

CIVIC SOCIETY GREAT YARMOUTH

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6TH ANNUAL REPORT 2022 - 2023

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INTRODUCTION

The country and Great Yarmouth are still recovering from Covid and the war in Ukraine. Along with inflation they have had a devastating effect on everyone. People have become used to sitting at home rather than going out so attendances at our meetings and membership numbers are down.

It is exciting to see the popularity of the Waterways since they were reopened, and the Marina Sports Centre is a shining replacement for its predecessor. The Indoor Market is nearing completion and then the landscaping of the whole area can take place. Work is progressing on The Place - the University Learning Centre - which will help to improve the qualifications of the local population. This will help them to apply for the jobs being created in the offshore businesses and it will bring more people into the Town Centre so helping to regenerate the town.

The Herring Bridge is about to open, work is progressing on the Operations and Maintenance Campus at South Denes and plans are being drawn up for the development of North Quay and the Conge. Over half of the 500 trees to be planted in the town are growing and it is especially good to see them on South Quay.

The Society has put on monthly talks throughout the year and arranged visits to the Marina, The Waterways and the old Palmers building. Awards to shops, businesses and the market stalls were made in October 2022 and July 2023. We also presented awards to the Waterways and the new Marina in October 2022.

Great Yarmouth has so much potential with its history, heritage, wonderful seaside facilities, the surrounding Broads and beautiful countryside. We have the largest collection of wind farms in the country with increasing use being made of the outer and inner harbours. We have increased investment in the town but all of us must play our part in improving its appearance for the benefit of the local population and the visitors. I would, therefore, urge you to encourage your friends and acquaintances to join the Civic Society so that we may make this a town for which we can be proud.

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Hugh Sturzaker, MBE
Chairman



THANK YOU

COMMITTEE

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

President: Henry Cator OBE, DL
High Steward of Great Yarmouth

Chairman: Hugh Sturzaker MBE,
Retired Surgeon

Secretary: Rachel Moore,
Chief Executive at TMS Media

Peter Bondi
Retired Hotel Manager

Dr. Paul Davies
Retired GP, Author, Chair of GY Minster Preservation Trust, Chair of Local History and Archaeological Society etc.

Anne Edwards
Ex editor of the Great Yarmouth Mercury

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

Ian Miller
Chartered Quantity Surveyor

Paul Patterson
Recently retired Managing Director of Associated Sourcing Web, Director of ATEC Design, historian and author

Graham Plant
Ex Mayor of Great Yarmouth, Deputy Leader of Great Yarmouth Borough Council and Norfolk County Council

Dr. Catherine Richards
Principal at East Norfolk Sixth Form College

Bruce Sturrock
Ex Chairman of Palmers & Town Centre Partnership

Michael Zegerman
Retired Businessman

Treasurer: Michael Musket, MBE
Retired Accountant & Chair of Local Macmillan Cancer Relief

Membership Secretary: John Burroughs,
Ex Mayor of Great Yarmouth & Retired Publican

SPONSORS & GRANTS

We are most grateful for the following:

Stardrop LTD towards the cost and printing of this annual report, £200.

The following sponsors, for the Civic Society Awards: Town Centre Partnership, Dr. Ajay Kumar, Bruce Sturrock, Great Yarmouth Borough Council & SPP Digital.

Great Yarmouth in Bloom, £100.

SPP Digital LTD, for Signs & Banners.

East Norfolk Sixth Form College for hosting our Zoom meetings.

Sainsbury's donated many packets of seeds and bulbs.

PROMOTION

Lewis Ashdown, Director of Publicity & Trustee at the Great Yarmouth Arts Festival maintains our website, and works with Jon Dack, Marketing & Admissions Manager at East Norfolk Sixth Form College to run our social media pages.

Our Chairman writes a weekly column in the Mercury about various aspects of the town and its people and has spoken several times on Harbour Radio about the activities of the Society.

Word of mouth is by far the best means of publicity and we hope that members will speak to their friends and colleagues about what the Society is doing and urge them to become members.



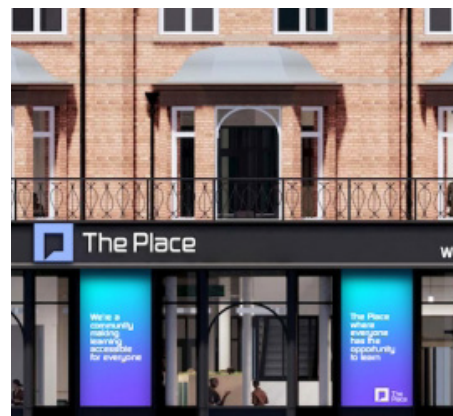
For the full details of the Town Deal plans, visit:

https://www.great-yarmouth.gov.uk/media/5881/Town-Deal-Brochure/pdf/Town_Deal_Brochure_Final.pdf

Covered Market - This is nearing completion after delays in obtaining materials and finding unexpected underground cables. The building should be completed by September and then work commences on landscaping which brings in trees, flower beds and a performance area between Lloyd's Bank and the covered market.



