

PONTEFRACT CIVIC SOCIETY

England & Wales · Charity number 513509

Details

Other names PONTEFRACT AND DISTRICT CIVIC TRUST

Status Registered

Legal form Other

Registered 1983-02-11

Register [View on the Charity Commission register](#)

Contact

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Pontefract
West Yorkshire
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Website www.pontefractcivicsociety.org.uk

Activities

Objects: (1) TO PROMOTE HIGH STANDARDS OF PLANNING AND ARCHITECTURE IN OR AFFECTING THE AREA OF BENEFIT. (2) TO EDUCATE THE PUBLIC IN THE GEOGRAPHY, HISTORY, NATURAL HISTORY AND ARCHITECTURE OF THE AREA OF BENEFIT. (3) TO SECURE TH PRESERVATION, PROTECTION, DEVELOPMENT AND IMPROVEMENT OF FEATURES OF HISTORIC OR PUBLIC INTEREST IN THE AREA OF BENEFIT.

Activities: A non-political independent organisation monitoring planning, land use, regeneration, tourism, civic pride, heritage, and business, raising awareness to the people of Pontefract and district. Raising the profile of Pontefract as a place to live, work, do business and visit, by protecting and enhancing the environment.

Classification

- **How:** Provides Advocacy/advice/information, Other Charitable Activities
- **What:** Education/training, Arts/culture/heritage/science, Environment/conservation/heritage
- **Who:** Other Charities Or Voluntary Bodies, The General Public/mankind

Geography

- **Area of benefit:** PONTEFRACT AND DISTRICT
- City Of Wakefield

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2024-12-31	£27,953	£22,626	-	-
2023-12-31	£25,224	£19,174	-	-
2022-12-31	£25,898	£36,295	-	-
2021-12-31	£12,068	£15,918	-	-
2020-12-31	£19,360	£17,396	-	-

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
Kelvin John Wilkins	Chair	2026-03-21
Dr COLIN WHITE		2013-12-29
Evelyn Westwood		2023-02-07
Ian Frederick Wood		2016-02-16
Michael James Farrell		2026-03-21
Philip Cook		2019-02-12
Rev Ian Bullock BA Hons		2025-09-25

PONTEFRACT CIVIC SOCIETY

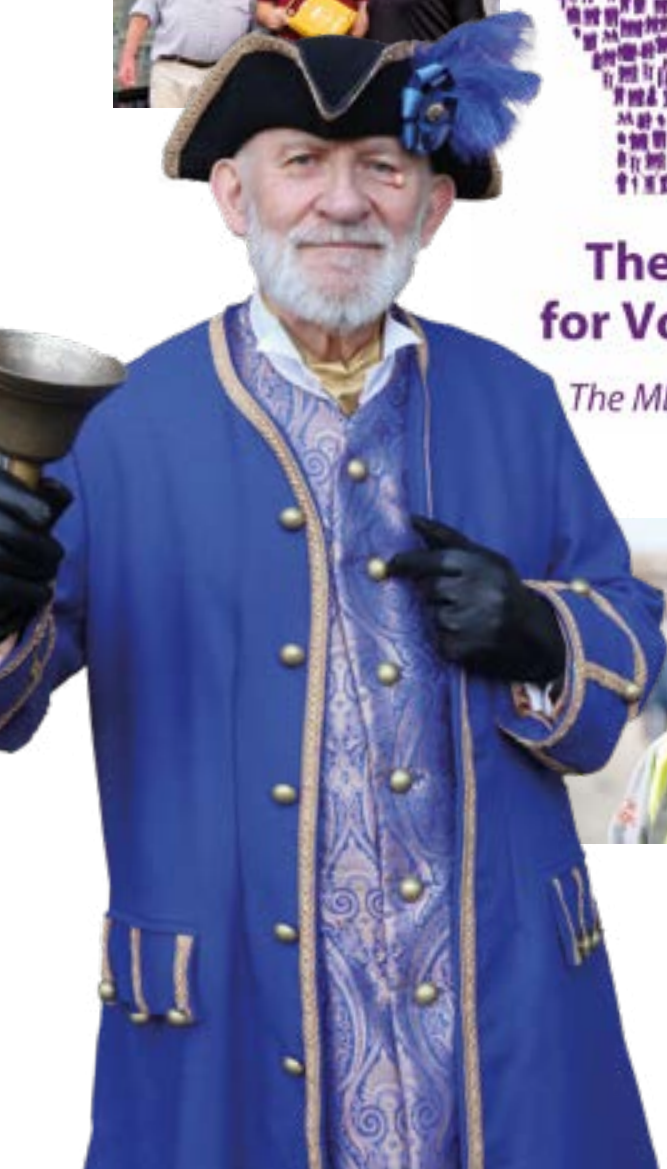
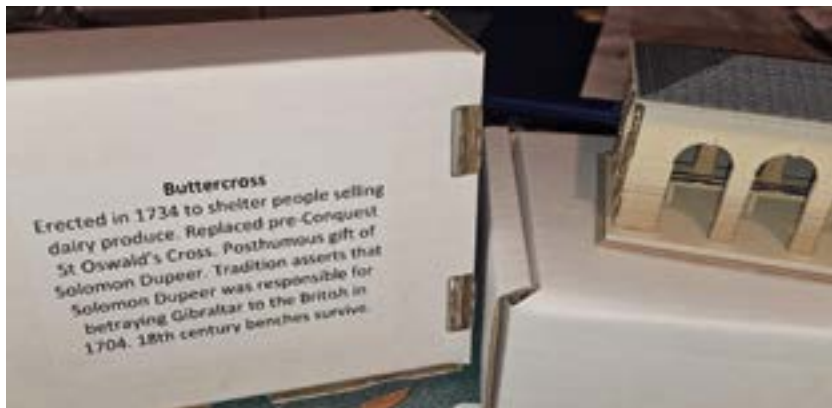
England & Wales - Charity number 513509

Accounts

ANNUAL REPORT 2024



PONTEFRACT CIVIC SOCIETY



The King's Award for Voluntary Service

The MBE for volunteer groups





Pontefract's Liquorice Heritage



CONTENTS

Chair's Review of 2024	4
Patron's Address	7
President's Address	8
Vice Chair's Report	8
Planning Group Report	10
Design Awards 2024	12
Highways Group Report	16
Heritage Group Report	16
Heritage Open Days	18
Rail Group Report	19
Community Connectors Group	20
Decoration Squad Report	21
Our Trustees & Working Groups	23
Report of Trustees	24
Treasurer's Report	25
2025 Calendar of Events	26
2024 Annual Accounts	27

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Venue provision: Town Hall, Library and Castle (WMDC), The Old Grocers, Tracked Spider Solutions, King's Croft Hotel, Pontefract Methodist Church, The Magistrates Market, The Blue Bell, Cromwells and The Red Lion

Heritage Open Days: All venues, exhibitors, speakers, workshop hosts, and tour guides, too many to mention

Ticket/book outlets: Michelle's Flowers, The Old Grocers, House of Ales, Pomfret Gallery, Pontefract Library, and Magistrates Market

Decoration Squad: Both civic society members, other volunteers including schools

Decorations collection points: Library, Yorkshire Building Society, and Michelle's Flowers

Photography courtesy of: Christine & Paul Cartwright, Peter Ferrari, Medlock Photography, Phil Cook, Rhona Crichton, design award winners and agents, KRA:FT Media Services/Wakefield Civic Society

Window decoration judges: Pontefract Academies Trust schools and St Giles CofE Academy

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- 🐦 : twitter.com/PontefractCivic
- 📷 : instagram.com/pontefractcivicsociety/

CHAIR'S REVIEW OF 2024

The highlight of the year has to be confirmation that we were awarded The King's Award for Voluntary Service of which I am extremely proud.

I am pleased to report that our membership grew modestly through 43 new members across all categories. We thank again new members for joining the civic family (see graph). We did incur some losses as did Pontefract as a whole; I attended funerals of Lion George Morgan, Tom Dixon ('Mr Liquorice'), and our founder member, Allan R Blaza.

The Board of Trustees was strengthened by the addition of Canon Andrew Sage, Planning Coordinator, who brings with him 18 years of experience in a similar role with Blackpool Civic Trust. Also, after a pause following the 2024 AGM elections, Rachael Anderson filled the vacant spot of Honorary Secretary.

By contrast, activities within each working group have been a mixed bag with most meeting from time to time, except the Futures Group which only met once, and the Business Group continuing to be covered by myself and Phil Cook, as and when needed. The renamed Community Connectors Group has been particularly active, which is good to see.

I have deliberately scaled back my involvement in the Highways Group and Rail Group as progress with stakeholder projects is so slow, and this allowed me to be more productive in other areas, whilst also getting some much needed free time. Although it doesn't look like I've scaled back on other areas of the civic society,

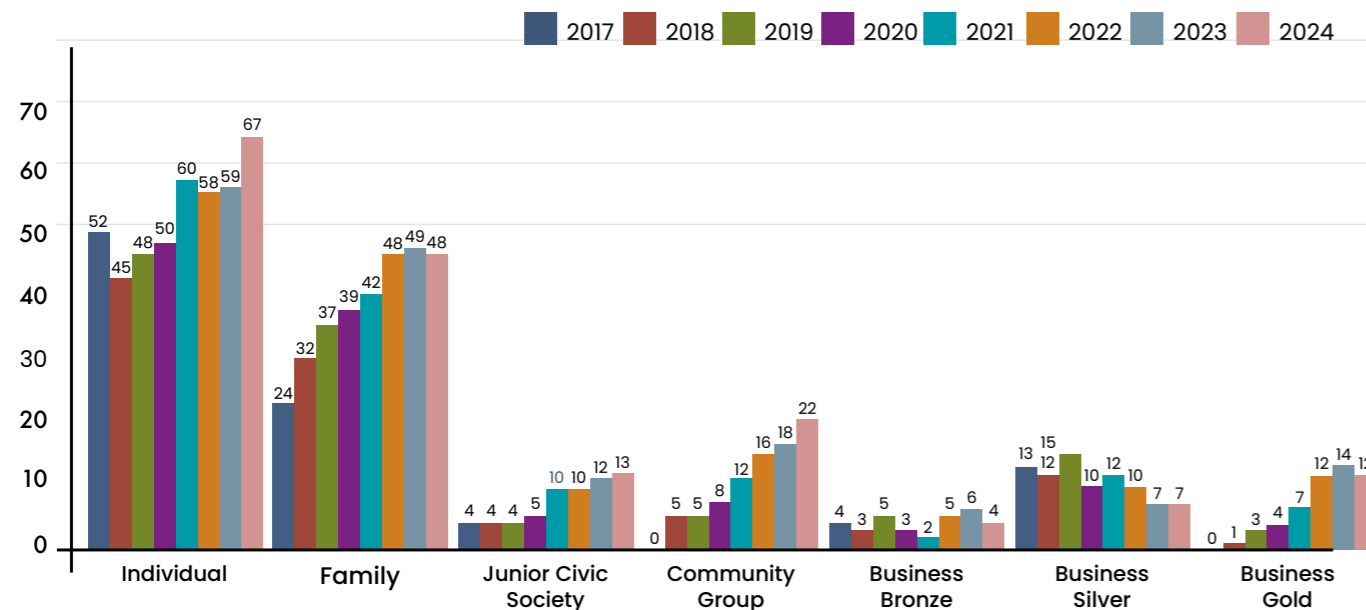
I am quite prepared to allow other trustees and key members to participate in some of the events that usually fall to me. Furthermore, the door remains open, on every working group and indeed the Executive, for members to volunteer.

BUSINESS ENGAGEMENT

- Hosted We Are Wakefield business network
- Prince of Wales Business Club 5
- Pontefract Racecourse Welcome Lunch
- Friday Revival business network supporting The Prince of Wales Hospice



MEMBERSHIP BY TYPE



- Brought the Anchormen Jazz Orchestra to Northern Social – 8 PCS members attended
- Facilitated Production Park visit
- Attended Pixel Playhouse (retro gaming arcade) soft launch
- Two site meetings with Mick Todd, the owner of Pontefract Squash & Leisure Club, for council advice on one major project, and highways/water repairs
- Supported Wakefield Council in engaging with businesses for events and festival days, as well as Citizen Coin participation to reward community volunteers
- Less than successful online call and follow ups with Haribo marketing
- 2023 Design Awards presented, and assessments during 2024
- Christmas shop window competition
- Supported New College Christmas concert at St Giles Church
- Shared business training & funding newsletters from other organisations

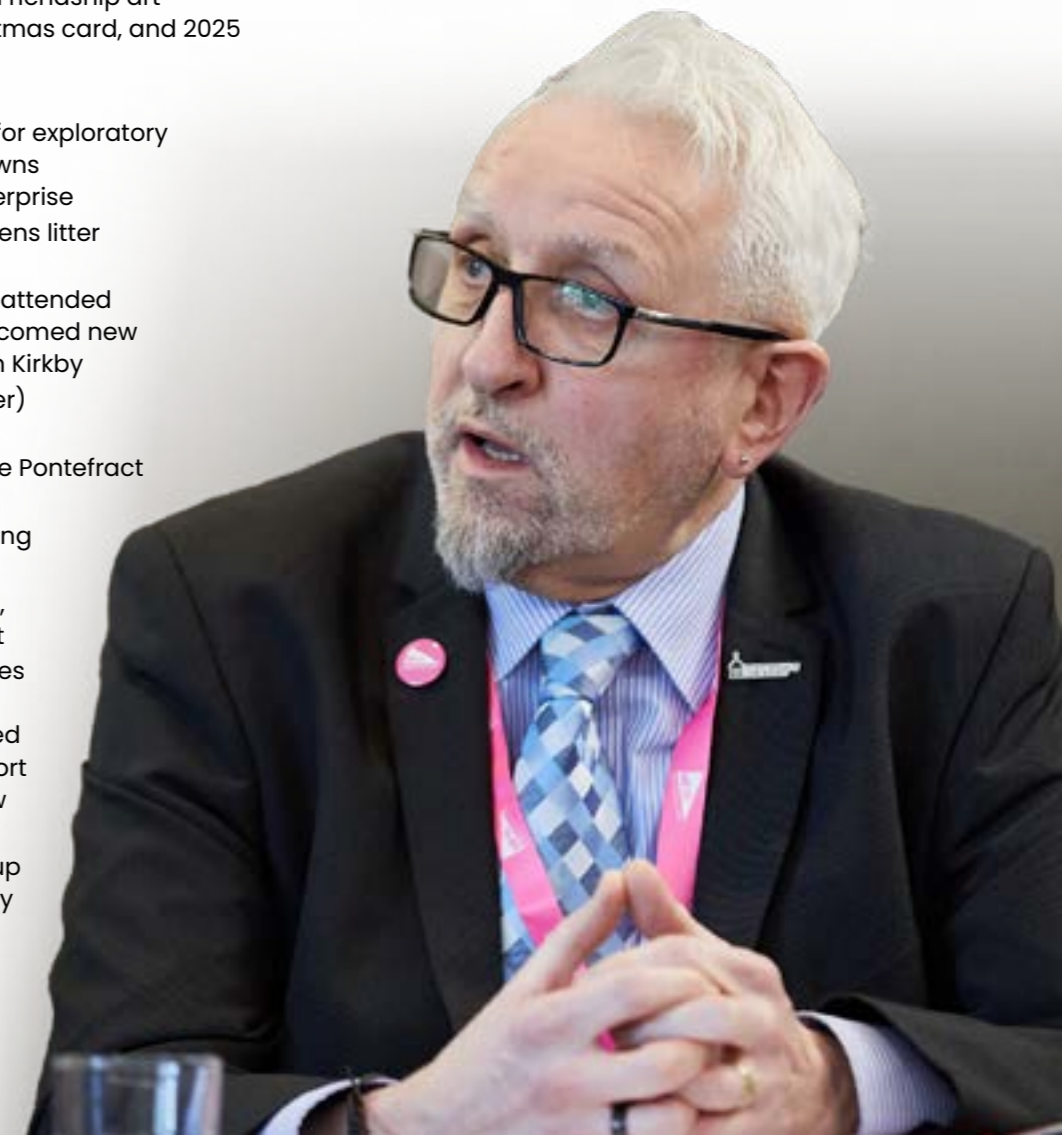
WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH OTHER LOCAL GROUPS

- Attended ceremony as Fr Ian Bullock was installed at St Giles
- Attended Pontefract Art Club exhibition and worked with Rhona Crichton for schools Friendship art exhibition, our stakeholder Christmas card, and 2025 art calendar.
- Community Showcase
- Met Conrad Aldridge (Quakers) for exploratory meeting on Pontefract & Five Towns regeneration through social enterprise
- Friends of Friarwood Valley Gardens litter picking
- Meetings with King's School and attended a Christmas Tree event, and welcomed new member Northfield School, South Kirkby
- Met David Buck (project manager) for Methodist engagement
- Christine and I were guests at the Pontefract Choral Society concert in June
- NOVA Mixer community networking event at Wakefield Cathedral
- Catch ups with Julian Appleyard, CEO, Pontefract Academies Trust
- Support given Pontefract Collieries FC for a community centre and skatepark (projects not confirmed yet due to key stakeholder support being needed, though that's now moving)
- Welcomed new community group members: Pontefract Community Kitchen, Friends Meeting House (Quakers), and Ackworth & Pontefract RBL

- DDay80 wreath laying, and later in the year, Armistice Day and Remembrance Day at the War Memorial, plus duty as poppy sellers for Christine and me
- Supported Carleton High School's Remembrance Day, and Christmas Spectacular
- Supporting Pontefract Pantomime, Castleford & Pontefract Lions Club Lantern Festival, and Santa's Grotto, Knottingley Concert Brass Christmas Concert, and hosted Christmas with the Liquorice Singers

STAKEHOLDER WORKING AT NATIONAL AND REGIONAL LEVEL

- King's Award for Voluntary Service celebration event for 2024 nominees at Bowcliffe Hall. John Turner also attended as a civic society member and contributor to the assessment interview
- West Yorkshire Combined Authority Partner Intelligence Portal meeting (police)
- Welcomed three representatives from Marple Civic Society for a full day in Pontefract with Phil Cook and Peter Ferrari to share how we work for Pontefract
- Council's A639 highways exhibition
- The Yorkshire Society Yorkshire Awards Gala Dinner
- Telephone interview West Yorkshire Police on their future priorities





- Highways England A1 open forum at Darrington Golf Club
- Leeds Civic Trust AGM
- Wakefield Civic Society AGM & Design Awards
- Civic Voice AGM in London where new two co-chairs were elected, and CEO Ian Harvey's farewell
- Advisory meeting on behalf of YHACS for Selby Civic Society trustees
- Email and telephone support to Doncaster Civic Trust for Heritage Open Days and securing new trustees
- Email support to Castleford Civic Society's new secretary
- I was one of many guest speakers at the Civic Voice/YHACS Convention at CAPA College where I shared how Pontefract Civic Society works. John Turner attended as a civic society delegate
- Civic Voice stakeholder webinars (some showcasing other civic societies)
- Yorkshire & Humber Association of Civic Societies online Executive meetings, and YHACS 25th Anniversary Lunch
- The Yorkshire Society – project managing the Yorkshire Heritage Summit at Hull Minster including a live interview with BBC Radio Humberside, and early planning of the 2025 Heritage Summit at Skipton Town Hall
- Haworth/Prince of Wales Liaison Group

PUBLIC RELATIONS

- BBC Radio Leeds live interviews for WheelFest, Liquorice Shoots, and Heritage Open Days
- Engaging with Rhubarb Radio for WheelFest
- Publishing our news on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and less so our website, and of course, Experience Wakefield

- Notice boards and display cabinets updated (Town Hall, bus station, library, and the Magistrates Market)
- Publicity for talks supported by Chris Walker, plus events, press releases, and submissions to YHACS newsletter, and Civic Update
- Pontefract Voice

GOVERNANCE, ADMINISTRATION & LOGISTICS

- Member renewals and new member recruitment achieving the highest member numbers in my time in the Civic Society!
- Annual Report 2023 and Annual General Meeting 2024
- Administering Design Award assessments
- Managing schools judging Christmas window displays
- Working with Panda IT to maintain our website and preparation to move to our business member, Twisted Design
- Circulated grants information to community groups & schools
- Christmas Dinner
- Updated logo created by Twisted Design approved
- Finally, probably a first, as the civic society is a respected organisations, Christine & I were invited to be witnesses for a wedding at Pontefract Registry Office and to the couple's evening reception in Sheffield

WORKING FOR PONTEFRACT IN PARTNERSHIP WITH WAKEFIELD MDC

Throughout the year, I've had in person and online meetings with officers and elected members at all levels and across various departments, and Phil Cook has equally contributed to most of these meetings. Examples are:

- WMDC Tourism Conference at The Hepworth
- Successful funding application from UKSPF
- Cllrs Jeffery & Graham, and Mark Lynam (Corporate Regeneration Director)
- Joint civic societies meeting with Joe Jenkinson (Service Director) and Planning & Highways team
- Council Green Space Forum
- Monkhill footbridge/lifts online consultation
- Markets, Festivals Events & Tourism, Highways, Armed Forces Day Steering Group, the cross-team Pontefract Delivery Group, and Seniors Officers meeting
- Two meetings on the Dispensary/PGI site with Wakefield Council, Homes England and URbanism consultants
- Judging musicians for the castle summer programme

- Supporting 'Our Year' including visiting The Hatchling outside Wakefield Cathedral, and supplying our ongoing event content
- Wakefield Libraries Local Studies Collection policy development workshop
- A639 highways exhibition
- Light Up events in Pontefract, Wakefield, and the National Coal Mining Museum for England
- Supported the Mayor's Christmas Concert in Wakefield Cathedral



NOW FOR 2025

To repeat my previous mantra: more of the same from 2024 to make the civic society more effective – more delegation, more new members, and more active members.

In leading Pontefract Civic Society's board of trustees through to the 2026 AGM, my role will ensure we deliver and strengthen the award-winning premier civic organisation in Pontefract:

- Making the board more strategic by co-opting trustees especially from business professions, whilst ensuring trustees delegate operational tasks through coordinators to working groups
- Ensure all trustees embed MS365 and other technologies for greater efficiency and effectiveness, including delivery of a new website
- All working group members to engage in recruiting additional active members to deliver their annual plan
- Review our strategy through the board and our Futures Group
- Strengthen existing partnerships, and build new ones
- To use our increased public awareness from events to bring in new members
- Continue to create a more 'social' Civic Society, whilst delivering our core constitutional objectives

Paul Cartwright | Chair, Board of Trustees

HONORARY PATRON'S ADDRESS

One of my duties as a Deputy Lieutenant (DL) is not only to actively promote the King's Award for Voluntary Service to the Charitable voluntary sector, but also to identify those who I believe would meet the challenging criteria for gaining this Award.

