

# CIVIC SOCIETY GREAT YARMOUTH

Find us on



## 7TH ANNUAL REPORT 2023 - 2024

[www.CivicSocietyGY.co.uk](http://www.CivicSocietyGY.co.uk)



# INTRODUCTION

***This year the Herring Bridge was opened resulting in a dramatic reduction in traffic queues along the A47 and quicker access into the town. The Covered Market was completed and was being well used until work was started on landscaping the Market Place which has had a negative affect on people using the shops and market stalls. The buildings on the south side of the Conge have been taken down ready for work to start on building new homes there.***

Work on The Place - the University Learning Centre - is progressing but the opening has been delayed until the spring. It will be a great asset to the community. The Operations and Maintenance campus at South Denes is progressing well. The Trees on South Quay are doing well as are many others in the town although a few have died.

We have a new government and a new MP, Rupert Lowe, whom we have asked to speak to the Society and are awaiting a date when he can come.

A small number of society members along with some non-members have been cleaning up some of the Rows and Alleyways in the town as part of Safer Streets and anyone who wishes to join us on Tuesday mornings would be very welcome.

We were very sad to see the passing of John Burroughs, ex Mayor of the town and membership secretary since the Society started, who had been unwell for a long time. Peter Bondi very kindly took over the post on a temporary basis. Michael Muskett has also stepped down as treasurer and we are very grateful to Susan Page who has taken over both posts.

Great Yarmouth has been very successful in obtaining many grants over recent years and we are beginning to see the results. However, everyone needs to look after their properties, we could start to introduce planters to brighten up the town and people living outside the town need to come into it. This will encourage new shops, cafes, restaurants etc. to open and we can develop a sense of pride.

Great Yarmouth has had a very successful past, it has enormous potential and let us all work together to achieve greatness again.



**HUGH STURZAKER MBE**  
*Chairman*





# THANK YOU

## COMMITTEE

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

### President:

**Henry Cator OBE, DL**

*High Steward of Great Yarmouth*

### Treasurer & Membership Secretary:

**Susan Page**

*Former Catering Manager, now a part-time taxi driver*

### Chairman:

**Hugh Sturzaker MBE**

*Retired Surgeon*

### Minutes Secretary:

**Dr. Catherine Richards**

*Principal at East Norfolk Sixth Form College*

.....

**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*

**Kol Kishon**

*Retired head of Imaging Department at James Paget University Hospital*

**Ian McCreadie**

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

**Ian Miller**

*Chartered Quantity Surveyor*

**Paul Patterson**

*Retired Managing Director of Associated Sourcing Web, Director of ATEC Design, historian and author.*

**Bruce Sturrock**

*Ex Chairman of Palmers and Town Centre Partnership*

**Michael Zegerman**

*Retired Businessman*

## SPONSORS & GRANTS

**We are most grateful to the following:**

Safer Streets

Fuller Foundation Trust

Stardrop LTD towards the cost of printing this report

The Following for sponsoring the Civic Society

- Great Yarmouth Borough Council

- Town Centre Partnership

- Dr. Ajay Kumar

- Bruce Sturrock

- SPP Digital LTD

- Businesses and Market Stalls

Sainsburys, for donating many packets of seeds and bulbs.

.....

## PROMOTION

Lewis J. Ashdown has maintained our website and designed our Annual Report since August 2022.

We could do with some help with publicity via social media etc.

Our Chair writes a weekly column in the Mercury about various aspects of the town and its people. He has also 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 more members will speak to their friends and colleagues about what the Society is doing and urge them to become members.



# TOWN CENTRE DEVELOPMENT

.....

**For full details of the Town Deal Plans, see this link (or scan this QR code)**

[https://www.great-yarmouth.gov.uk/media/5881/Town-Deal-Brochure/pdf/Town\\_Deal\\_Brochure\\_Final.pdf](https://www.great-yarmouth.gov.uk/media/5881/Town-Deal-Brochure/pdf/Town_Deal_Brochure_Final.pdf)

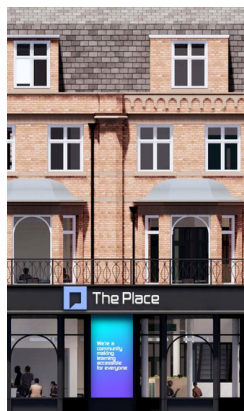
.....



**Covered Market:** This is completed, all stalls are occupied and many people seem to be using its facilities. Work has begun on landscaping the whole of the Market Place which brings in trees, flower beds and a performance area between Lloyds Bank and the Covered Market.



**University Learning Centre (The Place):** Work continues on turning the old Palmers building into a University Learning Centre. 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. It is hoped to have a training school for dental technicians and to provide five dental chairs for NHS dentistry.



Unfortunately, unexpected problems with the building means that the opening will be delayed until spring 2024. 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.

**Priory and Old Rectory** In the Spring there was a party to celebrate the third anniversary since these buildings were bought by one of our members, Rob Haslam, who has done an amazing job refurbishing them. Kirsty's Cakes has moved into the Old Rectory from Anna Sewell House and 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.



