



CIVIC SOCIETY GREAT YARMOUTH

Our aims are to make Great Yarmouth a better place in which to live, and we will preserve, protect, improve and promote the town's cultural heritage with pride.

ANNUAL REPORT

2017~18

www.civicsocietygy.co.uk



It is my great pleasure to welcome you to our first Annual Report.

Launching a Civic Society relies on people's goodwill to help the town they live in, or use, to become a better place in which to live. This is only achievable by volunteers who are prepared to give their time and help by offering their skills. I am pleased to report that we have a committee of people who have fulfilled my expectations.

I am also delighted by the response of others in the Borough who have become members of the Society. From the enthusiasm shown at meetings and visits, it is clear that all members feel passionately about the town and, through the Society, we can make it a much better place in which to live and for people to visit.

I am most grateful to all members for their support and I hope that you will encourage others to join the Society. Together we will show that we can make a difference and we welcome all ideas and suggestions to help us achieve our aims.

Best Wishes
Hugh Sturzaker



Great Yarmouth:
Preserve, Protect, Promote with Pride

COMMITTEE

We are very honoured to have our High Steward as our President and I am very grateful for the enthusiasm and hard work put in by our committee members.

President Henry Cator, High Steward of Great Yarmouth,

Chairman: Hugh Sturzaker, Retired surgeon

Secretaries: Anne Edwards, Archant Coastal Editor, (now retired). Rachel Moore, TMS Media

Treasurer: Michael Muskett, retired accountant and chair of Macmillan Cancer Relief

John Burroughs, Ex Mayor of Great Yarmouth and Publican

Paul Davies, retired GP, author and chair of Great Yarmouth Minster Preservation Trust,

Local History and Archaeological Society.

Gemma Manthorpe, Senior Planning Officer of Great Yarmouth Borough Council

David Marsh, Leading light in tourism, local businesses and previously non executive

director of Local Enterprise Partnership

Ian McCreadie, Managing Director of SPP Digital, Chair of Enterprise GY, School Governor

Paul Patterson, of ATEC Design, local historian and author, Managing Director of ASW

Graham Plant, Leader of Great Yarmouth Borough Council and Norfolk County Councillor

Andrew Smith, Partner of Paul Robinson Partnership

Bruce Sturrock, Chairman of Palmers and Town Centre Partnership

Stacey Nash, Development Officer at Harbour Radio and former Community Advocacy and

Befriending Service Coordinator at Voluntary Norfolk

Stacey Nash stepped down as membership secretary due to ill health and her place has been taken by Ann Mortimer, who is a volunteer at the booking office in St. George's most Fridays if you wish to see her.

Goals For The Year

INTRODUCTION

It is nearly a year since our first meeting on 19th September when we had 42 founding members. We now have 143 members and it is so good to see the enthusiasm of everyone at all our events. In this report I will summarise what we have done this year and what our plans are for the future.



Roundabouts

Although the Society is concerned about the town of Great Yarmouth we feel that the roundabouts leading to it are very important and we have campaigned for their improvement. Unfortunately, they are owned by Highways England who put in expensive planting schemes and then do little to maintain them. The Borough Council has managed to take over the maintenance of two in Gorleston which have been covered in granite chippings, which is an improvement, but must not be left as the final solution. The one at Fullers Hill looked fine when the wild flowers came up but are now overshadowed by weeds. There is still much to be done on the roundabouts and the Borough Council has little money to spend on them.

Theatre plaza.

We received £100 from Great Yarmouth and Gorleston in Bloom to purchase some plants and Haven Rotary has donated £150 towards the cost of the planters. We have a "greening up group" which will be meeting after the visit to Filby to see how we can implement our ideas for next year. We are very keen to increase the number of trees in the town, especially on South Quay. Apparently soil analysis here showed there was heavy contamination with salt and heavy metals. We are trying to obtain the report and the Woodland Trust has promised advice on how the problem can be overcome.

Litter Picking

Pat Harlow has arranged regular litter picking parties along the course of the town wall and adjacent roads prior to the official conducted town wall walks. A litter pick was done along the route being taken by judges for Anglia in Bloom the day before their visit and I was asked to speak to them about the work being done by the Society. In July we participated with other groups in a litter pick along the River Bure and Lawn Avenue organised by Comeunity and Neighbourhoods that Work. The possibility of litter signs for the market area will be discussed and proposed to the council, in the hope to deter litter dropping and seagull activity.