I can assure you this is no easy task and not to be undertaken lightly, as to raise false hopes would damage the reputation of the West Yorkshire Lieutenancy as well as the morale of the charity concerned.

Having been a successful assessor for many years, I was confident that when, as Patron, I broached the idea of seeking nomination for the Award with the Chairman he would take the matter very seriously. We went through the stringent criteria and he agreed that he and his team would indeed take up the challenge. Then the hard work began, culminating in meeting the designated assessors. I know when all concerned met the two assessors who were to write up their report for the Lord Lieutenant on what they had seen and observed, they fully experienced how rigorous the whole procedure was – I am sure quite draining for everyone involved at the end of it all.



I totally agree with the President of Pontefract Civic Society that the Chairman provides inspired leadership and his executive and volunteers have totally bought into his vision for the Society and its role within the Pontefract community. That is its real strength and one which I so much admire.

The Cabinet Office normally lets nominees know if they have been unsuccessful a week before the King's Birthday. I and everyone else involved with Pontefract Civic Society must have been on tenterhooks but thankfully we heard nothing that week – it had to be good news?!!

Confirmation was provided (not to be published or

announced until the King's Birthday) on the evening before. I have to say that this is not only a remarkable achievement, but a historic one.

My understanding is that Pontefract is the first Civic Society to gain the award – first among equals. I very much look forward to being with you all when the Lord Lieutenant makes the presentation of the Award. Note that unlike most awards this certificate is personally signed by the King. May the Society continue to go from strength to strength!

Michael Sayles-Fox DL | Hon Patron

HONORARY PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

One of the things that is frequently said to me by older members of the community is that it is sad to see the changing (and perhaps the passing) of the old social structures that we valued and were used to.



And this is nowhere more evident than in witnessing the demise of local societies. Time was when there were dozens of local societies in Pontefract catering for a wide variety of interests, but many of them have now passed and some of those that remain only retain an increasingly elderly membership and struggle to keep themselves afloat.

But there are those that successfully adapt to social changes and it gives me great pleasure to report that Pontefract Civic Society has bucked this trend and is going from strength to strength. It has embraced the changes and challenges that modern technology has brought, widened its appeal, and by all normal measures (the modern vogue-word is

'metrics') has improved its offer to the public. The past year has seen an increase in activity with more events, a record number of visitor destinations in the Heritage Open Days, a full Talks schedule and increased cooperation with business interests in the Town, all of which has resulted in an increase in membership. The achievements of the year have been crowned by a King's Award for Voluntary Service, which is a cause for great celebration. None of this could happen of its own accord and the success has been due to the hard work of the Executive and our various Working Groups under the leadership of our Chairman, to whom our thanks are due.

It is likely that communities will always be interested and concerned about where they live and that is true of the people of Pontefract. It is the role of this Society to celebrate its historic past, its changing present and its future development and we invite others with an interest in the wellbeing of the Town to join with us in working to this end.

Peter Cookson | Hon President

VICE CHAIR'S REPORT



I believe that 2024 has been one of the most important years for the civic society to become more integrated in the town's future, not just with the promotion and development of the tourist and visitor experience the town, but also the society being seen as a driving force in the town and being involved in the major developments in the town's infrastructure.

2024 has been a year of greater engagement and strengthening the way the society works and building new relationships. Wakefield District Housing Neighbourhood Panel meetings, which I attend representing the civic society as an independent member representative of the town, which I have continued to attend when possible. I was pleased to again support the Friarwood Festival as Safety Officer and input to event management, both roles I which will continue into 2025.

We were approached by Castleford and Pontefract Lions Club to come up with an alternative to the Lantern Parade which due to costs and logistics had become impractical. Sitting down with them we were able to put an alternative forward to use the Market Hall to display the lanterns that had been created from the workshops. This was agreed with the markets team and hopefully after the success in 2024 it will grow in the forthcoming years. I was also able to give



support to Pontefract Celebration of Singing, which saw a collaboration of choirs performing at the Town Hall, raising funds for The Prince of Wales Hospice. As an advocate for the town and its community, I was also pleased to represent the civic society at various meetings with ward councillors and council officers, events team and markets team, where we were able to have direct input into the town's events and the Market Hall red telephone box refurbishment. In short 2024, has been a year of ups and downs but definitely ended on a high with the King's Award for Voluntary Service and reflecting on all the success we've had in the year.

Not being one to sit back, I proposed to trustees in September that I look at raising money to instal a Public Access Defibrillator (PAD) on the Town Hall. We were taken aback at how our members, local businesses, schools, community groups, and individuals got behind this. The target was smashed, allowing us to instal not just one AED, but four at the following locations Cartners No.5, The Old Post Office, Town Hall, and Michelle's Flowers.

Usage 2024 from October			
VENUE	DEFIB USED	ACTION	
Town Hall	Nov Online		
Old Post Office	3	Deploy	Not Attached
Cartners No 5	12	Deploy	Not Attached
Michelle's Flowers	1	Deploy	Not Attached
TOTAL	16		

We are already planning on how to improve our major events WheelFest24, 1940's Day, Liquorice Shoots by adding different attractions to the events and building upon the invasion of the Star Wars characters and much more. We will need support on the event days to ensure the events are a success so if you feel you can volunteer please come forward

VICE CHAIR HIGHLIGHTS 2024

- WDH Community Award
- Remembrance Day support
- Actively promoted and supported the Lights switch and light up the Town.
- Supported the Lions Santa Grotto in the town hall
- Support to Friends of Friarwood Valley Gardens though the year, in particular the Friarwood Festival event management
- Support to businesses in various ways including risk assessment writing and funding streams
- New town centre events• participating in local PACT meetings
- Attending various meetings with council officials
- Lantern event support
- Pontefract Celebration of Singing
- 1940's Ropergate
- Market Hall telephone boxes replaced
- King's Award for Voluntary Service



Phil Cook | Vice Chairman

PLANNING GROUP REPORT

Introduction – Having acted as Planning Officer for Blackpool Civic Trust for almost 18 yrs I arrived at my new home in Hemsworth in September 2022. I visited Pontefract for the very first time – to visit a couple of the shops.

I was at once taken by the place and determined to become involved with Pontefract Civic Society as soon as I had settled into my new home and job at Archbishop Holgate Hospital and as time allowed. The rest as they say, is history! I joined the Planning Group in early 2024 and took on the role of coordinator in September 2024. I am still a very new boy, and this has certainly affected how I exercise the role. Whilst I often ask old questions, I like to think that I can sometimes add a new perspective.

The planning group continues to monitor changes to land and buildings in Pontefract town centre and surroundings. Few new buildings have appeared in the year and the number of planning applications compared to pre-covid continues to be low.

- The Group relies heavily upon individual members of the Planning Group pointing out past works – some good and some not so good. They also continue to monitor new scaffolding, finding out what is proposed, does it have planning permission, is one needed? We all regularly examine the local authority web site to identify redevelopment schemes and planning needed.
- Several members, individually, have walked the main town centre streets to identify changes in occupancy or alterations. I am deeply indebted to members for keeping me abreast of what is happening at street level.
- There continue to be regular refurbishments of shop frontages. These have varied in quality and architectural appropriateness
- Brownfield sites in the Pontefract Masterplan have not seen any development activity, these are former PGI site, Philidas site, and Carlton Furniture works.
- Housing under construction on phased development for 120 properties on Prince of Wales site is nearing completion by Taylor Wimpy called 'Ember Mews'. We think that a controlled bus gate through the site stays under consideration. It is true however, as several people have pointed out, if it is as effective as the town centre bollard system, we need not hold our breath!
- An excellent leaflet designed for all who live and/or work in the town conservation areas has been produced and delivered.

The major highlight for me was helping the group to identify and choose the 2024 Design Awards. Site visits were well appreciated and informative for all concerned. Other slight changes continue to highlight the attractiveness visually and environmentally of our town.

THOUGHTS FOR 2025 – INCLUDING SOME REPEATS FROM EARLIER REPORTS

- We need to review what group members do collectively versus individually, this will provide more clarity, and we could certainly do with some new members in the group.
- We are desperate for a group administrator.
- We will continue the good work of the Design Awards, starting our assessments earlier; it's already a well-run and well-received process, though if we can improve it including category criteria, we'll look to do that. We are also in the very early stages of a review as to where and when the ceremony is held.
- All relevant planning applications will continue to be reviewed and discussed on a monthly basis before the closure date, sending comments where appropriate.
- We need to consider how we might aid the enforcement and completion requirements to projects.

DONATIONS & BEQUESTS

Have you thought of making a donation to Pontefract Civic Society during your lifetime, or leaving us some money in your will?

Pontefract Voice and our Annual Reports show the tremendous work the civic society does to make Pontefract a better place; new projects always need support. The civic society is both independent and non-political.

We would be absolutely delighted if you would make a donation or a bequest. Both the Chair and Vice Chair are available if you wish to discuss this in more detail.





DESIGN AWARDS 2024 - BUILDINGS AND SPACES MAKE PONTEFRACT A BETTER PLACE

Pontefract Civic Society recently hosted its Design Awards for 2024 at Pontefract Town Hall in the presence of Cllr Darren Byford, Wakefield Council Mayor, and accompanied by his Consort, Peter.

Awards were presented by the mayor in front of a gathering of business and property owners, contractors, and civic society members, .

Civic Society Chair, Paul Cartwright said "this is an evening to celebrate regeneration projects which enhance the historic streetscape, Pontefract Racecourse and open spaces of Pontefract as a place for residents and visitors to shop, relax, and enjoy."

The civic society presented the Countess of Rosse Façade of the Year award to The Galway Girl for respecting and conserving the historic frontage of the former HSBC, and the London City & Midland Bank Limited. The Galway Girl was nominated in three categories and they walked away with two justifiable awards.

Tony Lumb, owner, said, "We are beyond proud to receive these awards from Pontefract Civic Society".

Also, for the very first time, Pontefract Civic Society presented a new award category – Environmental Sustainability Award which had been on the radar for a few years waiting for the right project. Paul Cartwright explained that over a number of years shifts in planning policy, the climate change crisis, rise in

energy costs and taxes have put added pressure on running a business.

The award was collected by Ted Newton on behalf of Farmer Copleys Kitchen new build. He said, "We're thrilled that Copleys Kitchen won the Environmental Sustainability Award. Sustainability has always been at the heart of what we do – from sourcing local, seasonal ingredients to reducing waste and implementing eco-friendly practices throughout our kitchen and farm. This award is a testament to our team's dedication and our commitment to preserving the environment while offering an exceptional experience to our visitors. A huge thank you to the Civic Society for recognising our efforts."

Other awards presented on the night were:

- Special Commendation – Friends of Friarwood Valley Gardens
- Regeneration Award – Galileo's Show Bar
- Improvement Award – Pontefract Racecourse Weighing Room complex for officials, media, jockeys and valets

At the start of the ceremony, Pontefract Civic Society's newly appointed Planning Coordinator, Canon Andrew Sage (formerly of Blackpool Civic Trust) encouraged those present to appreciate the town centre's heritage buildings by looking up above the shop fronts.

PONTEFRACT PLACEMAKING AT ITS BEST!

On Mon 27 Jan, Pontefract Civic Society hosted its Design Awards for 2024, in the Georgian Nelson Room of Pontefract Town Hall which were presented by Cllr Darren Byford, Mayor of Wakefield District Council accompanied by his Consort, in front of a gathering of business and property owners, contractors, community volunteers, representatives from Wakefield Council, and civic society members.

Civic Society Chair, Paul Cartwright said "this is an evening to celebrate regeneration projects which enhance the historic streetscape, destinations, and open spaces which make Pontefract a great place."

Paul Cartwright was MC for the night and the awards being presented were:

- **Heritage Award**
The Galway Girl
- **Improvement Award**
The Weighing Room complex at Pontefract Racecourse
- **Special Commendation**
Friends of Friarwood Valley Gardens
- **Regeneration Award**
Galileo's Show Bar
- **Environmental Sustainability Award**
Copley's Kitchen, Farmer Copley's
- **Façade of the Year Award**
The Galway Girl

Tony Lumb, The Galway Girl owner, said, "We are beyond proud to receive these awards from Pontefract Civic Society".

The evening was also an opportunity for the civic society to launch their new category of Environmental Sustainability where Ted Newton, Marketing Coordinator at Farmer Copley's said "Sustainability has always been at the heart of what we do – from sourcing local, seasonal ingredients to reducing waste and implementing eco-friendly practices throughout our kitchen and farm".

Canon Andrew Sage, the civic society's newly co-opted Planning Group Coordinator said when looking around any town or city centre, that we should look up to admire the rich architecture that is all around us.

Cllr Darren Byford, thanked Paul Cartwright for showing leadership in Pontefract supported a group of active volunteers, and in congratulating the winners, he went onto say, "the town is very lucky to have a civic society that does things differently to many others, led by a chair that knows which buttons to press for Pontefract".

Canon Andrew Sage
Planning Group Coordinator



2024 AWARD WINNERS

Improvement Award

The Weighing Room complex at Pontefract Racecourse



Environmental Sustainability Award

Copley's Kitchen, Farmer Copley's



Regeneration Award

Galileo's Show Bar



Special Commendation

Friends of Friarwood Valley Gardens



Heritage Award

The Galway Girl



Regeneration Award

Galileo's Show Bar



HIGHWAYS GROUP REPORT



The Highways Group held three meetings this year at Central Methodist Church. After these meetings, we met with Wakefield Council Transportation officers online.

In advance of the start in 2025 of the Streets for People traffic reduction scheme, the traffic

gyratory scheme around All Saints Church has been completed and appears to be working well. Introduction of it is hoped that the displacement of traffic caused by the traffic reduction measures will strengthen the need. Members attended the consultation held by West Yorkshire Combined Authority on the definitive plans for the Leeds to Pontefract Corridor Improvement Scheme, which has reduced in scope and provides a signalled pedestrian crossing at the park entrance roundabout, some highway improvements and improvements to the cycle route through the park. This scheme is unlikely to be delivered before 2027.

The scheme to introduce bus lanes on Southgate between the Town End roundabouts and Valley Road are being re-evaluated because of a shortfall in the funding available from the West Yorkshire Combined Authority.

We await plans for changes to traffic arrangements within Pontefract Park, following a review carried out by the Council's Streetscene Team, which will reflect the increase in traffic to and from Aspire@ThePark and the Huggamug as well as the improvements to the children's play area and the lake.

We continued to raise the importance of providing an accessible level pedestrian link between the Prince of Wales Park housing development and the footpath to Colonels Walk, which is a condition of the planning permission. The stepped pedestrian link which Avant Housing have provided does not satisfy this condition. The failure of the rising bollards to protect the town centre traffic free precinct continues to be a major concern and we have regularly raised this with WMDC. The South Featherstone Link Road has been on our agenda throughout the year and there is growing pressure from housing developers to provide access to south Featherstone. WMDC and WYCA are awaiting the outcome of their consultants' evaluation of the new road linking the Warhorse with the Crematorium. The West Yorkshire Combined Authority's efforts to promote bus usage continue with the single bus fares cap of £2 and the introduction of additional evening bus journeys on local routes operated by Arriva. Although there are doubts that both these initiatives will continue throughout 2025.

The repairs on the A1 to the Wentbridge viaduct and the Wentedge Road bridge are set to continue until summer 2025. The damaging effects of diverted traffic will continue and any repairs to the surrounding roads are the responsibility of the Local Authority.

For 2025 the Group will continue to meet in advance of our regular meetings with Wakefield Council officers. Regrettably no new members joined the Group this year, but we will continue to seek new members for the Group.

Anthony Dee

Highways Group Coordinator & Administrator

HERITAGE GROUP REPORT

2024 has been another busy year for the Heritage Group, with a productive blend of individual and collective achievement, and as the year progressed, we've even roped in additional volunteers working remotely on a number of projects. More of that later.

SPEAKER OPPORTUNITIES

In June, I was invited to speak at the Heritage Trust Network roadshow at Unity Works in Wakefield. In July, I presented what we do for Heritage Open Days at the Wakefield & District Family History Society AGM in Outwood, and later that month I an illustrated talk on Pontefract's blue plaques to 25 members of Upton Ladies Group. In November, I attended the Pontefract Conservative Ladies Lunch to deliver an illustrated talk to 50 ladies on the area immediately surrounding the club from Bridge Street through Market Place and Gillygate and onto Southgate.



TOWN CRIER IS NOW FULLY EMBEDDED IN THE CIVIC SOCIETY

John Turner is a member of our Heritage Group, Community Connectors Group and the Talks & Tours Group, and it is the former being reported here.

In January, John took the lead in the livery research and redesign, including costs which needed significant funding. Though by May, a letter to the Freemasons for support for replacement livery was deemed unsuccessful.



In June, John recommended delivery of weekly engagement sessions in the library, and they were successful, alongside regular proclamations on the street promoting events and activities in Pontefract, not just ours, as well, as showcasing community groups, businesses and market traders, and occasionally addressing residents and visitors as they pass by. By July, contacts were established with the Ancient and Honourable Guild of Town Criers ahead of a 2025 application, which also required the support of the Mayor of Wakefield Council. He then went visit the Knaresborough town crier in October, seeing him and his deputy in action around the historic town. The Executive gave the 'go ahead' to use our funds for replacement Town Crier livery.

By November, the new blue and gold livery had been received and a photo opportunity took place with John Turner and I stood outside Pontefract Town Hall. We also recognised that whilst the town crier's role has a big heritage focus, it is equally about community engagement and communication of activities from all aspects of the civic society and the wider community, and therefore, the role was then formally transferred to the Community Connectors Group coordinated by Phil Cook. A new booking process has also been created to cater for both community and commercial opportunities.

WORKING WITH WAKEFIELD COUNCIL - 'OUR HERITAGE OUR STORIES' AND MORE

Having previously been integral to the creation of the Heritage Framework, in May, we supported Our Heritage Our Stories Showcase in Pontefract Library and Our Heritage Our Stories Framework Launch at Wakefield Town Hall, one week later. This was also followed in July by an initial meeting in Wakefield with Tegwen Roberts, the newly appointed Heritage Development Manager between myself Phil Cook, vice chair.

We've worked with Library supervisor, Lee Wilson, to ensure stocks of all the heritage books we sell are available to purchase at the library. We facilitated the repainting of the Market Hall blue plaque on conclusion of the building's refurbishment project. Then in July, a council-funded Liquorice Walk and map based on past and present factory and garth locations was delivered as a health walk during Liquorice Shoots and the Liquorice Festival. Phil Henfrey and Derek Norfolk are thanked for their research, and John Turner for his support.



HERITAGE OPEN DAYS FESTIVAL RECORDS BEST EVER SUCCESS!

63 in person and online events was our best ever Heritage Open Days festival for Pontefract and the surrounding area, even stretching out to Hemsworth, Womersley, Kellington and Pollington.

26 brand new events and activities were delivered, engaging many partner organisations and places which were new to the festival, such as Featherstone Male Voice Choir's Celebration of Singing, a Quaker Businesses Walk, Electric Dreams talk on women in the electrification industry delivered by the University of Leeds. HOD2024 was a remarkable collective achievement including support from staff at Pontefract Castle and Pontefract Library. As the council culture grant was refused, we paid for the 800 booklets ourselves this year.



Regular attractions included the town hall, the racecourse, masonic hall, Darrington farming walk, the Rosse Observatory, and five different walks around Pontefract's conservation areas, two led by local historian and public speaker, Eric Jackson. New online slideshows of our four cinema/theatres and our nautical connections were also available on Facebook.

Over 1,400 people attended events in our programme, and top of the leader board was the



Celebration of Singing, and St Giles Church had record numbers on the ringing chamber visit, whilst Womersley Church had visitors from Manchester and Sheffield who had a plan to visit other HOD sites in our area, so our publicity is definitely working. We were really pleased with the positive response from all of our partners and the public who were both enthusiastic and really interested in Pontefract's rich heritage. Everyone enjoyed the variety in our extensive programme, and I was pleased to see some faces at multiple events, which must suggest that we've got it right.



PLAQUES FOR POMFRETIAN

In February, we were fortunate to receive a grant of £5,000 from the UK government Shared Prosperity Fund monitored by Wakefield Council and supported by West Yorkshire Combined Authority and the Mayor. We already had a list of potential recipients, though we did allow other nominations to be considered during the project. I also sought out a good negotiation with a supplier in Whitby, which allowed us to research past Pomfretians and then purchase eight blue plaques instead of the planned six.

Outside of this project, Pontefract Rotary Club were invited to pay the refurbishment costs for all or part of 10 plaques that they had installed over the years, though they declined due to low membership and

funds. Stocks of our Blue Plaque Guide were delivered to Pontefract Museum and Pontefract Library at intervals throughout the year.

SUPPORT FOR OTHER HERITAGE AND CULTURE EVENTS

In November, we attended The Liquorice Story drama production from New College students, and the Panto Society exhibition launch at the museum, then in December, the New College music students Christmas performance in St Giles Church.

PLANS FOR 2025

- Complete the installation of eight Plaques for Pomfretians.
- Facilitate sponsored plaques for West Yorkshire Astronomical Society's original location, and the 25th Anniversary of Production Park, South Kirkby,
- Heritage Walks for Doncaster Civic Trust in June, Wakefield Civic Society in August, and Illkley U3A in September.
- Receive research on Lemon Alley from Diane Atkinson's sister.
- Heritage Open Days theme for 2025 is Architecture
- A number of new projects will be considered, funding permitting

Paul Cartwright | Interim Heritage Coordinator
Supported by Phil Henfrey | HOD Coordinator

RAIL GROUP REPORT

Members of the Rail Group have met seven times through the year at Central Methodist Church.

We have held online meetings with officers from the rail team at the West Yorkshire Combined Authority, who recognise and support our arguments about improving rail links to Goole and Doncaster. Their influence over the rail network appears limited and their financial priorities will be on bus service franchising and the Leeds – Bradford light rail proposals. It is to be hoped that this may change with the Government's plans for greater local government devolution and a relaxation of the current tight government finances.

The scrapping of the Restoring our Railways Fund has severely weakened the activities and prospects of the Friends of Reopening Askern Station and with it the opportunity to provide a frequent link between Pontefract and Doncaster. The opening of the

Siemens train building factory in Goole may offer an improvement in the Pontefract – Goole service.

The focus of rail funding is concentrated on the Trans Pennine Route Upgrade and the area has benefited from the new Trans Pennine Express Manchester – Castleford – York service. Whilst this is welcome, we are aware of the risk that this poses to the Sheffield – Baghill – York service, and this has already seen the withdrawal of the Sunday service on this line.

Current work on the Trans Pennine Route Upgrade is also having an adverse effect on the reliability of the Grand Central service through Monkhill. The forthcoming December 2025 timetable sees more trains serving Pontefract, but regrettably the current day return on Saturdays to London disappears and we will be encouraging Grand Central to restore this well used facility.

