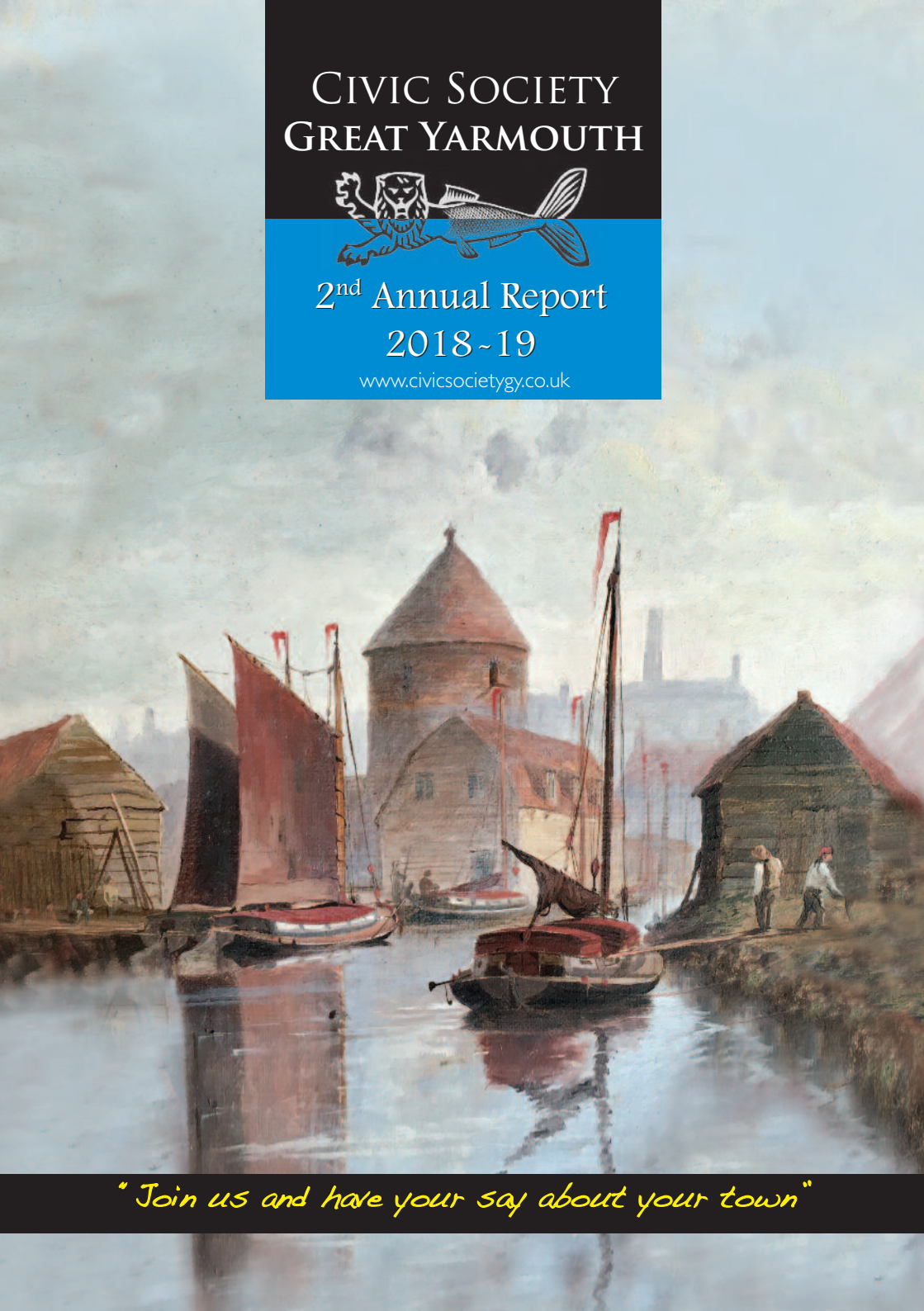


CIVIC SOCIETY GREAT YARMOUTH



2nd Annual Report
2018~19

www.civicsocietygy.co.uk



"Join us and have your say about your town"



It is nearly a year since our first meeting on 19th September when we had 42 founding members. We now have 124 paid up 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.



Welcome to the second annual report of the Civic Society of Great Yarmouth.

