5 hoist - and is a Grade II* listed building.

Percy’s great nephew, Keith Mellard, travelled from his home in Aberdeen to unveil the Blue Plaque. He was joined by Brian Halford, cricket writer and author of The Real Jeeves, a book about Percy’s life. A special message from actor Stephen Fry, who played Jeeves in the TV series Jeeves and Wooster, was read out at the unveiling. He said: “I am so heartened and happy to learn that Percy Jeeves — the cricketer who inspired P. G. Wodehouse’s immortal gentleman’s personal gentleman - is to be memorialised in his hometown of Goole.”

“The original Jeeves’s gentlemanly deportment, respectful manner and quiet efficiency were the perfect model for Wodehouse’s Jeeves. “The sacrifice that Percy made however, reminds us of what the truth of life was like for so many of his generation. We salute him.”

The chair of Goole Civic Society, Margaret Hicks-Clarke, said: “We could think of no finer person to honour with our first Blue Plaque, being unveiled in the anniversary year of Percy Jeeves’s death. “He was a great cricketer and a brave soldier who paid the ultimate sacrifice for his country.”

Margaret Hicks-Clarke
One of the key objectives Civic Voice set for 2015 was “Participation not Consultation” and they provided leaflets about Collaboration using a “Charrette” (an intense period of design or planning activity) which we distributed to Scarborough Borough Council. You often wonder whether people are taking note of these campaigns so we were delighted when in February it was announced that there would be a charrette.

The strap line used by Civic Voice for this programme is “Unlocking community support through participation to shape high quality neighbourhoods of enterprise and opportunity in our towns”. In Scarborough the area of concern was Eastborough which is part of the old town and connects the new town to the harbour.

Members of the Academy of Urbanism were to participate in a ‘charrette’ and young Academicians were challenged to come to Scarborough to help facilitate the community planning event investigating how to breathe life back into a ‘forgotten’ yet crucial part of the town.

Achieving an adequate level of attendance at such an event is key as the more people participating the better and more sound the data and therefore proposals and direction identified. So it required quite some effort in promoting the event.

Having got the word out and gained a good number of attendees, the first action was to run a participative session to find the ‘problems’, ‘dreams’ and ‘solutions’. This was done most effectively using post-it note sessions. That way everyone gets equal input. It’s always essential to get the views of children. It is often said “from the mouths of babes“.

Then the process moved to a ‘Hands-on Planning’ with the participants gathering round maps and starting to overlay the areas of change needed. These came from the principle elements identified in the previous session.

Just a few of the comments:
“You’ve got to change the perception of the area”
“This could be an artisans quarter and the market hall could be your incubator hub.”
“Create a buzz; attract more people here more often for more reasons”

The session resulted in a plan which will be used to stimulate funding which will be required for its implementation. The next stage will be to raise the funding and this exercise will form the basis for a “Heritage Townscape” bid.

It was great to see real public consultation (involving hundreds of people) happening in Scarborough.

Adrian Perry

High-rise living, not so cosy?

Advocates of tower block residential living, sprouting up in cities everywhere, should see the film “High Rise” currently showing at cinemas around the area.

Based on the 1975 novel of the same name by J G Ballard it is a dystopian tale that raises issues about the housing crisis and the widening gulf between the rich and the poor.

With the classes stratified in the apartment block—the rich and powerful on the top floors, the middle, professional classes occupying the middle floors and the workers confined to the lower floors – anarchy and chaos eventually break out and a battle for survival and supremacy ensues.

The book is a cult classic, and the film has had good reviews—the Guardian review describes it as the “social-surrealist film of the year”.

David Moss
Go back four/five years and our society was in a worrying position.

A number had moved, to be nearer family, or died and were not being replaced by new members. Our annual dinner, 7.30 pm in late February or early March, dwindled to the lower twenties. Cold, most likely dark evening; dinner replaced by luncheon and at our luncheon in March 2016 we had 32, not quite a 50% increase but getting there.

The Society meets monthly, with booked speakers for eight months (September to May) again at 7.30 pm except in December, January and February when it is 2.30 pm. We've had the afternoon meeting for three years now and the attendance has been around 25% better than the evenings. Of course the subject and speaker has some influence on who comes but now we usually receive some excellent pictures to accompany the verbal presentation. We try to distribute our programme of speakers widely and welcome visitors asking for a £2 donation. We do serve tea, coffee and biscuits at the end of meetings leading to convivial exchanges.