**Winter Gardens:** The final grants for this building have been approved and formal plans are being drawn up. Kew Gardens are involved with the planning of the planting.



**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.





# TOWN CENTRE DEVELOPMENT

**Housing:** Good housing is so important for people's health and well being and it is the Council's intention to encourage owners of empty shops and businesses in the town centre to change them into housing and to convert premises above shops and businesses into apartments. The properties on the south side of The Conge have been demolished ready for housing to be built there. The acquisition of buildings on North Quay is proceeding ready to build homes and some small businesses there. This will increase the number of people living in the town centre which will result in greater footfall there and encourage the development of shops, cafes & restaurants.

**Herring Bridge:** This was opened by former Great Yarmouth MP, Sir Brandon Lewis on the 1st of February, and apart from a few initial teething problems, has proved to be a great success. The long queues at Gapton Hall Roundabout are a thing of the past making it so much easier to get into and out of the town.



**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 on St. George's Plaza and a raised bed near Sainsbury's Carpark. If anyone wishes to help with these projects please contact Ann by email on [AnnHacon@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:AnnHacon@yahoo.co.uk).



**Trees:** All the trees on the river side of South Quay are flourishing although several have had to be supported with cables to stop them rubbing against their cages. A few on the other side of the road have died and a few in other parts have been damaged by vandals. Overall the planning has been a great success and follows on from the tree audit the Society did several years ago.

**Sculpture Trail:** There were 98 applications, 22 of which were for a Market Place statue. The final selection has been made and the statues should be in place in the next few months.

**Litter Picking:** The Society has received a grant from the Borough Council to look after several Rows and alleyways in the town. The money has been used to buy equipment and chemicals and to provide liquid refreshments after the morning's work. We usually meet on St. George's Theatre's Plaza ready to start work at 10am. Anyone is welcome to join us - All equipment is provided.



**Parking in front of Christchurch:** Norfolk County Council has prevented people parking their cars in front of Christchurch. As a result fewer people used the cafe and it eventually closed. The attendance for the church has also declined and it closed at the end of August. We, along with some other societies, have been given permission to continue holding our meetings there but we will have to be responsible for opening and closing the building.

**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.

**Operations and Maintenance Campus:** This is a £24.8M development to provide storage, quay and pontoon infrastructure for new offshore energy operation and maintenance campus and should provide 650 jobs.



## TUES 5 SEPT 2023

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*

Darren Barker said that the aims of the Preservation Trust were to save deteriorating buildings, to teach building skills so helping unemployment and provide uses for the buildings that made them self-sustainable. He spoke about rescuing 133 King Street which now has a flat and artist studios above an art gallery. The old Howkins Jewellery shop now provides accommodation and office space and 33 King Street has been converted into an apartment and houses the Sue Lambert Trust. 60 King Street will have a ground floor cafe and residential accommodation above.

The Trust has maintained the Town Walls for 12 years and the south east tower is successfully let as holiday accommodation. The same will happen for the north west tower.

The Cemeteries Project started in 2012 and refurbishes dilapidated tombs at the same time teaching skills to the unemployed, some of whom are now in full employment. The ruined church in Hopton has been rescued and made safe.

The trust works across Europe and especially in Bulgaria where there is an exchange of students on various projects.

St. John's Church will be restored by trainees and volunteers to provide indoor camping. 145 King Street built in 1891 as church rooms for St. George's is being renovated and part of it will be used by the theatre for rehearsals and storage.

The Iron Duke public house was listed by Caroline Jones in 2017 and was bought by the Borough Council. The plans are to make it water-tight prior to restoring it as a public house serving food.

## TUES 10 OCT 2023

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

### Problems with Great Yarmouth and Possible Solutions

As the speaker did not turn up for the meeting Hugh Sturzaker led a discussion of what people thought was wrong with Great Yarmouth and how it should be tackled. Among the points discussed were the following.

**A.** Poor appearance of the town: litter, weeds, poorly decorated shop and business fronts, street furniture, uneven pavements and newly planted trees not well looked after.

**Action:** *Hugh Sturzaker had written to Sheila Oxtoby and Carl Smith and had a meeting with them along with Ann Hacon. Previously he had had a meeting with Paul Wells, Chair of the Environment Committee and Paul Shucksmith, Waste and Environmental Protection Manager. By the time of the meeting the trees along South Quay had been attended to and work had started on the Town Hall doors and railings which he had previously pointed out needed attention. Since then many of the watering bags need filling and some trees need supporting again. Ann Hacon had noted that 4 trees on the seafront near the bowling greens had been broken.*



**Further action:** HS to write to Sheila Oxtoby and Carl Smith again. Sheila Oxtoby was keen to have examples where workers were slacking in their duties.

Part of the latest grant of £20M should be devoted to improving the appearance of the town. A new company owned by the Council had taken over from the previous company run by Norse and the Council. New vehicles had been purchased but the sickness rate was very high and was being tackled. There were also reports of workers spending excessive times in their vehicles and not clearing rubbish before cutting the grass. Action. Managers needed to be more active in policing the work being done.