University Learning Centre: The Place - There are exciting plans to develop the old Palmers building in the Market Place. The basement and ground floor will house the library where weddings and receptions may be held. The upper floors will be occupied by the University of Suffolk, University of East Anglia and East Coast College. The aim is to improve the education of the local population by offering various types of education up to degree level. This should enable people to be better qualified for the many new jobs which are becoming available. In addition, the presence of the students in the building and visitors to the library will help the local shops, cafes and restaurants. In June some members of the Society had a guided tour round the building whose interior has been completely gutted.



Priory and Old Rectory - One of our members, Rob Haslam, has done an amazing job refurbishing the Priory and Old Rectory and Kirsty's Cakes has moved into the Priory from Anna Sewell House. All the rooms in the Old Vicarage have been let to charities and other organisations. Both buildings are part of our great heritage and it is encouraging seeing them being put to good use.



Housing - Good housing is so important for people's health and well-being and it is the Council's intention to change empty shops and businesses in the town centre into housing and to encourage businesses to convert premises above shops and businesses into apartments. There are plans to build good accommodation on North Quay and the Conge. All this will increase the number of people living in the town centre and this will result in greater footfall there and encourage the development of shops, cafes, restaurants, and bars.

Winter Gardens - Much of this year has been devoted to showing groups round the building - including a group from the Civic Society - and obtaining opinions about how the building could be developed. The plans are nearing completion and look far better than the initial ones.



The Ice House - This building was built to store ice for preserving fish. With various grants it is being converted into a training, performance and storage area for circus and is one of the areas which hopes to make Great Yarmouth the national centre for circus.



The Herring Bridge - The bridge should open in September and improve flow of traffic into the town and to the inner and outer harbours. Our chair had the privilege of sitting on the committee selecting the name for the Bridge and was delighted that so many people put forward names and in the second vote on the short list there was an equally high turnout. Herring Bridge is a very appropriate name as the "silver darling" was responsible for much of the town's wealth over the centuries and the bridge is close to the old fish market.



Greening Up - The gardens created around the Blackfriars section of the Town Wall by Ann Hacon, Angela Powley, and Clare Southern look superb and are well worth a visit. They also look after the planters outside St. George's Plaza and a raised bed near Sainsbury's carpark. If anyone wishes to help with these projects, please contact annhacon@yahoo.co.uk.



Trees - About 250 trees have been planted including those along South Quay. It is good to see that each has a bag of water to aid watering but some of the trees on South Quay do need some support. Another 250 should be planted this coming winter. It is over three years since the Society did an audit of trees in the town and made suggestions of where they could be planted so we are very pleased to see this tree planting come to fruition.



Litter Picking - A small dedicated group of members do litter picking each Friday morning. Any new litter pickers would be very welcomed. All equipment is provided. It starts at 10.30am down the Row beside Skippings in King Street.

Parking in front of Christchurch - After a great deal of lobbying by the Society and others Norfolk County Council and Highways have agreed to some places being allocated for cars in front of Christchurch yet it is over 7 months since this was agreed but it has still not been actioned by the authorities.





TUESDAY 27 SEPT 2022

Talk by: Lou Robson, Heritage Action Zone project manager for Great Yarmouth Borough Council.
"The Heritage Action Zone. What it means for Great Yarmouth - above and below ground."

Lou Robson gave a most interesting talk about the various projects being carried out by the Heritage Action Zone which is jointly funded to the tune of £2.3M by Historic England and the Borough Council. The area covered extends from the Minster to St. George's Theatre and includes some of the Rows. The aim is to improve the Townscape and increase people's pride in their town.

Among the projects completed or in progress are:

- Repairing the town wall behind St. Nicholas School
- Replacing the railings in front of St. Nicholas School
- Work on 160 King Street which is being converted into a Jamaican Restaurant
- Work on 145 King Street
- Increasing community engagement to learn about the town's heritage and cultural skills
- Making archaeological test pits around the town centre
- Ground penetrating radar examination of Minster grounds
- Production of a Ghost signs trail
- Awarding grants to improve shop fronts

The Annual General Meeting was held after the talk and the minutes of this are on the Civic Society website: civicsocietygy.co.uk

TUESDAY 18 OCT 2022

Presentation by Jon Barnard, Director of Greyfriars Project Management, Steve Logan, Project Manager, Master Planner and Urban Designer of Greyfriars Project Management

Jon Barnard is a civil engineer and set up Greyfriars Project Management in 2018. He has been involved in the Third River Crossing in Great Yarmouth and the Norwich Northern Relief Road.

Trees for Cities - The government has selected 10 locations in the UK with low tree cover and awarded the funding for planting and looking after 505 trees in each location. There is also funding for 2 traineeships, 15 training days and maintaining the trees for three years. Total funding is £261,840. Some trees were planted earlier this year and many more will be planted this autumn. This will include trees along South Quay which have been specially selected to try and overcome the adverse conditions there.