This year has seen the formation of our Civil Society (Polite people). Informally offering a walk around parts of the outer areas with something to study, chat and usually somewhere for refreshment. The walk and study is to be extended to parts of the town area. We have leaders for the outer areas and the town and hope to include examination of Grade II listed buildings on the walks.

Our membership is made up of 52 active members and 13 passive members (life members from long ago) who all receive a simple monthly Bulletin; the good news is that 28 of the 52 and 2 of the 13 receive on the Internet.

Our numbers are creeping up and our aim is to invite more on the Civil Society walks with a view to joining the society and publicise wherever it is free.

Cyril Oliver

A controversial planning application was submitted in early April by Holland’s Olof-Piral Associates.

The proposal is for a tidal barrage on the River Ouse in Selby where the twice daily rising tides will be channelled into a basin, and during the low tide periods this water will pass out into the river through giant turbines, generating 50 MW.

The basin will be a huge concrete structure some 2 hectares area by 15 metres deep, partially sunk into the ground to the north of Selby Abbey. Several 19thC listed buildings alongside the river would be demolished to accommodate the basin, and the southern limit would extend almost up to the east window of the Abbey Church.

The developers say that the basin will be faced in high density polyresin but this will be coloured in a pleasing pastel shade to meet local design criteria, and although it will be quite close to Selby Abbey, the colour here will be matched to the stone of the 11th century church.

It may be possible to use part of the basin as an outdoor swimming facility.

Complementing the barrage system will be a relatively small wind-turbine alongside the barrage basin. At 69m tall this turbine will provide back-up power should pumps be required to assist in filling the basin. Sensitive to the concerns of many that the wind-turbine will be an intrusive structure so close to Selby Abbey, the developers have kept the height below 70m and it will be sensitively painted to blend into the blue skies often seen in Selby.

A public consultation is expected later in 2016.

Shirley Notte
Goole Civic Society took the top prize in the 2015 YHACS Peter Spawforth Awards when they were presented at the YHACS AGM in Harrogate on 30th January.

The newest Society in the region, Goole were recognised for making a number of important developments for the community, including their Reuben Chappell Art Trail project.

Photo, above, shows members receiving the trophy and a cheque for their Society funds from Peter Spawforth.

Spen Valley Civic Society (above) and Wakefield Civic Society (below) also received cash prizes and there were commendations for Hull, Pontefract, Scarborough and Selby Civic Societies.

David Moss

Dame Zaha Hadid, architect and the first woman to receive the RIBA Gold Medal for her work, has died at the age of 65.


For more go to www.zaha-hadid.com
### Future Events/Dates In 2016/2017

- **Sat 9th April**: YHACS Spring Members meeting at the Mansion House, Doncaster.
- **Tues 19th April**: APPG for Civic Societies with Dr Andrew Murrison MP
- **Sat 18th June**: Civic Voice’s “Civic Day”.
- **Sat 25th June**: YHACS Summer Meeting - James Cook Theatre, Whitby.
- **Fri/Sat 21st/22nd Oct**: Civic Voice Convention and AGM in Chester.
- **Sat 29th Oct**: YHACS Autumn Meeting in Goole.
- **Sat 28th Jan**: YHACS Winter Meeting and AGM in Harrogate.

### Next Meeting

**Is At**

**The Mansion House, Doncaster**

**For More Details**

**See Page 5**

### Executive Officers & Committee (Portfolios)

- **Chairman**, Kevin Trickett (*Priorities for Growth*)
- **Vice Chairman**, David Moss (*Newsletter*)
- **Secretary**, Helen Kidman (*Planning*)
- **Treasurer**, Richard Ward (*Legal/Financial; Towns, Cities & Public Realm*)
- **Exec Committee Member**, Dr. Kevin Grady
- **Exec Committee Member**, Malcolm Sharman (*Heritage & Culture*)
- **Exec Committee Member**, David Winpenny (*Design Quality*)
- **Exec Committee Member**, Tony Leonard
- **Exec Committee Member**, Margaret Hicks-Claire (*Civic Pride & Engagement*)
- **Exec Committee Member**, Jim Robinson (*Infrastructure*)
- **President**, Peter Cooper (*Website; Towns, Cities & Public Realm*)