We have been involved in online meetings with officers from Wakefield Council and the consultants on the plans for the installation of the new footbridge and lifts at Monkhill Station, which has suffered from significant delays, but work is now scheduled to start in February 2025.

It has proved a challenge to maintain our links with our MP Yvette Cooper, but we hope that this will improve in 2025. We have attended the Northern Rail Stakeholder conferences and the monthly online updates. Members attend and contribute to the Yorkshire Branch Railfuture meetings.

We have embarked on a project, as members of the Northern Rail Station Adoption Scheme, with art students at New College to install their artwork on Tanshelf station, which Northern hope will tie in with their 200 years of rail 1825 –2025 National publicity campaign.

To engage and learn from the successful activities of other rail station groups we have joined the Community Rail Partnership covering all three Pontefract stations. This gives us access to information, training and appropriate funding.

We continue to be extremely concerned about the deterioration of Baghill station building. We continue to pursue The Arch Company who are responsible for the building, but we recognise it is essential to identify a realistic alternative user for the building.

We will be carrying out further work on the development of our social media outlets and we will continue to raise issues which are designed to increase rail travel and generate new opportunities.

Meetings will continue throughout 2025, where we will encourage more members with an interest in local rail to join our group. We thank Dave Hogg for chairing our group meetings, and we are now in need of a Group Coordinator.

Anthony Dee | Rail Group Administrator

COMMUNITY CONNECTORS GROUP

2024 has been a great year for the Citizenship Group, as it was known at the start of the year.

In January it was relaunched after the effects of Covid had finally meant the group could restart activities fully. The priority was to find new active members and I'm delighted to say we found them and all are very active not only attending meetings with meaningful contributions, but also helping with our events and activities. Many have connections to other organisations which is paying dividends with mutual support. One of the early tasks was to look at the name, which I felt was off putting to some and didn't reflect what we do as a group. After a lengthy debate and a poll it was agreed we would rename as "Community Connectors" which would enable us to be identified for what we do and be more appealing to the public, while incorporating the Junior Civic Society and the Decoration Squad into this group, but maintaining their own names and identity.

The Community Showcase as always one of the first events of the year, was well attended in the town hall. Quickly followed by our two now regular summer events of WheelFest and Liquorice Shoots in the town centre, again partnering with KLH Events. As the group is not one to stand still, we took a gamble by introducing 1940's Ropergate, adding it as part of WheelFest24. I'm pleased and relieved to say it paid off and was a great success, and coming back for 2025. We also engaged more with schools and developed our partnership between local educational providers and the town centre businesses and other community groups, such as Featherstone Male Voice Choir. In 2024, we developed the events further bringing Star Wars characters to the town and added two flash mob dances with a local group; both were a first for our town.

We strengthened our partnership with the local schools, including St. Giles Academy and Pontefract Academies Trust; this partnership is still growing. At the end of the year, we had meetings with both King's and Carleton heads or deputies to scope out joint opportunities for 2025. It is very safe to say, we are very excited about what will happen in 2025. At our 2024 AGM, we presented the long-awaited Community Group Award to Friends



of Friarwood Valley Gardens based on their application summarising their 2023 projects, which were assessed by our trustees.

Later, we were later able to help with planning and delivery for the Pontefract Celebration of Singing, which saw five local choirs perform in the town hall, arranged by Richard Hirst and Featherstone Male Voice Choir.



We introduced our bi-monthly social lunches, which are growing in popularity.

We also worked with Citizen Coin Wakefield to promote rewarding volunteers.

2024 saw the return of our annual calendar to raise funds for The Prince of Wales Hospice, which we did jointly with Pontefract Art Club. Unfortunately, sales weren't as high as expected due to other calendars being on sale, though Michelle's Flowers our star sales point did well, and we still gave a donation to the hospice.

I am delighted in the way the whole team has taken this group forward, confirming that the new name of Community Connectors is very well suited and is just right for us, making it possibly one of the busiest and active years we have ever had.



COMMUNITY CONNECTORS GROUP ACHIEVEMENTS

- Community Showcase
- Engaged with Pontefract Academies Trust and St Giles Academy for various projects in particular window judging and we had most schools ever engaged in designing Christmas cards for banners around the Christmas tree
- Worked with The Prince of Wales Hospice
- PR and activities stall at Armed Forces Day, Liquorice Festival and Yorkshire Day
- Supported the lantern display
- Remembrance Day support
- 4 AEDs placed



- Actively promoted and supported the Lights Switch On.
- Supported the Lion's Santa's Grotto
- 2025 Calendar
- Support to businesses in various ways
- Star Wars Characters
- 1940's Ropergate
- Christmas with the Liquorice Singers
- Society Socials
- New livery for the Town Crier
- New merchandise - Pontefract T Shirts
- and of course, delivering activities to achieve the King's Award for Voluntary Servicership and funds.

DECORATION SQUAD REPORT

While 2024 hasn't been a year of new displays, a 'police car' was constructed for WheelFest utilising a mobility scooter courtesy of Parkgate Mobility.

The team built a UXB display, an ARP warden's box, plus road barriers following the 1940s theme for Ropergate. We placed decorations in the market hall telephone boxes.



DECORATION SQUAD ACHIEVEMENTS

Over 25 flags in the town and a town hall display commemorating VE Day

- Greater public engagement in all our town hall displays
- Utilised the Market hall telephone boxes



Phil Cook | Community Connectors Group Coordinator



TRUSTEES

Role	Name
Chair	Paul Cartwright
Vice Chair	Phil Cook
Secretary	Rachael Anderson
Treasurer	Ian Wood
Citizenship Coordinator	Phil Cook
Rail Coordinator	Dave Hogg
Interim Heritage Coordinator	Paul Cartwright

Role	Name
Planning Coordinator	Canon Andrew Sage
Highways Coordinator	Anthony Dee* <i>non-trustee</i>
Talks & Tours Coordinator	Dave Hogg
Futures Coordinator	Khalid Rasool (till July)
Co-opted	Dr Colin White
Co-opted	Peter Ferrari
Co-opted	Evelyn Westwood

OUR WORKING GROUPS

Community Connectors	Rail	Heritage	Planning
Phil Cook (c) Vacant (D) Vacant (A) Paul Cartwright Christine Cartwright Rhona Crichton Charles Atkin Sonia Atkin Richard Hirst John Turner Karen Haddock Lynne Hartley Bernie Weston Jan Barlow Michale Barlow	Dave Hogg (c) Philip Henfrey (D) Anthony Dee (A) Ian Wood Peter Cookson Rosemary Barnes Paul Cartwright Chris Hyomes Tony Hames Keith Shenton (from Dec) Brian Mayhew	Paul Cartwright (Interim C) Vacant (D) Vacant (A) Philip Henfrey (HOD Coordinator) Phil Cook John Turner Linda Benson Henfrey Derek Norfolk Diane Atkinson	Canon Andrew Sage (c) Philip Henfrey (D) Vacant (A) Christine Cartwright Paul Cartwright Evelyn Westwood Mike Farrell Peter Taylor
Highways	Talks & Tours	Futures	Business
Anthony Dee (c & A) Vacant (D) Derek Vaux David Hogg Peter Cookson Paul Cartwright Tony Hames Derek Norfolk	Dave Hogg (c) Colin White (D) Diane Atkinson Paul Cartwright Mollie Garbett George Gott Tracy Gott Chris Walker Ian Wood Phil Henfrey	Khalid Rasool (c) Vacant (D) Vacant (A) Paul Cartwright Phil Cook Peter Ferrari	Paul Cartwright Phil Cook

C – Coordinator – D – Deputy Coordinator – A – Administrator

REPORT OF TRUSTEES FOR THE PERIOD ENDING 31ST DECEMBER, 2024

The Trustees present their report with the financial statements of the charity for the period ended 31st December, 2024.

The accounts have been prepared in accordance with the SORP accounting policies set out by our Treasurer.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Pontefract Civic Society is a registered charity governed by constitution. The organisation is viable by self-generated income from subscriptions and events. Project funding is developed through grant opportunities. There are no plans to recruit an Executive Director, and we intend that the trustees will continue to manage the charity on a voluntary basis. In the long term, paid roles may be considered, should new income or grants sustain a different business model.

RECRUITMENT AND APPOINTMENT OF TRUSTEES

As set out in the Constitution, the Chair of Trustees is nominated by the membership. The trustees are set out in this report and are those in place at AGM. The Board of Trustees has the power to co-opt trustees, as necessary.

TRUSTEE INDUCTION AND TRAINING

The Trustees maintain a good working knowledge of charity, charity law and best practice, supported by attendance at charity training courses, as deemed applicable. This whole area is always under review in order for us to take advantage of opportunities as they arise; we should never stop learning.

ORGANISATION

The Charity is controlled by a Board of Trustees. The day to day running of the charity is led by the Chair and Vice Chair with other trustees in specific roles, as required.

CHARITABLE OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

The Society is established for the public benefit for the following purposes in the area comprising Pontefract and District, which area shall hereinafter be referred to as "the area of benefit":

- (i) To promote high standards of planning and architecture in or affecting the area of benefit.
- (ii) To educate the public in the geography, history, natural history and architecture of the area of benefit.
- (iii) To secure the preservation, protection, development and improvement of features of historic or public interest in the area of benefit.

PUBLIC BENEFIT

In furtherance of the said purposes, but not otherwise, the Society through its Executive Committee shall have the following powers:

1. To promote civic pride in the area of benefit.
2. To promote research into subjects directly connected with the objects of the Society and to publish the results of any such research.
3. To act as a co-ordinating body and to co-operate with the local authorities, planning committees and all other statutory authorities, voluntary organisations, charities and persons having aims similar to those of the Society.
4. To promote or assist in promoting activities of a charitable nature throughout the area of benefit.
5. To publish papers, reports and other literature.
6. To make surveys and prepare maps and plans and collect information in relation to any place, erection or building of beauty or historic interest within the area of benefit.
7. To hold meetings, lectures and exhibitions.
8. To educate public opinion and to give advice and information.
9. To raise funds and to invite and receive contributions from any person or persons whatsoever by way of subscription, donation and otherwise; provided that the Society shall not undertake any permanent trading activities in raising funds for its primary purpose. To acquire, by purchase, gift or otherwise, property, whether subject to any special trust or not.
10. Subject to such consents as may be required by law, to sell, let, mortgage, dispose of or turn to account all or any of the property or funds of the Society as shall be necessary.
11. Subject to such consents as may be required by law, to borrow or raise money for the purposes of the Society on such terms and on such security as the Executive Committee shall think fit, but so that the liability of individual members of the Society shall in no case extend beyond the amount of their respective annual subscriptions.
12. To do all such other lawful things as are necessary for the attainment of the said purposes. We do this by organising membership events and reaching out to non-members to attend public talks and meetings in accessible locations and venues.

A number of free public meetings are organised and publicised, which ensures the Society remains accessible, financially viable and sustainable.

The total spend on public benefit was £13,135.

We have supported a number of organisations and events: St Giles with St Mary's Pantomime Society (£30), Pontefract in Bloom (£650), Friends of Friarwood Valley Gardens (£75), The Prince of Wales Hospice (£175), The Royal British Legion (£55), Schools Art Exhibition (£1,214), WheelFest24 (£2,677), Liquorice Shoots (£1,165), Liquorice Shoots Schools Art Trail (£177), Heritage Open Days (£1,097), Decoration Squad (£104), Talks (£522), Christmas

banners (£273), St Giles Church (£25), Conservation Area materials (£310), Marketing (£1,053), Defibrillators (£3,000), Town Crier livery (£533).

RISK MANAGEMENT

The trustees have a risk management strategy which comprises:

1. An annual review of the risks.
2. The establishment of systems and procedures to mitigate risk.
3. Implementation of the procedures designed to minimise any potential impact should those risks materialise.

ROLE AND CONTRIBUTION OF VOLUNTEERS

Pontefract Civic Society celebrates its commitment to a diverse and skilled volunteer team, and whilst some members have worked hard, it has been patchy, though with some successes recently. There remains much more to do, and volunteers of all backgrounds and experiences are openly welcomed especially transferable skills from professional or community organisations which can benefit the civic society, thus ultimately, the town.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

The Statement of Financial Activities showed a surplus of £6,050.

RESERVES POLICY

In accordance with the advice of the Charity Commission, the charity aims to hold unrestricted reserves at levels of approximately 12 months of budgeted unrestricted expenditure, to meet unforeseen costs and statutory obligations.

FUTURE PLANS AND DEVELOPMENTS

The main priority continues to be to create a blend of experience and 'younger blood', supplemented by relevant governance controls and trustee training, to deliver operational plans:

- To continue working in partnership with public, private, and third sector stakeholders
- To increase our membership with a broader demographic and encourage active participation, particularly younger members of the community
- To develop our Business Member scheme for the benefit of all parties and the town
- To further embed more technology, specifically, Microsoft 365, for active use by trustees and other key members
- To develop a more strategic Board
- To diversify income generation
- To manage capacity-building acting as a facilitator for delivery projects of benefit to the town, in partnership with other groups
- To develop policies and procedures recommended by the Charity Commission

On behalf of the Board

Paul Cartwright | Chair

TREASURER'S REPORT



I am pleased to present the Treasurer's report for 2024

I can confirm that all expenditure has been correctly dual authorised, prior to processing payments promptly, when due, and properly allocated/accounted for. I would once again

like to thank Christopher Hyomes for an effective independent examination of our 2024 Annual Accounts.

2024 has again been another year of considerable activity. The summer saw repeated stagings of WheelFest which incorporated a 1940's themed event, and "Liquorice Shoots" both of which were organised and run by the Society. Once again various events centred around the Christmas period were also held. Our income in 2024 (£27,953) was considerably higher (almost 30%) than that of 2023 (£21,626), due in the main to a significantly higher level of donations received, particularly in relation to the provision of several defibrillators which we have located in the town centre, together with a £1,000 legacy left to the Society by the late Alan Blaza, a former President of the Society. Our thanks are gratefully extended to the individuals and local businesses that responded to our appeal for funding the defibrillators.

Our net costs in 2024 after adjusting for the transfer of funds between accounts amounted to £19,582 which was significantly higher than in 2023 (£15,572). This difference can be put down almost entirely to the costs of the defibrillators (£3,000), and of our 2025 calendars (£1,190). Increases in the costs of events and PR materials were offset by a significant reduction in grant funded expenditure. Expenditure relating to the £5,000 grant received in the year for the provision of several blue plaques will be incurred in 2025. In keeping with previous years the Civic Society has made donations to various local organisations, the principal benefactors once again being Pontefract in Bloom and The Prince of Wales Hospice.

The accounts reflect a net cash inflow in the year of £8,371 (2023 £6,050). Cash reserves as at 31st December 2024 stood at £28,758, 89% of which (£25,695) has been ring-fenced for future projects.

Ian Wood | Treasurer

EVENTS CALENDAR 2025

PCS Talk & Events

March	
15	Community Showcase and AGM Pontefract Town Hall
18	Olaf's Tales of Battle Chris Cade
April	
15	All about Chocolate Allan Dixon
May	
20	Yorkshire Folk on Holiday in the Early 20th Century Christine Leveridge
June	
14	WheelFest25/1940's Ropergate - Town Centre
17	The Pontefract Murder Eric Jackson
July	
12	Liquorice Shoots Town Centre
13	Liquorice Festival Town Centre
15	The Mobile Police Museum David Hardcastle
August	
September	
16	Aquabox (Clean drinking water charity) Gordon
12 - 21	Heritage Open Days
October	
21	The Many behind the Few David Skillern
November	
18	My visit to the Normandy D-Day Beaches Dave Hogg
December	

Other events

March	
April	
8 14 30	Pontefract Races
May	
8	VE Day 80
23	Pontefract Races Evening Meeting
24	KLH Events Spring Fling - Ackworth Quaker School
June	
6	Prince of Wales Hospice Corporate Golf Day
9	Pontefract Races Evening Meeting
14	KLH Events Wheelfest - St Giles' Church
22 30	Pontefract Races
July	
8	Pontefract Races
12	KLH Events Liquorice Shoots - Pontefract
13	KLH Events Liquorice Festival - Pontefract Town Hall
18	Pontefract Races Evening Meeting
19	Prince of Wales Hospice Cyclothon & Family Fun Day
27	Pontefract Races
August	
1	Yorkshire Day Valley Gardens
6 17	Pontefract Races
9	Friarwood Festival
September	
18 25	Pontefract Races
October	
6 20	Pontefract Races
21	Trafalgar Day
November	
9	Remembrance Sunday
11	Armistice Day
December	
6	KLH Events Christmas Fair - Ackworth Quaker School



Scan the QR Code to go to the Pontefract Civic Society website

ANNUAL ACCOUNTS 31 DECEMBER 2024

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

INCOME	2024	2023
Annual subscriptions received	£4,954	£4,794
Gift aid	£-	£-
Blue plaques	£-	£-
Grants	£6,928	£6,922
Donations	£6,954	£3,565
Events revenue	£6,467	£4,896
Book, calendar, mug, pen and badge sales	£1,599	£1,269
Recharge cost of design award plaques	£91	£180
Legacies	£1,000	£-
SUB-TOTAL	£27,953	£21,626
INCOME FROM MONETARY ASSETS		
Transfers between accounts	£3,502	£3,598
Loan	£-	£-
Bank interest	£-	£-
TOTAL INCOME	£31,455	£25,224
EXPENDITURE	2024	2023
DIRECT CHARITABLE EXPENDITURE:		
Civic Voice	£224	£251
YHACS	£50	£50
Railfuture	£25	£25
Community Rail Network	£90	£90
Events & meetings	£6,527	£3,547
Donations	£835	£1,229
SUB-TOTAL	£7,751	£5,192
OTHER EXPENDITURE INCURRED:		
Defibrillators	£3,000	£-
Membership refunds	£20	£-
Insurance	£1,186	£1,208
Printing & Postage	£263	£317
Grants expenditure	£1,651	£5,516
Transfers between accounts	£3,502	£3,598
Calendar Printing & Envelopes	£1,190	£-
Business support costs	£91	£168
PR Materials	£3,797	£2,325
Website & Other Software Costs	£-	£60
Travel costs	£-	£11
Membership related costs	£633	£779
SUB-TOTAL	£15,333	£13,982
TOTAL EXPENDITURE INCURRED	£23,804	£19,174
OVERALL EXCESS/DEFICIT OF INCOME OVER EXPENDITURE	£8,371	£6,050
STATEMENT OF ASSETS OF LIABILITIES AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2023	2024	2023
MONETARY ASSETS		
Barclays Community A/c (current)	£28,746	£20,387
Paypal A/c	£12	£-
Totals	£28,758	£20,387
RECONCILIATION OF CASH MOVEMENTS TO BANK BALANCES		
Opening bank balances	£20,387	£14,337
Total cash receipts	£31,455	£25,224
LESS: EXPENDITURE	£23,084	£19,174
TOTAL CASH INFLOW	£8,371	£6,050
CLOSING BANK BALANCES	£28,758	£20,387

The Income and Expenditure Account for the year ending 31 December 2024 and the Statement of Assets and Liabilities as at 31 December 2024 set out above are as approved by the Executive Committee.

Treasurer: IWood (2024) I have examined the Receipts and Payments for the Year 2024 and found it to be in accordance with the records and vouchers produced.

Christopher Hyomes | Independent Examiner | Date: 10 Feb, 2025. **P Cartwright** | Chairman | Date: 3 Feb, 2025
Charity Commission number 513509

Gold Member 	Gold Member 	Gold Member 	Gold Member 	Gold Member 
Gold Member 	Gold Member 	Gold Member 	Gold Member 	Gold Member 
Gold Member 	Gold Member 	Silver Member 	Silver Member 	Silver Member 
Silver Member 	Silver Member 	Silver Member 	Silver Member 	
Bronze Member 	Bronze Member 	Bronze Member 	Bronze Member 	

COMMUNITY GROUP MEMBERS

Friends of Friarwood Valley Gardens • Friends of Pontefract Park • Liquorice Singers • Pontefract Art Club
 Pontefract Collieries FC • Pontefract Heritage Partnership • Pontefract in Bloom • Pontefract Choral Society
 Castleford & Pontefract Lions Club • Pontefract Rugby Union Football Club • St Giles Centre • Pontefract Rotary Club
 Carleton Running Community • Featherstone Male Voice Choir • St Giles with St Mary's Pantomime Society
 The Urbane Commune • Pontefract Calligraphers • Ackworth & Pontefract Branch RBL
 Friends Meeting House (Quakers) • Featherstone Rovers Foundation • Pontefract Community Kitchen



With thanks to Pontefract Print and Design, for the print and design of the Pontefract Civic Society Annual Report 2024.



For more information, contact us by email:

✉ info@pontefractcivicsociety.org.uk

or visit us on social media:

📘 @PontefractCivic

ANNUAL ACCOUNTS 31 DECEMBER 2024

Income and Expenditure Account

Income	2024
Annual subscriptions received	£ 4,954
Gift aid	£ -
Blue plaques	£ -
Grants	£ 6,928
Donations	£ 6,954
Events revenue	£ 6,467
Book, calendar, mug, pen and badge sales	£ 1,559
Recharge cost of design award plaques	£ 91
Legacies	£ 1,000
Sub-Total	£ 27,953
Income from monetary assets	
Transfers between accounts	£ 3,502
Loan	£ -
Bank interest	£ -
Total Income	£ 31,455

Expenditure	2024
Direct charitable expenditure:	
Civic Voice	£ 224
YHACS	£ 50
Railfuture	£ 25
Community Rail Network	£ 90
Events & meetings	£ 6,527
Donations	£ 835
Sub-Total	£ 7,751
Other Expenditure incurred:	
Defibrillators	£ 3,000
Membership refunds	£ 20
Insurance	£ 1,186
Printing & Postage	£ 263
Grants expenditure	£ 1,651
Transfers between accounts	£ 3,502
Calendar Printing & Envelopes	£ 1,190
Business support costs	£ 91
PR Materials	£ 3,797
Website & Other Software Costs	£ -
Travel costs	£ -
Membership related costs	£ 633
Sub-Total	£ 15,333
Total expenditure incurred	£ 23,084

Overall Excess/Deficit of Income over Expenditure £ 8,371

Statement of Assets and Liabilities as at 31 December 2024

Monetary Assets	2024
Barclays Community A/c (current)	£ 28,746
Paypal A/c	£ 12
Totals	£ 28,758

Reconciliation of cash movements to bank balances

Opening bank balances	£ 20,387
Total cash receipts	£ 31,455
Less: Expenditure	£ 23,084
Total cash inflow	£ 8,371
Closing bank balances	£ 28,758

The Income and Expenditure Account for the year ending 31 December 2024 and the Statement of Assets and Liabilities as at 31 December 2024 set out above are as approved by the Executive Committee.

Treasurer: I Wood (2024) I have examined the Receipts and Payments for the Year 2024 found it to be in accordance with the records and vouchers produced.

Signed:.....Date:.....