The Rows - Following an audit by the Civic Society on the lighting in the Rows 70 new lights have been installed in 37 Rows at a cost of £80-90,000. The total sum for the project of £240,000 has come from the Safer Streets Fund and covers a Community Support Officer for three years and special cleaning equipment.

Middlegate Estate - With a grant of £850,000 new play spaces and greening up of areas has been done. Some trees will also be planted here. There was an opening ceremony on 28 October 2022 at 11am at Clarendon Close North.

Business Incubator Project - This is being developed near the outer harbour to provide start up businesses at a cost of £3.95M plus a further £420,000. It will gradually be extended to the Nelson Monument and an important issue is good landscaping.



TUESDAY 8 NOV 2022

"Goodchild Marine: Reflections" - by Alan Goodchild

This was an awe inspiring talk by Alan Goodchild who developed an interest in boats at the age of 15 and after an apprenticeship he set up his own business and made his first fibreglass boat in Great Yarmouth at the age 19. Eventually he moved his business to Burgh Castle where he builds a variety of craft, both commercial and leisure, and specialises in the building of Pilot boats which incorporate many novel designs e.g. a special bow to enable the boat to go faster, lightweight hull construction and no internal cables as all communication is via Bluetooth etc. He designed and builds a man overboard recovery platform.

His firm has produced a unique form of dredger head which cuts and sucks enabling the most difficult of areas to be accessed in harbours, canals and reservoirs.

In addition he runs several apprentice schemes and has been chair of at least two national organisations associated with boat building.

TUESDAY 10 JAN 2023

The Winter Gardens: History and the Future.

By Kate Blakemore, Stacy Cosham and Rachel Daniel of Great Yarmouth Borough Council.

Our three presenters gave a history about how the Winter Gardens were built in Torquay over a hundred years ago but proved a financial disaster. The building was purchased by Great Yarmouth and brought here by barge in the hope of providing a new type of venue and to extend the season.

Over the years, it had had several functions but was eventually closed over ten years ago for safety reasons. Fortunately, a large grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund and several other grants have enabled the last Victorian seaside Winter Gardens to be refurbished and, over the year, opinions have been obtained from the community and various plans are being drawn up.

Following the meeting arrangements were made for members to visit the Winter Gardens



Photos by Dr. Ajay Kumar



TUESDAY 31 JAN 2023

Equinor in Norfolk – Sheringham Shoal and Dudgeon Wind Farms; Innovation, Green Growth and Collaboration – maximising the positive societal impacts from Offshore Wind.

By Sue Falch-Lovesey, Stakeholder Manager, Business Development for Equinor.

This was an inspiring presentation covering many aspects of energy production. Her firm, Equinor, has a vision to turn natural resources into energy for people and progress for society and it plans to be carbon net zero by 2050.

Equinor has recently opened its Operations and Maintenance base in Great Yarmouth from which it controls the Sherringham Shoal and Dudgeon Offshore Wind Farms as well as the floating wind farms off the Scottish mainland. Next year it will open the Dogger Bank wind farm which will supply 10% of the UK's domestic market.

The firm still produces oil but is reducing its carbon footprint. It is also capturing carbon dioxide from the oceans.

Equinor is very keen to encourage young people into the industry by providing work experience and apprenticeships. To compensate communities for the disruption caused by laying cables across the county it is providing community benefit funds.

We hope to arrange a visit to Equinox's base in Great Yarmouth later in the year.

TUESDAY 28 FEB 2023

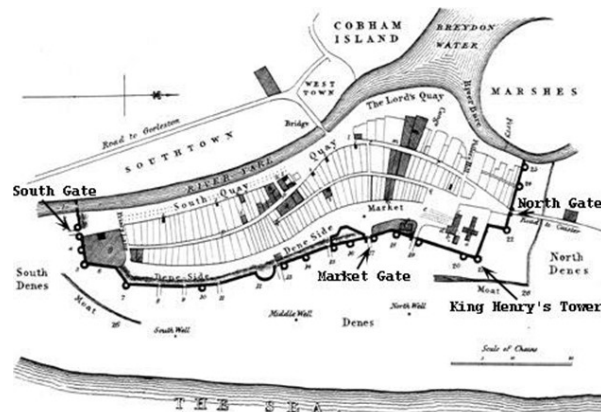
Design Code for Great Yarmouth

By Hanna Loftus of HAT Projects.

HAT Projects has been commissioned to produce a Design Code for the Borough of Great Yarmouth. After an initial meeting with some Civic Society Committee members and representatives of many other organisations Hanna Loftus presented her draft report.

The vision is to:

- Sustain and enhance the distinctive built and landscape character of the settlements in the Borough
- Ensure new developments are of a quality that will be enduring and can become the much-loved heritage of the future
- Encourage new design approaches that reflect the circumstances, technology and needs of the present day, as well as current and future challenges, in particular climate change.