Heritage walks

These have been much improved in the last two years and members of the Society had one provided for them along the town wall on Wednesday 11 April which was very much appreciated. A further walk will be arranged.

Attracting youngsters

Cliff Park Ormiston Academy pupils have been very enthusiastic and did a litter pick along King Street and Deneside and made suggestions about how the area could be improved. They have also produced some magnificent models of the Minster, Fishermen's Hospital, the Tolhouse, the Elizabethan and Nelson Museums etc. along with a leaflet which makes it a heritage trail. I have also had initial talks with East Norfolk Six Form College and Lynn Grove Academy and meetings with other schools and colleges are arranged for next term.

Greening up the town

Great Yarmouth and Gorleston in Bloom do sterling work beautifying both towns with hanging baskets and floral beds and we have had several talks about helping them to increase the number of plants around the town. A first step was the provision of six planters around St. George's





Activating Communities

We have had several meetings with social workers and Business in the Community to see how we can engage better with communities. The Community Fair at the Library, which is part of the Arts Festival, is always popular but an attempt to engage with shopkeepers and cafes in King Street as part of Festa Fiesta was less so. Our aim is for communities to take ownership of their area and we would like to see one or more ambassadors for each street.

Lighting up the town

Ultimately we would like to illuminate all our heritage buildings and the bridges leading into the town. As a first measure we are obtaining quotations for the cost of improving the illumination of the Town Hall.

Town Centre Masterplan

Hudsons Architects have been appointed to produce plans for the revamping of the Market Place and several Society members gave their views during the week's consultation in June. Many of the market traders are reluctant to move northwards. We pointed out the need to improve access to the Minster which was cut off from the market place by the road going through Fullers Hill. The planting of trees would be helpful and provision of fixings on the lampposts around the market place would enable the hanging of vertical banners to advertise forthcoming Festivals and events. They would also add some colour to the area. Pavement cafes and a tourist and booking office in the town centre were suggested. Many of the shops and businesses have unused accommodation above their premises and we would urge that these spaces be converted into flats.



Yarmouth Minster Clock

At the meeting on 10 April Jane Freeman mentioned that £3000 was still needed to repair the Minster clock. That evening £750 was donated by two very generous members and subsequently a further £600 has been raised. The clock is now being repaired.



Reconstruction Of A Town Gate

We have the most complete mediaeval town wall in the country yet all the gates in it were demolished, mainly by the Victorians. We feel it would be amazing to rebuild one of them as a community project. This would produce great interest in the wall and provide much needed publicity for the town. Paul Patterson has produced a wonderful book on the "The Great Wall of Yarmouth" and here is an illustration of how New Gate would look.



Tourist Information Centre In Town Centre

We have an excellent Tourist Information Office on the seafront but not one in the town centre and we firmly believe that one here is vitally necessary. We have suggested that it should be run by a paid part time manager and staffed by volunteers and that some costs could be recouped by selling souvenirs, and having a small cafe. Commission could be charged for selling tickets for shows and booking accommodation.



Hanseatic League

This was a sea trading empire based on Baltic sea-trading posts, with links to England at Kings Lynn, Great Yarmouth, Ipswich, London, Leith etc. It started in the 12th century and continued until the 1600s. On our visit to Kings Lynn we saw its magnificent Hanseatic Warehouse and heard of the advantages the town has benefitted from being a member of the Hanseatic League. Henry Cator suggested that we should consider joining the League. Unfortunately, this was turned down by the Council but your committee would like that decision reversed.



Promotion

We are very grateful to TMS for designing our website and maintaining it. Car stickers were produced by Ian McCreadie of SPP Digital who also arranged for printing of our logo on our high visibility jackets which are worn by our litter pickers and were used by marshals during the Carnival Parade. We have leaflets giving information about the Society which contain an application form for membership. A Facebook page has been set up and we plan to have a twitter account.



CIVIC SOCIETY
GREAT YARMOUTH



Membership

We have 143 members and membership fees for next year are due at the end of September except for those who have joined in the last 2-3 months. There are several advantages in becoming a charity, including being able to claim Gift Aid of 25%, and we have applied to become a charity.

