



## **2025 Annual General Meeting**

***To be held at West Park United Reform Church, West Park, Harrogate  
at 7.30pm on Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2025***

*Refreshments from 7.00pm*

*The evening will commence at 7.30pm with a short presentation on the plans for the West Park Centre. The AGM will follow at about 8pm. Afterwards members will have the opportunity to be shown round the building and hear more about the plans.*





## **2025 Annual General Meeting**

**To be held at West Park URC, West Park/Victoria Avenue  
at 7.30pm on Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2025**

***Refreshments will be available from 7pm***

*Before the AGM commences there will be a short presentation from Stuart Holland on the proposed re-purposing of the West Park URC.*

### **AGM AGENDA**

1. Apologies for Absence from Committee and any members
2. Approval of minutes of the 2024 Annual General Meeting
3. Matters arising from the Minutes
4. Trustees' Annual Report - summary
5. Re-election of Committee Members and Officers, and election of any Committee members co-opted since the last AGM
6. Election of any Committee members nominated in accordance with the provision of the Constitution before this AGM
7. Any Other Business

### **Re-election of Committee Members and Officers**

1. Mike Newby – Chair
2. Andrew Brown – Vice Chair
3. Henry Pankhurst
4. David Siddans
5. Tony Thorndike
6. Nick Brennan
7. Michael Laycock
8. Paul Fennimore – Treasurer

**Nominations received for new Committee Members:** None by the required date



**Minutes of 2024 Harrogate Civic Society  
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING  
held at 7.30 pm on 16<sup>th</sup> April 2024  
at St Paul's URC Hall, Belford Rd, Harrogate**

**Welcome and Introduction:** Stuart Holland welcomed the members attending. He introduced the members of the Committee and thanked them for their hard work and commitment over the year.

Committee members present: Stuart Holland SH (Chair), Susan Amaku SA (Vice-Chair), Angela Fahy AF (Secretary), Chris Dicken CD (Treasurer), Andrew Brown AB, Henry Pankhurst HP and David Siddans DS.

There were 80 members present.

**1. Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received from William Woods, Jennifer and Alan Cole, Stella Pilling, John Fox, Mr and Mrs Jaycocks, Val Michie, David Inglis.

**2. Minutes of the 2023 Annual General Meeting**

Accepted as a true record. Proposed by Mike Newby, seconded by Liz Hatherley.

**3. Matters arising from the Minutes**

None.

**4. Trustee's Annual Report**

This had been circulated in advance. SH thanked Wendy Cross for taking the Minutes for Committee meetings, and Brian and Beryl Dunsby for all of the work since taking over Membership. SH mentioned some highlights of the year - the success of the Coffee mornings and the well supported Christmas social, the use of the late Mike Hine's legacy to install the new lanterns at the main entrance to Valley Gardens. Also he noted the success of Paul Jennings' (member) guided walks, and the various talks and visits organised for members. The Society continued to build links with local organisations, and to install and promote the town's Heritage Plaques. David Siddans produced 6 excellent Newsletters, and Kevin Hales organised the annual Heritage Open Days, with Stella and Geoff Brown kindly taking over for 2024.

The Planning and Development sub-group considered many planning applications on lists compiled by Andrew Brown, some of which we decided which to comment on. There were pre application discussions with the architects for the Debenhams and Herald Building redevelopments.

The Society also kick started, with ZeroCarbon Harrogate (ZCH), the creation of a Neighbourhood Planning forum, which has got off to a very good start.



Nigel McClea has continued to build links with local organisations and the very successful showings of Harrogate on Film (with Harrogate Film Society) generated a profit. Members of the Society, notably Nigel McClea, were also very involved with the Cenotaph Centenary exhibition.

We continue to have two websites - the Society website and the Heritage Plaques website, both managed by Chris Dicken.

Our finances remain healthy, with £3,000 contributed from Harrogate on Film.

