

# Newsletter:

October 2023

<http://www.beverleycivicsociety.co.uk/>

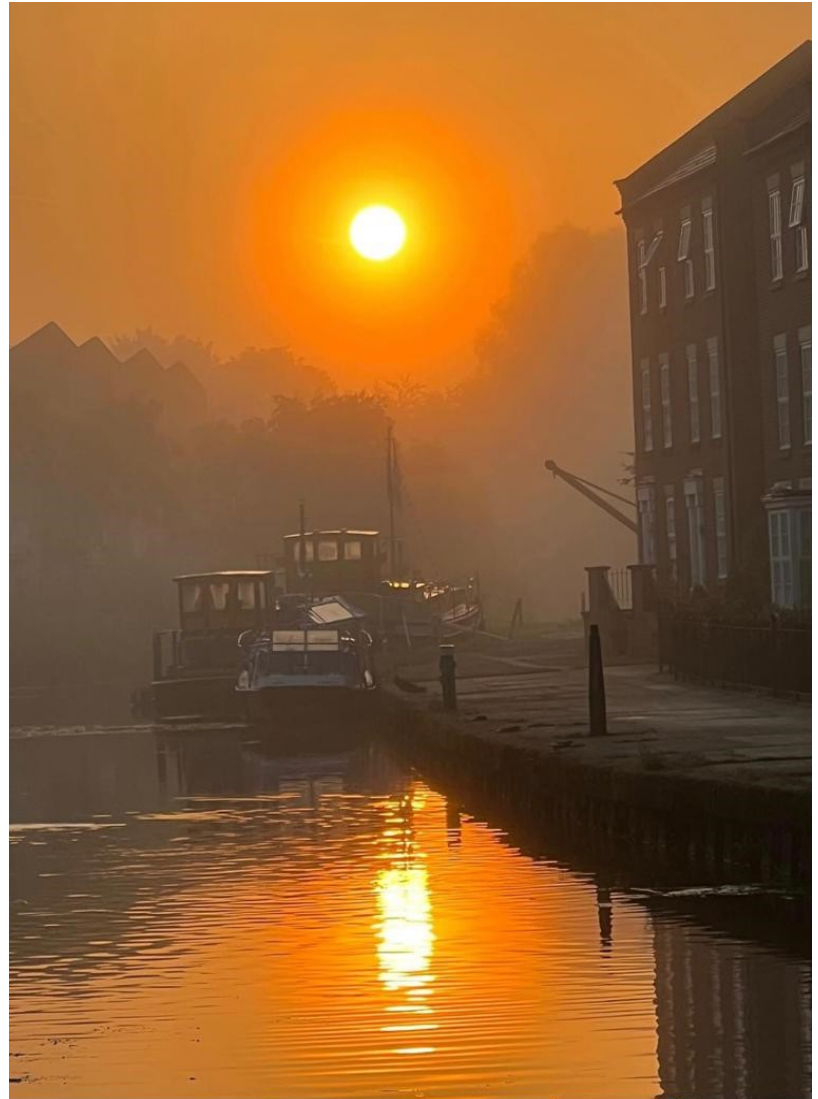
**BEVERLEY  
CIVIC  
SOCIETY**

Founded 1961

## Chairman's Remarks

Dawn over the Beck heralds the approach of autumn and reminds us of the importance of the Beck in Beverley's history, being the route for the movement of goods which built much of the wealth of our town. Flemingate, the clue is in the name, as Merchants from Flanders settled there to conduct their cloth and weaving businesses, and was the earliest street name to be recorded. Despite its early and later important industrial role, I feel it is now a rather neglected area, and is deserving of more attention; something to think about remedying.

Heritage Open Days were blessed with good weather, and were highly successful. I repeat our thanks to Sandra Williams, Mike Farrimond, all the owners who opened their premises, the creative speakers, all the volunteers who stewarded, and Kloskk Tyrer who designed the brochure. We now move on to our autumn programme of talks in St Mary's. The talk following the AGM on 12<sup>th</sup> October will be particularly interesting given the national focus on the role of slavery in the nation's wealth creation. We shall hear Dr Evans from The University of Hull's Wilberforce Institute on 'Slavery in East Yorkshire'. We look forward to seeing you there.



Courtesy Tim Howard

I hope you will enjoy reading this edition of the newsletter. We always welcome feedback, and look to our audience to perhaps contribute their own articles of interest to the membership.