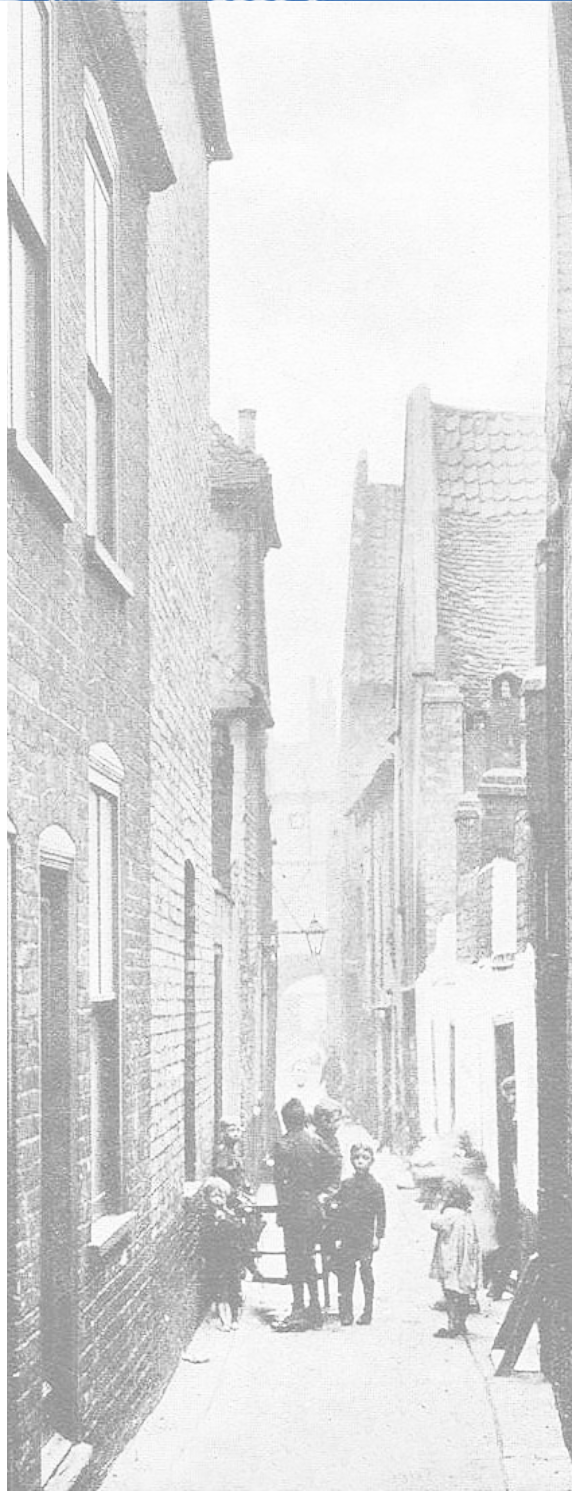
Conservation Audit

Civic Voice, which is an umbrella organisation for Civic Societies, is keen to carry out audits on conservation areas. We offered to do this for Great Yarmouth with the support of Darren Barker, the Borough's Principal Conservation Officer, but Civic Voice has postponed this until new forms have been developed. The matter will be discussed at the Regional meeting on 22 September which we are hosting.

Planning Applications

Gemma Manthorpe brings to our attention any planning application which she thinks we should discuss. One of the problems is the large number of homes of multiple occupation which are present in the town, many of which have landlords who live far away. Some of these are in a dreadful state which are bad for the occupants and lower the appearance of the neighbourhood.

We feel that there should be regular inspections of these properties and, where they do not come up to standard, they should be closed down. Poor housing affects the health of people which puts added burdens on the health service and leads to unemployment. We are delighted to learn that the Borough Council is about to start a scheme whereby all privately rented properties in Nelson Ward will have to be licensed and inspected. This will cost the landlords a small amount of money but they will receive some benefits in return.



PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

Much of our time this year has been spent in setting up the organisation and deciding what we plan to do. Much of this work requires funds and we need to make applications for grants to help this work.

The following are our priorities:

Roundabouts: Work with the Borough Council and Highways England to improve their appearance.

Litter: Encourage the Council to fine people who drop litter and feed Seagulls.

Provide larger signs discouraging the feeding of birds.

Attracting Youngsters. Work with more schools and colleges and encourage them to attend our meetings and visits.

Motivating Communities: Work with community workers and the community in trying to establish one or more ambassadors in each street to encourage the inhabitants to improve the outside of their homes and street.

Greening up the town: Work with Great Yarmouth in Bloom and the Council to provide more planters and increase the number trees in the Borough.

Lighting up the town: Obtain quotations for improving the illumination of the Town Hall and plan to illuminate heritage sites and bridges in the town.

Town Centre Master Plan: Work with the Council on the development of this plan.

Awards: Make awards to encourage shops, businesses and individuals to take pride in their properties.