SH invited questions/comments. Tony Thorndike complimented the Committee on all of their activities and proposed the Report be adopted.

The Trustees' Report was accepted by a show of hands.

### **5. Re-election of Committee Members and Officers, and Election of any Committee members co-opted since the last AGM.**

Stuart Holland and Susan Amaku are both retiring from the Committee but the remaining Committee members (Chris Dicken, Andrew Brown, David Siddans, Henry Pankhurst, Angela Fahy) are presenting themselves for re-election. No new members have been co-opted onto the Committee in the course of the year.

### **6. Election of any Committee members nominated in accordance with the provision of the Constitution before this AGM**

AF (Secretary) introduced the members standing for election to the Committee, for whom short biographies had been circulated in advance. They are Nick Brennan, Paul Fennimore, Mike Newby, Brian Dunsby, Michael Laycock and Tony Thorndike. She explained that Mike Newby had agreed to become Chair, after a period with Andrew Brown being Chair. This will allow Mike to be eased into the role.

One member asked who would be Vice Chair when MN became Chair. AF explained that the Constitution allows the Committee to change officers, an election would not be necessary.

All of the remaining and proposed Committee members were elected by a show of hands.

Susan Amaku, a conservation architect, was thanked for her 25 years of service on the Committee. SH (retiring Chair), a surveyor, spoke of his time on the Committee (joining in 2008) and his pride in how the Society had developed, now with a Vision Strategy and 6 sub-groups. He thanked his wife, Chris, for her support.

### **7. Any other business**

Presentations were made to SA and SH to thank them for their contributions.  
The AGM closed at 8.30 pm.

It was followed by short presentations from three members – Barry Adams, David Rhodes and Paul Hatherley, who spoke about their visions for Harrogate and gave members much to think about.



## TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT

*for the year ended 29<sup>th</sup> February 2025*

Harrogate Civic Society (the Society) is a Registered Charity, number 501055.

The constitution provides for the Charity to protect, preserve and enhance the character, amenities and environment of Harrogate and its environs.

The Society is managed by a board of Trustees (the Committee), appointed in accordance with the constitution at the Annual General Meeting. The Committee are assisted by a number of sub-groups, generally chaired by a Committee member but with Society members assisting.

### **The Committee 2024-2025:**

The following are the current members of the Committee and hence Trustees:

Mike Newby (*Chair, succeeding Andrew Brown who served for the first part of the year*)

Andrew Brown (*Vice Chair, Planning & Development Sub-group, earlier Interim Chair*)

Angela Fahy (*Secretary, Chair of Events Sub-group*)

Chris Dicken (*Treasurer to early 2025, Webmaster, Chair of Plaques group*)

Paul Fennimore (*Treasurer from early 2025, Membership, Communications*)

Nick Brennan (*Neighbourhood Planning Sub-group*)

Michael Laycock

Henry Pankhurst (*Chair of Planning & Development Sub-group*)

David Siddans (*Chair of Communications Sub-group*)

Tony Thorndike

In addition, Brian Dunsby OBE was a Trustee of the Society, serving on the Committee and heading the Membership Secretariat with his wife Beryl up until his sudden death in January 2025.

Angela Fahy and Chris Dicken are both standing down from the Committee after long service and are not seeking re-election.

The Committee meets bi-monthly with further meetings as required, currently in Woodlands Methodist Church Hall. The Committee shares its responsibilities between sub-groups who meet separately but report back to the Committee. These are *Communications, Events, History, Neighbourhood Planning, Planning & Development, Plaques*.

### **Public Benefit:**

The Society aims to represent the views of its members on key matters affecting the town and its environs. Via its links, communication channels and external meetings, it is able to meet its objectives.



## CHAIR'S REPORT:

I am pleased to present, on behalf of the Trustees, the following report which illustrates and records the extent of work undertaken on behalf of our members.