We have had a busy year with much that has been achieved but there is so much more to be done. I am most grateful to the support and ideas of your committee and the hard work done by our several subcommittees. All of us are volunteers and we feel passionately about the town. £150,000 has been granted to develop a

business plan which could unlock at least £10M to improve the town centre and £1.1M has been awarded by the Arts Council England to develop art and culture from the ground roots in the next four years. In addition there are the billions of pounds being invested in the offshore wind farms and much of the work for them is being done here. Preparations are in hand for the new river crossing and we are short listed for two further funds worth millions of pounds.

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

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.

..... everyone is welcome to join us

Email: enquiries@civicsocietygy.co.uk
www.civicsocietygy.co.uk



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, Retired Mercury and Archant Coastal Editor

Rachel Moore, TMS Media

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

Membership Secretary: Ann Hamilton. Replaced in August 2019 by John Burroughs

John Burroughs: Ex Mayor of Great Yarmouth and retired publican

Paul Davies: Retired GP, author and trustee of Great Yarmouth Preservation Trust, etc.

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 McCreddie: Managing Director of SPP Digital, Chair of Enterprise GY, School Governor

Paul Patterson: Recently retired MD of Associated Sourcing Web and Atec Design. Historian and author

Graham Plant: Deputy Leader of Great Yarmouth Borough Council and Norfolk County Council

Bruce Sturrock: Ex Chairman of Palmers and Town Centre Partnership

SPONSORS & GRANTS



We are very grateful to the generosity of the following:

- **TMS Media:** developing and maintaining our website, designing our logo and our social media.
- **SPP Digital:** for printing car stickers, our logo on our high visibility jackets and printing the stickers for the awards finalists.
- **Norse:** for providing refreshments for the litter pickers after each outing.
- **Great Yarmouth and Gorleston in Bloom:** £100 for plants.
- **Great Yarmouth Community Trust** for allowing committee meetings in its Boardroom free of charge.
- **Henry Cator and Michael Muskett** for paying the joining fee for the new Hanse.
- **Paul Patterson** for designing the annual report and for producing the certificates for the winners of the Awards Competition. Design four peas in a pod and the award for shops and businesses.

- **Cover Picture:** The North West Tower ~ Kind Courtesy of Malcolm Farrow

Promotion

We are very grateful to TMS for designing and maintaining our website. Car stickers and our logo on our high visibility jackets were produced by Ian McCreddie of SPP Digital and Paul Patterson designed our annual report. Anne Edwards runs our Facebook page and we are about to have a monthly column in the Great Yarmouth Mercury. However, the best publicity is by word of mouth so please continue to publicise what we are doing and encourage new members to join.



Litter Picking

A small group meets every two weeks to litter pick along the course of the town wall and the adjacent roads. We organised two Spring Cleans of the Town Centre which were open to all comers. Some members have helped other litter picking events in Gorleston, Caister and the Waterways. We had a very helpful meeting with Carl Smith, Chairman of the Borough's Environment Committee, and more recently with his successor, Penny Carpenter. As a result the street furniture in the Market Place will be repainted and the area in front of the Town Hall cleaned. Penny is already looking at new bins and cleaning equipment. We were pleased to receive £250 from the Council to buy litter picking equipment following a grant from government.

Attracting youngsters

We are very keen to engage with youngsters and have had talks with East Norfolk 6th Form College, East Coast College and Cliff Park Ormiston Academy. We would welcome other schools becoming involved. We are grateful for the £100 given by East Coast College.

Activating Communities

We have had several meetings with social workers to see how we can engage better with communities. We hope to have a community meeting on St. George's Plaza in the autumn to see how the residents can work together. Talks are also continuing to see how we can improve the gardens on the Middlegate Estate and improve the community spirit there. Our aim is for communities to take ownership and responsibility for their area.

Town Centre Development

The Civic Society is represented on the group looking at ways to develop the Town Centre and wrote a letter of support of the Borough's plans. £150,000 has been granted to help provide a business plan for the redevelopment of the town centre which we hope will result in a grant of £10M. The plans will be discussed at a meeting of the Society on Tuesday 26th November at 7.30pm in Christchurch.

Conservation Audit

Conservation areas are places that have been designated as being of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance. There are seven such areas in the Town, three of which are at risk: King Street, Market Place and part of the Seafront. In association with Darren Barker, Chief Conservation Officer and Azalia Sarkisyan a small group has carried out audits of these areas. The results are being collated nationally through CivicVoice (Umbrella organisation for Civic Societies).

The group is concerned about the state of many of the properties in the conservation areas and has suggested that guidelines should be drawn up to produce minimal standards and this is being taken up by the Conservation Department.



The 'Hanseatic League' map



Tourist Information Centre, originally the 'Sailors Home'



Impression of how Market Gate could look if reconstructed.