**B.** Weeds are in many areas covered by Norfolk County Council who had employed a firm in Leicester to kill them. It appeared that little work had been done.

**Action:** GYBC is trying to obtain the contract at present held by the Leicester Firm. Would it be possible for people on probation to be used to tackle some of these problems?

**C.** Poor state of shop and business fronts.

**Action:** The Civic Society holds an annual competition to assess these and hopefully this will encourage more businesses to take greater pride in their appearances. Owners of properties to be encouraged to apply for grants to improve their frontages.

**D.** Poorly decorated street furniture.

**Action:** Paul Shucksmith, Waste and Environmental Protection Manager, was going to see if art students from the colleges or people on probation could help with this task.

**E.** Terrible and unsafe pavements: These look bad and are a safety hazard.

**Action:** Many pavements need relaying and if they are dug up the firm doing the job should be responsible for returning them to their previous good condition.

**F.** Poor appearance of certain areas of the town. Although many councillors were active in reporting problems on their patch others could do more.

**Action:** members the public can report and photograph problems they see on the GYBC app 'Report it GY'. This has been replaced by 'Love Clean Streets'.

- Several members of the Society were willing to walk round a ward with the appropriate councillor noting the local problems.
- A combined Society and GYBC litter picking session. Unfortunately there were not many volunteers for this.
- Invite one or more of Nelson Ward councillors to address the Society. This has happened.

**G.** Parking around St. George's Theatre. This is a long standing problem with many cars covering the pavement which results in pedestrians having to go into the road to get round the vehicles. This was particularly difficult for wheelchairs. Hugh Sturzaker had spoken to St. George's and the land belongs to GYBC who have given it to St. George's trustees who have no powers to enforce any action against the vehicle owners.

**Action:** St. George's and GYBC are planning a joint project to put bollards around the areas where cars have parked. This has now been done.



## H. Extending the season

**Action:** Targeting the elderly with good pensions to visit Great Yarmouth and putting on some Festivals during the Winter e.g. Literary and Music Festivals.

### Updates were given and there was discussion on:

- Market Place
- University Learning Centre
- Railway Station
- Conge and North Quay developments
- Second part of Vauxhall Bridge
- Lack of progress on Bank Plain and Star Hotel
- Greening up the town

**TUES 14 NOV 2023**

**7:30PM at Christchurch, King Street, NR30 2HL**

### The Hanseatic League

*By Catherine Richards, Principal of East Norfolk Sixth Form College and Michael Boon, ex CEO of Great Yarmouth Port and Historian*

Michael Boon said that the Hanseatic League was set up in the Middle Ages by German merchants to protect their ships against pirates and to promote trade among the Baltic States. It continued for several centuries with trade extending from Russia to Portugal and from Finland to the Mediterranean. The Cog was the main ship of the day.

The first convention of the New Hansa was in 1989 and was in the Netherlands. Hansa means crowd. 50 port cities took part and they chose Lubeck as their headquarters. There are now 200 port cities as members in 16 countries. There are now six English members of the Hansa: Beverley in Yorkshire, Hull, Boston, Kings Lynn, Ipswich and Great Yarmouth.

He saw the advantages of membership being better cooperation between the members, promoting each others cultural heritage and commercial opportunities.

Catherine Richards went to the meeting in Turin, Poland on 23 to 25 June along with Carolin Vittess. Prior to the meeting students from East Norfolk Sixth Form College had written an article about Great Yarmouth in a booklet published in six languages which was distributed at the conference. The Mayors of many of the towns were present, there were parades through the streets, a concert and Lech Walesa - who led the pro-democratic movement to replace communism in Poland - gave a talk.

She thought that the New Hansa was a great opportunity to increase ties with Europe and it is planned that 20 students will visit Gdansk in June 2024 for work experience and promoting Great Yarmouth.

In the discussion that followed it was agreed that this was a great opportunity for students to broaden their horizons, to mix with students from other countries, to improve their foreign languages and to learn about European history, food and drink.





## TUES 9 JAN 2024

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

### **Harbour Radio: Its place in Great Yarmouth and the importance of communities.**

*By Nevv Moore, Founder and CEO of Harbour Radio.*

He had first come to Great Yarmouth in the late 1980's and fell in love with the place. He worked as a DJ at 151 King Street and in 2014 applied for an online internet licence. In 2017 an FM licence was granted and its headquarters are at 137 King Street. It is run by volunteers and he is hoping to improve their quality. There are 119,000 people living in the Borough and 29% listen to Harbour Radio at some time and it is heard world wide.

The Radio Station is involved in many outdoor events, has an audience of 19,500 daily which is increasing. It aims to bring the community together. It is funded by advertising, sponsorships and by Nevv himself.

