



HARROGATE  
Civic Society

*Celebrating 50 years*

# NEWSLETTER

*March 2021*



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**Our next talk will be on  
Tuesday 20 April at 7.30 pm.  
See page 5 for details**

*Christ Church Stray: 9 March 2021*

## Unitary Councils and Devolution

The Government has commenced an 'open consultation' on the proposals received from North Yorkshire County Council (NYCC) for a single unitary authority (excluding York) under the banner 'Stronger Together' (*right, above*) and the various District Councils who collectively are proposing two authorities under the banner 'East West is Best' (*right, below*).

The Civic Society is in contact with both teams to enquire how their alternative proposals would affect Harrogate town. In particular, we wish to know how a 'Harrogate Town Council' would operate, who will own and manage our town assets and what role will there will be for local input.

We propose to organise an open meeting for members to discuss the proposals and we shall email members with information when details have been finalised.

The Government consultation finishes at 11.45pm on 19 April 2021



**Celebrate** our past - **Enhance** our present - **Shape** our future





*Above: Sandra Fryer, President of Harrogate and District Soroptimists, unveiling the plaque to Dr Kathleen Rutherford, with the owners of Saint Mungo House, Richard and Lynn Wriglesworth. Below: Dr Rutherford.*

## Dr Kathleen Rutherford MBE 1896 - 1975

International Women's Day (8 March) was the occasion for the Soroptimist International of Harrogate and District to honour the life and work of its founder president, Dr Kathleen Rutherford MBE.

She was a medical practitioner in Harrogate who devoted much of her life to working with disadvantaged people both nationally and globally.

Later she was made an Honorary Freeman of the Borough of Harrogate.

The Civic Society contributed to the plaque and members of the committee were invited to the Soroptimists celebration and talk. This online event was attended by over 70 people from the town and across the world.



**For a full description of all 87\* plaques in the Harrogate town area, please visit the website:**

[www.heritageplaques.org](http://www.heritageplaques.org)

**This features the latest plaque shown above and the historic wellheads have now also been added.**

*\* Plaques are currently being added at the rate of two or three each year.*



Heritage Open Days are back in Harrogate after a break of two years.

This year we are optimistic that events can be run. We are already working with the Museums department of HBC on promotion.

The theme this year is 'Edible England'. It offers so many opportunities from working with food producers to visiting our allotments as well as opening up buildings in the usual way.

The Civic Society now needs two or three volunteers to work with the Committee on making this year's event a success.

Interested? If so, please drop an email to [info@harrogatecivicsociety.org](mailto:info@harrogatecivicsociety.org)

or call Stuart Holland on 07973 472060.



## Harrogate Station Gateway



*A public consultation has been launched on major changes to the area around the train and bus stations.*

The Civic Society is in the process of submitting its views on the Harrogate Station Gateway scheme being promoted as part of the Transforming Cities Fund. Earlier this month we asked members to send in any comments and we are grateful to those who responded.

### The scheme includes:

- **changes to the layout of Station Parade and Cheltenham Parade with the introduction of new cycle lanes - Bower Road and East Parade are also affected.**
- **options for the eastern end of James Street including full pedestrianisation.**
- **re-landscaping the public space of Station Square.**

On the basis of comments received and our committee discussions, our response is likely to favour the two-lane option for Station Parade and Cheltenham Parade, and the retention of a vehicular route through James Street with

widened pedestrian areas and improved surfacing. At the time of writing, we are considering the opportunities for the remodelling of Station Square and will respond on that too.

The deadline for comments is 24 March and we urge all members to submit individual responses by visiting <https://www.yourvoice.westyorks-ca.gov.uk/harrogate> and completing the online survey.

*Below: an extract from the two-lane option proposals*



## Our AGM

Almost 30 members signed up to attend our first Zoom AGM. While we missed the usual sociability of our traditional meeting we at least managed to get the important matters of our Financial Report and election of the committee and officers dealt with.

Your committee now comprises : Susan Amaku and Stuart Holland (joint Chairmen), Chris Dicken (Treasurer), Angela Fahy (Secretary), Henry Pankhurst, David Siddans, Granville Simpson, Nigel McClea and Chris Holland (Membership Secretary).

As our Annual Report noted, more members are

An Annual General Meeting was held on 23 February via Zoom.

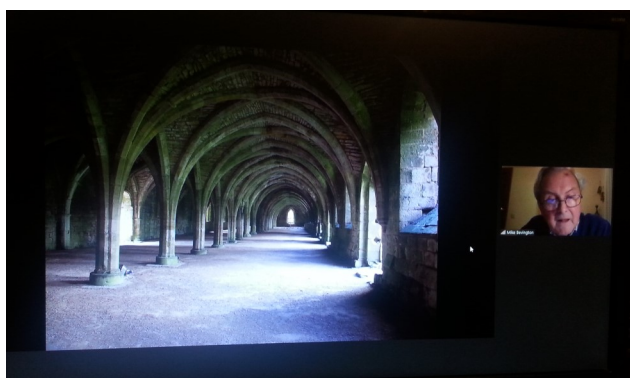
This was the postponed 2020 AGM which would normally have taken place last year.

