



The last event of 2022 was our Christmas Social, attended by over 70 members. Dr Paul Jennings entertained us with a short talk entitled 'Harrogate Pubs' during a break in the festivities.

What is in store for 2023?

As well as our regular programme of events, listed on page 8, the Civic Society is aware of a number of anniversaries this year:

- ▶ This Spring will see the centenary of JR Ogden's visit to view the tomb of **King Tutankhamun** at the invitation of both Howard Carter and Lord Carnarvon. We understand a celebration at Ogden's is under consideration.
- ▶ On 27 May the **Royal Hall** will be celebrating its 120th anniversary with a special open day.
- ▶ 1st September sees the centenary of the unveiling of the town's **War Memorial** in 1923 by Lord Harewood in the presence of the Princess Royal.

We shall advise members as and when we become aware of more details.

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Please note that whilst every effort is made to ensure accuracy, no responsibility can be accepted should any losses be incurred. Opinions expressed are those of the contributors and not necessarily of the Harrogate Civic Society.
David Siddans, Editor

Waiting to see in '23

These are just some of the topics with which the Civic Society will be concerned to see positive progress in 2023.



1. Harrogate Convention Centre

Will its future be secured?

2. Crescent Gardens offices

Progress this year on the redevelopment?

3. Museums and town assets

What is their future? With North Yorkshire Council or a new Town Council?

4. Harrogate Station Gateway

What are the future plans?

5. Former Debenhams building

Shopping? Residential? Awaiting new proposals

6. Existing council offices

What services will operate from this building?

7. Otley Road cycleway

How are environmental concerns to be addressed? What is the future for active travel schemes?

2023 Annual General Meeting

This year our Annual General Meeting will be held at the Harrogate Theatre on:

Monday 13 March at 7.30 pm

Agenda, Reports and Minutes of 2022 meeting will be emailed in early March.

Nominations for new committee members are welcome but must be received by 27 February in writing (by email or letter).

As part of the event we are arranging a guided tour of the theatre - more details on this will be given to members later.

Please let us know if you plan to attend the AGM and also if you are interested in going on the tour by emailing:

events@harrogateticivsociety.org



Local Government Changes - an Update

A report by John Fox

John is a member of the Civic Society sub-group on Local Government and a former County Councillor.

North Yorkshire Council

North Yorkshire Council comes into being on 1 April this year. From this month you will start to see and hear much more about it. An awareness campaign will help people to understand what's changing, why, and how to get in touch online, on the phone and face to face. There will be a single website, a single telephone number and a single set of social media feeds. This approach will make it easier for people to get in touch. There will be a main office in every former district area, supported by around 30 additional customer access points across the county.

The 90 members elected by the public in May 2022 will continue to represent their divisions for a further four years from 1 April 2023. The Executive is working as a 'shadow executive' for the new council and has already taken a number of key decisions. Richard Flinton has been appointed the Chief Executive of the new council and he recently completed the appointment of the three Assistant Chief Executives and five Corporate Directors.

Keeping things local, the commitment is to retain a main office in each former district area and to continue to have staff living and working in the communities they serve.



A Town Council for Harrogate

As we go to print the Executive considered the results of the initial public consultation on the future governance of part of Harrogate and Scarborough which are currently unparished. Of the 35431 households consulted only 3.5% responded (less than 1250 responses). Of these, 75% backed the proposals. Despite this a second consultation is to be launched into the creation of a

Harrogate Town Council. NYCC will write to households across Harrogate as part of an eight-week survey starting on 20 February.

The second consultation is expected to be more detailed than the first one, which merely invited people to say whether they supported the idea. The information will include the number of councillors (19 elected councillors), assets and reasons for why it is needed. There will not be a formal referendum.

There are concerns more generally about removing a layer of local government and replacing it in the Harrogate area with another one. It is likely that this will give rise to an additional tax liability on the population. We will need to know what that tax would be and what residents would get in return.

It is very important that community groups and residents get involved with this consultation, whichever way you believe we should proceed. If we have a Harrogate Town Council it needs the community's backing otherwise it will not succeed.