Heritage Walks

Hanseatic League

This was a sea trading empire based on Baltic sea-trading ports and with links to England at Kings Lynn, Great Yarmouth, Ipswich, London, Leith, Boston etc. It started in the 12th century and continued until the 1600s. The new Hanse was started in 1980 and we have seen the benefits which Kings Lynn has from being a member of the League and we have encouraged the Borough Council to apply for membership. We have just heard that our application for membership has been accepted and we are most grateful to Henry Cator and Michael Musket for offering to pay our joining fee.

Tourist Information Centre

The only Tourist Information Centre in the town is on the Sea Front. We feel that there is a need for a Tourist information Centre in the Town Centre and we will continue to press for this to happen.

Reconstruction of a Town Wall Gate

We have the most complete mediaeval town wall in the country yet all the gates have been demolished, mainly by the petition of fishermen. With enough public backing we think it may be possible to promote the idea and propose the recreation of a gate. This would produce great interest in the wall and provide much needed publicity for the town. Paul Patterson has produced two books on the "The Great Wall of Yarmouth". Here is an illustration of how a Gate could look if rebuilt.

Yarmouth Minster Clock

Some very generous donations were made by some of our members and we are delighted that the Minster Clock is now fully repaired and working.

Heritage walks

These are a great way to see different parts of the town's heritage and to learn some of its fascinating history. Several official town guides are members of the Society and would be happy to arrange a guided tour. Alternatively there are official town walks. Full details at:

www.great-yarmouth.co.uk/whats-on/guided-heritage-walks.aspx



Greening up the town

At the end of last summer three of the planters outside St. George's Theatre were destroyed. We have replaced them and Great Yarmouth and Gorleston in Bloom kindly gave us £100 to purchase plants and compost. With this money we have planted up the six planters outside St. George's Theatre as well as a raised bed between the town wall and Sainsbury's carpark. Three of our members cleared brambles and weeds along a pathway at Blackfriars section of the town wall and have planted up the long bed with plants. Many people make favourable comments about this initiative. For their efforts they were awarded a special award by the Civic Society and they have been entered for a community prize given by Great Yarmouth and Gorleston in Bloom.

Lighting up the town

Our long term aim is to light up all the heritage buildings, the town wall and the bridges leading into the town. The Great Yarmouth Preservation Trust has some funds which should enable it to illuminate part of the Town Wall opposite the Time and Tide Museum. The Conservation Group has carried out an audit of lighting in the Rows and this information is to be used to improve lighting here.

Trees

South Quay with trees, Victorian era



We have had a meeting with Graeme Watson who is in charge of trees in the Borough. As a result, soil samples will be taken to assess contamination along South Quay and if reasonable it is hoped to plant some trees along there in the autumn. This will be done in consultation with Norfolk County Council who is looking at ways to improve that area. We invited other groups in the town interested in greening up to a series of meetings to share ideas and facilities. As a result we are looking at places to put planters and trees. East Coast College plan to make planters for us and we hope to grow seedlings and plugs in the greenhouse and polytunnels at Community Roots.

Main photo:
Great Yarmouth Market Place
winter 2012.
(taken the week Woolworths closed)

Below left of the photo shows one of the remaining trees planted in wooden tubs, all of which were eventually removed due to lack of water.





Civic Society Awards

At the beginning of the year a small group of members assessed shops, businesses and food and drink establishments within the area covered by the Town Centre Partnership as well as Northgate Street. The six day stalls in the Market Place were also assessed. As a result, the following awards were made in the Town Hall on Tuesday 28th May.



Food and Drink:
PJs Takeway, in Northgate Street



Retail:
Pandora in Market Gates



Six Day Market: Nichols Seafood



Businesses: Larkes Estate Agents



Special Award:
Cliff Park Ormiston Academy for making models of ancient building in the town as part of a heritage trail.



Special Award:
to Rodney Scott and Family for refurbishing the buildings that now make up the Prom Hotel



We are grateful to our sponsors:

Town Centre Partnership, Great Yarmouth Borough Council, SPP Digital, Atec Design and an anonymous donor. Special thanks go to the small group of judges who spent many hours assessing all the shops and businesses in the area. We plan to make similar awards next year.

Before and After



The passage edges at Blackfriars tower and wall has been meticulously cleaned of brambles and weeds and replaced with a new flower boarder enhancing the wall and Heritage Trail.