Signed:.....

Christopher Hyomes Date: 10 Feb, 2025
Independent Examiner
Charity Commission number 513509

P Cartwright [Chairman

2023

£ 4,794
£ -
£ -
£ 6,922
£ 3,565
£ 4,896
£ 1,269
£ 180
£ -
£ 21,626

£ 3,598
£ -
£ -
£ 25,224

2023

£ 251
£ 50
£ 25
£ 90
£ 3,547
£ 1,229
£ 5,192

£ -
£ -
£ 1,208
£ 317
£ 5,516
£ 3,598
£ -
£ 168
£ 2,325
£ 60
£ 11
£ 779
£ 13,982
£ 19,174

£ 6,050

2023

£ 20,387

£ -

£ 20,387

£ 14,337

£ 25,224

£ 19,174

£ 6,050

£ 20,387

Statement of
Director's Remuneration

and

..... Date:.....

Date: 03 Mar, 2025

TALKS & TOURS GROUP REPORT

Our programme kicked off in January with an intriguing visit to the Rosse Observatory in Carleton. We were made very welcome by the West Yorkshire Astronomical Society.



An interesting presentation was given which detailed how they evolved from meeting in a roof space in a farmer's barn, to the amazing observatory they have now. We were then taken in groups up to the telescope where we were shown Venus, and various details of the Moon's surface. This was a truly amazing experience. February brought us David Jones, our former Mayor, who talked us through his hectic year of office. It was an incredible insight to hear about all the functions he attended and interesting people he met in his term of office.

March was an unusual talk by Circus historian Steve Ward. We were given incredible details of truly amazing feats by women in the Victorian and Edwardian era, including being shot from cannons and dangling from hot air balloons only using their teeth.

In April, fairground historian Steve Smith returned to do part two of the Pontefract's Statute Fair. Unfortunately this was very disappointing as Steve spent most of the talk repeating part one.

Another unusual talk was given by Jane Ellis in May. Jane showed us many breathtaking images of rail company's vintage posters. The images were mostly superb images around the UK to entice people to travel on their railway. The design, style and artwork of the posters was incredible.

A rather short presentation about the Battle of Flamborough Head was given in June by local historian Dave Cooke. Details and images were shown of the brief naval battle in which the Royal Navy was humiliated just off Flamborough Head by the maverick turncoat John Paul Jones.

In July, many interesting images of Wakefield and the surrounding area were shown by local historian Christine Leveridge. Details and stories were given of King George V tour of the West Riding in 1912, using Wentworth Woodhouse as their base.

A special visit took place in August when we toured Production Park in South Kirkby. This complex is simply mind blowing. There are huge staging areas where various famous artists do a practise run with their special effects, lighting and sound. They also manufacture staging and various props on site in the workshops. We were all astounded that such a prestigious and massive facility should be on our doorstep.

In September old favourite Eric Jackson gave us another very professional talk on the UK canal system. Eric took us through their inception and construction, to the decline in the 20th century, and back to the leisure resurgence of the late 20th century.

Unfortunately in October our scheduled magic show was replaced at the last moment due to a double booking oversight. However, we were treated to a very humorous and unusual presentation on the history of the Denby Dale pies. The details and logistics of baking a world record beating pie were truly incredible. Some said this was the best talk they had ever seen!



Actor Chris Cade brought the curtain down on our season of talks in November, with a moving performance of Arthur Walker's Great War. This was the sad tale of an East Yorkshire farmer Arthur Walker's experiences and tribulations whilst serving in the East Yorkshire's Wagoners Regiment. There was many a moist eye in the audience.

Attendances have generally been good throughout the year, though we are always keen to attract non-members. It is also often difficult to find a volunteer to steward the door; we are considering a rota system.

Dave Hogg | Talks and Tours Co-ordinator.

PONTEFRACT CIVIC SOCIETY

England & Wales - Charity number 513509

Accounts



ANNUAL REPORT 2023



CONTENTS

Chair's Review of 2023	4
Patron's Address	7
President's Address	7
Citizenship Group Report	8
Decoration Squad Report	9
Futures Group Report	9
Highways Group Report	10
Rail Group Report	10
Talks & Tours Group Report	11
Planning Group Report	12
Heritage Group Report	12
Heritage Open Days	13
Design Awards 2023	14
Our Trustees & Working Groups	18
Vice Chair's Report	19
Treasurer's Report	20
2023 Annual Accounts	21
2023 Calendar of Events	23

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Venue provision: Town Hall, Library and Castle (WMDC), The Old Grocers, Tracked Spider Solutions, King's Croft Hotel, Central Methodist Church, The Magistrates Market, The Court Cafe, Cromwells and The Red Lion

Heritage Open Days: All venues, exhibitors, speakers, workshop hosts, and tour guides, too many to mention

Ticket/book: The Old Grocers, Michelle's Flowers, House of Ales, Pomfret Gallery and Magistrates Market

Decoration collection points: Library, Yorkshire Building Society, and Michelle's Flowers

Photography courtesy of: Christine & Paul Cartwright, Peter Ferrari, Medlock Photography, Dan Barber Photography, Prince of Wales Hospice, Phil Cook, design award winners and agents

Window Decorations Judges: Pontefract Academies Trust schools and St Giles CofE Academy

Decoration Squad: Both civic society members, other volunteers including schools and Magistrates Court

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CHAIR'S REVIEW OF 2023

I am pleased that our membership has continued to grow once more, and in every category, which shows our message is getting through, as our position as the premier community group in Pontefract.

Moreover, I am pleased to report that three of our working groups are now in a stronger position following my personal invention, though others could do with more active members. I always say, with more volunteers, we can do more, and that is a proven fact. Some members may feel if we don't get volunteers, we'll just scale back our activities, and prioritise, though that makes me even more determined to lead an active Civic Society by encouraging members to get involved, and to work hard recruiting new members. As I said this time a year ago, I shouldn't have to attend every working group to ensure an annual plan of work is prepared, signed off, and then delivered.



WORKING FOR PONTEFRACT IN PARTNERSHIP WITH WAKEFIELD MDC

Throughout the year, I've had in person and online meetings with officers and elected members at all levels and across various departments, and Phil Cook has equally contributed to most of these meetings. Examples are:

- Cllrs Denise Jeffery, Malcolm Graham, and Mark Lynam (Corporate Regeneration Director)
- Teams such as Markets, Festivals Events & Tourism, Highways, Armed Forces Day Steering Group, the cross-team Pontefract Delivery Group, and Arts Heritage & Culture supported by Heritage Lincolnshire
- Attended the Mayor's final 'hurrah' at Wakefield town hall as a show of support for Cllr David Jones and Annette
- Online meeting with the council and Jacobs (consultants) on the future relocation of Pontefract Hospital staff car park
- Judging musicians for the castle summer programme
- Preliminary meetings for 'Our Year'
- Light Up events in Pontefract town centre, and the castle
- Destination Management workshop

BUSINESS ENGAGEMENT

- Prince of Wales Business Club 5
- WheelFest beer mashing in Altofts and launch at The Old Grocers
- Advancing No. 23/Erubi planning application to a decision following a lengthy delay
- Attended meetings for businesses with the Police and key council representatives
- 2022 Design Awards presented, and assessments during 2023
- Launch of Copley's Kitchen
- Christmas shop window competition
- Shared business newsletters from other organisations covering funding, training, and events

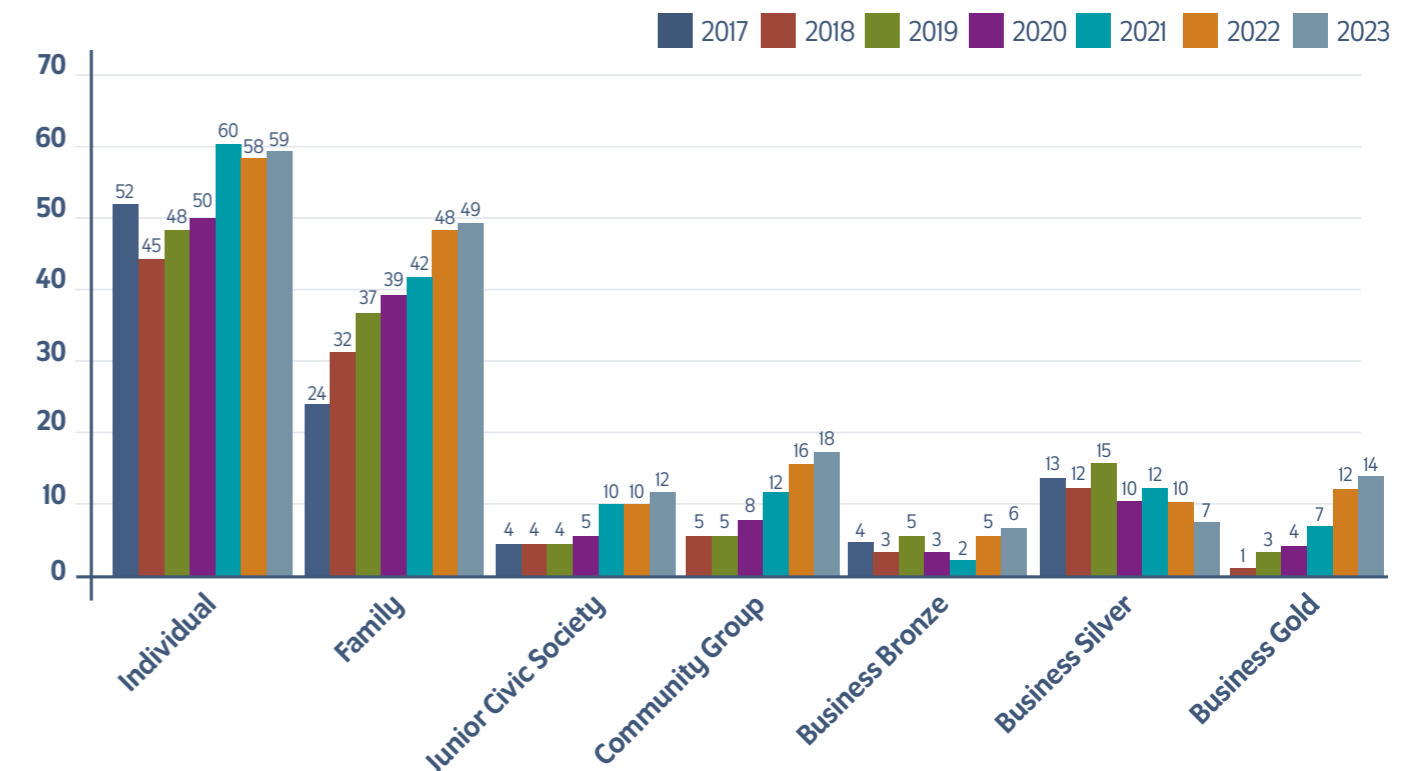
WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH OTHER LOCAL GROUPS

- AGMs for Friends of Pontefract Park, and Friends of Friarwood Valley Gardens
- Presentation on the Civic Society to Darrington Ladies Group
- Attended Pontefract Art Club exhibition; for Liquorice Shoots and Liquorice Festival business in particular, engaging with Rhona Crichton in meetings with Pontefract Academies Trust schools
- Community Showcase in Pontefract town hall
- Occasional volunteering for Friends of Friarwood Valley Gardens litter picking and gardening
- King's School Art & DT exhibition
- Rail meetings in Askern, and closer to home to highlight issues at Baghill Station with Arch (the owner)
- Meeting with Ackworth School
- Coordinating and delivering Heritage Open Days
- Promoting the Civic Society in schools to the CEO of Pontefract Academies Trust

- Support given Pontefract Collieries FC for a community centre and a skatepark (projects not confirmed yet due to key stakeholder support being needed)
- Welcomed the Urban Commune to Pontefract
- Armistice Day and Remembrance Day at the War Memorial
- Supported Carleton High School's Remembrance Day, and Christmas Spectacular
- Supporting Castleford & Pontefract Lions Club Santa's Grotto
- Christmas with the Liquorice Singers



MEMBERSHIP BY TYPE



STAKEHOLDER WORKING AT NATIONAL AND REGIONAL LEVEL

- Railfuture (Yorkshire Branch)
- Civic Voice webinars and Regional Forum
- Yorkshire & Humber Association of Civic Societies (where I am a trustee) visits to other places, and online Executive meetings
- High Street Taskforce webinars
- The Yorkshire Society – supporting the Heritage Summit in Saltaire, and taking up the role of project manager for the 2024 Heritage Summit in Hull
- Haworth/Prince of Wales Liaison Group

PUBLIC RELATIONS

- ITV Calendar King's Coronation soundbites
- Several BBC Radio Leeds live interviews for the King's Coronation (which I did from London), WheelFest, Liquorice Shoots, and Heritage Open Days
- Engaging with Rhubarb Radio for WheelFest
- Publishing news on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and our website
- Pontefract Voice



GOVERNANCE, ADMINISTRATION & LOGISTICS

- Member renewals and new member recruitment achieving the highest member numbers in my time in the Civic Society!
- Annual Report 2022 and Annual General Meeting 2023
- A successful funding assessment meeting from West Yorkshire Lieutenancy on behalf the Freemasons
- A successful stage 1 assessment of the Civic Society, leading towards the possible King's Award for Voluntary Service in 2024
- Administering Design Award assessments
- Managing schools judging Christmas window displays
- Notice boards and display cabinets updated (Town Hall, bus station, library, and the Magistrates Market)
- All publicity for talks, events, and including press releases, and submissions to YHACS newsletter
- Working with Panda IT to maintain our website
- Circulated grants information to community groups
- Christmas Dinner

NOW FOR 2024

To repeat what I said a year ago, more of the same from 2024, with the things that will make the Civic Society be effective - more delegation, more new members, and more active members.

In leading Pontefract Civic Society's board of trustees for another two years (if re-elected), my role will ensure that the promises made 12 months ago continue to be delivered and strengthened, my objectives being:

- Continuing to make the board more strategic by co-opting trustees especially from business professions, whilst ensuring trustees delegate operational tasks to our coordinators and working groups
- It is essential that in 2024 I recruit an Honorary Secretary
- To further embed MS365 and other technologies for greater efficiency and effectiveness, including a review of our website
- All working group members to engage in recruiting additional active members to deliver their annual plan
- Through our Futures Group, to review our strategy
- To continue to strengthen existing partnerships, and build new ones
- To use our increased public awareness to bring in new members
- Continue to create a more 'social' Civic Society, whilst delivering our core constitutional objectives

Paul Cartwright - Chair, Board of Trustees

PATRON'S ADDRESS

A highlight of the PCS year for me was being able to attend the Away Day Plan on 21st July 2023.

It is always a good thing to involve members in looking at the full range of activities provided and having ideas on how they can be improved and developed. It was so encouraging to see at first-hand how enthusiastic were the members in coming up with ideas and potential plans for the future. Khalid Rasool was an excellent facilitator. I hope I am not giving away state secrets but there were five important highlights coming out of the day. These being:

1. The need to constantly increase community awareness and engagement with the Society
2. The need to review and enhance the online presence of the Society
3. Organise diverse events and initiatives
4. To develop and strengthen corporate relationships and fund raising



5. Undertake a regular evaluation exercise on all that is being provided by the Society and adapt when necessary

A classic example of number 3 was the very successful WheelFest event which saw many visitors who surely would have boosted the local economy that day. Congratulations to Phil Cook and his team in not only organising and promoting this event but also showed an innovative approach to the use of the town centre.

I am so impressed with the range of activities of the Society and the role played by its many volunteers that I encouraged the Chairman in 2023 to look at the possibility of seeking a nomination for the King's Award for Voluntary Service. This award, if achieved, is personally signed by the King and has MBE status. The Lord Lieutenant of West Yorkshire presents the award. I understand a nomination has been made and wish the Society every success.

Michael Sayles Fox DL - Hon Patron

PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

Although the memory of the Covid 19 pandemic for many people is fast receding as we readjust to normal life, the effects of it are still very much with us and have badly affected many organisations, slowing down recovery in many ways.

But over the last year or two, in spite of challenging trading conditions, we have seen several new businesses opening up in Pontefract; though few have been shops in the traditional sense, most are in the hospitality or service sectors. Ropergate in particular has been radically changed with several new cafe bars opening over the period and this process is not yet complete.

I'm delighted to report that the Society has been very closely associated with these developments and has worked hard to

recognise and reward good work when it has been done to a high standard and this has been publicly recognised in our Annual Awards event. In particular, the Civic Society has worked hard to support businesses by being sponsors and supporters of many events throughout the summer months, designed to bring visitors into the town in their thousands. In addition to the traditional Liquorice Festival and the events associated with the Castle, Park and Valley Gardens, the Civic Society hosted a highly successful WheelFest in the town centre, which promises to be bigger and better this coming summer. In addition to this a 1940s themed weekend is planned to add to an already impressive series of events. All this we hope will lead to a perception of Pontefract as a vibrant and interesting place to visit, with a warm welcome to all.

All this requires much hard work to put in place and I must thank members of the Civic Society for all their efforts in bringing these events to fruition. I must also thank Wakefield Council, with whom we have a good working relationship, for their help in what we seek to do.

Notwithstanding these highly visible public events, the Society has also hosted a successful series of monthly public talks, while behind the scenes, our various committees work continually to improve different aspects of the town's life and these are reported on elsewhere in this report.



Finally, I would like to emphasise that we are not an inward-looking closed clique of people who simply wish to complain and bewail our situation. We are open to new ideas and we welcome into the Civic Society all those, both as workers or supporters, who love Pontefract and want to see it prosper. Why not come and join us?

It only remains for me to extend my customary thanks to our Chairman and the Executive Committee for all they have done over the past year and for their astonishing work ethic.

Peter Cookson - President

CITIZENSHIP REPORT

We had hoped that in 2023 we would be able to reform our Citizenship Group and become more active than in previous years.

Unfortunately, due to personal issues at the start of the year, this was not to be. Despite this set back, the Community Showcase returned to the town hall in March and by mid-year, the group was back in full flow although low in members. This engagement was helped by partnering with KLH Events for WheelFest23 and Liquorice Shoots, and also engaging more with schools and developing our partnership between local educational providers, town centre businesses, and community groups, such as Pontefract Art Club.

WheelFest23 was a new event and was built on the back of the successful Jubilee market in 2022 which included a small vehicle show in Beastfair; this idea was expanded to create WheelFest23. 2023 saw its own event with 80 vehicles of all ages and categories being displayed in most areas of the precinct, with a full day's programme of entertainment. This included a character parade of mascots and other costumed characters from various local organisations and sports teams – we even had Stig and Mini Mouse. The day was a massive success, not only for the civic society, but the town, our local businesses, and those charities which attended raising around £4000.

From data supplied by Wakefield Council, we can say that the day attracted 10,000 people in addition to the day's normal footfall. The feedback was brilliant from the exhibitors and the public, ensuring that this event will be run again in 2024, with a difference; the addition of a one-day 1940's event in Ropergate. There will be a road closure allowing for street decorations harking back to WWII, with displays and exhibits, local history information, entertainment and dancing, allowing businesses to join in the theme, taking advantage of increased footfall.

Shortly after the success of WheelFest23 followed Liquorice Shoots. This was brought about from the Council review of the 2022 two-day Liquorice Festival, which was less successful than envisaged, and we were informed that 2023's Liquorice Festival would revert to a one day event. This was seen as an opportunity for the civic society to create a Saturday warm-up event prior to the annual Liquorice Festival.

Our initiative was welcomed and fully supported by council colleagues. The civic society was fully determined to make sure that a weekend of events would work. Working with KLH Events, we looked for businesses to join in and create a new event called Liquorice Shoots. The key emphasis was that this was a community event, not on the same scale as the Liquorice Festival. Our event was a great success despite being held on one of the wettest days of the year!

Through Michelle Grainger's contacts, we staged a Fun Dog Show in support of The Prince of Wales Hospice, as well as a character parade, live music, and over 40 craft stalls across the

town complementing the regular Saturday market.

WheelFest and Liquorice Shoots were only achievable by working closely with the Wakefield Council events team, and with support of local councillors and businesses. Moving forward, these two events will see sponsorship opportunities for businesses to join in and promote themselves. Both events were fully reviewed afterwards which gave us the confidence to expand further in 2024, expanding WheelFest24 into Ropergate with a 1940's day, and the potential for additional entertainment zones.

Later in 2023, we re-established our partnership with 13 local schools, including St. Giles Academy, and Pontefract Academies Trust, and this partnership is still growing. At the end of the year, we had meetings with most school heads or deputies to scope out joint opportunities for 2024. It is safe to say that we are very excited with how this will develop in 2024, though as always, we needed new members for the Citizenship Group.

To this end, a successful meeting was held in November, attended by 13 invited people, all of whom are involved in community projects, activities or organisations. The purpose was to strengthen the group's delivery, and look at further opportunities to promote our town and its community. I also announced that we wished to change the name of the Citizenship Group to reflect what the group actually does; to date, we have not been able to agree a suitable name to match breadth of activities and responsibilities which includes youth, business, promotion, membership, and more. We would welcome any ideas for names that you may have.

I am delighted at the way the whole team has taken this group forward, whilst adapting to changing circumstances and the support given to myself during my recovery, making it possibly, one of the busiest and active years we have ever had.



CITIZENSHIP ACHIEVEMENTS 2023

- Community Showcase
- Engaged with Pontefract Academies Trust and St Giles Academy on various projects such as the Christmas bauble display, and business window judging
- Worked with Rhona Crichton from Pontefract Art Club to have a school art display in shop windows for Liquorice Shoots and the Liquorice Festival
- PR and activities stall at Armed Forces Day & Yorkshire Day
- WDH Community work
- Actively promoted and supported the Christmas Light Up
- Supported the Lion's Santa Grotto in Town Hall
- Identified a replacement fundraising event, Christmas with the Liquorice Singers, to replace our annual photographic calendar for Prince of Wales Hospice
- New town centre events
- Christmas with the Liquorice Singers

DECORATION SQUAD REPORT

Over the years, the Decoration Squad has accumulated numerous display which are in storage; these were reviewed and checked for damage and refurbishment.

It was decided that the Liquorice display needed to be fully refurbished, and further displays were introduced for Liquorice Shoots, namely life-size Bertie and Betty Bassett, who we understand for 2024 will be expecting a new arrival.

The team also created a union flag for display on the town hall along with the King's cypher to mark the Coronation, and Remembrance Day decorations were refurbished. A new light display was made for the Magistrates Market, unfortunately it did not deliver the impact we had hoped for, and this will be repurposed for 2024. The north of the town centre is an area of concern which lacks Christmas decorations.

As always we are grateful for public support through the donations of recycled bottle bottoms for our displays, and long may that continue.