Our overriding aim has been to enhance the standing of the Society within our town by pursuing our strap line, *Celebrate our Past, Enhance our Present and Shape our Future*. All our activities have helped achieve that aim whilst providing interesting and informative events for our members to enjoy.

I should first thank Andrew Brown who acted as Interim Chair for the first part of this year which enabled me to ease into the role.

I also wish to acknowledge the long service by Angela Fahy and Chris Dicken who are standing down from the Committee at the AGM, having served as Secretary and Treasurer respectively as well as covering many other roles. I thank them both for their hard work and support.

Most importantly though, I must pay tribute to Brian Dunsby OBE who was a Trustee of the Society, serving on the Committee and heading the Membership Secretariat with his wife Beryl up until his sudden and untimely death in January 2025. Our thanks and condolences have been passed to the family.

Looking ahead, we hope to establish a good working relationship with the new town council once it is elected on 1st May. It is half a century since Harrogate had a council covering the boundaries of the town alone and there will no doubt be many challenges and opportunities to explore with this new body.

I would also like to thank all those members who have contributed to and continue to contribute to the work of the Neighbourhood Plan. This is a very important piece of work in furthering our ambitions to celebrate our past, enhance our present and shape our future.

In conclusion, I believe that the year ended 28<sup>th</sup> February 2025 has been a successful one. This is a direct result of the enormous amount of hard work by Committee members and sub-group members, all serving in a voluntary capacity.

We are grateful to them and to all our members who continue to support the work of the Society.

The following reports summarise our activities and show how we have met our Charitable Objects.

*Michael Newby*

April 2025



## SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES, MEMBERSHIP AND FINANCIAL POSITION

The Committee and sub-groups have worked hard in the last period to deliver a programme of activities to members and to keep them informed of issues affecting the town.

The following is a summary of our activities.

### Events:

Our events have been very popular with an average attendance at talks of about 60 and have included:

#### Talks (9 in total) which included:

- Heritage Plaques - a talk by Committee member Chris Dicken who created the Plaques website and walking trails
- Elizabeth Smith spoke about the work of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission
- Leonora Cohen - a Leeds suffragette who spent some time in Harrogate, by Nicola Pullan curator at Leeds Museums
- Robert Ogden on the history of Ogdens, the jewellers.
- A talk on the Local Plan process from Paul Hatherley, who also spoke about the emerging Neighbourhood Plan

Reports on all of our past talks can be found on our website, and we are very grateful to both members and guests for giving their time to present these talks.

#### Visits

- Visit to Markenfield Hall, near Ripon, including a guided tour and cream tea.
- Visit to Pannal, St Roberts Church, for a talk by Anne Smith on Pannal's history.
- A tour of Headingley Water Treatment Works to hear how Yorkshire water manages our supplies. This tied in with our talk in May from Yorkshire Dales River Trust.
- Guided walk with Dr Paul Jennings - "Harrogate Contrasts" around Victoria Avenue and Tower Street.
- A guided ecology walk around RHS Harlow Carr.
- Coffee mornings at The Everyman.
- Christmas Social held at St Wilfrid's Church.

*Events were organised by a sub-group comprising Liz Hatherley, Kevin Hales, Jenny Moore, and led by Angela Fahy.*



## Heritage Open Days:

The national Heritage Open Days event took place through the period 6 to 15 September 2024. It was a busy 10 days – 59 events over 28 venues. There was an eclectic mix of tours, talks, walks, music, exhibitions and buildings, which, as always, during HODs were completely free to attend.

Many of the regular favourites were in the programme, popular as ever, all well attended, some oversubscribed. To these were added new walks, new talks, and new venues. The HODs Festival continues to be a fantastic opportunity for residents and visitors alike to see some of the amazing heritage within Harrogate and the surrounding area – and often with tea and cakes! One of the features of the Festival is to provide a rare opportunity to visit places and events that are not available at other times.