## TUES 23 APR 2024

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

### **NELSON WARD: ITS PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS**

*By Tony Wright, GYBC Councillor and ex MP for Great Yarmouth*

Unfortunately, Tony Wright's two other councillors for Nelson Ward had to attend a council meeting so were unable to join us. However he gave an impassioned talk about life and experiences in Nelson Ward which runs from Regent Road to the harbour mouth.

Tony was born on Middlegate and grew up in Great Yarmouth. After an engineering apprenticeship he qualified as a mechanical engineer where he became active in trade unions and politics and became an elected local councillor. For two years he was the leader of the Council prior to becoming the borough's MP from 1997-2010.

Nelson Ward was responsible for most of the wealth creation of the Borough from the herring to oil and gas and tourism yet it was in the top 10% most deprived wards in the country. The area has one of the lowest skill levels in the country. More recently many of the productive works in the ward have moved away and cheap holidays abroad have affected the tourism industry. Many of the guest houses and hotels have been turned into homes of multiple occupation - 80% of these in the Borough are in Nelson Ward - many of which are poorly looked after. Rubbish bins, many of which are overflowing, are on the pavements.

He was pleased that the two main parties in local government work together but upset that government support to local councils had decreased so that this year the borough has a £2M deficit. He walks through his ward daily and is disappointed at the weeds everywhere, the fly tipping and the number of people living in caravans near the harbour mouth.

He felt that Great Yarmouth was still a good place in which to live, to have holidays and for businesses to develop. He was pleased at the number of grants which it had obtained in recent years.



## THURS 28 APR 2024

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

### **Talk about his 14 Years as an MP for Great Yarmouth and his various Government Posts**

*By Sir Brandon Lewis CBE MP*

Sir Brandon said that he had applied to be the conservative candidate for Great Yarmouth as he had been coming here on holidays as a teenager since his father bought the Docwra Rock Shop. His application to be the conservative MP candidate here in 20001 failed but he was successful in 2006 and he moved to Hemsby in 2007. He was elected MP in 2010 and had been the longest serving Minister since then and had been in the cabinet for 5 years.

In 2012 he was appointed Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government and subsequently held positions as Minister of State for Housing and Planning, Policing and Fire Service and eventually for Immigration. In 2018 he was Chair of the Conservative Party and in 2019 was appointed Secretary of State for Northern Ireland resigning in July 2022. In September he was appointed Secretary of State for Justice and Lord Chancellor and oversaw the accession of King Charles. He resigned on 25 October 2022.

He gave an insight into how ministerial appointments were made and how, as a Cabinet Minister, he had the ear of colleagues in putting forward Great Yarmouth's case for new projects and grants.

## TUES 21 MAY 2024

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

### **Crimestoppers**

*By Jim Carter, Ex Manager of Woolworths and President of Great Yarmouth and Gorleston RNLI*

Jim Carter, a member of the Civic Society and previous manager of Woolworths in the town, gave his account of Crimestoppers which originated in the United Kingdom in Great Yarmouth. It resulted from a trip to America by detective inspector Michael Cole. In Peoria, Illinois he noted a police sergeant taking information anonymously from the public about crimes and where this led to an arrest the member of the public was given some money for the information. The scheme was based on one started in Albuquerque, New Mexico in 1976 which solved the murder of a young man. On his return to this country Inspector Cole prepared a report about the scheme which was approved by Norfolk police.

A meeting was convened with local businessmen and Peter Ware, Editor of the Mercury. Money was raised and then local businesses donated £10 monthly for the scheme which was officially started on 24 June 1983. Many anonymous calls came in about crimes which were then investigated by the police and, if found to be true, Jim Carter and others met the informer who had been given a password to hand over the monetary award.



The scheme was a resounding success and was taken up by many police forces around the country. In 1988 it became a national scheme which continues to this day. Speaking in Parliament in 2008 on the 25th Anniversary of the scheme being started, Tony Wright, MP said that since the scheme went national 84,000 arrests and charges had been made, nearly 1 million actionable calls had been received and, as a result, more than £100 million worth of goods had been recovered and more than £145 million worth of drugs been seized. This works out at 17 arrests every day and one person being charged with murder every five days.

In 2013 a blue plaque was unveiled on the old Mercury offices in Regent Street recording the ground breaking work done by Peter Ware, the Mercury editor, and Michael Cole and Jim Carter. John Hemsworth was in the audience and he had served as East Anglia Director for Crimestoppers for five years. He mentioned the great work of Jim Wilson, head of programming at Anglia Television, who was later chairman of Norfolk Police Authority and of Anglia Crimestoppers.

Crimestoppers has been a great success internationally and we should be very grateful for the initiative shown by Michael Cole, Jim Carter and Peter Ware in setting it up in Great Yarmouth.

## **TUES 25 JUN 2024**

**7:30PM at Christchurch, King Street, NR30 2HL**

### **GARDLINE, OUR CHALLENGES AND OUR AMAZING OPPORTUNITIES**

*By Samantha Massingham, MBA, Chartered MCIPD, CMgr MCMI, Head of HR at Gardline Limited*

Sam Massingham reminded us that the world's population was increasing which meant that more energy was needed but because of climate change this should come from renewable sources rather than from fossil fuels and wind farms would play an important part in this. Gardline was found by George Darling in 1969 and a year later bought three survey vessels. The firm was bought out by Boskalis - a Dutch firm - in 2017 which, apart from dealing with offshore energy, is involved with dredging and salvage.