*Dick Lidwell*

## Planning Matters

### Household Recycling Centre.

Members will be well aware that earlier in the year ERYC proposed a new facility off Ings Road, Molescroft. The Planning Committee deferred the decision having received very many objections. The application is in the process of re-submission, and a public exhibition was held in the Beverley Treasure House/Library in mid-September. With publicity having been scarce, many members may not have been able to visit to view the amendments. There should be (by the time you read this) details of the new application on ERYC's Planning website for you to submit any comments

<https://newplanningaccess.eastriding.gov.uk/newplanningaccess/>

We have been pleased to see restoration works on the **Market Cross**, ceiling repairs, repointing, coats of arms being restored, and total re-decoration, with the 'all year round' Christmas lights being removed. The Society has always been very concerned about the disfigurement throughout the year of this important Grade 1 listed structure. By the way; a dove's nest in the roof postponed the start of the works, and the golden ball's re-gilding was delayed until a wasps' nest had been removed... nature rules!



Courtesy Dick Lidwell

Members may also like to view the attractive redecoration of the Old Gentleman's Club in Cross Street. The Society was advised of, and consulted on, the works on both these structures.

There are signs of works, at last, on the former Grant's bistro building on the corner of Hengate and North Bar Within. We look forward to seeing this attractive, and important Listed Building, part of our street scene, being restored to life with two commercial spaces on the ground floor, and two apartments above.

Many other planning applications continue to be lodged, including ones for signage (M&Co for Cotswolds Outdoor and Runners Need, amendments to Pizza Express, etc) all of which are reviewed in detail to avoid excessive or intrusive lighting and/or signage which would have a negative effect on the Conservation Area. There is also an application for a two storey extension to western rear wing of Norwood House. Great care needs to be taken not to adversely affect the setting of this notable Grade 1 listed building.

ERYC have produced a draft **Design Guide** for buildings, including shop fronts, in the East Riding. Consultation is open from Monday 11th September - Sunday 22nd October 2023 and there is to be a public exhibition in Beverley Library from 12.30 -18.30 on Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> October; presumably in the new temporary premises opposite the Treasure House, which is to be closed for the redevelopment work.

Some members may have known that the Racecourse had, along with works for new stabling, received planning permission to move the cattle grid at the entrance to Westwood further east, to the end of the grandstand to eliminate the cattle moving around the entrances. This will, of course, entail extending the existing fencing to the new grid position. Any proposal for fencing on Common Land needs to be carefully regulated. Adopting the same style as the existing low timber bar fence would maintain the open views of Westwood when approaching the town from the west.

*Dick Lidwell*

## Beverley Civic Society round 'green' plaques

Beverley Civic Society has produced many plaques that can be seen at several sites across town. We are often asked about their purpose, and how we decide on which plaques we choose to commission, and why they look as they do.

We chose the green background plaques to distinguish them from the London 'blue' plaques which are produced by English Heritage which commemorate a link between that location and a famous person, event, or former building on the site, serving as an historical marker.

Our plaques work in a similar way as they are historical markers that provide details about people and buildings either extant or lost, which are specifically relevant to Beverley's history. The criteria for installing a plaque are actually quite strict, and each proposal is assessed on its merits to establish if it is appropriate. The main criteria we use are as follows:-

- If the plaque is to commemorate an individual/individuals, is that person (s) relevant to the history of Beverley and beyond? In several cases persons named have relevance not just to Beverley, but nationally and sometimes internationally.
- If for a building, does the building have historic status that is important to the history of Beverley whether Listed or not?
- If the building no longer exists, is its former existence important historically?
- Are there plaques already in existence that commemorate that property or person as often a number of locations may refer to the same? We need to avoid duplication with other plaques and our History Boards.
- Can the plaque be placed on the exact building, or if the building no longer exists, be placed on the former site or close enough to be an appropriate location?
- Will people be able to see the plaque, will it be in clear view and not hidden where the benefit would be lost?

If the above criteria are met we can start the process to commission a plaque. This in itself can be quite a lengthy process, as we need to check for historical accuracy, for which we refer to our own information, as well as that held by the Local Authority, Professional organisations, and individuals who have researched the subject including local historians who are experts in their field.