Created by Sue Walker White'



She illustrated these points by dividing the Borough into separate areas:

- Great Yarmouth Historic town centre (within the walls)
- Great Yarmouth Seafront
- Great Yarmouth 19th century extensions
- Gorleston town centre/historic core
- Great Yarmouth and Gorleston port/industrial area
- Gorleston Seafront
- Gorleston 19th century extensions
- Caister - pre-war development
- Historic Inland villages
- Interwar housing estates
- Postwar housing estates
- Plotlands
- Holiday parks
- Hamlets and dispersed farmsteads, open countrysides
- New Housing developments

This list of areas shows how diverse is the Borough and most will need separate considerations. Following the presentation there was a lively discussion.

TUESDAY 21 MAR 2023

The Renovation of the Venetian Waterways

By Lee Brown, Events Coordinator at Waterways and cafe, and Ian Guest, gardener at the Waterways and Boating Lake covered the history of the building of the Waterways and Boating Lake and their recent renovation.

Work was started on the Boating Lake in 1926 to help the drastic unemployment which followed the First World War. Following its completion, work was started on the Waterways which reached their most popular periods in the 1930's, 1950's and 1960's. Subsequently there was a decline in their popularity and they were eventually closed. Following a successful bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund for £1.77M work started on reconstruction and replanting of the whole site which was opened in 2019. Since then it has proved to be a great success and it is run by Access Community Trust which supports social inclusion across Norfolk and Suffolk.





TUESDAY 6 JUN 2023

Great Yarmouth Regeneration: 2023 Update By Steve Logan from Greyfriars Project Management

This was a roundup of the many projects taking place in Great Yarmouth and overseen by Greyfriars Project Management.

Six Day Covered Market was nearing completion of the third stage. The first stage was delayed by 5 months due to supply problems and having to divert some electric cables. It is hoped the work will be completed by August. Construction Inflation is running at 15% resulting in a £4M shortfall in the various projects being carried out in the town. The Council is able to juggle some of the funding between different projects which means that some will be delayed in starting. Some towns and cities have put all their grants into one large project where it is not possible to move money around and if it is not spent by 2025 it will have to be returned to government.

Landscaping of Market Place - This should start in the autumn. It will produce a multi-use public space for events plus trees and flower beds costing nearly £5M.

Entrance into town from railway station - There will be a bus terminus at the rail station and plans are being drawn up of a grand vision for the area including Vauxhall Bridge, North Quay and the Conge.

Trees for Cities - 250 have been planted and they are being maintained and watered for the next 3 years. Another 250 will be planted this winter.

Midlegate Estate - Green spaces have been developed and play equipment installed at a cost of £880,000. The areas are being well used with great social benefit.

Business Incubator Unit Project at South Denes - This is to attract new businesses and to help people run a business. It has reached the planning stage but further work is on hold for 6-12 months as the £4M cost has been transferred to other projects. Steve was confident that other grants will come forward for this project.

Operations and Maintenance Campus at South Denes - Costing £20M it is due for completion in early to mid 2025. This will facilitate work on renewable energy projects.



TUESDAY 8 AUG 2023

The Greek Orthodox Community of Saint Spyridon's of Great Yarmouth. By Miriam Kikis, ex owner with her husband Chris, of the Fish Restaurant.

Miriam explained that a Turkish Cypriot designed the Cypriot flag and in 1974, after invasion by the Turks, 200,000 Greek Cypriots left the country.

In 1935 Mr. Lucas and Mr. Kikis left a small village in the north of Cyprus which had 900 Greeks and 200 Turks. They set up a restaurant in London. During the Second World War Mr. Kikis returned to Cyprus working for the coastguard. Mr. Lucas moved to Great Yarmouth and established 15 restaurants around Norfolk inviting friends and relatives to come to Great Yarmouth. Mr. Lucas and Mr. Kikis were like fathers to these people and gave them accommodation and shares in the Savoy Company. Many then sold the shares to buy their own restaurant.

In 1961 St. Nicholas Church, which had been bombed in 1942, had been rebuilt and the congregation moved back from their temporary home of St. Peter's Church which the Borough Council allowed the Greeks to buy for £1 in 1967. The Greeks furnished it, paid for its priests by raising funds from jumble sales, raffles and donations from local businesses and eventually receiving a national grant for refurbishing the church. The annual Greek Dinner Dance raises a great deal of money for the church. In 1971 for Epiphany an annual procession to the jetty was started when a cross was thrown into the sea and retrieved.

The church has been the centre of the Greek community and provides a school teaching Greek to children and providing much needed social care.

The invasion of Cyprus by the Turks in 1974 resulted in more Greeks coming to Great Yarmouth and in the 1980s there were 140 families spread around Great Yarmouth, Lowestoft and Norwich. This figure is now about 120.