Gardline now has over 500 employees and a fleet of eleven survey vessels which work in many parts of the world surveying sea-beds for clients prior to them building wind farms. Although Gardline's headquarters remain in Great Yarmouth its vessels tend to be serviced in Hull as the fees there are much cheaper although both Hull and Great Yarmouth ports are owned by Peel Ports. Consequently, Great Yarmouth is missing out on all the servicing contracts for these vessels and the supply of materials required by them. In addition, local people do not see these vessels here so are less aware of Gardline's activities.

Gardline offers work experience, internships, trainee positions and apprenticeships yet have difficulty in obtaining local people to take up these posts which is very disappointing. Sam found the response from schools to take up work experience had been poor. A recent email to 50 schools and colleges offering work experience had produced only one reply.

Gardline is planning to have an open day when it opens its new offices and it was suggested that fairs put on by offshore businesses would help to publicise jobs in this sector.



**TUE 9 JUL 2024**

**7:30PM at Christchurch, King Street, NR30 2HL**

## **FUTURE PAGET PROGRAMME - NEW HOSPITAL**

*By Mark Flynn FCCA MAAT, Director of Strategic Projects, James Paget University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust*

All four of the hospitals in East Anglia built in the late 1970's and early 1980's were built with Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete which deteriorates with time and we have seen pictures of the thousands of props holding up the roofs at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Kings Lynn. The government promised to rebuild these hospitals and James Paget University Hospital has purchased land from the Borough Council at the back of the present site to allow for the development.

The population is growing as are the needs of an ageing population. In the meantime to the north of the present hospital a concept ward has been built and a Diagnostic Assessment Centre should be opening in July with a further Diagnostic Centre at Northgate Hospital. An Elective Centre, mainly for orthopaedic surgery, will be opening in October or November.

The present hospital covers 60,336 square metres and it is planned that the new building will cover 118,000 square metres as the present 5-6 bed bays will be replaced by 100% single rooms which should reduce the incidence of infection although it makes it more difficult to nurse.

It is planned to improve operational patient flow and staff well-being with the aim of retaining staff.

It is hoped to have automatic guided vehicles on site and to get to energy net zero by 2050 if not by 2030. Construction is expected to start in late 2026 with the hospital opening in December 2030. Work has started on building a new carpark which will increase spaces from 1,800 to 2,200.

The hospital will be up to six stories high with solar panels providing 6-8% of its energy and ground source heating may be used.

**Comment by Hugh Sturzaker** - Since this talk the new government has put a hold on all new hospital building and for the situation to be reviewed. This is a terrible retrograde step. We have seen the poor state of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. All these hospitals were built with cheap materials and the cheapest single glazed windows which made them very energy inefficient. This cannot be allowed to happen again and it is a false economy to delay the rebuilding of these hospitals.





## AWARDS FOR SHOPS, BUSINESSES and MARKET STALLS 2024

On Thursday 11 July we presented awards to shops, businesses and market stalls in the Town Hall Assembly Room. 500 premises had been assessed and given points by 10 judges. This gave 38 premises which were then judged again by all the judges to produce winners in various categories.

Marks were given for the general appearance of the building, its cleanliness, the window display and the pavement outside down to and including the pavement.

### ***THE WINNERS WERE:***

- **National Retailer** - Warren James
- **Independent Retailer** - Reef Gems
- **Food and Drink National Chains** - The Troll Cart
- **Food and Drink Independent** - Market Row Kitchen
- **Services** - Specsavers
- **Personal Services** - Stattoos
- **Market Stalls** - Jack's Flower Stall

### **Overall Winner**

Warren James

### **Special Award**

GYBC for the Covered Market

The awards were presented by the Mayor who also gave a gracious speech. The special award for the covered market was received by Carl Smith, leader of the Council, who gave an update of the many recent developments which have been happening in the town. Warren James, the jewellers in Market Gates, were presented with the trophy as the overall winner of the competition which they will keep for the year.

These awards are to acknowledge the work done by many shops, businesses and market stallholders in making their premisses stand out and they were asked to encourage their neighbours to do the same. It is essential for each and everyone to work together to improve the appearance of the town and show pride in it. This will make the place look so much better and will encourage more visitors to the benefit of all businesses.





## **TUE 24 SEPT 2024**

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

### **DEVELOPMENTS AND PLANS FOR THE TOWN**

*By Carl Smith, Leader of Great Yarmouth Borough Council*

This will be followed by the AGM.

## **TUE 15 OCT 2024**

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

### **REVISITING EMPLOYMENT**

*By Sarah Flindall, General Practitioner*

Her talk will cover how it is possible to improve children's education and the chances of obtaining jobs.