DECORATION SQUAD ACHIEVEMENTS 2023

- Over 25 flags across the town celebrated the King's Coronation, supported by a display on the town hall
- Remembrance Day support
- Displays on the town hall for various occasions
- Working with schools to create a large bauble display on the town hall
- Greater public engagement in all our town hall displays
- Community plans for the use of the iconic red telephone boxes



Phil Cook - Citizenship Group Coordinator

FUTURES GROUP REPORT

We have embarked on a comprehensive strategy for the civic society to enhance vitality by increasing membership, fostering stronger business and community ties, and boosting fund-raising initiatives.



A key component of this strategy involves the promotion of cross-generational engagement, aiming to create a more unified community that values the contributions of all age groups. In pursuit of this goal, we have placed significant emphasis on evolving the society's digital footprint to better connect with the community and showcase its activities. Integral to the development of these strategic initiatives was a collaborative session where the Futures Group met in July with the board, working group coordinators, and key members. This half day board 'away day' was crucial for fleshing out individual strategies, ensuring a cohesive and unified approach to achieving the society's objectives.

By organizing inclusive events and enhancing online engagement in 2024 and beyond, the Futures Group is dedicated to solidifying Pontefract Civic Society's presence as a pivotal part of the community, driving forward into a promising and interconnected future.

Khalid Rasool - Futures Group Coordinator

HIGHWAYS GROUP

The Highways Group met twice in 2023, in advance of meetings with Wakefield MDC Transportation officers.

At these meetings we were able to gain more information on the following current highway issues, which the group will continue to review in 2024:

- The South Featherstone Link Road – No real progress, but it was good to hear that the Council are keen to avoid piecemeal road developments.
- The Park Road A639 Leeds to Pontefract Corridor Improvement Plan which regrettably does not include any impact of house building on the former Parkside Hotel site by Harworth Estates, nor road layout changes from further development at Junction 32.
- The outcome of the review carried out by the Council's Street Scene Team into the traffic arrangements within Pontefract Park.



- The implementation of 'The Streets for People' scheme in Horsefair, including the traffic gyratory scheme around All Saints Church.
- The delay in opening an accessible pedestrian link between the Prince of Wales housing development and the footpath to Colonels Walk.
- The ongoing problems with the failure of the rising bollards to protect the town centre traffic-free precinct.
- The development of a district-wide car parking policy which we trust will create a blueprint for the assessment of need and provision of car parking in the town.
- The narrowness of parts of Skinner Lane near to De Lacy Way.
- A review of the state, relevance or absence of traffic road signs and other highway infrastructure issues around the town.
- The suggested introduction of 20mph speed limit on Mayor's Walk.

Our Group will continue to meet regularly in 2024, and we are always pleased to welcome new members to the Group.

Anthony Dee - Highways Group Coordinator

RAIL REPORT

The Rail Group met eight times, about every six weeks in 2023.

Group members have maintained contact with Northern Rail and the West Yorkshire Combined Authority discussing the changes to the timetables in May and December. Trans Pennine Express have now introduced a Manchester – York service replacing the former Northern Huddersfield – Castleford service. We welcome the news that Grand Central have acquired additional trains to improve their reliability.

As members of Railfuture, group members attend and contribute to their regular Yorkshire Branch meetings, their on-line webinars and articles in 'The Yorkshire Rail Campaigner'.

All three Pontefract stations are now part of Community Rail Partnerships and Northern Rail Station Adoption schemes. These will give us various chances to access training, opportunities to network with other station groups and financial grants to improve our stations. In 2024 we are planning to involve the local community, local schools and New College in the provision of posters at Tanshelf station.

In November 2023 a planning application was submitted to Wakefield Council for the replacement of the footbridge at Monkhill Station with a new footbridge including lifts. It is anticipated that the construction will be completed during 2024 and we aim to be involved in the opening of the new bridge.



Baghill Station Building – We found that protection of the fabric of the station building and the search for new tenants proved difficult because The Arch Company, who are responsible for the building, have been slow in responding to our efforts.

We will continue to promote the need to extend rail services beyond the West Yorkshire boundary at Knottingley to Doncaster and Goole as part of our 'Connectivity Agenda'. We will continue to support the Friends of Askern Station in their efforts to reopen their station as this would offer the potential for a regular Pontefract – Doncaster service.

Our meetings will continue throughout 2024 and anyone interested in rail services locally is always very welcome to join our Group.

Dave Hogg - Rail Group Coordinator
Compiled by **Anthony Dee** – Rail Administrator

TALKS & TOURS REPORT



Last year, saw a full programme of 10 talks, two special events, but no tours; the latter were postponed due to low numbers.

We are not sure how to manage this in 2024, and we are seeking your feedback for the way forward.

The talks season began in

January with our own Peter Cookson showing various vintage railway shots around Pontefract from Peter's vast photographic archive, alongside a matching current image of the same view. This event was particularly well attended and had the audience spellbound by what we have lost.

February's talk also had local interest with the history of Pontefract Statutes Fair up to 1945. It was incredible to learn of live ammunition being used to shoot at actual glass bottles in the rifle range! Part 2 of this talk will be in April, 2024.

A late problem in March caused us to change the advertised subject to the History of the Post Office, when former Post Office worker John Lyte stepped in to give us the complete history of the Royal Mail. John started with the Mail Coaches and ended with the mass closure of local Post Offices, of which we are all too familiar. John also bought along some of his historic stamp collection for us to view.

In April we decided to try something totally new. Local magician, Ray Roberts thrilled the audience with a series of mind-boggling tricks and details of how he entered the world of Magic. This was a great success and Ray will be returning in October, 2024.

Actor Chris Cade returned in May, this time as Isambard Kingdom Brunel, sporting the famous stove pipe hat which was Brunel's trademark. Chris astounded the audience with his usual flair and historical accuracy. Chris will be performing for us again in November, 2024.

Former prison Governess Veronica Bird returned in June to give us her life story entitled 'From Prison to Palace'. Starting with her troubled childhood, going in to how she advanced her career, adding in details of some very notorious prisoners.

In July, we welcomed Dewsbury historian, Stuart Hartley told us about famous Yorkshire folk in his talk 'What made Yorkshire Great'. This was followed in September by a rare insight into the many

Circuses in Leeds city centre around the Victorian era. We heard tales of strange acts and eccentric showmen. Also in September, the fabulous Haley Sisters returned to the Town Hall for our first extra event of the year. They gave an awesome performance and their father's high-speed yodelling was the highlight of the show for many.

In October, local Civil War expert Dave Cooke finished off his series of talks on the sieges of Pontefract Castle. It was incredible to think that some of the events he described only happened a few yards away from where we were sat!

The last talk of the year was given by myself in November, entitled 'A Day in the Life of a Yorkshire Coal Miner'. I described the methods of modern coal mining and what life was actually like working underground.

Also at the end of November, we held our second Christmas Double Bill event. The format was the same as the previous year, with actor Chris Cade performing his rendition of Charles Dickens 'A Christmas Carol'. As Chris does not use a script there were subtle differences from his previous performance, including a lot of audience participation who had been furnished with suitable hats! A large chain clanking on the floor added further intrigue to the Ghost of Christmas Future scene.



After a mince pie and coffee at the interval, it was the turn of local professional musician who performs as 'Underdrive Johnny' to entertain us. He started with the Beatles and then played classics from most decades, doing a few requests on the way. A moody rendition of Chris Isaak's Wicked Game was my own personal favourite. The evening ended with Slade's Merry Christmas Everybody, and a good time was had by all.

I must end with a big thank-you to all members of the team who make these events possible. Also an extra thank-you to our new team members, who have made such a difference this year.

Dave Hogg - Talks & Tours Group Co-ordinator

PLANNING GROUP REPORT



The Planning Group meets on a monthly basis at changing locations in the town centre, focussing, in the main, on planning applications submitted to the Council.

These applications are for properties, mainly in the town centre, with some in the surrounds and the documentation can be accessed via the Council's planning portal.

In our meetings we discuss the relevant proposals, sometimes following a visit to view the property and on occasions meeting with the applicant in order to discuss their application, giving our views/experience and perhaps gaining an insight into the rationale of the property changes. In many cases, after consideration, we make comments on the portal, with a summary of 'support', 'object' or 'neutral'.

We also 'walk around town', both individually and as a group, in order to view and appreciate the changes in our town. Over the past year, Pontefract's night-time economy has received a significant boost with developments along Ropergate and there has been an increase in the number of applications regarding town centre apartments, which is viewed as a positive.

Viewing the town centre as a whole, the retail sector is doing well in terms of the relatively low number of vacant retail units, especially compared to other towns/cities in the vicinity. However, one worrying feature is the number of vacant large units in the Salter Row and Woolmarket area.

Our 'town walks' highlight another worrying aspect, especially when looking above street level at the properties. Some of the buildings, occupied by both local and national retailers, are in desperate need of some TLC, which would enhance their visual attractiveness and assist the preservation of the buildings themselves (wins all round).

The Planning Group's other main focus culminates in the annual Design Awards, which takes place in January, having assessed projects completed over at least a 12 month period to around the end of October, or slightly later. Awards are presented to property owners and tenants who have made changes to their property (including new builds), recognising and celebrating their hard work and investment in the town, whilst matching the criteria of our seven award categories.

Our assessment builds upon our review of the planning applications, which is the theoretical aspect of the process for what is intended. This is followed by the applicant undertaking the work and developing the property into the finished project.

Our group reviews planning applications, as outlined above, then 'watch' the physical development and finally the end result, all the while considering the changes. Group meetings create a 'long list' of potential contenders is drawn up. Further discussions and some consultation visits will reduce the number of contenders, from this a 'short list' is drawn up for final evaluation, the end result being the nominees and winners in each category.

The Planning Group would like to take this opportunity to thank all 'contenders' for their hard work and investing in Pontefract and to say that the recipients of awards were worthy 'winners'.

We have also reviewed the council's Local Plan 2036, and contributed to meetings of the Prince of Wales Liaison Group coordinated by the Harworth Group.

OUR 2024 ACTION PLAN:

- Continue as stated above
- Conservation Areas
- Buildings at Risk
- Buildings of Local Interest

Philip Henfrey - Deputy Planning Group Coordinator

HERITAGE GROUP REPORT

The day Harrogate U3A came to town - On Wednesday 29 March, we had the pleasure of hosting 45 visitors from Harrogate U3A, who arrived by coach at 9:45am, and departed at 3:30pm, having had a fantastic heritage day with our volunteers and Wakefield Council teams.

I planned the day in conjunction with the Harrogate organiser, Heather Law, who said afterwards, "I want to say thank you to you and all of your team. Everybody thoroughly enjoyed it and the feedback was really good. I heard comments such as 'a really good, full day out', 'we learnt a lot', 'Pontefract was impressive', and 'we'd no idea there was so much history there'. Thank you to Paul, an excellent guide".

It was a real pleasure to start in the Town Hall and Assembly Room, then walking around the town centre, visiting the museum, and after lunch onto the castle.

We had the assistance of Rosemary Barnes, Yorkshire Blue Badge Guide, who's a Civic Society member, plus there were four other members in support, one of which was the purple-clad town crier, John Turner, who equally impressed the visiting party.

All the King's horses and all the King's men - During April, group members created three presentations which were published on our social channels ahead of the coronation of King Charles III. Our thanks go to Linda Benson-Henfrey and Derek Norfolk for curating these video slideshows, which are still available on Facebook:

- All the King's horses and all the King's men
- When Royal Charles came to Pontefract
- A look back at how Pontefract celebrated the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II



When military came to town - On Saturday 17 June, Wakefield Armed Forces Day in Pontefract Park coincided with our national umbrella organisation's 'Civic Day'; whilst this is community event, it does have heritage content, and is therefore worth including here. Considering that a week earlier we'd staged WheelFest23, the biggest community event in our 50+ year history, then we did not plan an additional event specifically for Civic Day. Both WheelFest23 and our support for Armed Forces Day were in effect our contributions showing 'pride in place' and connecting with our community.

Our PR stall was there to raise awareness, to sell books and merchandise, as well as to engage with very young people with our Tesco-funded heritage croquet game, containing local photographs and historic information. The kids were polite and everyone really enjoyed the time to play and learn about the town's history. We managed to get eight members to volunteer at different times, helping to set up, and cover the day in shifts, with Derek Norfolk being the guide for a walk around Pontefract Park focused on its military connections across time. We just needed to pack away until our stall was out again for Liquorice Shoots Saturday 8 July, and the Liquorice Festival on Sunday 9 July in Friarwood Valley Gardens.

As a member of the AFD Steering Group, I promoted all that was going on at AFD before, during and after the event using our social

channels. Unfortunately, the Battle of Britain Flight was curtailed for operational reasons, though the Lancaster bomber did fly over the local area after the event, around 7:40pm.

Town Crier joins our family - John Turner has been a member for a few years, though his services were managed elsewhere, and we had the pleasure of a healthy partnership. During 2023, we officially brought the role under our wing, and we have some exciting things planned, led by John, for 2024.

HERITAGE OPEN DAYS

Festival records best ever success! - With over 60 in person and online events in 10 days, we stretched our geographical reach to Hemsworth, Womersley, Kellington and Pollington, whilst not forgetting our core of Pontefract town centre and its four conservation areas.

26 events were brand new, and we engaged with many partner organisations and places which were new to the festival. Examples include Archbishop Holgate Almshouses, RAF Snaith Museum, Pomfret Gallery, eight of the new bars in Pontefract staged entertainment, churches in Kellington and Womersley, and Pontefract Choral Society; this was a remarkable collective achievement.

Regular attractions included the town hall, the racecourse, masonic hall, Darrington farming walk, the Rosse Observatory, Pontefract Castle and the library.

The number of attendees topped 1,200 and could easily be more with some unreported numbers. Top of the leader board was RAF Snaith Museum, followed by All Saints Church and St Botolph's Church. We were really pleased with the positive response from all of our partners and the general public who were both enthusiastic and really interested in Pontefract's rich heritage. All of our 800 comprehensive booklets went, which were funded by a culture grant from Wakefield Council. Visitors from across Wakefield district and far beyond really enjoyed the variety in our extensive programme, and I was pleased to see some faces at multiple events, which must suggest that we've got it right; some new members joined in the weeks that followed.



Paul Cartwright - Interim Heritage Coordinator
Supported by **Phil Henfrey** - HOD Coordinator

DESIGN AWARDS 2023



On Tues 30 Jan, Pontefract Civic Society hosted its Design Awards for 2023, in the Georgian Nelson Room of Pontefract Town Hall in front of a gathering of business and property owners, architects, contractors, representatives from Wakefield Council, and civic society members.

Civic Society Chair, Paul Cartwright said *"this is an evening to celebrate regeneration projects which enhance the historic streetscape and open spaces of Pontefract as a place for residents and visitors to shop, relax, and enjoy."*

The civic society presented the Countess of Rosse Façade of the Year award Headhunters, a two year project, based on the façade's bold and distinctive colour scheme and signage over all three floors of this potentially 16th century jettied timbered framed building. Headhunters were nominated in three categories and they walked away with two justifiable awards.

Jenine Hunter, owner, said, *"I'm absolutely blown away to be entered into so many categories, and to have won two of them, makes all the hard work worthwhile. I can't thank everyone that voted for me enough, and for all their kind words about my project"*.

Other awards presented on the night were:

Civic/Commercial: Indoor Market Hall

Special Commendations:
Pontefract Park Play Area

Regeneration Award: No. 23/Erubi

Residential Award: WDH Newport House

Heritage Award: Red Lion

Improvement Award: Headhunters

Philip Henfrey, civic society planning group deputy coordinator, said *"Our assessments start with the planning applications, followed by walking around the town checking the changes as they take place, and then suitable nominees are visited to discuss the work with owners; it's a year-long activity for us"*.

2023 AWARD WINNERS

Façade of the Year 2023 - Headhunters, 35 Market Place



Regeneration Award - Erubi, 23 Ropergate



Special Commendation - Wakefield Council
Play Area, Pontefract Park



Residential Award - WDH Newport House
Stuart Road, Pontefract



2023 AWARD WINNERS

Improvement Award - Headhunters, 35 Market Place



Commercial/Civic Award - Wakefield Council
Pontefract Indoor Market, Market Place



Heritage Award - The Red Lion, 12 Market Place



TRUSTEES

Role	Name
Chair	Paul Cartwright
Vice Chair	Phil Cook
Secretary	Vacant
Treasurer	Ian Wood
Citizenship Coordinator	Phil Cook
Rail Coordinator	Dave Hogg
Interim Heritage Coordinator	Paul Cartwright

Role	Name
Planning Coordinator	Peter Taylor
Highways Coordinator	Anthony Dee* <i>non-trustee</i>
Talks & Tours Coordinator	Dave Hogg
Futures Coordinator	Khalid Rasool
Co-opted	Dr Colin White
Co-opted	Peter Ferrari
Co-opted (from Aug)	Karen Pullin

OUR WORKING GROUPS

Citizenship	Rail	Heritage	Planning
Phil Cook (C) Vacant (D) Vacant (A) Paul Cartwright Christine Cartwright Carol Trueman Rhona Crichton (from Nov) Charles Atkin (from Nov) Sonia Atkin (from Nov) Richard Hirst (from Nov) John Turner (from Nov) Karen Haddock (from Nov) Lynne Hartley (from Nov) Joanne Browning (from Nov)	Dave Hogg (C) Philip Henfrey (D) Anthony Dee (A) Ian Wood Peter Cookson Rosemary Barnes Paul Cartwright Chris Hyomes Tony Hames Keith Shenton (from Dec)	Paul Cartwright (Interim C) Vacant (D) Vacant (A) Philip Henfrey (HOD Coordinator) Phil Cook John Turner Linda Benson Henfrey Derek Norfolk Diane Atkinson (from Jan)	Philip Henfrey (D) Vacant (C) Vacant (A) Christine Cartwright Paul Cartwright Evelyn Westwood (C to Sept) Mike Farrell (from Oct) Peter Taylor
Highways	Talks & Tours	Futures	Business
Anthony Dee (C & A) Vacant (D) Derek Vaux David Hogg Peter Cookson Paul Cartwright Tony Hames Derek Norfolk	Dave Hogg (C) Colin White (D) Diane Atkinson (A from March) Paul Cartwright Mollie Garbett George Gott (from March) Tracy Gott (from March) Chris Walker (from March) Ian Wood (from March) Phil Henfrey (from March)	Khalid Rasool (C) Vacant (D) Vacant (A) Paul Cartwright Phil Cook Peter Ferrari	Paul Cartwright Phil Cook

C – Coordinator - D – Deputy Coordinator - A – Administrator

REPORT OF TRUSTEES FOR THE PERIOD ENDING 31ST DECEMBER, 2023

The Trustees present their report with the financial statements of the charity for the period ended 31st December, 2023.

The accounts have been prepared in accordance with the SORP accounting policies set out by our Treasurer.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Pontefract Civic Society is a registered charity governed by constitution. The organisation is viable by self-generated income from subscriptions and events. Project funding is developed through grant opportunities. There are no plans to recruit an Executive Director, and we intend that the trustees will continue to manage the charity on a voluntary basis. In the long term, paid roles may be considered, should new income or grants sustain a different business model.

RECRUITMENT AND APPOINTMENT OF TRUSTEES

As set out in the Constitution, the Chair of Trustees is nominated by the membership. The trustees are set out in this report and are those in place at AGM. The Board of Trustees has the power to co-opt trustees, as necessary.

TRUSTEE INDUCTION AND TRAINING

The Trustees maintain a good working knowledge of charity, charity law and best practice, supported by attendance at charity training courses, as deemed applicable. This whole area is always under review in order for us to take advantage of opportunities as they arise; we should never stop learning.

ORGANISATION

The Charity is controlled by a Board of Trustees. The day to day running of the charity is led by the Chair and Vice Chair with other trustees in specific roles, as required.

CHARITABLE OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

The Society is established for the public benefit for the following purposes in the area comprising Pontefract and District, which area shall hereinafter be referred to as "the area of benefit":

- (i) To promote high standards of planning and architecture in or affecting the area of benefit.
- (ii) To educate the public in the geography, history, natural history and architecture of the area of benefit.
- (iii) To secure the preservation, protection, development and improvement of features of historic or public interest in the area of benefit.

PUBLIC BENEFIT

In furtherance of the said purposes, but not otherwise, the Society through its Executive Committee shall have the following powers:

1. To promote civic pride in the area of benefit.
2. To promote research into subjects directly connected with the objects of the Society and to publish the results of any such research.
3. To act as a co-ordinating body and to co-operate with the local authorities, planning committees and all other statutory authorities, voluntary organisations, charities and persons having aims similar to those of the Society.
4. To promote or assist in promoting activities of a charitable nature throughout the area of benefit.
5. To publish papers, reports and other literature.
6. To make surveys and prepare maps and plans and collect information in relation to any place, erection or building of beauty or historic interest within the area of benefit.
7. To hold meetings, lectures and exhibitions.
8. To educate public opinion and to give advice and information.
9. To raise funds and to invite and receive contributions from any person or persons whatsoever by way of subscription, donation and otherwise; provided that the Society shall not undertake any permanent trading activities in raising funds for its primary purpose. To acquire, by purchase, gift or otherwise, property, whether subject to any special trust or not
10. Subject to such consents as may be required by law, to sell, let, mortgage, dispose of or turn to account all or any of the property or funds of the Society as shall be necessary.
11. Subject to such consents as may be required by law, to borrow or raise money for the purposes of the Society on such terms and on such security as the Executive Committee shall think fit, but so that the liability of individual members of the Society shall in no case extend beyond the amount of their respective annual subscriptions.
12. To do all such other lawful things as are necessary for the attainment of the said purposes.

We do this by organising membership events and reaching out to non-members to attend public talks and meetings in accessible locations and venues.

A number of free public meetings are organised and publicised, which ensures the Society remains accessible, financially viable and sustainable.

The total spend on public benefit was £9,571.

We have supported a number of organisations and events: St Giles with St Mary's Pantomime Society (£135), Pontefract in Bloom (£564), Friends of Friarwood Valley Gardens (£218), The Prince of

Wales Hospice (£360), The Royal British Legion (£27), WheelFest23 (£1,322), Liquorice Shoots (£1,631), Liquorice Shoots Schools Art Trail (£780), Heritage Open Days (£1,415), Decoration Squad (£320), Talks (£762), Christmas (£126), Marketing (£1,911)

RISK MANAGEMENT

The trustees have a risk management strategy which comprises:

1. An annual review of the risks.
2. The establishment of systems and procedures to mitigate risk.
3. Implementation of the procedures designed to minimise any potential impact should those risks materialise.

ROLE AND CONTRIBUTION OF VOLUNTEERS

Pontefract Civic Society celebrates its commitment to a diverse and skilled volunteer team, and whilst some members have worked hard, it has been patchy, though with some successes recently. There remains much more to do, and volunteers of all backgrounds and experiences are openly welcomed especially transferable skills from professional or community organisations which can benefit the civic society, thus ultimately, the town.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

The Statement of Financial Activities showed a surplus of £6,050.