**TUESDAY 13 SEPT 2022****Marina Centre Visit**

Fourteen members were taken on a tour of the new Marina by Martin Marsh who runs the centre. All were very impressed by its design and the views over the beach and sea from the cafe and upstairs gymnasium. Revenue so far has greatly exceeded what was anticipated although the rising cost of gas and electricity is a worry.

There is a 6 lane, 25metre swimming pool - which was very busy - a pool for infants and a water play area. There is a large sports hall which can cope with a range of sports: netball, 4 badminton courts, football etc. There are 14 climbing walls and an amazing display of sports equipment in 3 different areas plus a further room for other activities. The cafe is open to all.

The focus is to encourage the local population to participate in sporting activities - to improve our health and well-being - although it is open to holiday makers as well.

**THURSDAY 15 JUNE 2022****Guided Tour of Waterways and Boating Lake
Bylan Guest, Head Gardener**

Having met at the cafe by the Boating Lake nine of us had a very pleasant tour of the Boating Lake and Waterways by Ian Guest who told us about the history of their construction, their decline in recent decades and their restoration and replanting following funding of £1.7 million from the Heritage Lottery Fund and Big Lottery Fund, plus further support from the Borough Council, New Anglia LEP and the Department for Communities and Local Government. We were impressed with the planting schemes, the abundance of wildlife and how well the whole area is maintained.

**MONDAY 26 JUNE 2022****Visit to the Old Palmers Building
By Adri Van Der Colff, Project Manager**

Ten members visited the old Palmers building, the inside of which has been gutted revealing some rather good stained glass. The plan is for the library to use the ground floor and basement. There will be a space for weddings and receptions. The first and second floors will be for the University of Suffolk, East Coast College and the University of East Anglia. It is hoped that one building could be used as a dental training school. The plan is to complete the work in the next 12 months.



Picture of the former Palmers Department Store, Great Yarmouth Market Place



2022 SHOPS & BUSINESS AWARDS

We made these awards three years ago but Covid stopped us over the last two years. Awards for 2022 were presented in the Assembly Room of the Town Hall on 27 October. The awards were as follows:

RETAIL:

WARREN JAMES, Jeweller in Market Gates

SERVICES: (Banks, Estate Agents, Building Societies etc.),

LARKES ESTATE AGENT in Hall Quay

PERSONAL SERVICES: (Hairdressers, Nail bars, tattooists etc.),

MORFOSE TURKISH BARBERS in King Street

FOOD AND DRINK:

THE COURTYARD in Row 75, Poppies Row

MARKET STALLS:

JACK'S FLOWER STALL

Each winner was presented with a framed certificate and the overall winner, Warren James, was awarded a trophy which will be retained for a year.

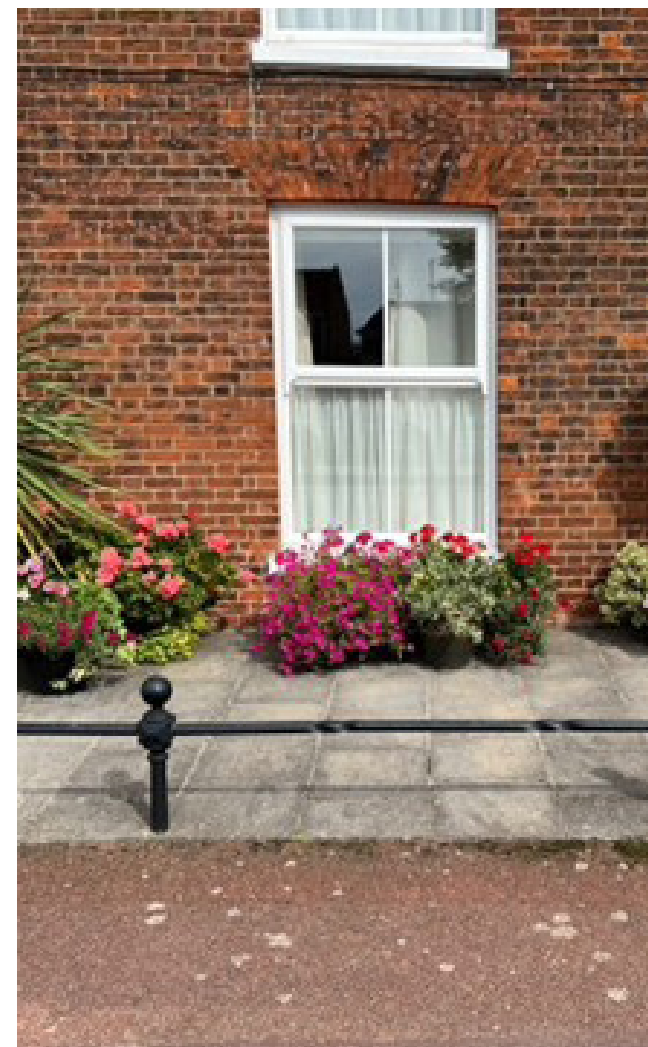
The prize for the best front garden or patio was awarded to Sally Bondi of 22 Church Plain.