A Mayor for Harrogate

On 31 March 2023, Harrogate Borough Council and the position of Mayor will be abolished. However, Harrogate will get a new civic figurehead from 1 April this year to perform ceremonial duties. He/she will wear mayoral chains and other civic regalia.

North Yorkshire Council will create a new role of charter trustee and he/she will remain in post until the creation of a Harrogate town council. The charter trustee would only represent the unparished area of Harrogate (town plus areas like Bilton, Hookstone and Starbeck). There are 10 councillors sitting on North Yorkshire Council with wards that fall within the unparished area. The first charter trustees would be voted in by councillors in April 2023.

Planning Matters - the Tempietto



An application to demolish the Tempietto was submitted in December 2022 on behalf of North Yorkshire County Council and is related to the Harrogate Station Gateway scheme, currently the subject of ongoing consultations.

*Our planning sub-group, led by **Henry Pankhurst** and **Andrew Brown**, routinely looks at planning applications within the town and a fuller article on how this operates will appear in the next edition of the newsletter. Among the applications reviewed last month was one to demolish the structure known as the Tempietto situated in Station Square.*

The Tempietto has been an attractive feature of Station Gardens for approximately 30 years. It is not an historic structure of course, but provides pleasing interest to the street scene and the conservation area.

In our response, the Civic Society has commented that no application for demolition should be approved before we know what the final plans are for Station Gardens. Demolition in the conservation area must surely be accompanied by knowledge of what its replacement would be. At this stage the designs for Station Gateway are still subject to public consultation and conservation area principles demand that any replacement scheme or building must be sufficient and suitable compensation.

Consequently we have said that, at this stage, no application to demolish the Tempietto should be determined.

Yorkshire and the Humber Association of Civic Societies (YHACS)

YHACS, of which the Harrogate Civic Society is a member, is holding its AGM in Harrogate at the Old Swan Hotel on Saturday 28 January starting at 1 pm.

The Chair of YHACS, Kevin Trickett MBE, writes:

Following the usual business of an AGM, we shall move on to present our annual awards and then hear from our guest speaker, Ian Harvey, Director of Civic Voice, who will talk about the future strategy for our national body. There will also be the latest news and views from the YHACS committee and an opportunity



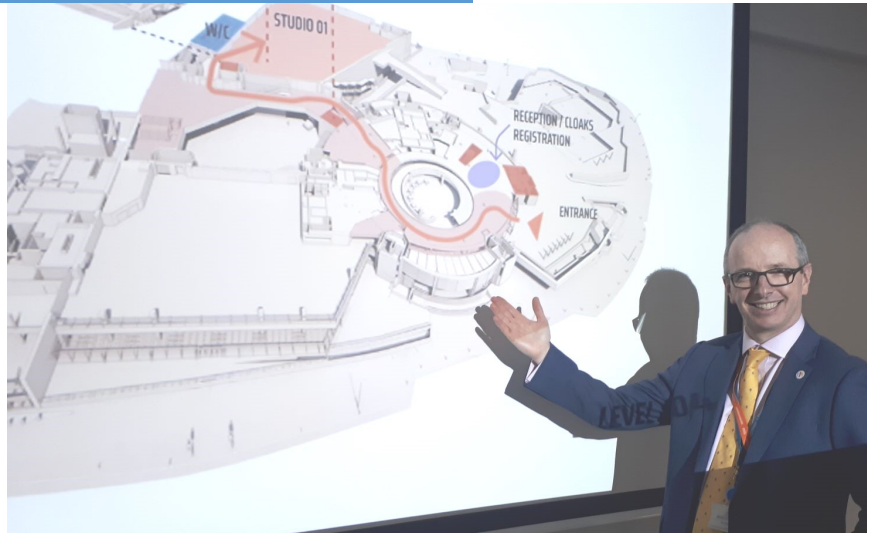
for members to share their news under our 'Just a Minute' round.

HCS members are welcome to attend. If you wish to do so, please book via the email

kevin@wakefieldcivicsociety.org.uk

Because of limited capacity, this will be on a first come first served basis.

On 29 November some 60 members and invited guests spurned the World Cup to attend a briefing at the Harrogate Convention Centre. We were told of the challenges facing the venue and given a confident vision of the future. Sadly the director, Paula Lorimer, could not be there to greet us, but we were made very welcome by Head of Operations Michael Constantine (right).



