

Yorkshire & Humber Association of Civic Societies



2024 Annual Report and Accounts

Registered Charity No: 1112290

www.yhacs.org.uk



Our Vision

YHACS aims to be the distinct voice of the civic society movement in the Yorkshire and Humber region, and our vision is to enhance the quality of life for all citizens in the region by engaging citizens in not only the protection of local heritage but also the promotion of sustainable economic development and urban renaissance. We aspire to being a regional force with which to be reckoned.

Our Mission

YHACS is the liaison point between local civic societies in the area as well as a regional focal point and resource for these societies.

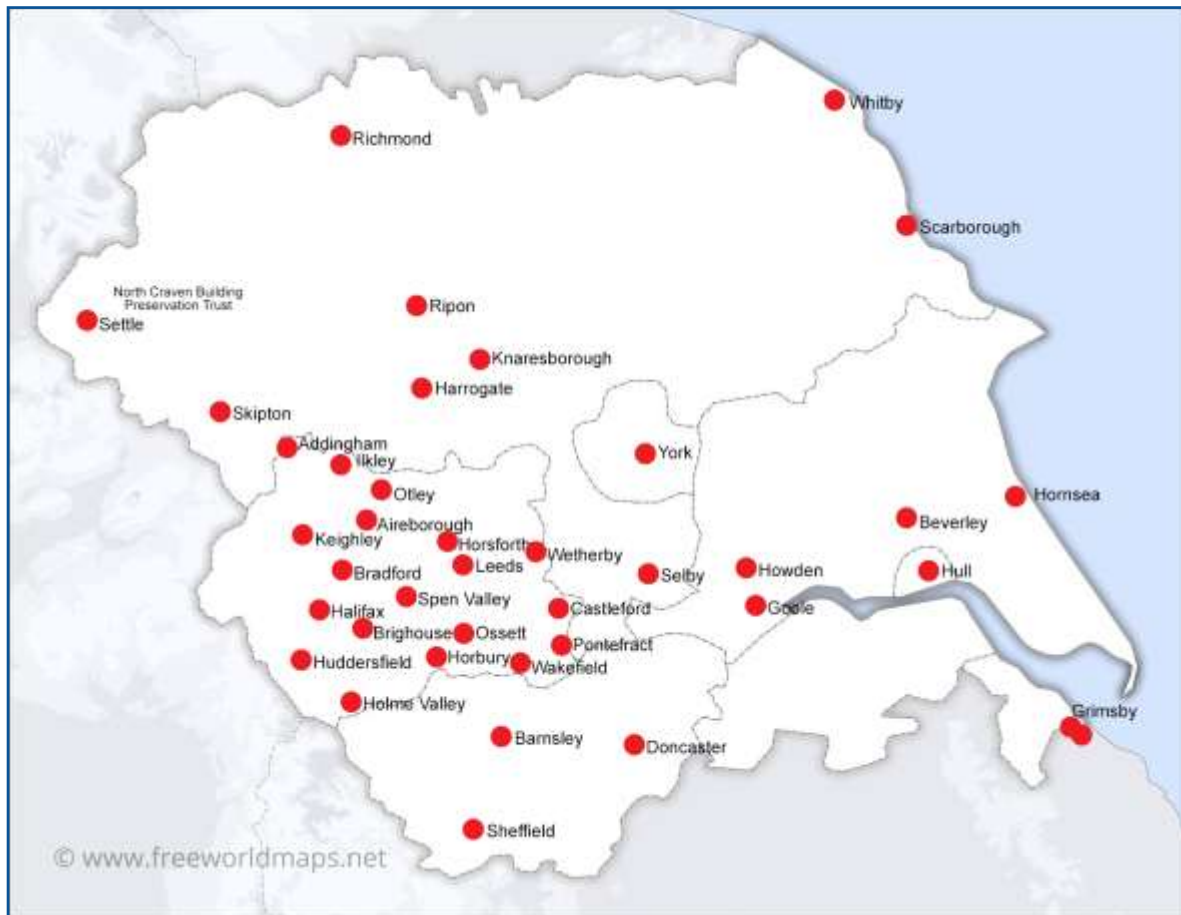
Through the medium of our quarterly meetings, a regular newsletter, occasional campaigns and a regular exchange of ideas with member societies and other key local, regional and national contacts in the public, private and non-profit sectors, YHACS intends to achieve the promotion of the civic society movement in our region.