Once this has been completed, we need to decide on the wording for the plaque. They are quite small, 300 mm diameter, so there will always be a compromise between what to put in, and what to leave out. They are really a tool to promote interest, and give a small amount of relevant information for visitors and residents to learn more about Beverley and maybe get involved with the Civic Society.

In many instances the property in question will be Listed and/or be in the Conservation Area, and we need to submit a full Planning Application. There are often strict conditions about the exact location of the plaque and means of fixing-that have to be met. This does surprise many people and whilst it presents some challenges, and can often extend the timescale, this is something that has to be done!

There are a few 'older' rectangular plaques around town that are different in format, including the one in North Bar Without for the Victorian pump which commemorates not only the pump but also the sponsors and managers of the project.

As I was personally very involved with the pump restoration in North Bar, I became known in the Civic Society as 'the pump man'! Perhaps I will now be referred to as 'the plaque man'!

I hope that this background information is of interest to members.

*Rich Fatkin*

## Crisis on the High Street

Barbara English

The newspapers are full of articles on the decline of the high street in the UK, most recently one by Simon Jenkins in the *Guardian* (14 September 2023). Three high streets close to us are Coney Street York (the subject of the latest CS talk), Whitefriargate Hull, and our own high street from North Bar to the Minster (which in earlier centuries was called collectively 'Alta Via', the High Street/Highgate).

It seems to me that currently Beverley's high street is doing very much better than the other two, and maybe we should try to find out why? These are my own thoughts, not the Society's, on an issue that must concern us all.

1. Coney Street and Whitefriargate decayed because the shop units were too large. Huge department stores in the high street (BHS, M&S, Boots, even John Lewis) are failing across the UK, because people prefer to shop online. Some services such as hairdressers, cafés or bars need actual buildings, and without newspapers, estate agents use shop windows. Small, specialised shops are still doing well, so that in York Stonegate and Petergate remain successful. Whitefriargate's additional problems come from the new shopping centres Hull built: first the Prospect Centre, next Prince's Quay, then St Stephen's, now Kingswood, each damaging its predecessor. Beverley was told it would fail economically because the shop units were too small, and so eventually Flemingate was created: carefully designed and built, but the large units now struggle to find tenants, while the small town centre shops continue to trade, and banks and building societies still remain.

2. Saturday and Wednesday markets have been essential to Beverley's success for a thousand years or so. Our great conservationist Margaret Powell realised this and in the 1960s persuaded the council to close the market to all traffic on Saturdays. To walk around the market not having to dodge lorries and cars was amazing, and it became the social centre of the weekend, like a party, where you could meet your friends to shop and talk. Shopping online or in a vast retail park doesn't have that extra dimension, and we all really need social contact. Hull's Trinity market and York's Shambles market are open seven days a week, diminishing that sense of a special event, a weekly excursion.



Saturday Market Wikicommons



Unused tables in Saturday Market at 11.30am  
Barbara English

Beverley market stalls, however, are not thriving, with some empty, the market space diminished by large areas of café seating unusable in winter. Maybe the soaring market rents should be lowered (they are higher even than York's), maybe we should entice new stallholders by offering three months rent-free to see if the market would work for them? Shop rents, stall rents and business rates in the high street only go in one direction – upwards, and the long-promised reform of business rates does not happen.

3. Charity shops can be seen by town planners as failures to attract national chains. But rebrand the charity shop as vintage (the new editor of Vogue writes that most of her own clothes come from resale or vintage), use amazing window dressers to draw shoppers into the shops as Beverley is now doing, and these are places to be welcomed, already 'super-cool' in London. Recycling is good for the planet and good for the town.

4. It should be possible to make full use of the upper floors of our magnificent high street buildings, neglected and often empty, whereas they could be living spaces. This is a matter for the landlords. At least one Beverley shop was owned by a Japanese pension fund, and others (like Debenhams) by private equity companies: not much chance of influencing these, but many of our shops are owned locally, and the landlords should do more to see them conserved and fully used.

5. John Betjeman wrote that Beverley 'is a place made for walking and living in' ... but not now, our lanes and pavements are neglected, unsafe, uneven, the littered footpaths jammed with rubbish bins. The recent closure of Hengate resulted in traffic chaos, demonstrating more than ever that we need a comprehensive traffic plan and a Park & Ride (both long promised) to keep huge lorries out of the high street altogether (yes, it can be done, look at York), with new speed restrictions of 20 mph across town, smooth level pavements and priority for pedestrians everywhere.