**Meetings are Held here (at Christchurch, King Street, NR30 2HL)**  
*(unless specified otherwise)*





## CLEAN UP OUR STREETS

The Civic Society of Great Yarmouth is weeding and cleaning up some of the Rows and Alleyways in the town. This is being done on a voluntary basis and we hope that you and your neighbours will help in keeping the areas clean and tidy.



If you would like to join us we usually meet on St. George's Theatre Plaza each Tuesday at 10am when all equipment needed will be provided. Meetings are cancelled if heavy rain is forecast. At 11.30am we break for a cup of coffee or tea and a chat to see what else we can do to make the town look better.

The Civic Society exists to preserve and protect our heritage and to promote the town with pride.

Membership costs £10 yearly. There are talks each month on different topics, we make visits to interesting places and each year we run a competition to find the best looked after shops, businesses and market stalls.

Like many towns and cities Great Yarmouth has suffered from closure of shops and businesses but together we can make a difference and we ask for your support.

Help us to develop civic pride  
[www.civicsocietygy.co.uk](http://www.civicsocietygy.co.uk)



*Volunteer  
Today*



Litter and the growth of weeds have been a real problem in the town and we have had several meetings with Borough Council officials. Dealing with the weeds in most areas is the responsibility of Norfolk County Council and they have employed a firm in Leicester to do the work. It appears they did very little last year but have been more active this year but only after the weeds had become very prolific.

After discussion with the Council we were awarded a grant of £5,000 to clean up several Rows and Alleyways in the town. In fact we have gone further than that by dealing with all the Rows from Yarmouth Way to The Conge as well as spraying all the weeds along King Street, Deneside and around St. George's Theatre. One of the greatest problems are the bird droppings in the Rows and we have repeatedly asked for the areas where they perch to be netted off and to bring in the cleaning machine which was purchased specifically for the Rows a few years ago.

We meet at 10am each Tuesday on St. George's Theatre Plaza unless heavy rain is forecast and the grant is used to buy equipment, chemicals and to provide a cup of coffee/tea for the volunteers at the end of the session when we discuss what else can be done to improve the town.

Do consider coming along to join us. You will be very welcome.

Part of the project covers safety of women and on Monday 8 April Hugh Sturzaker led a discussion at Feathers Futures - a charity bringing together women in a connected community group. - on anti-social behaviour The anti-litter group will be discussing these issues on a monthly basis





On Tuesday 6 February Ann Hacon, Angela Powley, Clare Southern and Hugh Sturzaker met with Hannah Woodruff, Cultural Support Officer for Inward Investment and Tracey Read, Project Manager for Inward Investment to discuss the Town Wall. There are two sources of funds from the Town Deal: for the sculpture trail and for the Town Wall. We covered many aspects:

- Destroying the weeds on the Wall
- Litter and weeds along its length
- The Jewish Cemetery
- Need for CCTV to discourage littering and vandalism
- Engaging schools with the wall
- Long term project of knocking down some of buildings on east side of Market Place to expose the Town Wall
- Lighting of Town Wall
- Importance of good signage plus QR codes
- General promotion of the town wall to residents and visitors
- Rebuilding a Town Wall Gate
- Installing markers across roads to indicate where Town Wall had been
- Provision of a greenhouse for growing seeds and plants to populate flower beds, tubs etc.
- Setting up a working group to promote the Town Wall to include GY Services

The photographs below show the good work done by Ann Hacon and Angela Powley on the Town Wall section beside the Sainsbury Carpark.

## Before



## After





## OPENING OF HERRING BRIDGE

On Thursday 1 February Hugh Sturzaker had the honour as Chair of the Civic Society to attend the opening of the Herring Bridge. It was a magnificent occasion with presentations by many officials and there were large crowds lining the bridge. Below are a few photographs taken during the event.



## GYBC IS LGC COUNCIL OF THE YEAR

In June the borough council was named Local Government Chronicle Council of the year. This was a most prestigious and well deserved honour having been one of the runners up last year. The Civic Society was one of the organisations which met the judges when they visited the Borough the previous month.

The judges said “Through foresight and vision for its place and people this council has delivered tangible regeneration and impressive economic development whilst also leaning into every area that could improve lives for its population, even if not its direct responsibility.

The judges were unanimous in their view that the kindness, energy and commitment on show from staff, members and partners is infectious and a beacon for the sector. This council is a perfectly timed example of how a small local authority with a relatively modest budget can punch well above its weight through leveraging significant financial investment but also partnership capital.”

## COMMUNITY PAYBACK

On 1st August Hugh Sturzaker met with the head of Norfolk and Suffolk Restorative Justice Hub to see if we could provide opportunities for people who have committed minor crimes. We made some suggestions and mentioned some other organisations which might be able to help and we are so far feedback has been very positive.

## HISTORY FAIR

The Society had a stall at the history fair in the Minster on 14 September which is part of the Great Yarmouth Arts Festival. It is an opportunity for various organisations to show what they are doing.