Ultimately, YHACS will be the regional force driving for a society in which the people of Yorkshire and Humber (and sometimes beyond) are connected with public policymaking and economic development in a way that will allow them to have a significant voice in the shaping of their cities, towns and rural communities.

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Cover photograph: St Nicholas' Gardens, Scarborough, featuring the resort's famous Grand Hotel and funicular railway, taken by Margaret Hicks-Clarke.

Our Members



Addingham Civic Society

Aireborough Civic Society

Barnsley Civic Trust

Beverley & District Civic Society

Bradford Civic Society

Brighouse Civic Trust

Castleford Civic Society

Doncaster Civic Trust

Goole Civic Society

Great Grimsby Ice Factory Trust

Grimsby Cleethorpes & District Civic Society

Halifax Civic Trust

Harrogate Civic Society

Holme Valley Civic Society

Horbury Civic Society

Hornsea and District Civic Society

Horsforth Civic Society

Howden Civic Society

Huddersfield Civic Society

Hull Civic Society

Ilkley Civic Society

Keighley Civic Society

Knaresborough Civic Society

Leeds Civic Trust

North Craven Building Preservation Trust

Ossett Civic Trust

Pontefract Civic Society

Richmond & District Civic Society

Ripon Civic Society

Scarborough & District Civic Society

Selby Civic Society

Sheffield Civic Trust

Skipton in Craven Civic Society

Spen Valley Civic Society

Wakefield Civic Society

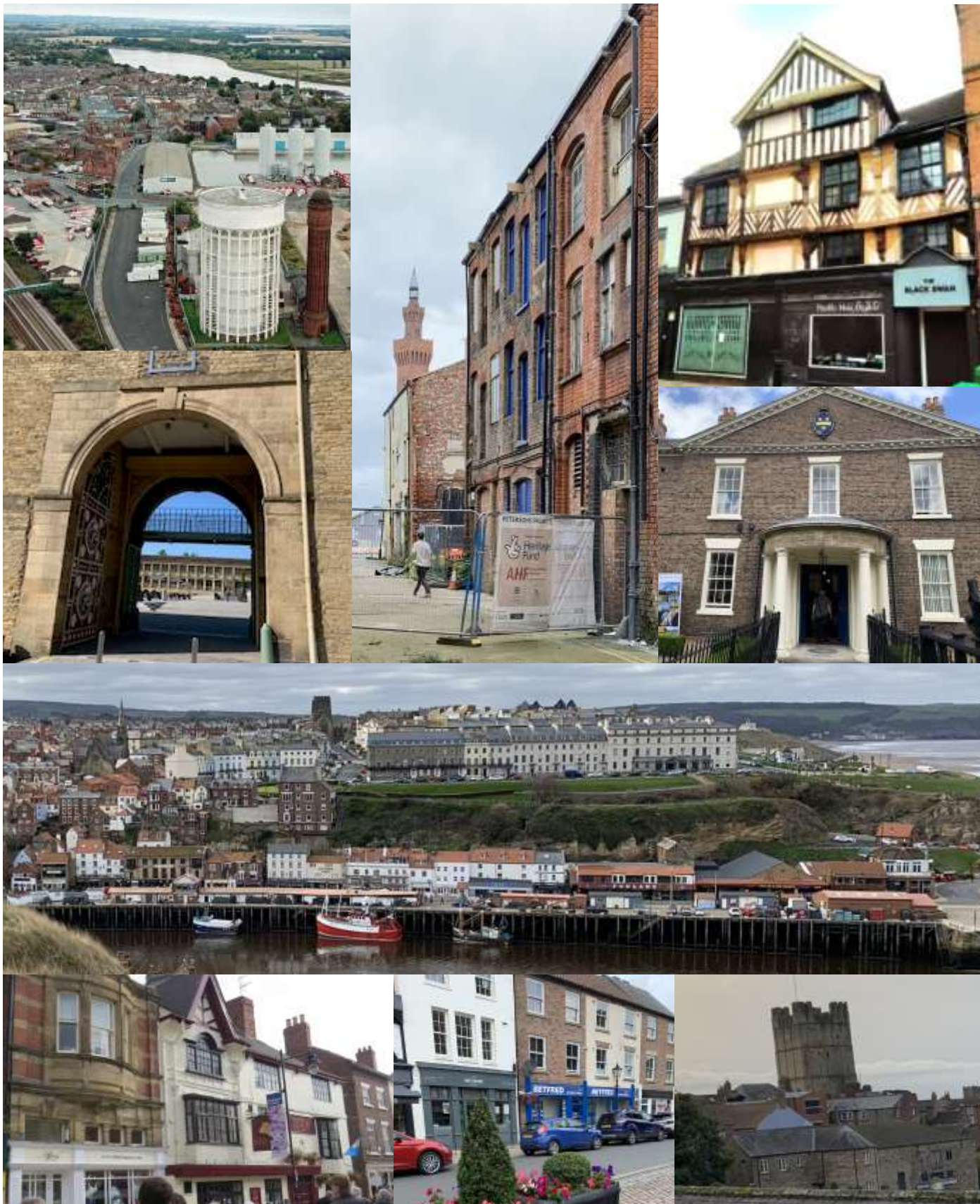
Wetherby Civic Society

Whitby Civic Society

York Civic Trust

Other Members: Action for Yorkshire Transport; The Yorkshire Society; seven individual members.

Our Places



Clockwise from top left: Goole; Grimsby; Wakefield; Hull; Whitby; Richmond; Howden; Pontefract; and Halifax.

We care about where we live

Chair's report

This report is my first as the Chair of YHACS after taking over the reins from Kevin Trickett MBE at our annual general meeting in Harrogate in January 2024. I took the helm as YHACS marked its 25th anniversary.

Although new to the chair, I have been a trustee of YHACS since 2013 and Vice Chair since 2021. I am also Chair of Goole Civic Society and a trustee of Scarborough and District Civic Society. As you can imagine, I have quite a busy schedule.

Along with my appointment came other changes on the YHACS Executive Committee.

