

HOWDEN CIVIC SOCIETY

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT TO ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 4th MARCH 2026

Summary

This year we have been active within the constraints of the resources we have available. Newsletters have continued to be produced and distributed and kept to up to date information.

Social Meetings

George Hudson- Railway King – Chris Cade

Growing up in the East Riding of Yorkshire – Angela Martinson

Tales from the Butchers' Block – Philip Parkin

Plant Raisers – Martin Ellis

Rides through Yorkshire with Daniel Defoe – Henry Farrar

Local Villages in old pictures – Susan Butler

Inclesmoor Map – Chris Collins

Colour in Winter – Enid Harrison

Uncovering Howdenshire History – Gary Tavender

This year we again had to change our venue and were again grateful to the Methodist Church for hosting our October meeting. Further discussions with the representative of the Masonic Hall revealed that this might happen again in the future so we have decided to move our social meetings permanently to the Methodist Church with effect from 1st January 2026.

Our visit to Ellerton Priory Church was able to take place on 4th June and we were grateful to Phil Thomas for hosting the visit. 17 visitors heard about, and saw, the remarkable restoration work on the church and its environment.

Exhibitions

On 3rd May we were present on Vintage Day in the Minster where Susan Butler presented a slide show illustrating Howden in the 1970s and we also displayed our interesting stock of publications for sale. We had a good position in the Minster near the refreshments so there was a steady number of visitors, many of whom stopped to enjoy the slide show.

On 6th July we again had a stall in the Traders Tent, for which we were very grateful when the downpours occurred forcing many people into the tent for shelter. Our display was focussed on the life and exploits of Charles Ledsham – Howden's Waterloo hero.

We took part in the national Heritage Open Days in the Shire Hall on 21st September and our display featured the town's airship heritage, Howden's original mural and a film showing the Burney Car filmed in London. We also lead two well attended walks round the town and were grateful to Marian Thomas and Diane Smith for their leadership.

Charles Ledsham

A part of Howden's Heritage which was in need of attention was the headstone on the grave of Charles Ledsham. Nationally, very few memorials exist to commemorate the exploits of servicemen other than officers. One of this few is Charles Ledsham, a hero of the Battle of Waterloo, who came to Howden in 1822, ran two public houses, one of which he renamed the Waterloo at 12 Bridgegate, and who died in 1837 and is buried in Howden Minster's churchyard. The headstone is severely corroded and half could not be read, although most of the wording has been previously recorded. The decision was made to replace this headstone with a new one, bearing the same inscription, as a fitting memorial to our Howden's Hero. After some research, a company was recruited to create the new headstone and install it on the grave. Grants were obtained from Howden Rotary, the Waterloo Association and Spaldington Wind Farm Community Fund towards the cost and the headstone installed in early November. We are now in the process of producing a pamphlet describing the life and exploits of Charles Ledsham, so far as we can ascertain it.

Exhibitions

We held three exhibitions during the year. On Saturday 3rd May we took part in Vintage Day by showing a reel of pictures of Howden in the 1930s and 1940s. This was greeted with great interest and if we had more space, we could have entertained many more people who stayed and watched the whole reel, with thanks to its creator Susan Butler.

On 6th July our display at Howden Show featured the story, as we then knew it, about Charles Ledsham. We benefited from the downpours of rain which encouraged many people to come into the Traders Tent looking for shelter.

Our third exhibition was held during the national Heritage Open Days initiative. We held a one day exhibition in the Shire Hall on 21st September which concentrated on the R100, also showing the original Howden Mural (a reproduction of the one that used to be in Butler's Gap), and the fascinating short film of the Burney car driving through London.

Awards

We were able to take part in the Traders Vintage Window Displays by judging the entries and Marian Thomas and Lin Lavender presented the winners with a small trophy, the winners being Dove House. Later in the year Marian and Diane Smith judged the Winter Windows initiative. Both initiatives were in association with Howden Town Council's Laura Smith who encouraged participation by the traders.

Easing access for scooters and wheelchairs

We have been in correspondence with East Riding Council asking them to look into means by which pavements can be altered to improve the ability of scooter and wheelchair users to move around Howden (Dropped crossings in the term). Improvements requested include access from the new pavement along Selby Road into the Marsh, crossings at Cornmarket Hill and near Zolsha and access along Vicar Lane which is difficult due to cobbles. They have made positive responses and have indicated other places where crossings will be improved.

Planning

2025 was a busy year. The Local Plan Update was published together with a Design Code. These are very comprehensive documents and take a long time to review. Included with the Update is an Allocations Plan which identifies area of Howden that can be developed. This indicates that the possibility of providing a road between Selby Road and Station Road has not been entirely abandoned. Land off Boothgate and the vast extension of the town towards the railway line are also included for housing, which together will almost double the size of Howden.

Despite much correspondence with the new owners of the Minster View pub, and our continuing support for its refurbishment now that all planning requirements have been met, nothing has as yet been done to improve the building.

Administration and a few grumbles

We decided during the year to make entry for members to meetings free but increase the charge for visitors to £3, this to reward members for their membership and encourage more members.

We also decided to move meetings from the Masonic Hall to the Methodist Church to avoid the occasional double booking giving more certainty about the venue.

I have been promoting the possibility of members, and others, signing up to Easyfundraising as a means of raising funds for the Society at no cost to them, but this has met with total failure which is a shame, and almost so has the request to increase our record of gift aid declarations.

Also the requests for information or anecdotes about the Airship Station has also met with total failure. Any information which exists is likely to disappear in the future unless they are recorded.

Philip Mepham

Chairman

Howden Civic Society - 27th January 2026

Sheet1

	2024		2025
Lloyds Bank		Closing Balances	Lloyds Bank
Selby a/c	7,438.39	Current Assets	Selby a/c
Corporate a/c	0.00		9,453.76
Heritage Fund	1,573.48		Corporate a/c
	<u>9,011.87</u>		0.00
			Heritage Fund
			<u>9,453.76</u>
			Cambridge & Counties
			Savings account
			30,000.00
			<u>39,453.76</u>
Fixed Asset Picture	700.00	Fixed Assets	Picture
Total	<u>9,711.87</u>		<u>700.00</u>
			Total
			<u>40,153.76</u>
Less Income over expenditure 2024	842.18		2025
	<u>8,869.69</u>		30,441.89
			<u>8,869.69</u>

Arthur Henrickson
Treasurer
10th January 2026

Richard Foster
Auditor

Richard Foster
6 Townshend Drive
Cottingham
East Yorkshire
HU16 5EE

12th February 2026

Howden Civic Society

I have audited the accounts ,Income and Expenditure and Balance Sheet for the year ending 31st December 2025. I have verified the balances shown on the Balance Sheet with the Bank Statements provided to me by the officers of the Society I am satisfied that the Balance Sheet shows a true and fair view of the Society's funds at the 31st December 2025

Richard Foster BA (Hons)

12th February 2026