What made it a success? The people! The Civic Society helped in coordinating the programme and supporting events, but it was the individual event organisers who led the walks, managed the opening of buildings, and all of the volunteers who helped out on the day – not forgetting the huge amount of behind-the-scenes research and preparation.

*HODS events were coordinated by Stella and Geoff Brown.*

## Plaques:

2024 has seen the plaques working group meeting quarterly with all members contributing to its aims.

We have eight plaques in consideration and whilst none have been installed in this year considerable progress has been made with funding, location and agreeing inscriptions. Of these eight, five should come to fruition in the near future, two are proving difficult and may eventually have to be dismissed, and the final one is at an early stage.

There is a list of further potential plaques which we will start to consider as the current plaques get installed. New suggestions are always welcome.

We have contributed to an English Heritage / Civic Voice survey on local plaques schemes and were selected to give a brief presentation on our scheme to a national round table discussion on such schemes. Our plaques website was commended.

*Plaques working group: Chris Dicken (Chair), Graham Douglas, Liz Hatherley, Dr Paul Jennings, Erik Thompson, Stuart Holland, Brenda Grant.*





## Planning and Development:

### Development Control

Development Control, or that aspect of planning that comes via planning applications, never stops, of course. We have been busy in this respect as usual.

Beginning with some statistics, during the year to 28<sup>th</sup> February, we examined 99 applications and commented to North Yorkshire Council on 66 of these. The Council consulted us (as a non-statutory consultee) on 28 applications, although not all of these were felt to require our response. Last year the figures were 133 applications examined, 67 responses and 25 consultations.

Two housing proposals that we responded to went to Appeal, firstly Almsford Bank Stables, which was for 7 affordable homes and 10 custom-build plots. This proposal to build houses in the Crimple Valley (not the first – larger applications have come forward) was dismissed. Secondly a housing development for 53 dwellings on Knox Lane was disappointingly allowed. The Council decided not to fight the Appeal and it was left to several third party objectors to put forward the case against the development. There will be an adverse effect on that end of Knox Lane just as it enters Knox Village, where the listed pack horse bridge is situated and where the ford was closed off. It is a lovely atmosphere where urban Knox Lane becomes a country lane.

We are still eagerly awaiting the Decision Notice on 22-30 Parliament Street, formerly the Debenhams Store. It went to the planning committee on 28<sup>th</sup> January this year.

In past years, we have been moved to comment on many shop fronts and advertisement applications, but this year, very few. But one in particular was for Specsavers on Beulah Street. The signs were acceptable but not so the proposed shopfront alterations. The application asked for permission that the timber panelling of the store risers be taken off and whatever surface exists below it be simply painted black. The shopfront is very long. It has three facades, Beulah Street, around the corner and on Station Parade. The application was refused, due to a negative impact on the conservation area. We do not wish to see the conservation area degraded by incremental damage!

As last year, but even more so, we have seen many applications for roof extensions (often listed as “dormers” on domestic properties). Unfortunately a lot of these are given consent under Permitted Development, which our Council is bound to follow despite having a House Extensions and Garages Design Guide that would see many an application refused. The Permitted Development rules are very general and are largely a matter of measurement and arithmetic. Little account is taken of suitability in terms of good design and aesthetics, unless the property is a listed building or perhaps a conservation area.

In our February Newsletter we described how 27, West Park (formerly the offices of the Stray Ferret) had become a dog care facility without planning consent. The Council wasn't given the chance to determine the retrospective planning application because it was withdrawn. We often welcome a change of use of town centre buildings, especially unused or little used upper floors when retail space is surplus to requirements, but not a dog kennels exercise area, next to Prince of Wales Mansions!

We are still waiting to see a Stopping Up Order for the road outside the former Harrogate Borough Council Offices on Crescent Gardens. The planning application for privatising the road for use only by the new owners was given permission last June. It is necessary in such



a case that planning consent comes before a Stopping Up Order. The application involved bollards and planters.