The 2021 AGM will be held around July this year.

becoming involved in our newly set up Sub Groups (Events, History, Communications, Development and Planning) and this is a very welcome change. Your committee is kept very busy and this helps share the workload and brings fresh ideas and energy to the running of the Society.

## A 'walk' around Fountains Abbey with Mike Bevington

We were delighted to have a Zoom talk from Mike, who used his 10+ years as National Trust guide to lead us around Fountains Abbey. At the time the abbey (named for the many springs on the site) was the largest monastic establishment in Britain, owning land in 200 places (including in Cumberland and Lancashire). Its annual turnover is estimated to have been £80 million in today's money. Fountains had 200 lay brothers in addition to the 'choir monks' (the latter subject to their oaths of poverty, chastity and obedience) who lived according to the rules of St Benedict.



Having spent two years camped under a tree on the site they set about building the extensive complex, only a small part of which is visible today. The buildings would have been painted white inside and out, with the walls decorated in some places, and with grey glass (painted coloured glass was a later addition). We were impressed to hear of the sophisticated lavatory arrangements, ensuring that the water used for washing and cooking flowed separately from waste water. Mike's talk could only scratch the surface of this beautiful UNESCO site, so we hope in the future to organise a visit there.



## Harrogate in the USA

One of our members, Terry Williams, spent much of his life as a teacher at New Park School where among his students were children from the US base at Menwith Hill. Recently he achieved an ambition to visit the families of his former American students.

One family lived near Ellicott City just west of Baltimore, where there is an estate where all the streets are named after Yorkshire places, including Harrogate Road, Ilkley Moor Lane, Bramhope Lane, Yorkshire Drive and several others.

Later, on a camping trip to Tennessee, he travelled to the town of Harrogate on the northern border of the State, close to Cumberland Gap National Historic Park. This town was founded in 1888 and named after our own town in Yorkshire. With a population of only 4398, Harrogate, Tennessee, is the home of Lincoln Memorial University, founded in 1897 and also the Abraham Lincoln Library and Museum.

His research has not revealed why Harrogate was named after its English cousin, although during Terry's visit it was mentioned that, at one time, the town had aspirations to be a spa town!

However, not far away is the site of the oldest spa structure in the US, Jefferson Pools, built in 1761. At the time it was known as the Gentlemen's Bath House.

Harrogate has clearly given more to the rest of the world than might be imagined!



*Top: Harrogate Road in Ellicott, DC*

*Above: The Post Office in Harrogate, Tennessee*

## Our next talk: A pictorial history of New Park

**Tuesday 20 April  
at 7.30 pm**

During his long career as a teacher at New Park Primary School, Terry Williams became a local historian and established the New Park Heritage and Visitor Centre which opened in 2000 at the school.

This talk, the first of two talks on local history, will be delivered over Zoom and a link will be emailed nearer the time. please let us know if you are planning to attend by emailing us: [events@harrogatecivicsociety.org](mailto:events@harrogatecivicsociety.org)

*Please feel welcome to pass the Talk information on to a friend (but not the public at large please!) who can then confirm interest via the email above.*





## NYCC's Active Travel Fund survey

*This 'tick box' survey was aimed at individuals, so was considered inappropriate for us. However, we decided that a response should be sent. In brief our comments were as follows:*

We support well thought out measures towards achieving a sustainable transport system that includes cycling but we believe that the role which cycling can play in solving problems of congestion and air pollution is limited.

The gradual change to **electric vehicles** will play a major part in the latter. **Park and Ride** for Harrogate could also help but it still seems a long way into the future. **Bus service** improvements, serving the many new housing estates would be welcome.

It is important to recognise the benefits of **walking**, which needs to be a safe and comfortable activity. The proposed Otley Road cycleway for instance does not currently conform to guidelines due to cyclists and pedestrians having insufficient separation and at times sharing the same limited width. This is acknowledged by the Government's Local Transport Note 1/20 that confirms that 'pedestrians and cyclists do not happily mix'.

When it comes to cycling infrastructure, an important aspect to us is the History and Heritage of the town. Street furniture, trees, grass verges and of course The Stray needs to be carefully considered in order that they make a positive contribution.



Oatlands Drive on 6 March

The Active Travel Fund Survey had questions on three sections of cycleway that are under consideration but no details were given.




The A59 from west of Knaresborough to

Harrogate Golf Club already has a cycle track on the south side but the further plans were not detailed.



Oatlands Drive has an advisory cycle lane on

each side. It was proposed to devote a greater width to cyclists which involves making the road one-way south. After much local opposition, pointing out the increased vehicle movements elsewhere, including the use residential roads to find 'rat runs', the Council now appears to have dropped this proposal.

Finally, a cycleway on  Victoria Avenue is planned but with no details given. Victoria Avenue is very important under the History & Heritage heading, so trees, grass verges and signage need special care.

### Contact us:

General matters .. .. info@harrogatecivicsociety.org

Membership queries.. .. membership@harrogatecivicsociety.org

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