Warren James Jewellers



Sally Bondi



A picture of the Winning Garden by Sally Bondi.



Ann Hacon and Angela Powley's work at Blackfriar's

A special award was made to the **WATERWAYS** and **BOATING LAKE** which were constructed nearly one hundred years ago and were refashioned two years ago. The second special award was made for the newly built **MARINA** on the Seafront and was presented to Carl Smith, Leader of the Council, who had been one of the main protagonists of the scheme.

We were delighted to learn that Ann Hacon and Angela Powley, two very active gardening members of the Society, had been awarded the **Great Yarmouth in Bloom Gold Medal for the Community Project** which involved creating gardens around the Blackfriars section of the Town Wall and the **Silver Gilt medal** for the Courtyard they maintain at the Yare Gallery. Both awards are very well deserved.



2023 SHOPS & BUSINESS AWARDS

Twelve judges assessed nearly 500 shops and businesses in the town centre in June and as a result a short list of 30 finalists was drawn up each of whom received a sticker to go on their window indicating that they were a finalist. These finalists were then assessed by all the judges resulting in the winners of each section being announced in the Assembly Room of the Town Hall on Thursday 13 July. The winners were:

COVERED MARKET:
NICHOLS SEAFOOD

PERSONAL SERVICES:
MORFOSE TURKISH BARBER in King Street
(for the second year running)

SERVICES:
HAYS TRAVEL in Market Place

RETAIL:
F. HINDS, Jewellers in Market Gates

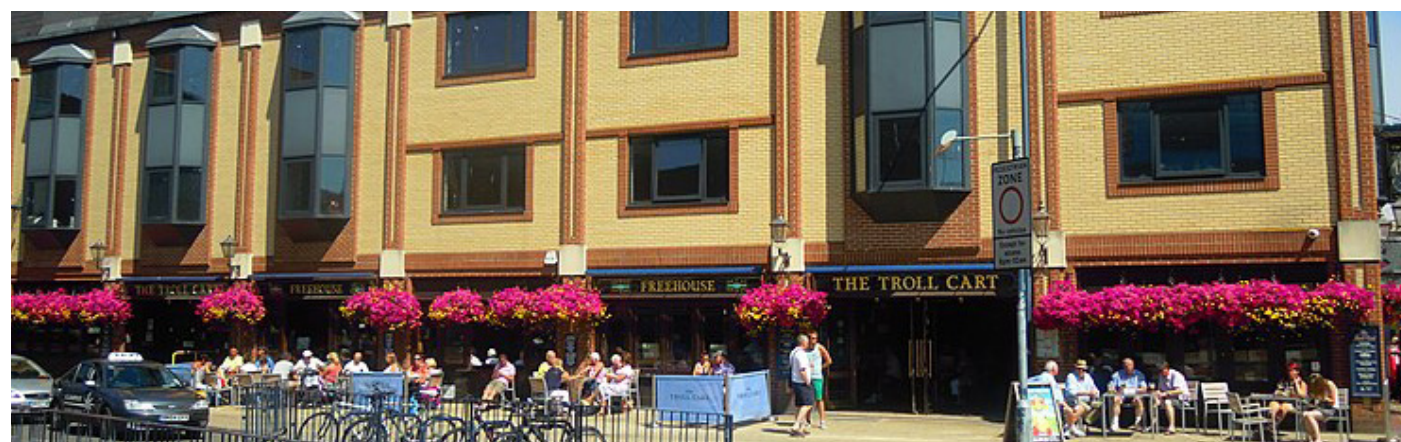
INDEPENDENT RETAIL:
AVENUE FABRICS in Market Place

FOOD, DRINK & LEISURE:
THE TROLL CART, 7-9 Regent Road



Winners of Awards for Shops, Businesses and Market Stall holders. Photo by Ajay Kumar

The overall winner was the Troll Cart. This was an unanimous decision of all the judges and the trophy was presented by the Deputy Mayor to Todd, the Manager.



The Troll Cart, 7-9 Regent Road, Great Yarmouth

CIVIC DAY, SAT 17 JUNE

Promoting Civic Pride is one of the aims of the Civic Society and we are very grateful to Terry Mills, Miriam Kikis, Michael Zegerman, Gavin Hetherington, Ann Hacon, Angie Powley, Chris Stanley and Ajay Kumar for manning our stand in the Market Place on Saturday 17 June.



