

## Newsletter Number 9



**FUTURE MEETINGS:** Held at Christchurch, King Street, NR30 2HL at 7.30pm

**Tuesday 12 March Dr. Mark Rumble** will talk on Secrets of Great Yarmouth: Ancient Origins, Hidden Places and Interesting Characters.

**Saturday 30 March East of England Forum** will be held in Ipswich. It will be dedicated to the Government's latest review - Building Better, Building Beautiful Commission. There will be discussions about how the civic movement can make the case for higher quality development in the local area. A local civic society will talk about their current activities before Ian Harvey, Civic Voice Executive Director, leads workshops on "What is high quality design when we see it?" and "What is appropriate public participation in the planning system?"

This event is free for Civic Voice members, but a charge applies to non-members.  
[You can register to attend here.](#)

**Tuesday 21 May:** A visit to Kings Lynn organised by Michael and Lyn Muskett. This is a follow up of the highly successful one made last year. Details will be announced later.

### VARIOUS SUBGROUPS

If you would like to sign up to any of the subgroups below you may do so at our meetings. Alternatively, let me know by email. [hugh@sturzaker.plus.com](mailto:hugh@sturzaker.plus.com). Many hands make light work!

**LITTER GROUP** We arranged a meeting with other groups in the town and have decided to participate in the Great Britain Spring Clean. The Great Yarmouth Spring Clean will be on **Saturday 13 April starting at 10am and 1pm**. Each will last up to two hours and we hope to cover most of the town. Do consider joining us. Equipment will be provided.

**ROUNDABOUTS** I have had another meeting with Brandon Lewis MP about the poor state of the roundabouts between Lowestoft and Great Yarmouth and he has written to the Highways Authority who own them.

**GREENING UP GROUP** Our three remaining planters have been planted up with crocuses and daffodils and are now back on St. George's Plaza. We have brought together other groups who are keen on greening up the town and our third meeting is on 13 March. We have great ideas but are lacking in funds so if you know of any please let me know.

**MIDDLEGATE ESTATE** I have met with some residents on this estate and work is about to start on creating flower and vegetable beds on a bare patch of ground. From this we plan to ask residents what they would like to improve the grounds of the estate and whether they are willing to be involved. Ultimately we hope that the whole estate will be much improved with a sense of pride and better community spirit.

**CONSERVATION AREAS** are "areas of special architectural and historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance". The Conservation Group has now carried out an audit of the three conservation areas "at risk": King Street, Market Place and

Seafront areas. This is the first time that this has been done since 2005 and plans are being drawn up for the area and are about to be submitted for some large national grants.

**AWARDS.** We have agreed that there will be four categories:

- Retail
- Services (to include banks, estate agents, businesses, bookmakers etc.)
- Food and Drink to include cafes, pubs, restaurants
- Market Stalls

We are about to carry out the judging and if you would like to be involved please contact Gemma at [gmanthorpe@me.com](mailto:gmanthorpe@me.com). The awards ceremony will be in the Town Hall in the middle of May.

## **TWO MONTHLY DINNERS.**

Two very successful dinners have been organised by Ann Hacon - in Ambitions Restaurant, East Coast College - and by Angie Powley in the Plaza, South Quay. The next is at the Courtyard Restaurant, 75 Howard Street South, NR30 2PU on Thursday 14 March and is being organised by Sue Skoyles. There are still a few places left and if you would like to go please contact her on [sueskoyles@outlook.com](mailto:sueskoyles@outlook.com).

**MEMBERSHIP.** Two thirds of members have signed up for this coming year. You may do this at our meetings. Alternatively you may do so through our membership secretary, Ann Hamilton. You may send the completed membership form below to her. Details are on the form. If you pay income tax please fill in the Gift Aid Form as we can claim £2.50 for each £10 paid. Please consider inviting friends to meetings and encouraging them to become members.

## **RECENT TALKS**

**Talk by Ms Sheila Oxtoby**, Chief Executive Officer of Great Yarmouth Borough Council and

**Mr Darren Barker** of Great Yarmouth Preservation Trust on Tuesday 24 January.

Ms Oxtoby said that the Council would cooperate with the Highways Authority and the Local Enterprise Partnership to attract funds to the town to improve the quality of Yarmouth's environment particularly in aspects of 'greening', lighting and litter. She mentioned various plans for the town over the next few years with schemes for the Town Centre, the Market, The Conge, Hall Quay and the better use of existing building. She felt the policy should be 'bold but listening'. Two million pounds of extra funding will be available and new trains will serve the town. The bus station would be improved, lighting and signage around the bus station will follow. The Conge area would be improved and it would probably become more residential. The plans exist but cannot be implemented until funding is definitely available.

The new Yare Bridge, at a cost of £120 million, will free traffic flow through the town and £3.9 million will be spent on flood protection.

She said the Town Centre is a problem and the former Marks & Spenser premises are not in use. The current position is that business rates are charged even when premises are not in use giving an incentive to sell or let the buildings at an attractive rate. It will be impossible 'to turn back the clock' on town centre trading because large, out of town shops with free parking and internet shopping account for much of the population's spending. Innovative shops and catering could take over the Town Centre with more residential dwellings.