Special Awards:

Photo below circa 1900 of Blackfriars tower, with attached cottages to the outer east wall and tower. The medieval hovels on the inner south wall were removed earlier. At that time the internal area of the wall was still open ground, as it was since the 13th century, but now occupied by Blackwell John Buckle printing company.



Clare Southern, Angela Powley and Ann Hacon, for creating flower beds near the Blackfriars part of the Town Wall.



"You have reached your destination?"

Do our Roundabouts greet visitors to Great Yarmouth?



The Society concentrates its attention on the town of Great Yarmouth, but we regard the roundabouts and the roads around the town as the shop window so we are concerned about their appearance as this is the first thing seen by visitors. We are delighted with the new Fuller's Hill roundabout paid for by Norfolk County Council but were disappointed that the trees appear

Vauxhall roundabout, the town's shopwindow. Photo courtesy EDP24.co.uk

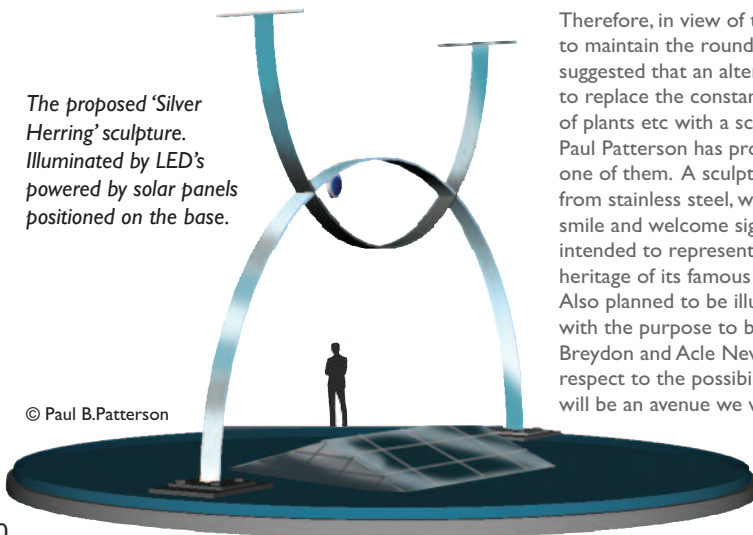
to be dying due to lack of water. Enquiries have shown that the contract for planting them did not include any subsequent maintenance and watering. We have been assured that this is being rectified. The two roundabouts north of the hospital covered with granite chippings continue to grow weeds but have recently been sprayed with weedkiller.

We have been in contact with Brandon Lewis MP and the Highways Authority about the roundabouts. We have also been having conversations with the Highways Authority about the litter and weeds along the A47 and not getting very far. Apparently the weeds have been sprayed with weed killer but this has not been effective.

We also mentioned the long delays in traffic travelling northwards to Gapton Hall roundabout which is caused by traffic cutting across the A47 to get into the shopping centre. As a result a fault was found in the traffic signals which has been rectified but it has produced little benefit. The only solution would be having more traffic lights there or a flyover or underpass.

The Highways Authority is happy for the Borough Council to take over the maintenance of the roundabouts but will give it no finance for doing so.

The proposed 'Silver Herring' sculpture. Illuminated by LED's powered by solar panels positioned on the base.