- SEPT 7** Seaside Heritage Network meeting with colleagues from seaside resorts around the country. This was the first meeting looking at ways to promote seaside resorts' heritage.
- SEPT 27** A workshop helping in the branding of University Learning Centre in the old Palmers building.
- SEPT 28** Mayor's Reception at Hirst Farm, Ormesby. It was a good opportunity to view part of the farm which is practicing sustainable farming and seeing its farmshop which was opened just 18 months previously and now employs 20 people.
- OCT 11** Town Deal Board meeting.
- OCT 15** Visit to the Winter Gardens. We were given the opportunity of commenting on the plans for its development and making suggestions. These will be collated with suggestions from other groups and put to the public in the new year.
- OCT 19** Invited to meet Royal College of Defence Studies who brought 18 members from around the world to assess the Borough's prospects for stability, security and prosperity and to hear our views on social equality, and generation of tourism.
- NOV 3** Tea in the Town Hall to celebrate the planting of trees in the town and work on the Tree Canopy to mark the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. That day school children were planting trees on South Quay along with the Mayor.
- NOV 21** Giving a presentation to Civic Voice - national umbrella organisation for civic societies - about our awards scheme for shops, businesses and market stalls.
- NOV 29** Paul Patterson, Bruce Sturrock and Hugh Sturzaker met with Hanna Loftus and Chrissy Cheung of the HAT Project to discuss what should be put in the Design Code for Great Yarmouth. Having met with representatives from other organisations they produced their report which they discussed with members of the Civic Society on 28 February 2023 before it is published.
- DEC 1** Met with representatives from other councils from around the country reviewing the work of the Great Yarmouth Borough Council.
- JAN 5** Gave a talk to Gorleston Rotary Club about the Civic Society
- JAN 11** Attended a meeting of the Community Partnership for Great Yarmouth and northern villages to discuss how to tackle the problems of health, education and violence in the area.
- JAN 17** Online discussion about the development of the old Palmers building into a University Learning Centre and new library.
- JAN 27** Selection Committee to appoint a new Executive Director of Place for the Borough Council.
- JAN 31** Town Deal Board meeting.
- JAN 31** Leader of the Council's Reception in the Town Hall in which he presented many of the achievements and successes which have occurred in the last three years.



- FEB 7** Meeting with Borough's Events Team to discuss events to celebrate the Coronation.
- FEB 23** Culture and Tourism meeting.
- APR 11** Town Deal Board meeting.
- MAY 16** Seaside Heritage Network meeting.
- JUN 12** Town Deal Board meeting.
- JUN 14** Culture and Tourism meeting.
- JUN 22** Meeting with GYBC Chair of Environment Committee.
- JUL 1** Opening of Magic Acorns Early Years Arts Space.
- JUL 5** Seaside Heritage Network meeting at which there was a presentation on the Winter Gardens.

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MIDDLEGATE PROJECT

Before the Covid Pandemic our chair had had talks with various Council officials to see how we could improve the gardens of the Middlegate Estate. Unfortunately, the Pandemic put a stop to this project but recently he had talks with the Housing Officer. We hoped we could get a number of interested gardeners from the Society to work with those living on the estate to improve their gardens. Gardening is extremely therapeutic and neat and tidy gardens would make the whole estate look so much better.

Unfortunately attempts at getting together some residents to discuss the scheme proved unsuccessful. A local resident offered to oversee a tool lending scheme and we have left the door open if the residents are willing to participate in coming together in looking after the area.

HANSEATIC LEAGUE

The Hanseatic League was set up in the 13th century to promote and protect trade from north German ports to other parts of Europe including Britain. It was restarted in 1980 with the aim of improving tourism, cultural exchange and business links and has a thriving youth section. It consists of about 200 towns and cities in northern Europe from 17 different countries.

The Civic Society decided that Great Yarmouth should join the Hanseatic League and the first year's subscription was generously paid by Henry Cator and Michael Muskett and subsequent subscriptions have been paid by the Borough Council.

Henry Cator, our President and High Steward of the Borough, was invited to attend the Hanseatic League annual meeting in Torun, Poland but was unable to go and two teachers from the East Norfolk Sixth Form College attended in his place to pave the way for students from Great Yarmouth to attend the meeting next year. This will be a great opportunity for students and, hopefully, will result in an increase in visitors to the Borough from Europe.

Henry Cator made a generous contribution towards the cost of the visit this year and the Civic Society and the Haven Rotary Club gave £250 each. The rest of the trip was funded by the East Norfolk Sixth Form College.

TUESDAY 5 SEPT

7:30pm at Christchurch, King Street, NR30 2HL

Update on Projects by Great Yarmouth Preservation Trust
By Darren Barker, Managing Director of Great Yarmouth Preservation Trust

He will cover recent projects of the Trust including The Iron Duke, 145 King Street and North West Tower.

This will be followed by the **Annual General Meeting**.

TUESDAY 10 OCT

7:30pm at Christchurch, King Street, NR30 2HL

Somerleyton Estate and ReWilding
By Hugh Crossley, Lord Somerleyton

He will cover recent changes in the Somerleyton Estate and plans for ReWilding on his estate and elsewhere.

TUESDAY 14 NOV

7:30pm at Christchurch, King Street, NR30 2HL

Report on Hansa Conference in Poland and the benefits for Great Yarmouth
By Dr. Catherine Richards & Carolina Vettes

They will report on the conference they attended in Torun, Poland and it will be followed by a discussion on how Great Yarmouth could benefit from its membership of the new Hansa and what we need to do to achieve those aims.