Conservation Audit: Carry out an audit of the Town's Conservation Areas in association with the Chief Conservation Officer.

Planning Applications: Review planning applications and make our views known to the Council. Ensure that the Council revokes licences where Homes of Multiple Occupation are not kept up to standard.

Tourist Information Centre in Town Centre: Continue to press for the establishment of a Tourist Information Centre in the Town Centre.

Rebuild New Gate: Paul Patterson is drawing up plans for this and has a much greater vision for the Market Place, opening up the east side through to the town wall.

Hanseatic League: Investigate joining the Hanseatic League.

Membership: Continue to increase membership. A good resolution would be for each member to encourage at least two members to join the Society.

Grants: Apply for grants to help us achieve our goals



AWARDS

We have discussed many awards which we would like to set up but thought it best if we started with just three and we are looking at the following:

- Best shop/business window. Assessment will include contents of window, cleanliness of shop/business front and the area in front of it. Jonathan Newman, Town Centre Manager, is supportive of the idea and we plan to have further meetings about implementation. Below, is a proposed window sign to be displayed in shop window.



- New Generation Civic Pride Award. Given to a young individual, school or group in recognition of what they have done to promote pride in the town.
- Outstanding contribution to the Town Award. To be awarded to an individual or business that has gone that extra mile.

SPONSORS & GRANTS

We are very grateful to the generosity of the following:

- TMS Media: for developing and maintaining our website, designing our logo and setting up our social media.
- SPP Digital: for printing car stickers and our logo on our high visibility jackets.
- ATEC Design : designing four peas in a pod, the award for shops and businesses. Illustrating the reconstruction of New Gate. Design and producing the Civic Annual Report. (Edited by Hugh Sturzaker)
- Norse: for providing refreshments for the litter pickers after each outing.
- Great Yarmouth and Gorleston in Bloom: £100 for plants.
- Haven Rotary: £150 for the planters around St. George's Plaza.
- Paul Robinson Partnership (uk) LLP for letting us use its Boardroom for committee meetings without charge.
- Great Yarmouth Community Trust for allowing us to hold committee meetings in its Boardroom free of charge.

THE ACCOUNTS.

These have been meticulously kept by our treasurer, Michael Muskett and are shown below.

Civic Society of Great Yarmouth				
Income and Expenditure Account for the period ended 30 June 2018				
INCOME				
Subscriptions and talk income	1,424.10			
Donations	50.00			
Profits on Kings Lynn Visit	35.00			
TOTAL INCOME			1,509.10	
EXPENDITURE				
Civic Voice	240.00			
Hall Hire	340.00			
Speakers costs	98.75			
Printing	234.50			
Stationery	4.49			
Flower displays	30.00			
High Vis Jackets	42.42			
TOTAL EXPENDITURE			990.16	
Excess Income over expenditure			518.94	
BALANCE SHEET				
Balance at Bank as at 30th June 2018			518.94	
Balance as at 30th June 2018			518.94	
I certify that the Income and Expenditure and Balance Sheet				
show a true and correct record of the transactions of the Society				
for the period ended 30th June 2018				
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M J MUSKETT MBE, FCA				



MEETINGS & SPEAKERS

September 19	Initial meeting with presentation by Hugh Sturzaker.
November 21	Civic Movement: The Future. Ian Harvey. CEO of Civic Voice .
January 16	Great Yarmouth Town Walls. Paul Patterson. Historian, Author and Designer.
March 6	The Work of the Great Yarmouth Preservation Trust. Darren Barker. Project Director of Gt.Yarmouth Preservation Trust.
April 10	Henry Cator on his work as High Steward.
April 21	Civic Trust East of England Regional Meeting in Norwich.
May 23	Visit to Kings Lynn.
June 5	Talk about the Town Centre Master Plan David Glason. Director of Development for the Borough.
July 17	Life of Hotels. Rodney Scott. Hotelier.
August 14	Visit to Filby for talk and guided visit of floral displays Derek Nicker.

FUTURE MEETINGS & EVENTS

August 28	Trip on Broads.
September 11	AGM and Talk about Norwich City Wall and Norwich Society. Vanessa Trevelyan, Museum Consultant and Adviser who is also chair of the Norwich Society.
September 22	Civic Voice Regional meeting hosted by Civic Society of Great Yarmouth.
October 2.	The Maritime Festival. Aileen Mobbs. Chair of Maritime Festival and hotelier.
November 6.	Art and Culture in Great Yarmouth. Joe Mackintosh. SeaChange Artistic Director and CEO.



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