The trustees and I invited Kevin Trickett MBE to take on the honorary role of President, which was officially endorsed by members. Although he is no longer a trustee and has no voting rights, Kevin has continued his staunch support for YHACS, organising the Civic Voice/YHACS Spring Convention, attending events and giving wise counsel at YHACS Executive Committee meetings. I would like to thank Kevin for all his hard work and commitment to YHACS and the civic movement over many years.



Margaret Hicks-Clarke, Chair of YHACS.



New trustee Simon Green.

Alan Goodrum, Chair of Halifax Civic Trust, was elected Vice Chair and Jane Lee, from Keighley, replaced him as our Treasurer. Helen Kidman, the Chair of Ilkley Civic Society, was re-elected as Secretary. Two trustees – Malcolm Sharman and Tony Leonard – stepped down and Simon Green, of Hull Civic Society was elected as a new trustee.



Kevin Trickett MBE receiving a certificate of thanks for his devoted service to YHACS.

Other trustees re-elected were: David Moss, Secretary of Selby Civic Society and Editor of the YHACS newsletter, Society Insight; Paul Cartwright, Chair of Pontefract Civic Society; Martin Hamilton, Director of Leeds Civic Trust and Chair of Civic Voice; John Clarke, Trustee of both Goole Civic Society and Scarborough and District Civic Society; Alan Nicholson, Chair of Grimsby, Cleethorpes & District Civic Society; George Eglese, of Knaresborough and Harrogate Civic Societies; Ben Cowell, Secretary of Wakefield Civic Society.

I am grateful to have such a strong committee with a broad range of skills and experience that YHACS and our member societies can draw on. I thank them for the great work they have done throughout the year to help and support our member societies. Thanks and good wishes also to Malcolm and Tony, who served us so well for many years.

More than 50 members and guests attended the agm, representing 24 YHACS member societies.

Peter Spawforth Annual Award

At the agm we presented the annual Peter Spawforth/YHACS award for 2023, with first place and trophy going to Spen Valley Civic Society for its work on creating a pond and wildflower area.

The society's Secretary, Erica Amende, is pictured right receiving the award from Peter Spawforth and Kevin Trickett MBE.

Richmond Civic Society took second place for its efforts in updating listings for all 346 listed buildings in the town. Goole Civic Society came third for a film screening and Blue Plaque event that paid tribute to Goole-born Dorothy Bartlam, a 1920s-30s film star.