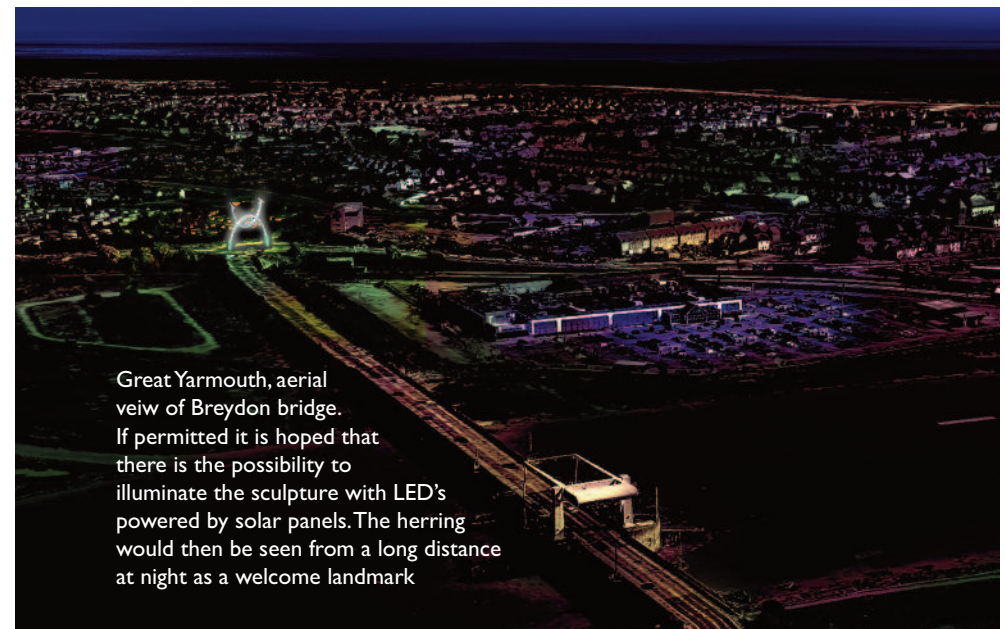


© Paul B.Patterson

Therefore, in view of the huge annual cost to maintain the roundabouts it was suggested that an alternative idea could be to replace the constant upkeep and cost of plants etc with a sculpture. Paul Patterson has proposed a design for one of them. A sculpture constructed from stainless steel, which would signify a smile and welcome sign into the town, and intended to represent Yarmouth's rich heritage of its famous Herring industry. Also planned to be illuminated at night with the purpose to be seen from Breydon and Acle New Road. With respect to the possibilities and costs, this will be an avenue we will be perusing.



Impression of the 'Silver Herring' as seen when approaching the Vauxhall Roundabout



Great Yarmouth, aerial view of Breydon bridge. If permitted it is hoped that there is the possibility to illuminate the sculpture with LED's powered by solar panels. The herring would then be seen from a long distance at night as a welcome landmark

Welcome to Great Yarmouth...

...Or Not?



Notwithstanding Yarmouth's rich heritage and surviving buildings, from any direction the town's entrance is sadly dismal. On arrival visitors must be appalled by the clutter of billboards and depressed railway station. Without spending masses of money there are simple solutions that can make a big difference.

Below illustrates a before and after.

Careful landscaping and introducing more trees and hedges can make all the difference to the town's entrance. With politics involved it is never as simple as it seems, but this is something the Borough Council has to endure, despite continuous efforts to make things happen. However, with the help of public pressure it is sometimes possible to achieve goals.



The road area in front of the terminal has at last been resurfaced, however the building leaves a lot to be desired.

Over the last 5 years Great Yarmouth has experienced massive train fare increases, unreliable service, and a high number of public complaints. Despite this, little seems to be offered to improve this station.



Billboards are cluttering up the town's entrance.



By introducing trees and hedges an artist impression illustrates a possible solution?

Visits: The Society organised several visits for members



Thurne Mill

Thurne Mill was built in 1820 by the millwrights England & Co of Ludham, Norfolk. Originally when the mill was built it had common canvas sails and a scoopwheel but in 1885 the mill was raised (hained) to accommodate the new turbine pump and the patent sails. Bob Morse had a fascination with windmills from the age of seven. In 1949 a boyhood dream became a reality when he purchased the then derelict Thurne Mill. In 18 months, with the help of Albert England, a direct descendant of the original builders, the tower was restored. The mill was then leased to the Norfolk Windmill Trust. Sadly Bob Morse passed away in January 2007.



Gorleston ~ Wild Life Conservation

Earlier in the day we visited Gorleston allotments where a natural wild area was being constructed to attract newts, frogs, sticklebacks etc.

We then had an interesting guided tour of Acle and its fascinating assets seen around the village.



King Lynn

King's Lynn was one of England's foremost ports as early as the 12th century, and was perhaps as important in the Middle Ages as Liverpool was to become during the Industrial Revolution. Aptly described as 'The Warehouse on the Wash' it maintained its prominence as a port until the railways robbed it of much of its traffic in the mid 19th century. Originally known as 'Linn', the town is thought to have derived its name from the

Celtic word for a lake or pool, and it is recorded that a large tidal lake originally covered this area. By the early 13th century with the granting of the charter, the town became Bishop's Lynn.



Membership

We have 124 members but we need many more to help finance our activities and to demonstrate that we have the support of the community. Perhaps each member would aim to recruit at least two new members. Application forms are on the website and may be obtained at our meetings. We were successful in applying to become a charity and this enables us to obtain £2.50p via Gift Aid for each £10 subscription paid by a UK taxpayer.