This report can, of course, only give a small insight into the representations that the Civic Society has made. You may ask – is it worth the effort? A rough idea of how the outcome of the applications, in relation to the views we expressed, is as follows - of decisions made during the year 47% were good, 26% were bad and 11% were withdrawn. The remaining 16% were good in part, often because useful amendments had been made to the original proposal.

*Planning and Development Sub-group: Aspects are handled by a number of members, including Henry Pankhurst (Chair), Barry Adams, Susan Amaku, Andrew Brown, Rebecca Haven.*

### **Neighbourhood Planning:**

Over the last twelve months there have been significant local, regional and national political changes that will affect our town. These together with the emergence of a Harrogate Town Neighbourhood Plan, Harrogate Town Council and a North Yorkshire Local Plan, means that it has been an opportune time for the Harrogate Civic Society to seek influence and contribute to their evolution so we can help shape our future local environment.

### **Harrogate Town Neighbourhood Plan**

Society members have been instrumental in working alongside Zero Carbon Harrogate to establish a forum to give voice for businesses and residents through a Harrogate Town Neighbourhood Plan for the unparished areas of Harrogate.

The Harrogate Town Plan Forum (HTPF) has evolved from this endeavour. It now includes over fifty forum members who have contributed to a series of workshops which have looked at key topics such as the Local Economy, Transportation, Housing, Heritage and the Built Environment, The Natural Environment, Health & Wellbeing, and Sustainability. Separate sub-groups have been formed to follow up and discuss in greater detail how these topics may be incorporated into the Neighbourhood Plan.

We received some good news in January this year when it was announced that the HTPF and corresponding neighbourhood area had been approved by North Yorkshire Council. They officially became the 'responsible body' for preparing a statutory neighbourhood plan for the unparished area of Harrogate. While the Forum's designation ceases once the new Harrogate Town Council comes into existence in April, it is anticipated that the new town council will continue with this work.

To this end, there will be a meeting held with prospective town councillors in April to discuss the ways in which the work of the Forum can continue to aid the development of the Neighbourhood Plan.



Our thanks go out for all the efforts made by the Forum's steering group consisting of Civic Society members Paul Hatherley and Stuart Holland, Jemima Parker of Zero Carbon Harrogate and Kathryn Jukes of Directions Planning, in achieving this milestone.

### **Harrogate Town Council**

Following approval by North Yorkshire Council last year, Harrogate Town Council will officially come into being on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2025, with elections for councillors a month later.

While there may still be some debate about the services the town council will provide, it is anticipated that the new town council will act as a statutory consultee for planning matters within the new town council environs. North Yorkshire Council will remain the designated authority for granting planning permission.

It is hoped that the Harrogate Town Plan Forum will in effect become a steering group for the new town council who will use Forum information to enhance publicity, strengthen evidence, and draft a neighbourhood plan. The goal is to create a neighbourhood plan that complements the North Yorkshire Local Plan, see below, and addresses specific planning issues in Harrogate that a county-wide plan may overlook.

### **North Yorkshire Local Plan**

The existing Harrogate District Local Plan (2014–2035) remains in effect until a North Yorkshire Local Plan is adopted.

The intention is for the neighbourhood planning work undertaken by HTPF and Harrogate Town Council to inform the North Yorkshire Local Plan. This aimed to be adopted in late 2028 though there have already been delays due in part to the new Government's housing targets needing to be incorporated. It is now anticipated that the North Yorkshire Local Plan will not be ready until later in 2029.

North Yorkshire Council has also confirmed in the papers to their Strategic Planning Committee, that the Harrogate District Local Plan is now out of date with specific reference to housing supply land allocation. This may lead to housing development outside of the Harrogate District Local Plan settlement limits being supported, in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development, until the new North Yorkshire Local Plan is formally adopted.

As part of the process in developing the new Local Plan, North Yorkshire Council are currently reviewing their recent "Call for Sites" with an Issues and Options/Engagement Consultation in 2025 instead of 2024 as previously planned.