YHACS Committee takes centre stage

At the regular YHACS quarterly meeting immediately following the agm, the Executive Committee members and I introduced ourselves to the members. We gave presentations about ourselves and our societies, demonstrating the wide range of activities carried out by the civic movement across the region. We also highlighted the successes and challenges we face and the support and help that YHACS and individual committee members can give to our member societies.



Memories from the 2024 agm: Left, the committee and friends enjoying dinner on the evening before the agm. Right, members gathering for the meeting at the Old Swan Hotel, Harrogate.

Civic Voice/YHACS Spring Convention, Wakefield

Our President, Kevin Trickett MBE, welcomed YHACS and Civic Voice to his home city of Wakefield for a joint Spring Convention on 12th and 13th April 2024, organised and hosted by Kevin and Wakefield Civic Society.

The event began on Friday afternoon when more than 30 guests enjoyed a guided walk around the Westgate Heritage Action Zone (HAZ), exploring some of the back streets and historic yards, and learning more about the origins of the city.

Later that evening members of Wakefield Civic Society joined Convention delegates at Create Café for a drinks reception and three-course dinner. Our guest speakers were Martin Hamilton, Chair of Civic Voice, and Helen Featherstone, Director of England North, the National Lottery Heritage Fund, who talked about the sort of conservation work that had been enabled by the

fund. It was a very enjoyable evening with nearly 60 guests.

On the Saturday delegates gathered at CAPA, a performing arts college for students aged 16-19, for the main Convention, introduced by Wakefield MP Simon Lightwood. Then followed some 12 presentations delivered by speakers from Wakefield Council, Historic England, Rushbond, the National Lottery Heritage Fund, Edgelands Arts, CAPA College, Wakefield and Pontefract Civic Societies, YHACS and Civic Voice.



Convention delegates network over coffee in the Green Room.

Students from the college performed for the audience and were on hand throughout the day to help look after guests at what was an impressive feat of organisation by Kevin and the Wakefield Civic Society team. Thank you all.



Kevin Trickett MBE, Honorary President of YHACS, and myself addressing delegates in the college theatre.
Photos by KRA:FT Media Services and used with permission of Wakefield Civic Society.

Yorkshire Heritage Summit, Hull Minster

YHACS had a stand at this event in May, organised by the Yorkshire Society, a reciprocal member of YHACS. Paul Cartwright, a YHACS Executive Committee member and President of Pontefract Civic Society, played a key role in organising the weekend event, which included a symposium, exhibition, guided walks, bus tours and entertainment.

Several YHACS member societies, including Hull, Beverley, Pontefract and Howden, had their own stands. I had three hats on – YHACS, Goole and Scarborough. We got chance to network with other heritage groups as well as engaging with the public.



YHACS Summer Members' Meeting, Cleethorpes



Grimsby, Cleethorpes and District Civic Society welcomed delegates to the YHACS Summer Members' Meeting in Cleethorpes on Saturday 13th July. The hospitality was warm but the weather was atrocious!

Some of us hardy souls arrived early and braved the rain for a Friday afternoon walk around the historic Kasbah at Grimsby Docks, which proved fascinating. In the evening we enjoyed fish and chips at Papa's on Cleethorpes Pier. The next morning we were taken on a guided walk around the Cleethorpes Green Plaques before our main meeting.

Delegates were welcomed to the town by Melanie Onn, MP for Great Grimsby and Cleethorpes. We then enjoyed talks on the history of Cleethorpes and the Second World War "butterfly bombs". Ian Harvey, Executive Director of Civic Voice, took a four-and-a-half-hour train journey direct from Liverpool to Cleethorpes to brief us on the Government's proposed planning reforms, which had just been announced. Thank you to all at Grimsby and Cleethorpes.

Member societies share 60th birthday celebrations

I was delighted to join Wakefield, Hull and Scarborough Civic Societies as they celebrated their 60th anniversaries with reciprocal visits over the summer.

I joined Scarborough Civic Society President Adrian Perry to welcome visitors from Hull and Wakefield Civic Societies. On each occasion we enjoyed walks, a tour of the Grade II-listed Scarborough Town Hall, refreshments and lots of lively discussion.

I accepted an invitation to Hull Civic Society's 60th anniversary celebration at the Charterhouse – a hidden gem in the heart of



Wakefield and Scarborough Civic Society members together in Scarborough.