RESERVES POLICY

In accordance with the advice of the Charity Commission, the charity aims to hold unrestricted reserves at levels of approximately 12 months of budgeted unrestricted expenditure, to meet unforeseen costs and statutory obligations.

FUTURE PLANS AND DEVELOPMENTS

The main priority continues to be to create a blend of experience and 'younger blood', supplemented by relevant governance controls and trustee training, to deliver operational plans:

- To continue working in partnership with public, private, and third sector stakeholders
- To increase our membership with a broader demographic and encourage active participation, particularly younger members of the community
- To develop our Business Member scheme for the benefit of all parties and the town
- To further embed more technology, specifically, Microsoft 365, for active use by trustees and other key members
- To develop a more strategic Board
- To diversify income generation
- To manage capacity-building acting as a facilitator for delivery projects of benefit to the town, in partnership with other groups
- To develop policies and procedures recommended by the Charity Commission

On behalf of the Board

Paul Cartwright - Chair

VICE CHAIR'S REPORT



As most will be aware, 2023 started with a personal challenge for myself after having a serious stroke in late December, 2022.

I would like to thank all for the support I received post-stroke during this difficult time; also, my thanks to those who had confidence to re-elect me while still adapting to the changes. I am pleased to say that whilst I had stepped down from a lot of meetings, I am now back at full capacity.

During my recuperation, it allowed me time to focus on developing some new ventures for the civic society benefitting residents and businesses alike. By April, I had recovered enough to carry on with most of the role of Vice Chair. So, on reflection, I believe that 2023 has enabled the civic society to become more integrated in the town's future. This includes the promotion and development of the tourist and visitor experience, with the civic society being seen as the first point of contact by Wakefield Council when looking at events for the town, and being involved in the major developments in the town's infrastructure.

At our 2023 AGM, we announced the long-awaited Community Group Award, which had been on hold due to COVID and other reasons. The 2023 winner will be announced at our 2024 AGM.

During 2023, Wakefield District Housing restructured their neighbourhood panel meetings which I attend representing the civic society as an independent member. Whilst the full effects of the restructure are yet to be determined, it has given a further insight into the work done, further allowing the civic society to have a voice at WDH.

I was pleased to support the Friarwood Festival as safety advisor once more, and to give input to event management, both roles I will continue in 2024.

In July, our trustees away day was hosted at the Red Lion Hotel.

As an advocate for the town and its community, I was also pleased to represent the civic society at various meetings with local Councillors and officers, examples being the Events team and Markets team, where we were able to have direct input into the town's events and the indoor and

VICE CHAIR'S REPORT CONT....

outdoor market changes. In short, 2023 has been a year of ups and downs, but it definitely ended on a high note when I was able to reflect on all the success we've had in the year.

So 2024 is now here, and plans are already in place for WheelFest24 incorporating a 1940's Day, then Liquorice Shoots, and much more. We will need support on these event days to ensure they're a success, so if you feel you can volunteer, please come forward.

VICE CHAIR HIGHLIGHTS 2023

- WDH Community Champion Award
- Remembrance Day support
- Actively promoted and supported the Christmas Light Up
- Supported the Lion's Club Santa's Grotto
- Support to Friends of Friarwood Valley Gardens, in particular the Friarwood Festival
- Support to businesses, including risk assessment writing, and funding streams
- New town centre events
- Attended Police PACT meetings (North Ward and town centre for businesses)
- Attended various meetings with WMDC officials

TREASURER'S REPORT



I am pleased to present the Treasurer's report for 2023.

I can confirm that all expenditure has been correctly dual authorised, prior to processing payments promptly, when due, and properly allocated/ accounted for. I would once again like to thank

Christopher Hyomes for an effective independent examination of our 2023 Annual Accounts.

2023 has been another year of considerable activity, a far cry from the earlier years during which restrictions were imposed on the Society as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. The summer saw several successful community events organised and run by the Society including WheelFest and Liquorice Shoots. Once again various events centred around the Christmas period were also held.

Our income in 2023 (£21,626) was broadly in line with that of 2022 (£22,508).

2023 income is made up principally of grants amounting to £6,922 the majority of which came from Wakefield Council, annual subscriptions of £4,794 and revenue from events of £4,896.

Annual subscription rates were increased in 2023 and this combined with an increase in memberships particularly in the community group category yielded an overall increase in income of 12%.

A substantial donation of £3,185 was received from The Crescent Project which has been ring-fenced for future community projects, in line with that group's constitution.

Our net costs in 2023 after adjusting for the transfer of funds between accounts amounted to £15,576 which was considerably lower than in 2022 (£32,905). This difference can be put down almost entirely to a significant reduction in grant funded expenditure from £20,981 in 2022 to £5,516 in 2023. The most significant costs incurred in the year were grant funded expenditure (£5,516), events and meeting costs (£3,547), and PR materials (£2,325). In keeping with previous years the Civic Society has made donations to various local organisations amounting to £1,229, the principal benefactors being Pontefract in Bloom and The Prince of Wales Hospice. Other aspects of the Society's expenditure are either broadly in line with or below that of the previous year.

The accounts reflect a net cash inflow in the year of £6,050 (2022 outflow of £10,397). Cash reserves as at 31st December 2023 stood at £20,387, 75% of which (£15,232) has been ring-fenced for future projects.

Ian Wood -Treasurer

DONATIONS & BEQUESTS

Have you thought of making a donation to Pontefract Civic Society during your lifetime, or leaving us some money in your will?

Pontefract Voice and our Annual Reports show the tremendous work the civic society does to make Pontefract a better place; new projects always need support. The civic society is both independent and non-political.

We would be absolutely delighted if you would make a donation or a bequest. Both the Chair and Vice Chair are available if you wish to discuss this in more detail.

ANNUAL ACCOUNTS 31 DECEMBER 2023

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

INCOME	2023	2022
Annual subscriptions received	£4,794	£4,295
Gift aid	£-	£776
Blue plaques	£-	£-
Grants	£6,922	£11,913
Donations	£3,565	£522
Events revenue	£4,896	£3,065
Book, calendar, mug, pen and badge sales	£1,269	£1,826
Recharge cost of design award plaques	£180	£111
Legacies	£-	£-
SUB-TOTAL	£21,626	£22,508
INCOME FROM MONETARY ASSETS		
Transfers between accounts	£3,598	£3,390
Loan	£-	£-
Bank interest	£-	£-
TOTAL INCOME	£25,224	£25,988
EXPENDITURE	2023	2022
DIRECT CHARITABLE EXPENDITURE:		
Civic Voice	£251	£176
YHACS	£50	£50
Railfuture	£25	£25
Community Rail Network	£90	£0
Events & meetings	£3,547	£2,607
Donations	£1,229	£633
SUB-TOTAL	£5,192	£3,491
OTHER EXPENDITURE INCURRED:		
Membership refunds	£-	£-
Insurance	£1,208	£730
Printing & Postage	£317	£254
Loan to Civic Voice	£-	£500
Grants expenditure	£5,516	£20,981
Transfers between accounts	£3,598	£3,390
Book Printing	£-	£-
Calendar Printing & Envelopes	£-	£1,055
Mugs & Boxes	£-	£150
Pens	£-	£160
Business support costs	£168	£97
PR Materials	£2,325	£3,074
Website & Other Software Costs	£60	£115
Travel costs	£11	£-
IT Equipment	£-	£1,563
Membership related costs	£779	£735
SUB-TOTAL	£13,982	£32,804
TOTAL EXPENDITURE INCURRED	£19,174	£36,295
OVERALL EXCESS/DEFICIT OF INCOME OVER EXPENDITURE	£6,050	-£10,397

STATEMENT OF ASSETS OF LIABILITIES AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2023

MONETARY ASSETS	2023	2022
Barclays Community A/c (current)	£20,387	£14,337
Paypal A/c	£-	£-
Totals	£20,387	£14,337
RECONCILIATION OF CASH MOVEMENTS TO BANK BALANCES		
Opening bank balances	£14,337	£24,734
Total cash receipts	£25,224	£25,898
LESS: EXPENDITURE	£19,174	£36,295
TOTAL CASH INFLOW	£6,050	-£10,397
CLOSING BANK BALANCES	£20,387	£14,337

Treasurer: I Wood (2023) I have examined the Receipts and Payments for the Year 2023 and found them to be in accordance with the records and vouchers produced.

Christopher Hyomes - Independent Examiner - Date: 31 Jan, 2024

P Cartwright - Chairman - Date: 3 Feb, 2024

1940's DAY

Ropergate Pontefract

Part of WheelFest 24

8th June 2024

D Day 80th anniversary proclamation by the town crier, military vehicles & equipment displays, businesses dressed, re-enactors, 1940's cafe food, and live entertainment

contact events@pontefractcivicsociety.org.uk for involvement/sponsorship opportunities



2ND MARCH PONTEFRACT TOWN HALL 10AM WHILE 2PM

Community Showcase

WE ARE STRONGER TOGETHER

Come along and find out how you can join a group, become an active volunteer & see what support there is

Hobbies, Health, Sport, History, Drama, Music, Gardening, Youth, Art, First Aid

Over 20 community groups attending
















PONTEFRACT

Events 2024



PCS TALK & EVENTS	OTHER EVENTS	PCS TALK & EVENTS	OTHER EVENTS
JANUARY		JULY	
17 THE HISTORY OF GARLETON ROSSE OBSERVATORY Rushey Old Rectory, Colliemore By Paul Robinson Town Hall	14-20 SNOW WHITE AND THE SEVEN DWARFS PANTOMIME Town Hall	13 LIQUORICE SHOOTS Town Centre	1 PONTEFRACT RACES
30 2023 DESIGN AWARDS Town Hall		17 KING GEORGE V'S VISIT TO THE WEST RIDING By Christine Jones-Edwards	9 PONTEFRACT RACES
FEBRUARY		AUGUST	
21 MY MAYORAL YEAR By David Jones			13-14 KLH CRAFT FAIR
27 CIVIC SOCIETY AGM Town Hall			14 LIQUORICE FESTIVAL Town Centre, Rushey Old Rectory, & Greenwood By Ray Gardner
MARCH		SEPTEMBER	
1 WE ARE WAKEFIELD BUSINESS NETWORK Town Hall	20 EASTER EGG HUNT Highwood Valley Gardens	6-15 HERITAGE OPEN DAYS Various Locations	19 PONTEFRACT RACES
2 COMMUNITY SHOWCASE Town Hall	23 PONTEFRACT CHORAL SOCIETY 150TH ANNIVERSARY CONCERT By Olive Church	18 YOU WILL ALWAYS REMEMBER YOUR CO-OP NUMBER By Stephen Lakeland	26 PONTEFRACT RACES
20 DANGEROUS WOMEN By Dawn Ward		OCTOBER	
APRIL		16 A LITTLE MORE MAGIC By Ray Roberts	
17 PONTEFRACT STATUTES FAIR 1945 TO 1990 By Steve Smith	3 PONTEFRACT RACES	21 PONTEFRACT RACES	
	13 KLH CRAFT FAIR	21 TRAFALGAR DAY	
	22 PONTEFRACT RACES	NOVEMBER	
MAY		20 PERFORMANCE OF ARTHUR WALKER'S GREAT WAR By Oliver Caine	
15 THE HISTORY OF RAIL POSTERS By David Ellis	10-11 SCOOTER CLUB RALLY Pontrfract Colliemore	10 REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY	
	19 THE PRINCE OF WALES HOSPICE 10K Pontrfract Park	11 ARMISTICE DAY	
	24 PONTEFRACT RACES	DECEMBER	
	26 THE PRINCE OF WALES HOSPICE SPRING FAIR Naxoside Gardens	5 CHRISTMAS WITH THE LIQUORICE SINGERS Onge's Cafe	
JUNE		7 KLH CRAFT FAIR	
8 WHEELFEST Town Centre	7 THE PRINCE OF WALES HOSPICE GOLF DAY Pontrfract & Quarry Golf Club	7 KLH CRAFT FAIR	
17 CIVIC DAY	8 KLH CRAFT FAIR		
19 THE BATTLE OF FLAMBOROUGH HEAD By David Coole	8 PONTEFRACT CHORAL SOCIETY SUMMER CONCERT By Oliver Edwards		
	10 PONTEFRACT RACES		
	22 PONTE ROCKS Pontrfract Colliemore		
	23 PONTEFRACT RACES		
	29 ARMED FORCES DAY		
	29 PROMS AT THE CASTLE		
	30 MUSICALS AT THE CASTLE		

For more information, contact us by email: info@pontefractcivicsociety.org.uk or visit us on social media: [f @PontrfractCivic](https://www.facebook.com/PontrfractCivic)

Gold Member 	Gold Member 	Gold Member 	Gold Member 	Gold Member 
Gold Member 	Gold Member 	Gold Member 	Gold Member 	Gold Member 
Gold Member 	Gold Member 	Gold Member 	Gold Member 	Silver Member 
Silver Member 	Silver Member 	Silver Member 	Silver Member 	Silver Member 
Silver Member 	Bronze Member 	Bronze Member 	Bronze Member 	Bronze Member 
	Bronze Member 		Bronze Member 	

Community Group Members

Friends of Friarwood Valley Gardens • Friends of Pontefract Park • Liquorice Singers • Pontefract Art Club • Pontefract Collieries FC
 Pontefract Heritage Partnership • Pontefract in Bloom • Pontefract Choral Society • Castleford & Pontefract Lions Club
 Pontefract Rugby Union Football Club • St Giles Centre • Pontefract Rotary Club • Carleton Running Community
 Featherstone Male Voice Choir • St Giles with St Mary's Pantomime Society • Prince of Wales Residents Association
 The Urbane Commune • Pontefract Calligraphers



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With thanks to Five Towns Print and Design,
 for the design and print of the Pontefract Civic Society
 Annual Report 2023

🌐 www.pontefractcivicsociety.org.uk

PONTEFRACT CIVIC SOCIETY

England & Wales - Charity number 513509

Accounts



ANNUAL REPORT 2022





CONTENTS

Chair's Review of 2022	4
Patron's Address	7
President's Address	7
Citizenship Group Report	8
Heritage Group Report	9
Heritage Open Days Report	10
Rail Group Report	11
Talks & Tours Group Report	11
Highways Report	12
Planning Group Report	13
Design Awards	14
Our Trustees & Working Groups	18
Vice Chair's Report	19
Treasurer's Report	20
2022 Annual Accounts	21
2023 Calendar of Events	23

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Venue provision: Town Hall, Library and Castle (WMDC), The Old Grocers, Tracked Spider Solutions, King's Croft Hotel, Central Methodist Church, The Coffee Lounge, The Magistrates Market, and The Court Cafe

Heritage Open Days: All venues, exhibitors, speakers, workshop hosts, and tour guides, too many to mention

Calendar/book sales: Suzi's Boutique, The Old Grocers, Forever After, Michelle's Flowers, The Court Cafe, House of Ales, and Pomfret Gallery

Decoration collection points: Library, Yorkshire Building Society, and Michelle's Flowers

Photography courtesy of: Christine & Paul Cartwright, Peter Ferrari, Medlock Photography, Prince of Wales Hospice, Phil Cook, design award winners and agents

Window Decorations Judges: Pontefract Academies Trust schools and St Giles CofE Academy

Decoration Squad: Both civic society members and other volunteers including schools

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CHAIR'S REVIEW OF 2022



A year in the life of a civic society chair - I am pleased that our membership has continued to grow to the highest level in my time, which had been broadened across most categories.

Unfortunately, more active members were required in our working groups, and all needed to be active, though some members have volunteered for tasks on an ad hoc basis, which is a good sign.

The volume of work goes on unabated, though when you see the below, that is not sustainable. As well as leading the board of trustees, and being the face of the civic society, I have continued to be involved with every working group, though it shouldn't have to be that way once clearer direction and plans are set.

WORKING FOR PONTEFRACT IN PARTNERSHIP WITH WAKEFIELD MDC

Throughout the year, I've had in person and online meetings with officers and elected members at all levels and across various



departments, and Phil Cook has attended most of these meetings, too. Examples of which are:

- Cllr Denise Jeffery, Cllr Jack Hemingway, and Mark Lynam or a representative.
- Cllr Darren Byford and Cllr David Jones (Pontefract Regeneration)
- Teams such as Markets, Major Events, Planning & Highways (including Transportation), Events & Functions, Pontefract Delivery Group
- Armed Forces Day ('AFD') Steering Group, AFD event, and AFD Reception
- With some reservations and clear feedback, I did support the Ropergate trial or 'Plantergate' as I called it, though our comments fell on deaf ears. After the Council conducted further business consultation, it was sadly scrapped, though the precinct has benefited
- Arcadis online meeting to discuss the framework for the next Pontefract Plan 10 Year Plan, followed by an in-person workshop
- Wakefield MDC & Corals 'Streets for People' site visit
- Visit to WMDC CCTV control centre
- Year of Culture 2024 Workshop
- Street art site visit Kate Watson from Beam
- WMDC wayfinding/PCS Heritage boards - installations in four locations
- Local List Initiative briefing
- Creative Wakefield networking site tour of CAPA College
- Culture Grants workshop
- Liquorice Festival
- Castle Coffee Shop official opening by Town Crier
- Attended the Mayor's Proclamation for King Charles III at Wakefield Town Hall
- Light Up events in Pontefract town centre, the castle, Knottingley, and Wakefield
- Meet the Mayor, Cllr David Jones, and observing a Citizenship Ceremony
- Attended the Mayor's Civic Service at Wakefield Cathedral

BUSINESS ENGAGEMENT

- Heritage Group visit and research at Cartners No. 5
- Prince of Wales Business Club 5 networking
- Queen Elizabeth II Jubilee beer mashing in Altofts, and launch at The Old Grocers
- Cartners No 5 site meeting with WMDC Highways/Regeneration re: outside seating
- Supported Action Coach Five Towns business networking
- Co-hosted a meeting for business with the Police and key council representatives
- 2021 Design Awards presented, and preparation for 2022

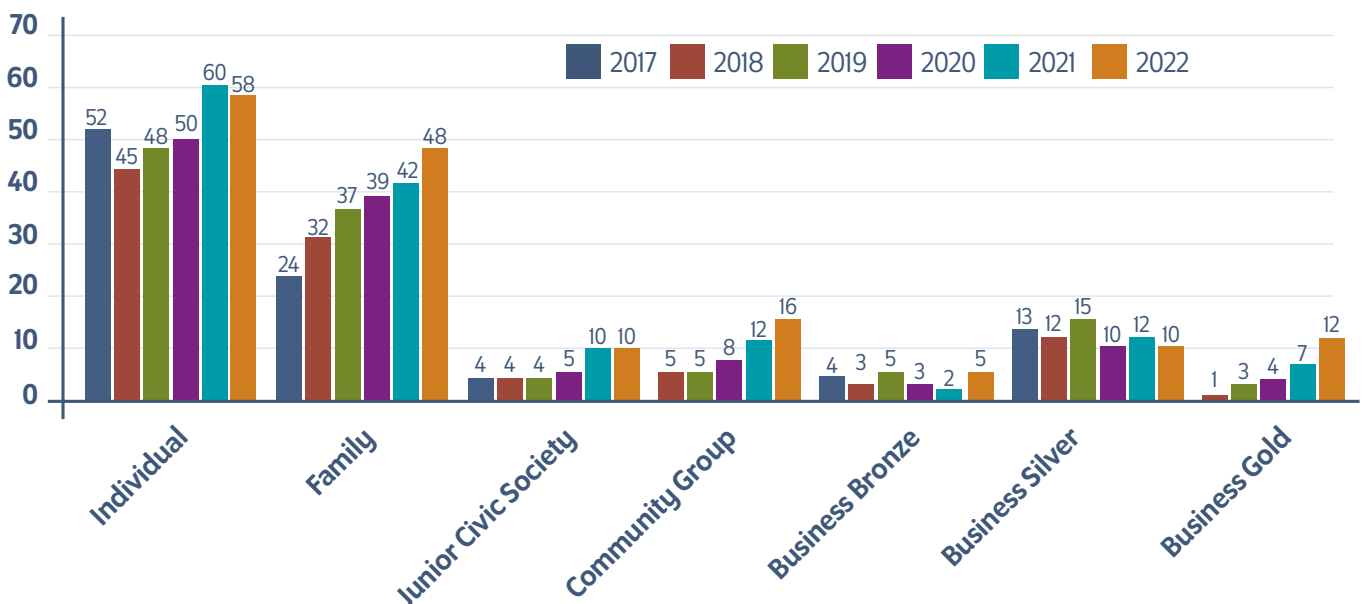


WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH OTHER LOCAL GROUPS

- Presented the Queen's Platinum Jubilee opportunities with Michelle Grainger to Rotary Club of Pontefract, and Rotary Club of Osgoldcross
- Friends of Pontefract Park AGM at Aspire
- Pontefract RUFC Sponsors Buffet and match
- Supported Castleford & Pontefract Lions Club's Lantern Parade by displaying banners & being a steward on the night, plus helping run the Santa's Grotto

- Core groups and businesses representatives meeting, to achieve volunteers owning Jubilee projects
- Pontefract Art Club meeting St Giles' CofE Academy for Jubilee artwork
- St Giles' Church Accession Service
- Community Showcase in Pontefract Library
- Hosting Friends of Friarwood Valley Gardens AGM, and participated in numerous litter picking sessions, and regular gardening sessions
- Falklands War anniversary - wreath ceremony
- Garforth & Kippax University of the Third Age - heritage walk
- Civic Day - Market Place conservation area heritage walk
- New College Pontefract – a series of meetings and presentations
- King's School Art & DT exhibition
- Supporting two meetings/site visits for Askern railway station
- Supporting the Yorkshire in Bloom judging visit
- Friends of Pontefract Park - briefing from Arcadis, plus a group meeting and The Picnic in the Park
- Heritage Open Days
- Armistice Day at the War Memorial
- Hosted the St John Memorial ceremony at the town hall – well done Phil, and thanks to Pauline, Peter & Christine
- Remembrance Day parade
- Christmas Concert with the Liquorice Singers

MEMBERSHIP BY TYPE



QUEEN'S PLATINUM JUBILEE

- Conservative Club Quiz
- St Giles' Civic Service
- Town Hall inside decorations
- Various events including online
- Attended the National Beacon Lighting at castle
- Jubilee Market with vintage vehicles & entertainment
- Jubilee Afternoon Tea in the Town Hall
- Attended the Mayor's Jubilee Service at Wakefield Cathedral

STAKEHOLDER WORKING AT NATIONAL AND REGIONAL LEVEL

- Railfuture (Yorkshire Branch)
- Civic Voice webinars and Regional Forum
- Yorkshire Association of Civic Societies
- High Street Taskforce
- Maybe* webinars on town & city centre trends
- We Are Wakefield
- The Yorkshire Society – hosting the Heritage Summit of over 50 delegates and delivering heritage walks; attending York Races; attending Yorkshire Day in Keighley; supporting the management team
- Wakefield Gate event by Halifax Civic Trust
- National Rail webinar
- West Yorkshire Lieutenancy team co-organised with Michael Sayles-Fox DL
- Onsite meeting at Baghill station with Arch Holdings
- Haworth/Prince of Wales Liaison Group
- Meetings commenced with the Sealed Knot chair towards a major multi-day Civil War re-enactment event in 2024

PUBLIC RELATIONS

- 5 Towns Radio - Jubilee meeting and on-air chat
- Photoshoots for Lottery Jubilee award, Heritage Open Days
- Two live Jubilee interviews in Market Place and at the castle for GB News
- Publishing news on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and our website
- Pontefract Voice
- Pre-Jubilee BBC Radio Leeds live interview with Sanchez Payne
- Jubilee BBC Radio Leeds 10-minute live interview by Andrew Edwards

GOVERNANCE, ADMINISTRATION & LOGISTICS

- Member renewals and new member recruitment achieving the highest member numbers in my time in the civic society!
- Annual Report 2021 and Annual General Meeting
- Design Awards 2021 presentation, and all assessment administration for 2022
- Four social meetings for new members

- Managing schools' judging of Jubilee decorations and Christmas decorations
- Notice boards and display cabinets updated (Town Hall, bus station, library, Magistrates Market)
- All publicity for talks, events, and including press releases, and submissions to YHACS newsletter
- Working with Panda IT to develop our website
- Administration & invitations, jointly with St Giles', for Jubilee Civic Church Service
- 2023 Calendar completed, managing sales & distribution
- Circulated grants information to community groups and business information to our wider business mailing list
- Christmas Dinner – largest attendance to date



NOW FOR 2023

More of the same from 2022, though hopefully, more delegation, more new members, and more active members.