North Yorkshire Council will assess the sites submitted and possibly discounted some for logistical reasons. Once a list of remaining sites has been determined these are then open for public comment including those of the Society. It is anticipated that the provision of supporting infrastructure will be key to realising a site's sustainability.



Therefore, the next few months and years will be a crucial time for Harrogate and its residents in how our town will be shaped. We would therefore encourage Society members to become involved and actively contribute to the consultations that lie ahead.

*Neighbourhood Planning Sub-group: Nick Brennan, Paul Hatherley, Stuart Holland and others.*

## History:

We have had another busy year researching, recording, communicating and celebrating the history of our town.

Highlights include:

- Responding to an ever increasing number of enquiries from the public;
- Contributing to the Society's events programme and newsletters;
- Supporting the great work of Geoff and Stella Brown on Heritage Open Days, including talks and walks around the town;
- Supporting the impressive activities of the Plaques Group;
- Securing the monthly reprint in the Harrogate Advertiser of articles by the late Malcolm Neesam. A particular thanks to Simon Kent for all his hard work. The Advertiser's Graham Chalmers has commented:  
*"It's a great series of articles and it's a testimony to Malcolm's - and Harrogate Civic Society's - high standards and key role in the town".*
- Researching and uploading to Wikipedia more than 40 articles on people and places in the town - the valuable and ongoing work of new History Group member Linda O'Carroll. The Advertiser and Wikipedia articles can be found (along with a great deal more) by browsing the ever-extending History pages on the Society's website.

Just before Malcolm Neesam's death the Society was privileged to support the launch of "Wells and Swells", the second part of his monumental history of the town. Malcolm left sufficient papers for the story to be continued up to 1974 and we are hoping, in the coming year, to be able to secure the publication of the third and final volume.

We are always keen to welcome new members with an active passion for history. Please do contact any existing member if you are interested.

*Current members of the History Sub-group are Chris Dicken, Stuart Holland, Dr. Paul Jennings, Simon Kent, Lynne Mee, Mike Newby, Nigel McClea (our Chair), Linda O'Carroll and Terry Williams.*



## Links:

Fostering connection between our Society and a multitude of other organisations in Harrogate (public, private and charitable) has been a material part of our strategy, designed to strengthen our involvement in the life of the town. With now rather over 30 organisations with whom we have forged a significant association, we have pledged to support, encourage and add value to their activities and ambitions wherever we can.

The past year has seen two further sell-out showings of “Harrogate on Film” commissioned by us and the Harrogate Film Society from the Yorkshire Film Archive and screened at the Odeon. So far, this has raised some £5,000 to assist with the Society’s work and, encouragingly, we continue to receive requests for further showings.

Looking to the future, we shall be supporting the unveiling of two new brown plaques with a wider programme of celebration involving our link partners, commemorating:

- Claude Verity, the sound and film pioneer (whose work was a world first for Harrogate); and
- Dr. Wilfrid Edgecombe, the distinguished physician and medical administrator. (This is shaping to be a major programme of events next spring led by Harrogate Medical Society and the District Hospital).

Finally, we have begun scoping how best we might celebrate the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Great Award that created the Stray, arguably Harrogate’s most emblematic asset. Details of all this, and much more, will be advertised as it takes shape.

*Links are largely developed and maintained by Nigel McClea.*

## Communications:

We regard communicating with our wide membership and keeping everyone aware of what the Civic Society is doing as extremely important. We do this in several ways:

- via our website
- regular newsletters
- by email
- on Facebook.

Our website [www.harrogatecivicsociety.org](http://www.harrogatecivicsociety.org) was compiled and launched in 2021. It is maintained and constantly updated by Chris Dicken and is the source of up-to-date information of our events and activities. It also contains a number of articles written by the History sub-group.

The Plaques website [www.harrogateplaques.org](http://www.harrogateplaques.org) receives an increasing number of visitors, providing an instant source of historical information about the town. It is linked to an Android App which includes a map and details of plaques which can be used while walking around the town or following the trails.