Michael talked about the Centre's history, now more than 50 years old, and with a footprint greater than the rest of the Council's public estate put together. An elegant venue in its time, by the 1990s it had reached the top five of conference and exhibition centres in the UK. But since then its fortunes have been in gentle but persistent decline until it is now well outside the top ten. So why is this?

- First, the venue is tired, after years of insufficient investment in repairs and renewals.
- Second, it cannot accommodate the current key conference market (500 delegates or more) nor can it provide the flexible breakout spaces required.
- Third, newer venues (such as Liverpool and Manchester) are major competitors with more contemplated, such as Gateshead and Leeds.

The good news is that customers love Harrogate. All that is needed is a venue that reflects the quality of the destination. The Centre still delivers a massive economic benefit to the town and district, attracting 157,000 visitors each year with an economic impact for the hospitality, retail and leisure sectors of some £35m.

What are the options?

Do Nothing - continue as it is with minimal investment. But that would only lead to further decline. Forensic accountants KPMG have estimated that, over a 40 year period 'do nothing' would result in the centre losing some £250m. This would result in a massive ratepayer subsidy.

Do Minimum - see vital improvements to the venue's infrastructure but not the fundamental redevelopment

needed to restore the competitive edge. The 40 year loss might reduce to about £113m, but still hardly satisfactory.

Do Something - substantially redevelop and upgrade. This is by some degree the most attractive of the options.

But Michael was at pains to point out that *Do Something* would not be cheap. Even the first phase (approximately the eastern half of the venue) is likely to cost some £46m. Even so, KPMG's model indicates that *Do Something* would eliminate the deficit and indeed convert into a £29m surplus over the 40 year period.

Do Something is the option being vigorously pursued, with the new unitary council already showing its commitment by agreeing for Harrogate to invest some £3m to work up phase 1 in detail including tendered costs. Yes, the capital cost remains to be found, perhaps from a mixture of borrowings, authority reserves and central government funding. An application has already been made for a £20m grant from the levelling up fund. But Michael is confident it can be found.

So a bright future is predicted and Michael finished by asking us for constructive and nurturing feedback and support - and any good ideas that the Centre team have not already thought of.

That is the challenge he has given us!

Harrogate on Film - Two More Screenings

Following the sell out performances last September we are delighted that two additional screenings have been arranged for **Monday, 27 March** at the Odeon. Tickets are already available through the Harrogate Film Society website.

Please do not delay! An appreciable percentage of the tickets have already been sold.

Helping our funds

In September the profits were donated to Yorkshire Film Archive charities. This time any surplus after costs will be split equally between the Harrogate Civic Society and the Harrogate Film Society to further the work of both organisations.



Online bookings

For the matinee at 2:30pm

<https://www.harrogatefilmsociety.org/event-details/special-event-harrogate-on-film-matinee-screening-3>

For the evening at 7:30pm

<https://www.harrogatefilmsociety.org/event-details/special-event-harrogate-on-film-evening-screening-2>

.. and two more dates to view the Harrogate Railways Exhibition



The exhibition will be staged, as before, in the vacant unit in the station foyer.

Part of the exhibition as displayed last year

Due to popular demand, the exhibition celebrating the 160th anniversary of the opening of Harrogate Railway Station is to be put on display on two further weekends

- Saturday and Sunday 4/5 February
- Saturday and Sunday 4/5 March

from 10 am to 3 pm on each day.



**ZERO
CARBON
HARROGATE**

On Tuesday 17 January, Jemima Parker, Chair of Zero Carbon Harrogate gave a talk on the challenges of meeting net zero carbon targets. A full report on the issues raised in the talk will be included in the next edition of the newsletter.

Membership fees

As indicated in the November newsletter, the Society has reviewed the current fees and how we collect them.

Fees:

The level of fees has not increased for many years and as we have increased expenditure (most talks are now free to members, more frequent newsletters etc.) we have decided to change the annual fees to:

Individual members	£20
Two people at the same address	£30
Under 25s or on UC	£10

Your annual fee will include free admission to many of our talks, an invitation to our December social and, if you prefer, a printed copy of our Newsletter. It will also ensure we can expand our work in the town, including on plaques.

