

101

civic ideas



This leaflet was originally produced in 2011.
We're redistributing it for Civic Day 2025 pending a new and updated edition.

“‘Fantastic, just what we needed’ was the reaction of the first users of our new playground.”

Mike Bolton,
Addingham Civic Society

“Our public meetings raise awareness and engage people with key local issues.”

Alan Morris
Bristol Civic Society

“Our Peoples’ Award for Sheffield’s favourite building is decided by a public vote.”

Paul Bedwell,
Sheffield Civic Trust

“Supporting local shops and businesses through our Hampstead Card is one of the Society’s many positive schemes.”

Helen Marcus,
Heath and Hampstead Society

“We had loads of coverage in the local press for the results of our Love Local survey.”

Pat Barnett,
Retford Civic Society

“We fully support clearing the streets of clutter and so undertook a street audit.”

Gillian Wain,
Fleet and Church
Crookham Society



We all have something we love about where we live. It might be a patch of open space or a nugget of local history. Or maybe you have a town centre that makes you proud or a festival that puts a spring in your step. There is so much that is so important to all our lives in the place where we live.

Civic societies have been champions of what makes places attractive, enjoyable and distinctive for generations. Across England there are hundreds of volunteer led and community based civic societies who work on a daily basis to remind us of what is important and campaign for its future. It is easy for anyone to get involved in their local group.

There are so many ways to show we care and play our part. This guide is packed full of ideas from civic societies which can help. Whether you are looking to raise funds, get more young people involved, harness the internet, raise your profile, engage business, mount a campaign or get creative there is sure to be something here for everyone. If there’s a great idea missing then let us know.

The guide celebrates the diversity and range of activities taking place across the civic movement and unites us with a simple idea – that we can all do something, however big or small, to make our towns, villages and cities great places to live in.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Griff Rhys Jones'. The signature is stylized and fluid.

Griff Rhys Jones

President

Hold an event

Run a giant street party

Organise a BBQ for the community

Organise an architecture festival on local buildings

Run a civic pub quiz

Hold a public meeting about the future of the town

Invite architects, historians or owners to give building tours

Host a 'question time' event with local opinion formers

Organise a design review for a new building

Hold a town concert outside

Organise an 'open garden' day



Run a treasure hunt with civic clues




Ask for blue plaque nominations



Set up a 'friends' group for your local park



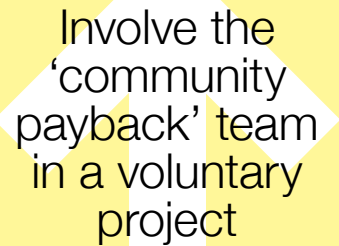
Sponsor a walk around the town



Run a pledge campaign, where people commit to an action



Establish a 'civic award' to recognise local volunteers



Involve the 'community payback' team in a voluntary project




Involve people

Run a volunteering fair with other community groups



Invite people to nominate their favourite views



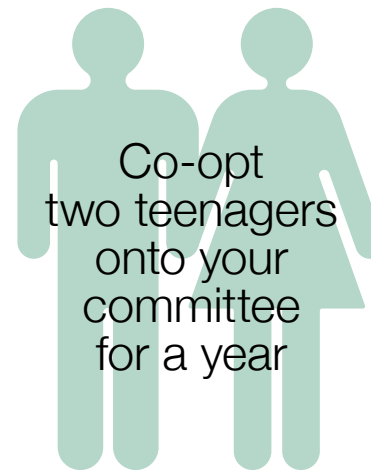
Embark on a parish plan



Invite contributions from young and old to your community's 'memory box'

Young at heart


Get young people to make a map of what they like about the area




Co-opt two teenagers onto your committee for a year


Run an essay competition for local schools



Run a competition for young people to design a town badge

Persuade a local youth club to set up a young civic society



Award a local youth project


Organise a 'green day' with a local school


Hold a school debating competition about civic pride

Twin students with volunteers to help learn computer skills


Business matters

Run a best shop front award

Work with shops on a late night shopping event

Hold a garden party for local business

Support local businesses when organising events

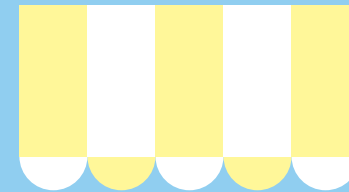
Get sponsored to renovate an area of green space