Hull – and took a tour of the fascinating Grade I-listed building and gardens. The Charterhouse was founded in 1384 and now provides independent living for 40 people over the age of 60. Congratulations to all three societies, as well as Huddersfield Civic Society, which also turned 60.



YHACS 25th Anniversary Lunch, Leeds, October 2024

YHACS marked its 25th anniversary in 2024, which we celebrated with a lunch at the Met Hotel in Leeds on 19th October. It was a wonderful occasion to get together, enjoy good food and wine and network with other societies.

We were honoured to welcome Dr Kevin Grady, who in 1999 established and chaired YHACS, then named the Yorkshire and Humber Amenity Societies Association. He also spent 30 years as Director of Leeds Civic Trust and has distinguished himself as an influential figure in the civic movement.

Our speaker, Abigail Scott Paul, Global Director of the Humanise Campaign, working at Thomas Heatherwick Studios, gave us some food for thought about the campaign to create human-centred, socially beneficial and sustainable architecture.

I would like to thank Martin Hamilton and Leeds Civic Trust for their help in organising and making this such a memorable event, and to everyone who joined us.



Our guest speaker, Abigail Scott Paul, Director of the Humanise Campaign.



ROYAL RECOGNITION: In November 2024, Pontefract Civic Society was awarded The King's Award for Voluntary Service. This is the highest award a local voluntary group can receive in the UK and is equivalent to an MBE.

Congratulations to all at Pontefract Civic Society and to its Chair, Paul Cartwright, who is also a member of the YHACS Executive Committee. He expressed his pride and delight at the honour and paid tribute to all the volunteers.

Civic Voice Annual General Meeting, London, 7th December

YHACS continues its strong relationship with Civic Voice, the national charity of the civic movement.

In December I attended the Civic Voice Annual General Meeting in London, along with three YHACS Executive Committee members, Paul Cartwright, Jane Lee and John Clarke. Paul represents YHACS on the Civic Voice Regional Forum.

At the agm Ian Harvey, who co-founded Civic Voice in 2010, stepped down as Executive Director to take up a post leading the Institute of Place Management at Manchester Metropolitan University. He accepted the honorary post of Vice President and was presented with a special 'Blue Plaque' by the President, Griff Rhys Jones (right). Civic Voice hopes to appoint a new Executive Officer in early 2025.



Martin Hamilton, a YHACS Trustee, stepped down as Chair of Civic Voice and Robert Osborne and Andrew Jackson were elected Co-Chairs. Barry Goodchild, who is on Wakefield Civic Society's Executive Committee, was elected as a Civic Voice Trustee.

Behind the scenes

As well as putting on some great events, the YHACS Executive Committee works hard all year to help and support our member societies. We belong to societies right across the region and we are each willing and able to support our neighbours. I have visited societies in Hull, Grimsby and Hornsea this year and have helped to host Wakefield and Hull Civic Societies in Scarborough. As a committee, we have helped and advised member societies on sustaining their societies, succession planning, member recruitment, Heritage Open Days and other issues.

Our Executive Committee has held four virtual meetings in 2024. Two sub-committees, focused on rebranding and an application to the National Lottery Heritage Fund, have also met virtually.

We spent the summer poring over the proposed changes to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) in response to the Government consultation exercise. We also joined virtual workshops with Civic Voice, as did many of our member societies. We have tried to keep up with a raft of Government announcements on housing and planning in the Government's declared mission to build 1.5 million homes in England by the end of this Parliament.

Four editions of our newsletter, *Society Insight*, have been published. It is edited by David Moss, with articles are submitted from member societies across the region. I have also issued four bulletins and regular email communications, keeping the membership up to date.

We have also been talking to the National Lottery Heritage Fund about an application that will help to sustain and grow YHACS and our member societies. Our initial Expression of Interest was accepted and we have progressed to making a full application to the £10,000-£250,000 scheme. We are currently engaging with member societies to assess what support they need.

Finances

YHACS finances remain strong, as displayed on the following pages. We have no liabilities and our member societies continue to support us with their annual subscriptions and by hosting quarterly members' meetings. Holding our Executive Committee meetings virtually helps to reduce both our costs and carbon footprint. Thanks go to members of the Committee, who largely have waived their expenses.

However, if we are to sustain and grow the civic movement in the region we need to increase our capacity, hence the bid to the National Lottery Heritage Fund. Our ability to manage our finances well will stand us in good stead with funders and we have a small pot of funding to use as match.