Membership renewal date

We also need to streamline how we collect our membership fees and so **we propose a single annual renewal date of 1 May for all members** starting from 1 May 2023 (subject to approval at the Annual General Meeting).

To renew membership for 2023

Members who joined or renewed before 30 Jan 2023:

If you pay by **Standing Order**, change the date to 1 May and alter the amount to the new fee.

Please ensure you quote '**subs**' and your **last name and initials**.

If you pay by **Bank Transfer** pay the new fee on 1 May, or as soon as possible afterwards, with reference as above.

If you pay by cheque please make a note in your diary to post a cheque for the amount of the new fee to the Membership Secretary* to arrive by 1 May 2023.

Members renewing between 30 January 2023 and 30 April 2023

Pay as normal on your usual renewal date and we will not expect another full payment until May 2024. Then, if you pay by Standing Order please change it to 1 May 2024, if you pay by Bank Transfer or cheque make a note to pay on 1 May 2024.

Donations

Some members very kindly add a donation to their membership fees. It would be very helpful, if possible, you could do this as a separate transaction as this assists our accounting.

Gift Aid

You can help us to increase our income further – at no extra cost to yourself! If you are a tax payer and don't already do so, please consider making your subscription eligible for Gift Aid. Please contact the Treasurer** if you would like to do this.

We will contact you in April (by post, if you don't have email) to remind you of what you need to do.

* write to the Membership Secretary, 108 Duchy Road, Harrogate, HG1 2HB

** write to The Treasurer, 74 Otley Road, Harrogate, HG2 0DP or email info@harrogatecivicsociety.org

We have tried to make the changeover as simple as possible and as fair as possible to all.

If you have any questions please email membership@harrogatecivicsociety.com

We look forward to your continued membership and support to help us all take the society from strength to strength.

Forthcoming Events

Unless otherwise stated, please book by email to events@harrogatecivicsociety.org

Saturday 28 January 1 pm	YHACS Annual General Meeting At the Old Swan Hotel - see details on page 4. Booking via YHACS on kevin@wakefieldcivicsociety.org.uk
Sat and Sun 4-5 February 4-5 March 10 am - 3 pm	Welcome to Harrogate Railways This amazing exhibition has been extended for a final two weekends. To be held in the Station entrance as before. See page 6.
Tuesday 21 February 7.30 pm	John Metcalf (Blind Jack of Knaresborough): A Man of Vision A talk by Bernard Higgins on the pioneering eighteenth century road builder . Venue: St Paul's church hall, Belford Road
Monday 13 March 7.30 pm	Annual General Meeting See page 2. More details to be sent out later
Monday 27 March 2.30 and 7.30 pm	Harrogate on Film To be screened at the Odeon cinema. Book through the Harrogate Film Society website. Please note: Tickets already selling fast!
Tuesday 16 May 7.30 pm	The work of Destination Harrogate A talk on the vital role of this body in the promotion and the economy of Harrogate. More details to follow
Saturday 27 May 10am - 4pm	Royal Hall Anniversary The 120 th anniversary of the formal opening of The Royal Hall is being celebrated by the Royal Hall Restoration Trust with a free public open day. There will be performances in the auditorium and other attractions.

Paying for

events - (Where applicable)

By bank transfer: Name: Harrogate Civic Society. Sort Code: 05-04-54. Account: 167 465 95

By cheque: post to Mr C R Dicken, HCS Treasurer, 74 Otley Road, Harrogate, HG2 0DP

Reference: please use your name, followed by the date DDMM (day/month) of the event.

All details are on our website and are continuously updated. Full information and reminders will be issued via the newsletter, by email and via facebook.

Occasionally, talks will be advertised to our link groups and the general public. **Events are free for members** unless otherwise stated. There will be a £5.00 head charge for non-members. Early booking is recommended.

Contact us:

Chairman: Stuart Holland	..	Tel: 01423 500089
General matters	info@harrogatecivicsociety.org
Membership queries..	..	membership@harrogatecivicsociety.org
Event bookings	events@harrogatecivicsociety.org

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