In leading Pontefract Civic Society's board of trustees for another year, my role will ensure the promises made 12 months ago continue to be delivered and strengthened, my objectives being:

- To create a more strategic board, co-opting trustees, and delegating operational tasks to our working groups
- To recruit an Honorary Secretary
- All trustees and key representatives capability to include Microsoft 365 (email, file storage & file sharing)
- All working group members to engage in recruiting additional active members
- All working groups to be more agile, to create an annual plan and deliver action
- An updated strategy to be implemented
- To continue to strengthen existing partnerships, and build new ones
- To further shift the balance of being less internally focused
- Continue to create a more 'social' civic society, without losing focus on our primary objective of the built environment

PATRON'S ADDRESS

After being put on hold due to Covid 19, I cannot thank enough the Chairman and his colleagues for hosting a very successful tour of Pontefract town centre, Town Hall, the Castle & Visitors Centre, and St Giles' Church for the visit by the Vice-Lord Lieutenant and other West Yorkshire Deputy Lieutenants.

My colleagues were bowled over by how prosperous the town looked and how members of the Society were very proud of its rich heritage and its place in English History. Many had never been to Pontefract and wondered why they had not known of this local treasure before.

It was also gratifying to have in attendance the Mayor of Wakefield who is a Pontefract Councillor. He and his wife gave that extra something to the occasion. He also wore the Pontefract chain of office during the morning, to the delight of all.

You have only to look at Pontefract Voice to see how dynamic Pontefract Civic Society is and also its contribution to other Civic Society events, including areas of common concern and interest in West Yorkshire. I firmly believe that Civic Societies have a significant role to play in the Levelling Up agenda; clearly, we have to be bold in the era of many challenges facing our communities.



It was also a significant Royal Year, and it gave me great pleasure to attend, with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman, a Platinum Jubilee Service at St Giles' Church which was very well attended.

I have said before how interesting some of the speakers are in the Civic Society calendar of events. I particularly enjoyed the talk on the history of the Barnbow Factory in Leeds. We too often forget the significant role women played at this factory in both world wars, and beyond.

A group of us also attended a Mayor's event in Wakefield Town Hall and saw how he conducted a Citizenship Ceremony. I was sorry to hear from him that there was no immediate prospect of the King visiting Wakefield or Pontefract. Perhaps we ought to get our heads together to look at what could be of interest to members of the Royal Family. If we can come up with a suggested programme I am more than happy to forward it to the Clerk to the Lieutenancy for further possible action.

Michael Sayles Fox DL - Patron

PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

How we assess the effects of the Covid Pandemic and the Ukrainian War on our economic life will no doubt be debated for some time yet, but it is quite obvious that those effects have been serious.



No doubt also that other factors can be conflated with these to account for the fact that nearly every major scheme that we might have hoped to comment on in this report has been delayed for one reason or another.

However, notwithstanding the frustrations felt throughout the past year, the Society has continued to feed into all the consultations affecting our town and we are reasonably confident that we shall see such important schemes as the Horsefair "Streets for People" initiative, the development of Monkhill Station and the publication of the Northern Rail Plan, among others (to which we have made significant contributions) go forward in the present year.

The Society has also worked hard to broaden its base and to widen its appeal to local people, and you will read in these pages a detailed account of our work over the past year. But this continuing work needs active members, and I would invite and urge those members who can offer some time and relevant skills to join us in some suitable capacity to carry this work forward.

I am very much aware of the hard work that has been done throughout the past year by our various committees, and I am pleased to express my own thanks and those of the Society to all these members as individuals and to our Chairman, who has so ably coordinated this work.

Peter Cookson - President

CITIZENSHIP GROUP REPORT

For the first time in three years, both the Citizenship Group and the Decoration Squad were able to get back to a full year of Pontefract's life and activities, which had previously been affected by the pandemic.



We were finally able to run a full programme of events starting with the Community Showcase in the library in March. This was followed by attendance at the Armed Forces Day and Yorkshire Day events. Throughout a very busy and active year, we've worked with Pontefract Academies Trust, and of course our ongoing work with St Giles C of E Academy. I am delighted in the way the whole team has taken this working group forward, whilst still building on and increasing our activities from previous years.

2022 hasn't seen the growth in Citizenship Group we had hoped for; in fact, we've had less members, but this hasn't restricted our normal activities. We were delighted and surprised with The Queen's Platinum Jubilee Celebrations and the Civic Society was recognised as the lead in Pontefract for this. The Decoration Squad and Citizenship Group worked tirelessly to create an outstanding display in the town centre.

I am pleased to say that our Jubilee Market with vintage vehicles in June was extremely well attended, which saw the Market Hall, Library and KLH Craft Fair all have a record attendance on what most expected to be a very quiet time in Pontefract. This has led us to instigate WheelFest in June 2023, as an annual event in the Pontefract calendar benefiting the town centre businesses and residents.

We were also able to re-engage local schools for our usual joint activities for Remembrance Day, and our annual shop window Christmas display competition. Another key highlight of the year was working with local Councillors and St John Ambulance to relocate their Memorial plaque, remembering its members who had lost their lives in conflict. It is very satisfying to know that the Civic Society was able to bring the parties together to ensure that the plaque has a permanent home in Pontefract Town Hall. I am pleased to say that during the year normality did return and allowed us to plan for what has now become our annual Christmas Concert with the Liquorice Singers, which had its largest audience to date.

I am personally taken aback by the support given during 2022 and how much we have achieved in promoting our town. It is the interaction with other community groups and local business supporting Pontefract Civic Society which, together, has made Pontefract a talking point in a positive way within the district and beyond.

I was delighted in October to be one of the recipients of "The Wakefield Unsung Hero Awards". I also need to make a personal thank you to Paul Cartwright, Peter Ferrari and the executive for the support they have given to me throughout the year. We are already looking at ways to increase our activities in 2023-24, and I am excited about the potential activities we will have for our town, expanding on the work we already do to ensure Pontefract is a destination town to live, work and play.

CITIZENSHIP ACHIEVEMENTS 2022

- Community Showcase live event at the Library
- Engaged with St Giles Church & St Mary's Community Centre for Jubilee activities
- Engaged with Pontefract Academies Trust for various projects in particular the Jubilee • Delivered/co-ordinated over 70 events for the Jubilee including a town centre market with over 20 vintage vehicles on display
- Relocation of the St John Memorial plaque to the Town Hall
- Remembrance Day and support for the live ceremony
- Actively promoted and supported the Lights Switch On and Castle event.
- Supported Castleford & Pontefract Lions Santa's Grotto with our members taking a very active performance and roles
- 2023 Pontefract Calendar fundraiser for The Prince of Wales Hospice
- Support to Friends of Friarwood Valley Gardens for their Christmas Trail event with Santa • Early planning WheelFest 2023
- Liquorice Singers Carols at Christmas at the Kings Croft
- Engagement with New College Pontefract which is still developing
- Christmas Window display judging with schools



DECORATION SQUAD ACHIEVEMENTS 2022

- Nominated for WDH Arts in the Community Award 2022, though didn't make the shortlist
- Helped Pontefract in Bloom achieve a Gold Award for Pontefract in the Yorkshire in Bloom competition through the community engagement for the Jubilee arch, which the judges appreciated
- Over 80 flags in the town celebrating the Jubilee, Yorkshire Day and Pontefract's town crest
- Displays on the town hall for the Jubilee, Yorkshire Day, and Remembrance Day
- Larger poppy display for Remembrance Day extending onto the War Memorial and Beastfair
- Support to Friends of Friarwood Valley Gardens for their Christmas wonderland decorations
- Greater public engagement in all our town hall displays
- Designed and built the Angel display for Cartners No. 5

CITIZENSHIP GROUP & DECORATION SQUAD PLANS FOR 2023

- Live Community Showcase
- Low key displays for the Coronation of King Charles III
- Coordination of other Coronation celebrations
- Re-establish the Citizenship meetings and attract new members
- Engage in live events and activities with the Junior Civic Society
- Support Armed Forces Day working party
- Establish WheelFest 2023
- Create engagement opportunities for New College
- Increase our engagement with community groups on joint projects
- Ensure Liquorice shoots is a success through joint working with businesses, community groups and WMDC
- Participation in the Lions Lantern Parade
- 2024 Photographic Calendar

Phil Cook - Citizenship Coordinator

HERITAGE GROUP REPORT

We started the year in preparation for two significant full day events; one would have been a challenge, but in Pontefract Civic Society, we don't do things by half.

The first of these was The Yorkshire Society's inaugural Heritage Summit, and where better to host that than in our historic town. The event was held in our Georgian and Victorian Town Hall, complete with guest speakers; lunch was followed by a guided walk in two groups, including the Market Place conservation area and part of Friarwood Valley Gardens conservation area. Phil Bell, Chief Executive, The Yorkshire Society said,

"It was important to get many of the region's volunteer organisations and our heritage guardians together for the first time in one place, to share ideas and work together to show the strength of their combined power"

I would like to thank Mollie Garbett, Rachael Willoughby, Phil Cook, Phil Henfrey, Derek Norfolk and Jayne Poppleton for supporting the day.

The second event - held on 25 May for the Vice Lord Lieutenant of West Yorkshire, Deputy Lieutenants, and their partners - followed a more ambitious day of guided walks, supported by a presentation on the town and the major part that the Civic Society plays within it. This visit was planned with our Patron, Michael Sayles-Fox DL, which included guided walks of the Market Place conservation area in two groups. These included a visit to St Giles' Church and Pontefract Museum led by their respective teams, and after lunch, a walk-through part of the Castle conservation area, where we handed over to Ian Downes and the Castle team.

Tim Hare, Vice Lord Lieutenant of West Yorkshire said,



"Without a doubt this was a great success, enjoyed by all; without a doubt, Pontefract will receive a very positive review."

Earlier in 2022, we started a positive relationship with Paul & Karen Copley with a welcoming stew and bread meal, after which Phil Henfrey provided his research on Cartners No. 5. They've since become business members and good friends of the Civic Society. We've been consulted by Wakefield MDC throughout the process of creating four new monoliths, which provide current signposting for visitors, as well as our heritage content on the reverse. We are really pleased with the outcome, especially as our demand that they were not too contemporary was met, and for the Council accepting our request for key buildings in our streetscape to form the liquorice-style header. The boards were installed in June on Liquorice Way, Headlands Road, Ratten Row and Gillygate. Throughout the whole of the first half of the year, the Heritage Group contributed to the Citizenship Group's output for the

Queen's Platinum Jubilee, with well-researched videos and slideshows, and in particular, I want to thank Derek Norfolk and Linda Benson-Henfrey.

In June, we hosted Garforth & Kippax U3A for a half day heritage walk, which was soon followed by a walk for Civic Day; whilst the latter was poorly attended, we got two new members from it. Some non-Heritage Group members were taken on a familiarisation walk between Ferrybridge and Knottingley along the tow path, with the return leg in part through the old town of Knottingley.

In August, I met with Peter Phillips, who's based in Seattle, USA, as he visited Pontefract with a close friend as part of a UK-wide visit, though his interest was researching his family dating back to the 1600's. Whilst he was thrilled by Pontefract and the Civic Society, we had to make him aware that his ancestors were likely to have emigrated from the Huddersfield area. During this month, Phil Cook and I briefed Karen and Lynne from KLH Events on the history of the town hall, so that they can answer questions informing people at their craft fairs.

Having been saddened by the passing of our late Queen Elizabeth II, which had a minor impact on our Heritage Open Days programme (reported below), we went to support the Proclamation of King Charles III in Pontefract with the Town Crier, John Turner, and in Wakefield with the Mayor, Cllr David Jones. We then posted the Proclamation in the Magistrates Market, the bus station and outside the library.

During the autumn, we worked in partnership with Rebecca from Pontefract Library, on reaching relatives of those named on the St John Ambulance stone memorial. This was in preparation for its move from their Pontefract HQ to the Town Hall, which Phil Cook arranged with the council. We then hosted an unveiling and blessing conducted by the Mayor, Cllr David Jones and Canon June Lawson, respectively, in the presence of St John Ambulance representatives, past and present - plus two descendants we'd located in the Castleford area; it was a fitting, moving and worthwhile event.

Dwain Longley, Regional President in the North East, St John Ambulance said:

"We are very grateful to Pontefract Civic Society for their work to have our St John memorial plaque mounted in the Town Hall where it will be on permanent display. Our volunteers worked tirelessly in a number of ways, both in England and overseas, to provide assistance during the First and Second World Wars, and this is a very fitting way to commemorate their actions many decades ago."

HERITAGE OPEN DAYS REPORT

Each year, we coordinate Heritage Open Days in and around Pontefract, and whilst it's a 10-day festival, the planning and review takes up 10 months of the year.

I would therefore like to start by thanking the Heritage Group and our partners for their support and perseverance, and in particular, Phil Henfrey, HOD Coordinator.



Hot on the heels of our Jubilee programme success in creating 70 events and activities (both face to face and online), I was so pleased that we were able to replicate that model for HOD in planning 50 events and activities with 27 being brand new, though we did lose five events following the passing of our late Queen. 'Innovations' was the 2022 theme, and Phil Henfrey was able to research a number of Pomfretians and others close by, plus their inventions, which formed the basis of our daily social media posts.



Paul Cartwright - Interim Heritage Coordinator
Supported by Phil Henfrey - HOD Coordinator

RAIL REPORT



Members of the Rail Group have met eight times through the year, with most meetings held face to face in the Town Hall or at Central Methodist Church.

Regrettably the West Yorkshire Combined Authority has wound up the Wakefield District Consultative Sub-Committee so there is now no face-to-face contact with officers from the Combined Authority. However we have maintained contact, via Teams or Zoom, with officers from the Combined Authority and Northern Rail and, over the course of the year members have attended meetings and given support to the Friends of Reopening Askern Station. We have maintained our links with our MP Yvette Cooper. We continued our membership of Railfuture and members attend and contribute to their regular Yorkshire Branch meetings. Through our meetings with Officers from Wakefield Council we have been consulted on the installation of lifts at Monkhill Station with work scheduled to start in 2023.

WE TAKE EVERY APPROPRIATE OPPORTUNITY TO RAISE OUR CAMPAIGN PRIORITIES WHICH ARE:

- Raise issues which are designed to increase the return of passengers to rail travel post-pandemic as well as generate new opportunities.
- To overcome the lack of connectivity of our local train services to destinations outside West Yorkshire. Within this campaign we see the re-opening of Askern Station as way to achieve a service to Doncaster. We also support the campaign for a more frequent service to Goole.
- Improve facilities at Monkhill Station including the access road, as well as provide adequate car parking for when rail travel eventually returns to pre-Covid levels.
- The improvement to ticket machine provision at Tanshelf station.
- An improvement to the service between Sheffield and York via Baghill station in particular the introduction of a Sunday morning journey in each direction.
- We are keen to develop further our Station Adoption schemes for all three stations with Northern and liaise with other station adoption schemes.

- Explore the potential benefits that Community Rail Partnership schemes could bring to our stations.
- Raise the awareness of the state of the Baghill station buildings to stop further deterioration and explore possible alternative uses.
- Encourage Grand Central to provide a reliable service and timetable more trains through Pontefract to reflect the increased usage.
- Provide opportunities for schools and New College to become involved.

Meetings will continue throughout 2023 where we will continue to meet face-to-face and we will encourage more members with an interest in rail to join our group.

Dave Hogg - Rail Coordinator

Compiled by Anthony Dee – Rail Administrator

TALKS & TOURS GROUP REPORT



Last year we returned to “normal”, with all our talks being presented to a live audience, although we did not plan any tours to other places or businesses.

The season started in January with a speaker new to us, Dave Cooke. Dave is a historian who specialises in

the Civil War. His talk, “If buildings could talk”, gave details of the buildings that are still standing that were involved in the Civil War. February’s meeting was postponed due to the speaker having Covid. In March we were treated to a first-hand account of “What really happened at Sutton Hoo” by Eric Houlder. In April we went in a different direction, with a talk from Jenny Howarth who runs the Donkey Sanctuary at Criddling Stubbs. A video clip of donkeys kicking a football raised many smiles!

We changed our venue at the start of May for the postponed live costume performance by Sharron Garner. This thought-provoking tale of the suffragettes’ struggle brought a tear to the eye for many. The scheduled talk in May was back in the Town Hall, for our second charity event by the Yorkshire Air Ambulance. We were lucky to have an actual responder involved who was able to answer all the questions put to him by the audience.

June’s talk had to be postponed due to the AI being blocked by an accident, stopping the speaker in her tracks. Eric Houlder returned in July to show us his photographs of the skulls recently



unearthed from the Battle of Towton, explaining how various injuries had been inflicted.

Unusually we had a meeting in August, which was the postponed talk about Royalty by Veronica Bird OBE. She gave us some 'insider' details of various members of the

Royal Family, who she met during her time in the Prison Service. Dave Cooke returned in October to tell the tale of the first siege of Pontefract Castle. It was amazing to think that all this happened very close to where we were sat!

November started with September's postponed costume performance by actor Chris Cade. The life story of "The Railway King" (George Hudson) was performed with a little mirth and audience participation, which went down well. For the scheduled talk, Carole Smithies returned to present part two of the history of the Barnbow munitions factory, up to the closure in 1999. Many details were given of the hardships endured by the mainly female workforce during World War Two.

Our Christmas event proved to be a fine ending to the year. This was a double bill event kicked off by Chris Cade's superb performance as Ebenezer Scrooge, in Charles Dickens' "A Christmas Carol". The audience did not know whether to laugh or cry, such was the depth of the performance by actor Chris. The second half was an awesome set by a professional musician, "Underdrive Johnny", which went in a slightly different direction than planned due to requests from the audience! A fantastic time was had by all.

All in all, a good year, with some amazing talks. We are grateful to the Gott family for the help given to Mollie with the refreshments. We still need more volunteers for the group as we struggle to cope when a member of our core team is absent. Hopefully we will resume visits this year, with a trip to York planned when the rail service on the Baghill line settles down.

Dave Hogg - Talks & Tours Co-ordinator

HIGHWAYS REPORT

The Highways Group held three meetings this year which were all face-to-face meetings in the Town Hall.

In advance of these meetings, we met with Wakefield Council Transportation officers on-line, which seems to work well for everyone. In November, in addition to the usual two WMDC officers, we were joined by a member of the Highways team and a member of the Streetscene team, which allowed a more detailed discussion.

The speed reduction measures on the A628 Castle Syke Hill, involves significant white lining of the carriageway and more controversially extending the 30mph speed limit nearer to the brow of the hill.

The traffic reduction scheme for Ropergate was introduced with a narrower carriageway, reduced on-street parking and the opportunity for a street café culture. Although the scheme enhanced the attractiveness of the street for pedestrians, the retailers strongly objected to the design and the loss of parking. The scheme was abandoned and the substantial and expensive planters were relocated within the pedestrian precinct.

The Streets for People scheme for Horsefair now reflects the views expressed in the public consultation, and work is expected to start early in 2023. It is hoped that the displacement of traffic caused by the traffic reduction measures will strengthen the need for a traffic gyratory scheme around All Saints Church.

We await plans for changes to traffic arrangements within Pontefract Park, following a review carried out by the Council's Streetscene Team, which will reflect the increase in traffic to and from *Aspire@ThePark* and the *Huggamug@thepavilion* café, as well as major improvements to the childrens' play area.

The Leeds to Pontefract Corridor Improvement Plan has been expanded to include the provision of bus lanes on Southgate between the Town End roundabouts and Valley Road, although along with the proposals for Park Road, the plans are being re-evaluated because of a shortfall in the funding available from the West Yorkshire Combined Authority.

We continued to raise the importance of connecting the Prince of Wales housing development with the town centre and Avant Housing have now committed to provide the pedestrian link between the estate and the footpath to Colonels Walk. A direct route for pedestrians into the rear of the Racecourse Retail Park is also being pursued.

The failure of the rising bollards, to protect the town centre traffic free precinct, continues to be of concern and we have regularly raised this with WMDC.

The South Featherstone Link Road has been on our agenda throughout the year and in the Public Examination of the Wakefield Local Plan 2036, the Government Inspector has scrutinised the plans for the road and housing developments in Featherstone. Wakefield Council and the West Yorkshire Combined Authority are awaiting their consultant's evaluation of the various route options which remain on the drawing board.

As part of a programme to promote bus usage single fares were capped at £2, paid for by the West Yorkshire Combined Authority.

For 2023 the Group will continue to meet face to face, and we will continue our regular meetings with Wakefield Council officers. Regrettably no new members joined the Group this year, but we will continue to seek new members for the Group.

Anthony Dee - Highways Coordinator

PLANNING REPORT



The planning group continues to monitor changes to land and buildings in Pontefract town centre and surroundings.

Few new buildings have appeared in the year and the number of planning applications has lessened.