The Council has a Tourism and Cultural Strategy supporting the Arts Festival, the 'Out There' Festival and the Maritime Festival but what to do with the Winter Gardens is a problem. Ms. Oxtoby said she wanted to hear the views of people at the meeting.

Mr Terry Mills said he felt that the harbour and the riverside should feature in the Town's attractions.

A speaker said that Gorleston people were not attracted to the town.

Another speaker said that the windows of unused shops could be decorated to improve the town. The problem of litter, bird droppings and 'aggressive' gulls were preventing people coming into town.

Ms Oxtoby said that about 12 years ago, she was involved in a plan to improve the Maltings in Wells. This was now coming to fruition so a long term attitude may have to be adopted.

Parking on the area of St. George's which was currently free was being abused on the granite setts there.

A speaker said that King's Street had a bad name among some people but as a resident he regularly walked there at all hours without trouble.

The local press was said to be negative about the town as bad publicity was spread over the front pages and any good news about Yarmouth was relegated to inside pages. It was suggested that information on U Tube would help to reach younger people.

A speaker said that he felt that innovative architecture that pleased other architects who gave each other prizes had been the enemy of useful and practical development in the town.

**Mr Darren Barker** of Great Yarmouth Preservation Trust gave a presentation on its work saying that a policy of preserving existing buildings for retail, office or residential use had been a great success particularly in King's Street. Rents from these premises were repaying the grants and loans for the work of the trust. There was a waiting list to occupy these premises.

Reported by Andrew Fakes.

**Talk by Charles Watt, High Sheriff of Norfolk**  
Tuesday, 19 February, 2019

The High Sheriff explained that Norfolk is the 4th largest county in England and Wales and his office is the oldest in the UK after the Monarchy. He is appointed by the Queen. It was established to oversee law and order and to raise taxes. It carries no remuneration.

In the Middle Ages Norfolk became very wealthy due to the intensive cultivation of the land and due to the wool trade. At one time Kings Lynn had the second largest port after London and Great Yarmouth's wealth was built on the herring and the tourist trade after the coming the railway in the 1840's. There used to be a vast shoe trade in Norwich. Thetford was the earliest religious settlement in Norfolk and all major trials were held there until 1832.

He explained that GCSE results in Norfolk were in the bottom quarter and he thought that this was due to the lack of ambition of many parents in the county and the fact that many of the good teachers preferred to work in the cities. Last year 260 children were excluded from schools and were in special units but there were several thousands who could not be accommodated there and were supposedly being "educated" at home.

He thought there was no future for the High Street due to the increasing popularity of on-line shopping and out of town shopping arcades. He noted the decline in the number of doctors in the rural communities and thought that health screening was important. He said that agriculture in Norfolk would remain large as would the leisure industry. The county had massive areas of land for housing development but needed proper communications and infra-structure.

Apart from overseeing law and order in the county he thought that one of his most important tasks was to ask questions and to support some of the 3000 charities in the county.

Reported by Hugh Sturzaker.

I look forward to seeing you at future meetings

Hugh Sturzaker

## APPLICATION FORM FOR MEMBERSHIP

I wish to become a Member of the Civic Society of Great Yarmouth and agree with its aims and Privacy Policy. For the purpose of the Data Protection Act, the Civic Society of Great Yarmouth is the data controller in respect of your personal data. The Civic Society will use your details to send you news of special events either by post or email. Our Privacy Policy may be found on our website: [www.civicsocietyGY.co.uk](http://www.civicsocietyGY.co.uk)

Name (Please print).....

Address.....

.....Postcode.....

Home telephone number.....Mobile number.....

Email address.....

I enclose my cheque/cash for £10.00

(please make payable to Civic Society of Great Yarmouth)

This form may be handed in at one of the Society's events or sent to:

Ann Hamilton,  
Membership Secretary,  
1 Webster Way,  
Caister, NR30 5XA

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### Charity Gift Aid Declaration – Single donation

Boost your donation by 25p of Gift Aid for every £1 you donate

Gift Aid is reclaimed by the charity from the tax you pay for the current tax year.

Your address is needed to identify you as a current UK taxpayer.

I want to Gift Aid my donation of £10 to the Civic Society of Great Yarmouth.

I am a UK taxpayer and understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax in the current tax year than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations it is my responsibility to pay any difference.

Please tick box if you wish future donations to be Gift Aided

My Details:

Title \_\_\_\_\_ First name or initial(s) \_\_\_\_\_ Surname \_\_\_\_\_

Full Home address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Postcode \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Please notify the Civic Society of Great Yarmouth if you:

- want to cancel this declaration
- change your name or home address
- no longer pay sufficient tax on your income and/or capital gains

If you pay Income Tax at the higher or additional rate and want to receive the additional tax relief due to you, you must include all your Gift Aid donations on your Self-Assessment tax return or ask HM Revenue and Customs to adjust your tax code.