We also have the £2,000 Richard Ward legacy, which was bequeathed to fund an annual memorial prize of £200 to encourage societies to engage with younger people. After a slow start, we will be presenting the first £200 at our 2025 agm.

We still hold £385.40 on behalf of the former Market Weighton Civic Society, which can only be spent on a suitable project or given to a charity with similar aims in the town. We continue to work on that.

Looking ahead

Being elected Chair of YHACS was a huge honour, which also brings great responsibility. YHACS is a thriving organisation with a proud history but, like our member societies, it faces challenges in a changing world.

My aim over the next two years of my term of office is to strengthen and grow YHACS and the civic movement in the region, helping our member societies to flourish. We need strong societies to engage communities in their heritage and help shape a bright and sustainable future that improves people's lives.

I am joined in that aim by the Executive Committee, a committed team of volunteers with a broad spread of skills and experience who work tirelessly on behalf of YHACS and the civic movement in the region. I would like to express my thanks to them for all they have done in 2024. Thank you also to our President, Kevin Trickett MBE, who continues to actively support YHACS. As volunteers with our own societies to run, we have limited time and energy. We are applying to the National Lottery Fund to help us increase our capacity to provide help and support.

***Thank you,
Margaret Hicks-Clarke, Chair***



PETER COOPER

Very sadly in 2024 we lost a dear friend and colleague, Peter Cooper, who died aged 72 after living with leukaemia for a number of years.

Peter was a mainstay of the civic movement. He served as YHACS Chair from 2000 to 2011, driving the organisation forward, securing funding for growth, converting it to a charity and adopting a new financing model to secure its future.

After retiring as Chair, he served as YHACS President from 2011 to 2021. He was also a former Chair of Scarborough and District Civic Society and Trustee of the Civic Trust.

He will be sadly missed by YHACS and all who had the good fortune to know him.

Income and Expenditure Account and Balance Sheet

Income and Expenditure Account

	2023	2024
	£	£
Income		
Subscriptions	1990.00	1725.00
Sundry donations	125.00	100.00
AGM refreshments	42.70	67.90
Civic Voice Convention ticket sales	5,774.88	2,295.00
	<u>£7,932.58</u>	<u>£4,187.90</u>
Expenditure		
Meeting expenses	575.00	625.00
Travel	0.00	125.40
Insurance	153.20	181.20
YHACS/Spawforth Awards - prizes	350.00	350.00
- engraving & certificates	14.00	51.38
Yorkshire Society Donation	0.00	25.00
Convention Costs -	5,293.60	2,340.00
Website	438.93	13.19
Vimeo account	82.80	0.00
Gifts	25.00	109.27
Awayday refreshments	98.46	0.00
	<u>£7,030.98</u>	<u>£3,820.45</u>
Surplus/(Deficit)	<u>£901.59</u>	<u>£367.45</u>

Balance Sheet

	31.12.23	31.12.24
	£	£
Balance of Accumulated Fund brought forward	9,293.39	10,194.98
Surplus/Deficit for year	901.59	367.45
<u>YHACS funds:</u>	<u>£10,194.98</u>	<u>£10,562.43</u>
 Additional funds:		
Monies held for the former Market Weighton Civic	£385.40	£385.40
Society Monies held for Civic Voice (transferred to Civic Voice in 2023)	0.00	0.00
	<u>£10,580.38</u>	<u>£10,947.83</u>
 Represented by:		
Cash with Co-operative Bank	10,580.38	10,947.83
	<u>£10,580.38</u>	<u>£10,947.83</u>

Accounts prepared by Jane Lee, Treasurer, and agreed by Alan Goodrum, Deputy Chair

Reserves Policy:

In 2016, the YHACS committee agreed to hold reserves of £2,000. This money is a notional sum and represents the minimum level of unrestricted funds that the committee will endeavor to maintain in our accounts at all times. We have chosen this figure because it is equivalent to one year's funding and, should there ever be a sudden and unforeseen drop in our income, it would allow us to continue to operate and cover all potential liabilities for one year until such time as we had restored our income or made the decision to wind up the charity's affairs. Having a reserves policy does not mean that we will never allow our funds to drop below £2,000 but, in the event of that happening, the committee would make it a priority to raise sufficient income to bring the level of reserves back to the target amount.

This policy will be kept under annual review by the committee.