- Monitoring new scaffolding, asking what is proposed, does it have planning permission, is one needed? Regularly examine the local authority web site to identify possible redevelopment schemes and planning required.
- Several members, individually, have walked the main town centre streets to identify changes in occupancy or alterations.
- Ropergate has seen changes to create The Last Bank, The Mad Ox, and The Old Post Office, and several refurbished shop frontages, however the council suggested part-pedestrianisation trial, after consultation with the property owners, was unsuccessful.
- No progress on the ground for Horsefair upgrading and linking to the Castle.
- The Wakefield District Housing scheme on the former fire station site has almost reached its conclusion and will be completed in early 2023.
- Pontefract Park and the Racecourse is an attractive focus for leisure activities but work on the surrounds to the park lake have still to be implemented. Playground improvements underway.
- Brownfield sites in the Pontefract Masterplan have not seen any development activity, these are former PGI site, Philidag site, and Carlton Furniture works.
- Housing under construction on phased development for

120 properties on Prince of Wales site is under way by Taylor Wimpy called 'Ember Mews'. A controlled bus gate through the site remains under consideration.

- Outside of Pontefract, the skyline saw the demolition of cooling towers at Ferrybridge Power Station.

Peter Taylor - *Planning Coordinator*

THOUGHTS FOR 2023

- We need to review what group members do collectively versus individually, this will provide more clarity, and may gain some new members to the Group.
- We will continue the good work of the Design Awards, starting our assessments earlier; it's already a well-run and well-received process, though if we can improve it including category criteria, we'll look to do that.
- All relevant planning applications will be reviewed and discussed on a monthly basis before the closure date, submitting comments where appropriate.

Evelyn Westwood - *Incoming Planning Coordinator*



DESIGN AWARDS 2022



On Mon 30 Jan, Pontefract Civic Society hosted its Design Awards for 2022, in the splendour of the Georgian Nelson Room of Pontefract Town Hall in front of an impressive gathering of business and property owners, trades people, representatives from Wakefield Council, and civic society members.

Civic Society Chair, Paul Cartwright said “this is an evening of celebration regeneration projects which enhances the historic streetscape of Pontefract as a place for investors and visitors, with a further year of a clear shift from retail to hospitality and activity-based experiences.”

The civic society presented the Countess of Rosse Façade of the Year award The Mad Ox based on the façade’s distinctive colour scheme, graphics, signage, lighting, and pavement space.

Carl Jeffery, owner, said, “Chuffed to bits! Thank you, so much people of Pontefract and Pontefract Civic Society for awarding us the Façade of the Year. We are absolutely speechless. This is our family business and accolades like this makes all our hard work really mean something. We’ve had a great 10 months so far, and can’t wait for the next 10 years”.

Bradleys Real Estate was awarded Façade Runner Up.

Other awards presented on the night were for improvements in shop fronts, architecture & design, place-making, and the Pontefract Racecourse Co. Ltd., scooped two awards for projects in two different categories:

- Countess of Rosse Façade of the Year (shop front)
- Civic/Commercial (a new or extended significant building)
- Special Commendations (complete ground floor refit)
- Regeneration Award (catalyst for retail expansion & footfall)
- Residential Award (creating attractive, distinctive, quality dwellings)
- Heritage Award (respecting a heritage building from the ground to rooftop)
- Improvement Award (attractiveness or character of the property)

Paul Cartwright, civic society chair, said “All the award winners were very appreciative of our recognition in making Pontefract a better place for everyone. The variety of projects, from housing, service, hospitality to racing accommodation, and Farmer Copley’s luxury AirBnB, shows that we rewarded the right projects, and Pontefract continues to be a successful market town. We’re already listing projects for 2023 assessment”.

2022 AWARD WINNERS

Façade of the Year 2022 - *The Mad Ox*



Special Commendation - *Orchard Farmhouse, Farmer Copleys*



Regeneration Award - *The Last Bank*



Façade of the Year Runner Up - *Bradleys Real Estate*



2022 AWARD WINNERS

Improvement Award - *The Pavilion Café,*
Pontefract Racecourse



Commercial/Civic Award - *The Stables*
Accommodation, Pontefract Racecourse



Residential Award - *4 Mill Hill Road*
Hitch & Midgley builders



Heritage Award - *The Robin Hood*



DESIGN AWARDS 2022

HERITAGE AWARD

The Robin Hood
4 Wakefield Road

PAUL CARTWRIGHT
CHAIRMAN

PONTFRAC CIVIC SOCIETY

TRUSTEES

Role	Name
Chair	Paul Cartwright
Vice Chair	Phil Cook
Secretary (to May 2022)	Julie Stotten
Treasurer	Ian Wood
Citizenship Coordinator	Phil Cook
Rail Coordinator	Dave Hogg
Interim Heritage Coordinator	Paul Cartwright
Planning Coordinator	Peter Taylor
Highways Coordinator	Anthony Dee* <i>non-trustee</i>
Talks & Tours Coordinator	Dave Hogg
Futures Coordinator	Khalid Rasool
Co-opted	Dr Colin White
Co-opted	Peter Ferrari
Observer (from Nov 2021)	<i>Khalid Rasool</i>
Observer (from Nov 2021)	<i>Peter Ferrari</i>



OUR WORKING GROUPS

Citizenship	Rail	Heritage	Planning
Phil Cook (C) Vacant (D) Vacant (A) Paul Cartwright Christine Cartwright Carol Trueman Bryan Cunningham	Dave Hogg (C) Philip Henfrey (D) Anthony Dee (A) Ian Wood Peter Cookson Rosemary Barnes Paul Cartwright Chris Hyomes Tony Hames (from Jun 2022)	Paul Cartwright (Interim C) Vacant (D) Vacant (A) Philip Henfrey (HOD Coordinator) Phil Cook John Turner Linda Benson Henfrey Derek Norfolk	Peter Taylor (C) Philip Henfrey (D) Vacant (A) Christine Cartwright Paul Cartwright Evelyn Westwood (from Jun 2022) Helen Newbold (from Jun 2022)
Highways	Talks & Tours	Futures	Business
Anthony Dee (C & A) Vacant (D) Derek Vaux David Hogg Peter Cookson Paul Cartwright Tony Hames (from Jun 2022)	Dave Hogg (C) Colin White (D) Vacant (A) Paul Cartwright Mollie Garbett	Khalid Rasool (C) Vacant (D) Vacant (A) Paul Cartwright Phil Cook Peter Ferrari	Paul Cartwright Phil Cook

C – Coordinator - D – Deputy Coordinator - A – Administrator

REPORT OF TRUSTEES FOR THE PERIOD ENDING 31ST DECEMBER, 2022

The Trustees present their report with the financial statements of the charity for the period ended 31st December, 2022.

The accounts have been prepared in accordance with the SORP accounting policies set out by our Treasurer.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Pontefract Civic Society is a registered charity governed by constitution. The organisation is viable by self-generated income from subscriptions and events. Project funding is developed through grant opportunities. There are no plans to recruit an Executive Director, and we intend that the trustees will continue to manage the charity on a voluntary basis. In the long term, paid roles may be considered, should new income or grants sustain a different business model.

RECRUITMENT AND APPOINTMENT OF TRUSTEES

As set out in the Constitution, the Chair of Trustees is nominated by the membership. The trustees are set out in this report and are those in place at AGM. The Board of Trustees has the power to co-opt trustees, as necessary.

TRUSTEE INDUCTION AND TRAINING

The Trustees maintain a good working knowledge of charity, charity law and best practice, supported by attendance at charity training courses, as deemed applicable. This whole area is always under review in order for us to take advantage of opportunities as they arise; we should never stop learning.

ORGANISATION

The Charity is controlled by a Board of Trustees. The day to day running of the charity is led by the Chair and Vice Chair with other trustees in specific roles, as required.

CHARITABLE OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

The Society is established for the public benefit for the following purposes in the area comprising Pontefract and District, which area shall hereinafter be referred to as “the area of benefit”:

- (i) To promote high standards of planning and architecture in or affecting the area of benefit.
- (ii) To educate the public in the geography, history, natural history and architecture of the area of benefit.

- (iii) To secure the preservation, protection, development and improvement of features of historic or public interest in the area of benefit.

PUBLIC BENEFIT

In furtherance of the said purposes, but not otherwise, the Society through its Executive Committee shall have the following powers:

1. To promote civic pride in the area of benefit.
2. To promote research into subjects directly connected with the objects of the Society and to publish the results of any such research.
3. To act as a co-ordinating body and to co-operate with the local authorities, planning committees and all other statutory authorities, voluntary organisations, charities and persons having aims similar to those of the Society.
4. To promote or assist in promoting activities of a charitable nature throughout the area of benefit.
5. To publish papers, reports and other literature.
6. To make surveys and prepare maps and plans and collect information in relation to any place, erection or building of beauty or historic interest within the area of benefit.
7. To hold meetings, lectures and exhibitions.
8. To educate public opinion and to give advice and information.
9. To raise funds and to invite and receive contributions from any person or persons whatsoever by way of subscription, donation and otherwise; provided that the Society shall not undertake any permanent trading activities in raising funds for its primary purpose. To acquire, by purchase, gift or otherwise, property, whether subject to any special trust or not
10. Subject to such consents as may be required by law, to sell, let, mortgage, dispose of or turn to account all or any of the property or funds of the Society as shall be necessary.
11. Subject to such consents as may be required by law, to borrow or raise money for the purposes of the Society on such terms and on such security as the Executive Committee shall think fit, but so that the liability of individual members of the Society shall in no case extend beyond the amount of their respective annual subscriptions.
12. To do all such other lawful things as are necessary for the attainment of the said purposes.

We do this by organising membership events and reaching out to non-members to attend public talks and meetings in accessible locations and venues.

A number of free public meetings are organised and publicised, which ensures the Society remains accessible, financially viable and sustainable.

The total spend on public benefit was £22,406.

We have supported a number of organisations, events, and ... Wakefield MDC (grant) wayfinding monoliths (£11,726) Decoration Squad and Jubilee (£6,223), other projects (£2,537), Friends of Friarwood Valley Gardens Jubilee (£1,002), Pontefract in Bloom (£575), and Yorkshire Air Ambulance (£320).

RISK MANAGEMENT

The trustees have a risk management strategy which comprises:

1. An annual review of the risks.
2. The establishment of systems and procedures to mitigate risk.
3. Implementation of the procedures designed to minimise any potential impact should those risks materialise.

ROLE AND CONTRIBUTION OF VOLUNTEERS

Pontefract Civic Society celebrates its commitment to a diverse and skilled volunteer team, and whilst some members have worked hard, it has been patchy, though with some successes recently. There remains much more to do, and volunteers of all backgrounds and experiences are openly welcomed especially transferable skills from professional or community organisations which can benefit the civic society, thus ultimately, the town.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

The Statement of Financial Activities showed a deficit of £10,397.

RESERVES POLICY

In accordance with the advice of the Charity Commission, the charity aims to hold unrestricted reserves at levels of approximately 12 months of budgeted unrestricted expenditure, to meet unforeseen costs and statutory obligations.

FUTURE PLANS AND DEVELOPMENTS

The main priority continues to be to create a blend of experience and 'younger blood', supplemented by relevant governance controls and trustee training, to deliver operational plans:

- To continue working in partnership with public, private, and third sector stakeholders
- To increase our membership with a broader demographic and encourage active participation, particularly younger members of the community
- To develop our Business Member scheme for the benefit of all parties and the town
- To further embed more technology, specifically, Microsoft 365, for active use by trustees and other key members
- To develop a more strategic Board
- To diversify income generation
- To manage capacity-building acting as a facilitator for delivery projects of benefit to the town, in partnership with other groups
- To develop policies and procedures recommended by the Charity Commission

On behalf of the Board

Paul Cartwright - Chair

VICE CHAIR'S REPORT



I am personally taken back by the support given in 2022 and how much we have achieved in promoting our town.

It is the interaction with other community groups and local business supporting Pontefract Civic Society which, together, has made Pontefract a talking point in a positive way within the district and beyond.

Our continued meetings with Wakefield MDC has enabled the civic society to be the driving force, ensuring Pontefract is a positive talking point in the district and beyond. I believe the civic society is going from strength to strength, but we need more active members in all our working groups to build on our success.

I was delighted in October to be one of the recipients of "The Wakefield Unsung Hero Awards". I also need to make a personal thank you to Paul Cartwright, Peter Ferrari and the executive for the support they have given to me throughout the year, which personally has not been easy. I am already working on plans to increase our activities in 2023-24, and I am excited about the potential activities we will have for our town, expanding on the work we already do to ensure Pontefract is a destination town to live, work, do business and visit, by enhancing the environment.

ACHIEVEMENTS

- Attended meetings for regeneration
- Meetings with council leader
- Meetings with Wakefield youth team
- Meetings with WDH, as an independent observer
- Various meetings and discussions with local businesses for planning events
- Meetings with Wakefield MDC Highways on regeneration projects and improvements
- Putting forward civic society solutions & opportunities for Pontefract
- Attended various public consultations for the future of Pontefract
- Supported guided tours and talks for visitors.

VICE CHAIR'S REPORT CONT....

POLICIES PREVIOUSLY APPROVED

- New Policy Introductory template and documentation
- Press Release template
- Health & Safety Policy and incident report
- Risk Assessment
- Data Protection Policy (GDPR)
- Data Privacy Retention Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Equality & Diversity Policy (including Equal Opportunities)
- Expense Policy and documentation
- Executive Reporting template
- Trustee Induction
- Project proposal documentation

POLICIES APPROVED IN 2022

- Junior Civic Society
- Whistleblowing Policy

Phil Cook - Vice Chair

up principally of grants from the National Lottery and Wakefield Council amounting to £11,913, accounting for more than half of our total income - together with annual subscriptions of £4,295 and revenue from events of £3,065, centred mainly around the Christmas period.

Annual subscription rates for 2022 remained at 2021 levels but due to further increases in memberships in the business and community group categories, a 10% increase in income was achieved. £776 was also received from HMRC in respect of a claim for Gift Aid for the four year period ended 5th April 2022. 2023 subscription rates are to be increased to reflect continuing cost inflation.

Our net costs in 2022 after adjusting for the transfer of funds between accounts amounted to £32,905, which was considerably higher than in previous years. The most significant of these costs (£20,981), representing 64% of the total, was incurred on grant funded projects. Primarily, these were the installation of wayfinding signage (£11,726) and the Queen's Platinum Jubilee expenses (£9,144).

Other significant items of expenditure included PR materials (£3,074), events and meeting costs (£2,607) both of which reflect the increase in activity levels during the year, and new laptop computers for members of the Executive (£1,563) to aid with administration. In keeping with previous years the Civic Society has made donations to various local organisations of £633. Other aspects of the Society's expenditure are either broadly in line with or below that of the previous year.

The accounts reflect a net cash outflow in the year of £10,397 (2021 £3,850), as a result of the utilisation in the year of funds which were ring fenced at 31st December 2021 for projects put on hold due to Covid-19 and have subsequently progressed.

Ring fenced funds at 31st December 2022 stood at £8,811 representing 61% of total cash balances.

Ian Wood - Treasurer

TREASURER'S REPORT



I am pleased to present the Treasurer's report for 2022.

I can confirm that all expenditure has been correctly dual authorised, prior to processing payments promptly, when due, and properly allocated/ accounted for. I would once again like to thank

Christopher Hyomes for an effective independent examination of our 2022 Annual Accounts.

2022 has been a year of complete contrast to that of the previous two years as a result of the lifting of the restrictions imposed on the Society due to the Covid-19 pandemic. This has resulted in the progression of various projects previously put on hold, and the resumption of face to face events, primarily our monthly talks programme. A great deal of activity was also centred around the Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebrations.

Our income in 2022 (£22,508) was considerably higher than in 2021 (£7,610) due largely to these levels of activity. 2022 income is made

DONATIONS & BEQUESTS

Have you thought of making a donation to Pontefract Civic Society during your lifetime, or leaving us some money in your will?

Pontefract Voice and our Annual Reports show the tremendous work the civic society does to make Pontefract a better place; new projects always need support. The civic society is both independent and non-political.

We would be absolutely delighted if you would make a donation or a bequest. Both the Chair and Vice Chair are available if you wish to discuss this in more detail.

ANNUAL ACCOUNTS 31 DECEMBER 2022

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

INCOME	2022	2021
Annual subscriptions received	£4,295	£3,904
Gift aid	£776	£-
Blue plaques	£-	£-
Grants	£11,913	£335
Donations	£522	£350
Events revenue	£3,065	£800
Book, calendar, mug, pen and badge sales	£1,826	£2,221
Recharge cost of design award plaques	£111	£-
Legacies	£-	£-
SUB-TOTAL	£22,508	£7,610
INCOME FROM MONETARY ASSETS		
Transfers between accounts	£3,390	£4,458
Loan	£-	£-
Bank interest	£-	£-
TOTAL INCOME	£25,898	£12,068
EXPENDITURE	2022	2021
DIRECT CHARITABLE EXPENDITURE:		
Civic Voice	£176	£203
YHACS	£50	£50
Railfuture	£25	£25
Events & meetings	£2,607	£852
Donations	£633	£991
SUB-TOTAL	£3,491	£2,121
OTHER EXPENDITURE INCURRED:		
Membership refunds	£-	£-
Insurance	£730	£579
Printing & Postage	£254	£327
Loan to Civic Voice	£500	£-
Grants expenditure	£20,981	£2,792
Transfers between accounts	£3,390	£4,458
Book Printing	£-	£3,881
Calendar Printing & Envelopes	£1,055	£732
Mugs & Boxes	£150	£191
Pens	£160	£-
Business support costs	£97	£-
PR Materials	£3,074	£235
Website & Other Software Costs	£115	£72
Travel costs	£-	£-
IT Equipment	£1,563	£-
Membership related costs	£735	£530
SUB-TOTAL	£32,804	£13,797
TOTAL EXPENDITURE INCURRED	£36,295	£15,918
OVERALL EXCESS/DEFICIT OF INCOME OVER EXPENDITURE	-£10,397	-£3,850
STATEMENT OF ASSETS OF LIABILITIES AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2021	2022	2021
MONETARY ASSETS		
Barclays Community A/c (current)	£14,337	£24,734
Paypal A/c	£-	£-
Totals	£14,337	£24,734
RECONCILIATION OF CASH MOVEMENTS TO BANK BALANCES		
Opening bank balances	£24,734	£28,584
Total cash receipts	£25,898	£12,068
LESS: EXPENDITURE	£36,295	£15,918
TOTAL CASH INFLOW	-£10,397	-£3,850
CLOSING BANK BALANCES	£14,337	£24,734

Treasurer: I Wood (2022)

I have examined the Receipts and Payments for the Year 2022 and found them to be in accordance with the records and vouchers produced.

Christopher Hyomes - Independent Examiner - Date: 31 Jan, 2023

P Cartwright - Chairman - Date: 3 Feb, 2023



PONTEFRACT

Events 2023



PCS TALK & EVENTS

OTHER EVENTS

JANUARY

- 25** "RAILWAYS OF PONTEFRACT – PAST & PRESENT"
by Peter Cookson
- 30** 2022 DESIGN AWARDS
Town Hall

15-17 & 19-21

DICK WHITTINGTON PANTOMIME
Town Hall

FEBRUARY

- 15** PONTEFRACT WAKES FAIR, AND HISTORY OF FAIRGROUNDS
by Steven Smith
- 28** CIVIC SOCIETY AGM
Town Hall

MARCH

- 15** FIRST SIEGE OF PONTEFRACT CASTLE
by David Cooke
- 18** COMMUNITY SHOWCASE
Town Hall

29 EASTER EGG HUNT
Friarwood Valley Gardens

APRIL

- 19** A LIFE IN MAGIC
by Ray Roberts

11 PONTEFRACT RACES
24 PONTEFRACT RACES

MAY

- 17** ISAMBARD KINGDOM BRUNEL
Performance by Chris Cade

3 PONTEFRACT RACES
6 KING CHARLES III CORONATION
14 HOSPICE CYCLOTHON
Pontrfract RUFC
26 PONTEFRACT RACES

JUNE

- 10** WHEELFEST
Town Centre
- 17** CIVIC DAY
- PRISON TO PALACE**
by Veronica Eird

3 HOSPICE SUMMER FAIR
12 PONTEFRACT RACES
17 ARMED FORCES DAY
Pontrfract Park
25 PONTEFRACT RACES

PCS TALK & EVENTS

OTHER EVENTS

JULY

- 8** LIQUORICE SHOOTS
Town Centre
- 19** WHAT MADE YORKSHIRE GREAT, AND WORKING WITH JOHN POULSON
by Stewart Hartley

3 PONTEFRACT RACES
9 LIQUORICE FESTIVAL
Town centre, castle & Friarwood Valley Gardens
11 PONTEFRACT RACES
21 PONTEFRACT RACES
30 PONTEFRACT RACES

AUGUST

1 YORKSHIRE DAY
Friarwood Valley Gardens
9 PONTEFRACT RACES
12 FRIARWOOD FESTIVAL
Friarwood Valley Gardens
20 PONTEFRACT RACES

SEPTEMBER

- 8-17** HERITAGE OPEN DAYS
Various Location
- 20** THE VICTORIAN CIRCUSES OF LEEDS
by Steve Ward

21 PONTEFRACT RACES
28 PONTEFRACT RACES

OCTOBER

- 18** THE BATTLE OF FLAMBOROUGH HEAD
by Dave Cooke

9 PONTEFRACT RACES
23 PONTEFRACT RACES
TBC LIONS LANTERN FESTIVAL
Castle & Friarwood Valley Gardens

NOVEMBER

- 15** A DAY IN THE LIFE OF YORKSHIRE COAL MINER
by Dave Hogg

11 ARMISTICE DAY
12 REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY

For more information, contact us by email:

✉ info@pontefractcivicsociety.org.uk

or visit us on social media:

f @PontefractCivic



Gold Member 	Gold Member 	Gold Member 	Gold Member 
Gold Member 	Gold Member 	Gold Member 	Gold Member 
Gold Member 	Gold Member 	Silver Member 	Silver Member 
Silver Member 	Silver Member 	Silver Member 	Silver Member 
Silver Member 	Silver Member 	Silver Member 	Silver Member VICARAGE COURT CARE HOME
Silver Member 	Silver Member 	Bronze Member 	Bronze Member 
Bronze Member 	Bronze Member 	Bronze Member 	

Community Group Members

Friends of Friarwood Valley Gardens • Friends of Pontefract Park • Liquorice Singers • Pontefract Art Club • Pontefract Collieries FC
 Pontefract Heritage Group • Pontefract Heritage Partnership • Pontefract in Bloom • Pontefract Choral Society
 Pontefract Lioness Club /Castleford & Pontefract Lions Club • Pontefract Rugby Union Football Club • St Giles Centre
 Pontefract Rotary Club • Carleton Running Community • Featherstone Male Voice Choir • St Giles with St Mary's Pantomime Society



For more information, contact us by email:
 ✉ info@pontefractcivicsociety.org.uk
 or visit us on social media:
 📺 @PontefractCivic



With thanks to Five Towns Print and Design,
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 Annual Report 2022

🌐 www.pontefractcivicsociety.org.uk