Planning Applications

Gemma Manthorpe brings to our attention any planning application which she thinks we should discuss. One of our concerns is the large number of homes of multiple occupancy, many of which are in a very poor condition. We think it is essential that there are minimal standards to which the landlord should adhere and we are delighted that the Borough Council has introduced licensing arrangements for these properties throughout Nelson Ward

Civic Society Heritage Booklet

It has been agreed that the Civic Society will produce a book of heritage sites in the town which will illustrate the town's long and amazing legacy. We hope this will increase the interest in Great Yarmouth.

MEETINGS & EVENTS 2018 ~ 2019

- September 11th AGM Norwich City Wall and the Norwich Society. Vanessa Trevelyan, Museum Consultant and Adviser who is also chair of the Norwich Society.
- September 22nd Civic Voice Regional meeting hosted by Civic Society of Great Yarmouth
- October 2nd The Maritime Festival.
Aileen Mobbs, Chair of Maritime Festival and hotelier
- November 6th Art and Culture in Great Yarmouth
Joe Mackintosh, SeaChange Artistic Director and CEO
- March 12th Secrets of Great Yarmouth: Ancient Origins,
Hidden Places and Interesting Characters. Dr. Mark Rumble, Retired GP.
- March 30th East of England Forum held in Ipswich.
It was dedicated to the Government's latest review
- Building Better, Building Beautiful Commission.
- May 21st Visit to Kings Lynn. Organised by Michael and Lynn Muskett.
- August 5th Broads Trip. Visiting projects being carried out in Gorleston, Acle and Thurne
- September 3rd The Organ and organists of St. Nicholas Church (The Minster).
Andrew Hayden, Organist and Choirmaster at Thorpe St. Andrew, Norwich
- September 10th Guided tour of St. John's Church, 38 Lancaster Rd, NR30 2NG Dr. Paul Davies.

FUTURE EVENTS ~ to date

- October 7th My Vision for Great Yarmouth
Carl Smith, Leader of Great Yarmouth Borough Council. AGM of Civic Society
- November 26th Town Centre Development Plan. Discussion led by Sheila Oxtoby, CEO of Great Yarmouth Borough Council
Darren Barker, Chief Conservation Officer, GYBC

2020

- January 22nd Sheila Oxtoby CEO of GYBC "My Vision for Great Yarmouth"
with Darren Barker, Chief Conservation Officer
- February 12th Charles Watt, High Sheriff of Norfolk
- August 23rd Mediaeval Fayre in grounds of the Minster



The following are our priorities:



- **Roundabouts.** Work with the Borough Council, Norfolk County Council and Highways England to improve their appearance. Install a prominent sculpture at Vauxhall roundabout. Treat the weeds along the A47 effectively and clear the litter.
- **Litter** Encourage people and businesses to look after the area in front of their properties.
- **Pavements.** Aim to be resurfaced and be regularly cleaned.
- **Attracting Youngsters.** Continue to work with more schools and colleges and encourage them to attend our meetings and visits.
- **Motivating Communities.** Work with community workers and the community to develop civic pride.
- **Greening up the town.** Work with GYBC, Great Yarmouth in Bloom and other organisations to provide more planters and increase the number of trees in the Borough.
- **Lighting up the town.** Work to achieve illumination of all heritage sites, the town wall and all the bridges leading into the town. Make sure the Rows are properly illuminated.
- **Town Centre Master Plan.** Work with the Council on the development of this plan.
- **Awards.** Make annual awards to encourage shops, businesses and individuals to take pride in their properties.
- **Conservation Audit** Follow up on the recommendations of our audit, to have proper illuminated Rows and to have minimal standards for properties in the conservation areas.
- **Planning Applications.** Review planning applications and make our views known to the Council. Ensure that the Council revokes licences where Homes of Multiple Occupancy are not kept up to standard.
- **Tourist Information Centre** Continue to press for the a Tourist Information Centre in the Market Place.
- **Rebuild New Gate.** This will enable people to see what one of the town wall gates looked like, the construction will be educational for school children and will help to bring the community together.
- **Hanseatic League.** Work with other New Hanse towns to encourage visitors to the town.
- **Grants.** Apply for grants to help us achieve our goals
- **Membership.** Continue to increase membership.
Encourage each member to get at least two members to join.

Conclusions

From the enthusiasm shown at meetings and visits it is clear that all members feel passionately about the town. This report shows what we have achieved and what are our plans for the future. We are most grateful to all members for their support and together we will show that we can make a difference. Please encourage new members to join and let us have your ideas and suggestions.

ALL
NEW!



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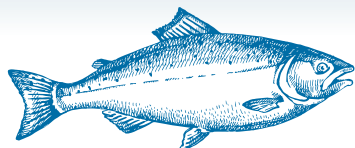
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