Who We Are

The Yorkshire and Humber Association of Civic Societies (YHACS) is a registered charity (no. 1112290) and a membership organisation for civic and amenity societies around the Yorkshire and Humber region.

We aim to be a distinctive voice for the civic society movement in the region and seek to strengthen and develop the movement by offering our members advice, support and networking opportunities. We also campaign on their behalf on matters of mutual concern and promote awareness of the work civic societies do through our website, in our quarterly newsletter and other publications, and through the issue of occasional press releases.

Civic societies are independent, grassroots groups of citizens who seek to enhance the quality of life in their communities. Mostly run by volunteers, civic societies have a particular focus on improving the public realm and built environment through helping to preserve the best of our built heritage while campaigning for the highest standards of architecture, design and town planning. They often act as public watchdogs or mediators between local authority planning officials, developers and the public on developments that impact on the quality of life for local people.

Civic societies can also be called upon to act as custodians of local history and heritage. As a result, they make an excellent springboard for fostering a sense of civic pride and community cohesion. Many societies celebrate the heritage of their locality through publishing literature, organising walks, talks and events and erecting commemorative plaques.

YHACS encourages member societies to see themselves as part of a wider movement and to share ideas and experiences. YHACS has been instrumental in establishing civic societies in Barnsley, Bradford and Sheffield and, in 2015, stepped in to prevent the closure of Horbury Civic Society.

While we still regard the protection of our built heritage as a key aim, we recognise that new development can be a necessary step in delivering vibrancy and prosperity in our communities. Where civic societies might once have viewed development sceptically, the civic society movement in our region looks to present development as an opportunity to create the heritage of tomorrow through good design.

At YHACS, we are driven by a desire to reconcile the past, present and future of our townscapes with a vision developed by communities in their local civic societies.

YHACS is a member of Civic Voice, the national charity for the civic movement in England, and collaborates with others, such as Historic England, on matters concerning the conservation and preservation of our built heritage.

Our aims

Our aims are to promote and encourage:

- a high standard of architecture, building, and town and country planning;
- the preservation of beauty or amenity in cities, towns and villages or the countryside, and of land, buildings and features of beauty or interest in such cities, towns and villages or countryside;
- a sense of civic pride among members of the general public by the provision of support and advice to civic societies in the Yorkshire and Humber area.

Membership

Membership of YHACS is open to any civic or amenity society that has aims in sympathy with our own. Membership is subject to an annual subscription (held again at £50 in 2024), payable each January. In 2018, the YHACS Committee agreed to open membership to individuals sympathetic to our aims for which the annual fee is £10. We also welcome and encourage donations from societies and individuals who can afford to make an additional payment.

Statement of Public Benefit

The Charity Commission requires charities to provide a statement of public benefit. Having taken account of the guidance produced by the Charity Commission, the YHACS trustees (ie the Executive Committee) have prepared the following statement:

Our vision is to enhance the quality of life for all citizens in the region by engaging people not only in the protection of local heritage but also in the promotion of sustainable economic development and urban renaissance. Through our campaigns and networking and through the provision of advice and support to civic and amenity societies, YHACS aims to help make Yorkshire and Humber a better place in which to live, work or relax. This is for the overall benefit of the general public, whether or not they are members of any particular civic society and whether they be residents or visitors to the area.

Governance

As an unincorporated registered charity, YHACS is managed by an Executive Committee of volunteer trustees in accordance with our written constitution, dated 24th September 2005 and amended in January 2008 and again in January 2017. The Constitution provides that the charity shall be managed and administered by a committee comprising Officers and other members duly elected at the Annual General Meeting held in January each year. Such persons are also the Trustees of the charity.

In addition to the Executive Committee, YHACS also has an elected President, whose role is honorary. The President is consulted for advice and is invited to attend meetings of the Committee to take part in discussion but does not vote.

YHACS encourages applications from anyone wishing to join the Committee and who can help us to run the association.

The officers and committee who held office during 2024 were as follows:

Honorary President: Kevin Trickett MBE

Chair: Margaret Hicks–Clarke

Secretary: Helen Kidman

Vice Chair: Alan Goodrum

Treasurer: Jane Lee

Executive Committee Members:

Paul Cartwright

John Clarke

Ben Cowell

George Eglise

Simon Green

Martin Hamilton

David Moss

Alan Nicholson

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