Newsletters are issued four times a year to all members, largely by email downloads but also by delivering printed copies where requested - some hard copies are delivered by hand



which reduces postage costs. We have set up an email messaging system (Mailer) which means we can communicate much more regularly to members with information about activities and reminders of forthcoming events.

We have also trialled additional social media activity to publicise our work to a wider audience outside the membership.

We would urge any member who has difficulty in accessing any of our communications to get in touch so that we can do something about it. It is important that every member feels a part of the Society, can see what is being done in their name, and can be involved whenever they want.

#### Statistics for Communications: (April 2024 to March 2025)

- Newsletters issued in the year **4**
  - To members - email 241
  - To members – hard copy 32
  - To NYC councillors – email 13
  - To external contacts - email 46

Total newsletter circulation 332 *per edition*
- Mailer communications issued **24 (including newsletters)**
- Websites - *continually updated*
  - Civic Society:
 

Number of unique visits in the year:	6,783
Pages viewed:	19,905
  - Plaques:
 

Number of unique visits in the year:	2,698
Pages viewed:	7,659
- Displays
  - Roll-up banners - Plaques and Society banners
  - Stall taken at the Allotment Show (18 August 2024)

*Communications sub-group: David Siddans (Chair), Chris Dicken, Angela Fahy, Paul Fennimore, Margaret Siddans.*

### **Membership:**

Brian and Beryl Dunsby took on the role of Membership Secretariat in April 2023 and carried this on until Brian's untimely death in January 2025. Their responsibilities were to maintain a database of members and to administer membership renewals.

They started this role shortly after the 2003 AGM had agreed to increase the subscriptions for the first time in 14 years, and this change in rates, coupled with the move to a uniform renewal on 1<sup>st</sup> May each year, meant that Brian and Beryl took on a significant piece of work. Their commitment to the task and to orderly record keeping is to be applauded, and this has enabled other members of the Committee to pick this up from Brian's records.

The latest position is that the number of current members is now 302, which is very similar to last year. It is encouraging that 41 new members have joined in the year, compared to 36 last year, replacing those whose subscription has lapsed or ended for whatever reason.



The membership is now made up as follows:

Individuals = 135

Joint members = 160

Hon Members = 7

TOTAL = 302 members as at 28<sup>th</sup> February 2025.

All new member subscriptions and renewals will now be valid from 1 May 2025 until 30 April 2026.

*Membership sub-group Co-ordinator: Paul Fennimore*

### **Finance:**

The Society's financial accounts to February 2025 are appended to this report.

The Society's finances are in a strong and resilient position with cash reserves of nearly £38,000 of which £2,880 have been received for specific projects.

The year saw an overall increase of £1,780 mainly due to a further showing of the excellent "Harrogate on Film" arranged in association with the Harrogate Film Society, and this generated £1,935 for the Society. Membership income also increased, and so an initiative on increasing publicity to reach a wider audience in the town was more than covered by income.

Next year is likely to use up funds rather than generate a further surplus, but this is planned to be well within the financial resources of the organisation, and the Trustees are careful to manage financial commitments and spending in the light of available funds.

Overall, therefore, the Society is well placed to organise and financially support events and activities in line with its charitable aims.

*Treasurer and former Treasurer: Paul Fennimore and Chris Dicken*

Paul Fennimore has taken over the role of Treasurer from Chris Dicken progressively during the year.

#### **GIFT AID - PLEASE NOTE**

The Committee has decided not to reclaim Gift Aid on subscriptions, as applying it in practice restricts how events can be offered to members/non-members. It provided little or no financial advantage to members, while for the Society it involved a disproportionate amount of administration. Many members will be unaffected, but any members who previously included it in their personal tax disclosures to HMRC, should no longer do so. Thank you.