VICTORIA ARCADE

The Arcade was up for auction again but did not reach its reserve of £650,000. Talking to various people it was felt that with proper management it could have a promising future and it was necessary for the future success of Great Yarmouth. The government has established a Community Ownership Fund giving grants of up to one million pounds and needing 10% match funding. The Chair of the Society thought it would be one way of purchasing it and offering £1,000 shares to obtain match funding. Along with Bruce Sturrock, previous owner of Palmers, we approached several other people but in the end we found that we could not guarantee obtaining the grant before the next auction day so reluctantly decided not to pursue the matter further.

LITTER AND OTHER MATTERS

On 22 June the chair had a meeting with Paul Wells, Chair of the GYBC Environment Committee, and Paul Shucksmith, Waste and Environmental Protection Manager. Hugh Sturzaker pointed out the disappointment at seeing weeds growing throughout the town in spite of the Council setting up its own company to take over from Norse. Apparently many of these areas are the responsibility of Norfolk County Council who has subcontracted the business to a company in Leicester who had yet to start work. Previously GYBC had tried to take over the contract and Paul Wells will try again to see if this can be arranged.

The poor state of the Rows was discussed. In spite of receiving a grant to improve them they are very run down and Paul Wells will investigate. The chair mentioned the poor state of many of the rubbish bins which needed painting and Paul Wells said he would approach probation services and colleges to see if they would like to take on this project.

On leaving the Town Hall Hugh Sturzaker pointed out the poor state of the main doors and iron railings and Paul Wells was going to see if they could be attended to.

Although outside the remit of the Society the chair said that the flower beds on Gorleston Cliffs had not been attended to this year. This was due to shortage of staff and Paul Shucksmith has since been able to get the Green Gym to do some work on them.

GREAT YARMOUTH AND GORLESTON IN BLOOM

Following the news that GYBC was not renewing its grant to Great Yarmouth and Gorleston in Bloom Hugh Sturzaker contacted the new chair and vice chair of the organisation and hopes we can work together along with other organisations. The presence of well maintained flowerbeds, planters and hanging baskets is so important to the general appearance of a town and we need to further the great work done by the In Bloom group in the past.

LETTERS OF SUPPORT

During the year we wrote a letter of support for Great Yarmouth - within Living Memory. A project set up by Richard Harrison as a Community Interest Company to encourage youngsters to research the history of Great Yarmouth in association with their elders. They would learn how to present the results and the findings will be valuable for future generations.



AWARDS

Make annual awards to encourage shops, businesses, market traders and individuals to take pride in their properties.

PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Review planning applications and make sure our views are known to the Council. Ensure that the Council revokes licences where Homes of Multiple Occupancy 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. Hopefully, this will be in the new Heritage Centre.

PUBLICISE THE TOWN WALL

Remove some of the 1960 buildings on the east side of the Market Place to show the town wall and develop gardens between the Market Place and the Town Wall.

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.

ROUNDBABOUTS & ROADS

Work with the Borough Council, Norfolk County Council and Highways England to improve their appearance. Install a prominent sculpture on Vauxhall roundabout designed by Paul Patterson. Treat the weeds along the A47 effectively and clear the litter.

PAVEMENTS

Work with the Council and Norfolk County Council to develop decent pavement surfaces which are well maintained and that utility services which dig them up are responsible for returning them to how they were.

GREENING UP THE TOWN

Work with GYBC, GY Preservation Trust, Great Yarmouth in Bloom, and other organisations to green up the town and increase the number trees in the Borough.

LIGHTING UP THE TOWN

Work to achieve illumination of all historic buildings, the town wall and all the bridges leading into the town.

TOWN CENTRE MASTER PLAN

Work with the Town Board and the Council on the development of this plan.



Make sure the Rows are properly lit and kept clean and tidy.

Continue working to stop parking of vehicles on the ground around the theatre.

Publicise this report and obtain the support of the community for it so that many of its suggestions may be implemented and civic pride is generated. Report available on our website - **www.civicsocietygy.org.uk**.

Work with Schools and Colleges to encourage students to get involved with our various projects.

Work with community workers and the community to develop civic pride.

Great Yarmouth is a summer seaside resort. However, it is necessary to extend the season into the spring, autumn and winter months. There is much more than the seaside and we need to give more publicity to our heritage, museums, art galleries, theatres and develop extra festivals. We need to promote short breaks which include tickets to museums, theatres etc.

Encourage people and businesses to look after the area in front of their properties.

Work with other New Hansa towns to encourage visitors to the town.

Apply for grants to help us achieve our goals.

Work to increase membership. Encourage each member to get at least two members to join. In order to become a member of the Civic Society, see our website - **www.civicsocietygy.co.uk**.

@AshdownLewisJ on Facebook, Instagram & X.

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Proud members of the
Great Yarmouth Civic Society

Scott fine Norfolk hotels
on the sunrise coast