# CHAIR REPRESENTING THE CIVIC SOCIETY

|               |                                                                     |
|---------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Oct 4</b>  | Great Yarmouth and northern Villages Community Partnership meeting. |
| <b>Oct 30</b> | Town Board Meeting.                                                 |
| <b>Nov 1</b>  | Review of East Coast College be-building programme.                 |
| <b>Nov 8</b>  | Culture and Tourism Board meeting.                                  |
| <b>Jan 18</b> | Civic Voice meeting on Community Improvement Districts.             |
| <b>Jan 30</b> | Norfolk Economic Vision and Strategy meeting.                       |
| <b>Jan 30</b> | Council Leader's Reception.                                         |
| <b>Feb 6</b>  | Discussion about Town Wall.                                         |
| <b>Feb 6</b>  | Interview on Harbour Radio.                                         |
| <b>Feb 22</b> | Civic Voice meeting on Heritage Action Zones and Town Deals.        |
| <b>Mar 6</b>  | Great Yarmouth and Northern Villages Community Partnership meeting. |
| <b>Mar 13</b> | Opening of Cator Building at East Norfolk Sixth Form College.       |
| <b>Mar 14</b> | Talk to Gorleston Rotary Club.                                      |
| <b>Apr 23</b> | Norfolk Economic Vision meeting.                                    |
| <b>Apr 24</b> | Town Board Meeting.                                                 |
| <b>May 1</b>  | Great Yarmouth and Northern Villages Community Partnership meeting. |
| <b>May 9</b>  | Meeting with headmistress of Priory School.                         |
| <b>May 15</b> | Seaside Heritage meeting.                                           |
| <b>May 16</b> | Third birthday of opening of Priory Centre.                         |
| <b>Jun 3</b>  | Town Board Meeting.                                                 |
| <b>Jul 2</b>  | Investing in the future workshop.                                   |
| <b>Jul 3</b>  | Community Partnership meeting.                                      |
| <b>Jul 10</b> | Seaside Heritage meeting.                                           |
| <b>Jul 15</b> | Town Board Meeting                                                  |
| <b>Aug 1</b>  | Meeting with Norfolk and Suffolk Restorative Justice Hub.           |
| <b>Sept 4</b> | Great Yarmouth and Northern Villages Community Partnership meeting  |



## WORKSHOP ON NORFOLK'S ECONOMIC STRATEGY

**30 January.** This was overseen by Norfolk County Council to obtain opinions from personnel and organisations in the borough. Disappointingly Great Yarmouth came at the bottom of league tables for Norfolk and England concerning growth, productivity, education attainment, and the proportion of people not seeking employment or being unemployed. However, we have an established offshore wind sector and supply chain, a strong tourism, cultural and arts sector and the highest levels of life satisfaction and wellbeing in the county. Our challenges are health inequalities, high deprivation and low rate of people with qualifications.

The importance of improving education and raising aspirations among the young was stressed and increasing the length of the tourism season. The importance of working with the schools and colleges, bootcamps and apprenticeships was emphasised as well as giving greater publicity to the great opportunities that were happening in the Borough.

## REMINDER ON THE UPCOMING MEETINGS:

**TUE 24 SEPT 2024**

**7:30PM at Christchurch, King Street, NR30 2HL**

### DEVELOPMENTS AND PLANS FOR THE TOWN

*By Carl Smith, Leader of Great Yarmouth Borough Council*

This will be followed by the AGM.

**TUE 15 OCT 2024**

**7:30PM at Christchurch, King Street, NR30 2HL**

### REVISITING EMPLOYMENT

*By Sarah Flindall, General Practitioner*

Her talk will cover how it is possible to improve children's education and the chances of obtaining jobs.

Meetings are  
held at  
Christchurch  
(NR30 2HL)





## **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 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 IN TOWN CENTRE**

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

## **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.

## **ROUNABOUTS AND 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, Great Yarmouth Preservation Trust, Great Yarmouth and Gorleston 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.

## **IMPROVING THE ROWS**

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

## **REGENERATION OF GREAT YARMOUTH REPORT**

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.

## **ATTRACTING YOUNGSTERS**

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

## **MOTIVATING COMMUNITIES**

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



## EXTENDING THE SEASON

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, the Broads, the surrounding villages and develop more festivals. We need to promote short breaks which include tickets to museums, theatres etc.

## LITTER

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

## 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

Work to increase membership. Encourage each member to get at least two members to join.

## BECOME A MEMBER TODAY

You can become a member of The “Civic Society of Great Yarmouth” by visiting:

[www.CivicSocietyGY.co.uk/Membership](http://www.CivicSocietyGY.co.uk/Membership)



*Winners of Awards to Shops, Businesses and Market Stalls*





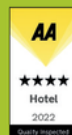
## The Prom Hotel, Great Yarmouth, Golden Mile

One of only two four-star hotels in Great Yarmouth, the 50-bedroom Prom Hotel sits on the Golden Mile, directly opposite Britannia Pier.