## Appendix: Annual Accounts

<b>Harrogate Civic Society</b>					
<b>Receipts and Payments Account</b>					
Year ended 28th February 2025					
		<b>2025</b>			<b>2024</b>
		<b>Unrestricted</b>	<b>Restricted</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Total</b>
		<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>Receipts</b>					
	Memberships received	4,926	-	<b>4,926</b>	4,388
	Bank interest	623	-	<b>623</b>	800
	Donations received	42	600	<b>642</b>	391
	Events receipts (gross)	447	-	<b>447</b>	983
	Film	1,935	-	<b>1,935</b>	2,918
	Cash back (on card payments)	0	-	<b>0</b>	2
	<b>Total Receipts</b>	<b>7,973</b>	<b>600</b>	<b>8,573</b>	<b>9,482</b>
<b>Payments</b>					
	Admin	1,109	-	<b>1,109</b>	1,150
	Insurance	286	-	<b>286</b>	286
	IT	478	-	<b>478</b>	265
	Newsletter	476	-	<b>476</b>	488
	Events payments (gross)	1,152	-	<b>1,152</b>	1,569
	Plaques	-	-	<b>-</b>	200
	Subscriptions	280	-	<b>280</b>	70
	Publicity	1,157	-	<b>1,157</b>	425
	Donations	124	1,000	<b>1,124</b>	-
	HODs	230	-	<b>230</b>	149
	Bank charges	115	-	<b>115</b>	148
	AGM	386	-	<b>386</b>	-
	<b>Total Payments</b>	<b>5,793</b>	<b>1,000</b>	<b>6,793</b>	<b>4,750</b>
	<b>Excess of receipts over payments</b>			<b>1,780</b>	<b>4,732</b>
	Bank balances at beginning of year			<b>36,014</b>	31,282
	Excess of receipts over payments			<b>1,780</b>	4,732
	<b>Bank balances at year end</b>			<b>37,794</b>	<b>36,014</b>





<b>Harrogate Civic Society</b>			
<b>Balance Sheet</b>			
As at 28th February 2025			
	<b>2025</b>	<b>2024</b>	
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	
<b>Assets</b>			
Cash at Bank			
Current Account	<b>15,818</b>	14,702	
Savings Account	<b>21,976</b>	21,353	
Less: Event income in advance	-	(41)	
<b>Total assets</b>	<b>37,794</b>	<b>36,014</b>	
<b>Represented by</b>			
Restricted funds			
Mike Hine legacy	-	1,000	
HBC restricted grant for information board	<b>2,000</b>	2,000	
Donations for Plaques	<b>880</b>	280	
	<b>2,880</b>	3,280	
Unrestricted funds	<b>34,914</b>	32,734	
<b>Total Funds</b>	<b>37,794</b>	<b>36,014</b>	
Approved by the Board of Trustees on 10 March 2025			
Checked and approved by Paul Fennimore and Chris Dicken (incoming and outgoing Treasurers)			

<b>Harrogate Civic Society</b>			
<b>Notes to the Accounts</b>			
Year ended 28th February 2025			
<b>Basis of preparation of the accounts</b>			
The accounts have been prepared on a receipts and payments basis, as is required for small charities, showing the movements in bank accounts during the year.			
No adjustments have therefore been made for debtors or creditors which would have arisen at the year end, such as minor items for bank interest income due, or administration costs not yet charged/paid such as room hire, bank charges, postage or other expenses. The amounts involved would not significantly affect these accounts.			
At the previous year end, a creditor was included for event income of £41 received in advance. No similar item has arisen this year.			
Funds received for specific purposes such as to contribute towards new plaques or for the information board, are accounted for as restricted funds as they can only be applied for those purposes.			
In addition, the Society is holding funds of £2,000 on behalf of the Harrogate Town Plan Forum, as it has agreed to administer bank receipts and payments for that organisation during its initial phase. Those funds are not included in these accounts as they belong to the Forum not the Society and are not under the Society's control.			