Launch a 'loyalty card' to encourage local shopping

Get a local business to sponsor some interpretation boards

Persuade companies to lend staff to help with your society's work

Run a networking evening for businesses





Launch a website

Set up a Facebook page for your group

Gather support through an online petition

Produce a podcast on your heritage with local students



Digitise your photographic archive

Start tweeting

Produce a smart phone app with the local college

Get online

Upload a short film on your work

Start a blog

Create a geocache trail





Poll opinion

Identify important trees not yet protected

Ask local celebrities what they love about the area

Record memories in an oral history project

Hold a competition for the best front garden

Invite nominations for a local list of important buildings

Create an eyesore of the month award with a public vote

Survey views on the 10 most endangered buildings

Undertake a 'love local' survey

Undertake a pavement survey and report the results

Undertake a survey of street clutter



Invite nominations for a local list of important buildings



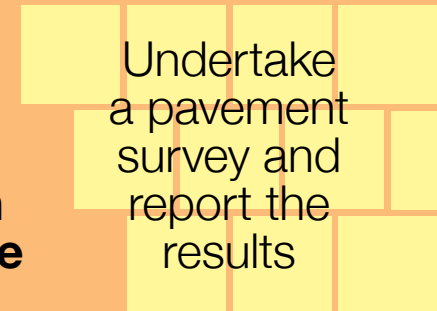
Create an eyesore of the month award with a public vote



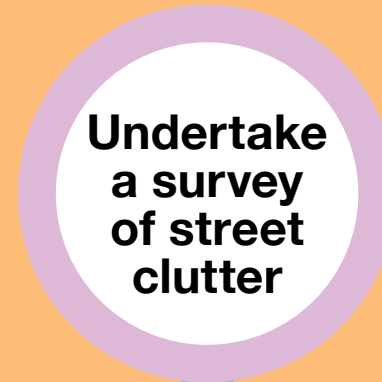
Survey views on the 10 most endangered buildings



Undertake a 'love local' survey



Undertake a pavement survey and report the results



Undertake a survey of street clutter



**Take
action**

**ROAD
CLOSED**

**Campaign
for pedestrian
priority in
your high
street**

20

**Make '20's
plenty for us'
happen**



**Lobby for
a building
to be listed**



**Campaign
for a new
conservation
area**



**Increase
the number
of places
opening free
on Heritage
Open Days**



**Gather
pledges in
support of
your latest
campaign**



**Run a
sightseeing
bus to
highlight
key issues**

**Organise a
public meeting
about a
building
at risk**



**Start a
campaign
to save
local green
space**



**Publish
a vision of
your area in
50 years
time**

**Get
creative**

Give all residents a history of their conservation area

Commission a picture from a local artist



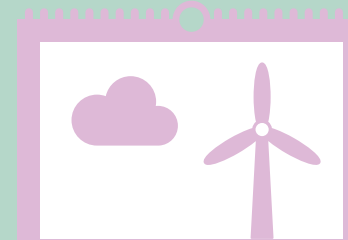
Begin a book celebrating your area



Launch a neighbourhood newspaper



Produce a town trail leaflet

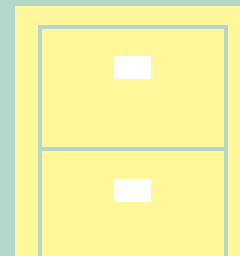


Produce a town calendar with local landmarks



Write and promote the story of your neighbourhood

Create a photo archive of your local high street



Make and sell a civic society bookmark



Produce a civic bag-for-life with your logo on it



**Improve
the area**

**Create
a flower
display**



**Renovate
a shelter
and seats**

Begin a
tree planting
campaign

**Hold
a 'pride of
place' award
with a public
vote**



Start a
stopped
clock

**Introduce a
design award
for the
best new
buildings**

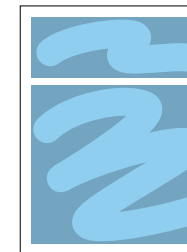
Erect a
community
notice board



**Undertake
some guerrilla
gardening**

Get
involved in
a clean-up

**Organise a
community
festival**



Profile raising

Hold a photography competition: 'what does this place mean to you?'

Get a regular slot on local radio

Put a pop-up exhibition in an empty shop

Hold a members lunch to recruit volunteers

Give a presentation to local councillors

Appoint a celebrity president or patron

Host a visit and twin with other civic societies

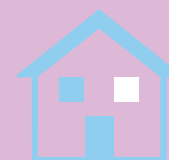


Run a competition for a mural in a central location

Mount an exhibition in the local library

Open an office where people will see you

shhh



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Work on some of these ideas with a neighbouring civic society



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