### Facilities

- Great bedrooms • 24-hour room service • Strollers Restaurant
- Private dining available • Function suite • Games room
- Popular public bar with fantastic selection of drinks from real ales to cocktails • Food served all day • Parking
- Lift to all main floors • Free wifi

[www.promhotel.co.uk](http://www.promhotel.co.uk) • [info@promhotel.co.uk](mailto:info@promhotel.co.uk)  
01493 842308



## The Pier Hotel, Gorleston-on-Sea

The Pier Hotel sits beside the entrance to Great Yarmouth's historic port and looks out over one of Norfolk's most magnificent beaches, with a view all the way to Ness Point, Britain's most easterly point.

### Facilities

- 20 en suite bedrooms
- Food served all day
- Popular bar with real ales • Wine bar
- Parking • Free wifi

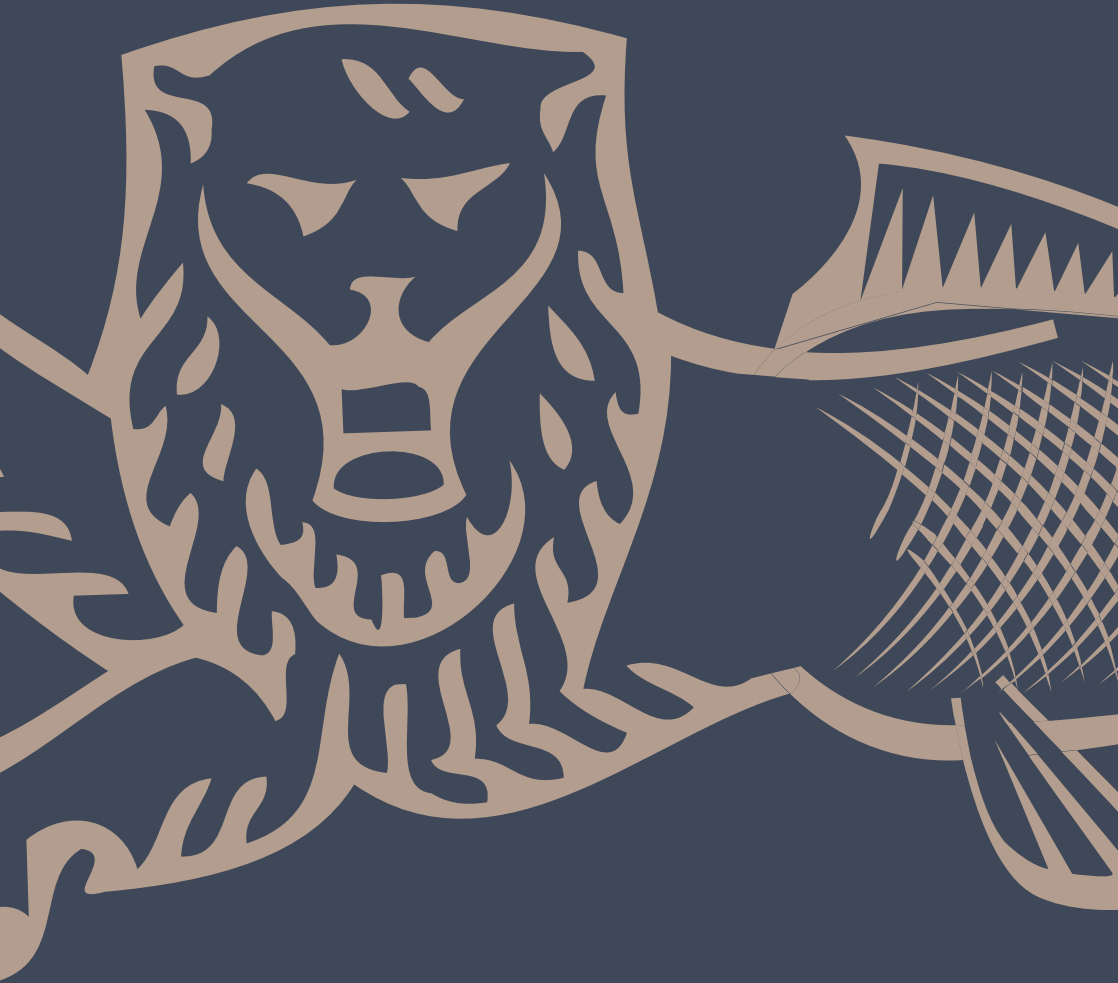
[www.pierhotelgorleston.co.uk](http://www.pierhotelgorleston.co.uk)  
[bookings@pierhotelgorleston.co.uk](mailto:bookings@pierhotelgorleston.co.uk)  
01493 662631

★★★★  
Proud  
members of the  
Great Yarmouth  
Civic Society

★★★

# **Civic Society of Great Yarmouth**

## **7th Annual Report 2023-24**



**Designed By:**  
**LEWIS J. ASHDOWN**  
[www.lewisashdown.link](http://www.lewisashdown.link)

**Printed By:**  
**BLACKWELL PRINT**  
[www.blackwellprint.co.uk](http://www.blackwellprint.co.uk)