Hengate East Riding archives



Playhouse Passage Barbara English

6. Who trades what on each high street changes century by century, and that's fine, a response to 'market forces'. Beverley is of course much more than its high street. The two great churches, Westwood and the other commons would bring people to visit even without the high street. But there is something about the centre of this 1300 year-old town that feels good to live in and to visit, even if we do not know quite what that is. Its age, its history, its human scale? The social interaction that is possible in traffic-free outdoor spaces?

For twelve years, since the excellent Portas Review, this crisis has grown, with almost none of Portas's recommendations for high streets adopted. She stressed the need to involve local people in the planning for each town. Simon Jenkins describes Beverley as 'his favourite market town': could the Civic Society start a conversation to keep it worthy of that title? Perhaps via this newsletter?

**Neil Harris**

Beverley benefits from a very vibrant 'indie' sector, with many side streets populated with a great variety of independent shops from Swabys Yard, Well Lane, Ladygate, upper Eastgate and more. These 'indies' take the smaller quirky spaces with their historical character and make them inviting, with imaginative stock and a focus on customer service. This is where and how retail started.



importance beyond transport, being the venues for auctions, election hustings and public meetings. Researchers also found details of the importance of the Jewish community, who had had a synagogue there in mediaeval times. Newspaper printing had been a feature of the street within living memory but it was found that it had a much longer history, Laurence Sterne's *Tristram Shandy* having been first published there in 1759. A carp pond was discovered in the bombed ruins of St. Martin le Grand church, and a Peace Garden has now been developed there. Walking tours began to encourage people to stop and look at the riches around them.

This first phase of the project was seen as so successful that the University agreed to fund work for another year. This phase is focusing on four main areas - the creation of a Common Room or drop in space to maintain community involvement; setting up a centre for print, linking the Coney Street heritage with the University's own print machine collection, possibly at St. Anthony's Hall; looking at ways of recording the Jewish neighbourhood; and the Willow Community Project. The Willow began life in the 1930s as a tea room, but by the 1970s had evolved into a very popular Chinese restaurant, which in the evenings metamorphosed into a vibrant disco and dance venue. It is planned to incorporate this vibrancy into the redevelopment.

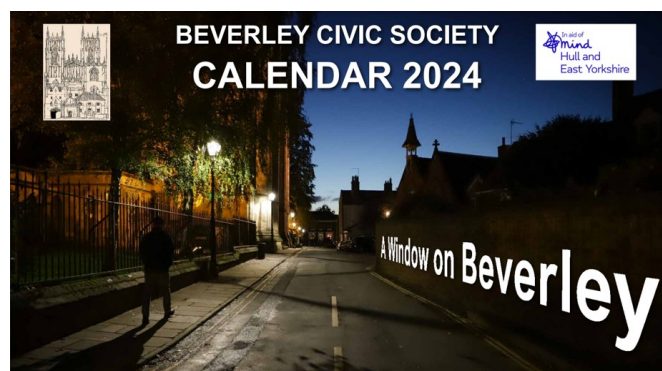
Andrew's closing words to us were that successful redevelopment involved looking for and finding stories and then grabbing them with both hands!

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## 2024 Calendar

The members of the Calendar sub-committee have been working with the students and staff of East Riding College to produce our 2024 Calendar which is now available to order.

The calendar theme is "**A WINDOW ON BEVERLEY**" and features 13 photographs around Beverley that were taken by the students of East Riding College media class.



This year the charity, **HULL & EAST YORKSHIRE MIND**, was chosen by the students as they empathise with those who need this support. As in previous years the funds raised from the sale of the calendar will be split between the charity and the Society.

We have managed to hold the price at **£8.00 per copy** and £1.00 for postal envelopes. Copies will be available at our public meetings, from any member of the Executive Committee, at various outlets around Beverley (including we hope the Tourist Information Centre at its temporary location on Cross Street) and by emailing the Secretary at [goodtymeshull@hotmail.com](mailto:goodtymeshull@hotmail.com) or by telephone (after October 14<sup>th</sup>) on 01482 866252.

Orders can also be made via the "Contact Us" page on our website at [www.beverleycivicsociety.com.uk](http://www.beverleycivicsociety.com.uk) Payments can be made at our public meetings by credit / debit card, cash or cheque made payable to Beverley Civic Society.

We would prefer Payments by bank transfer and our details are:

**Beverley Civic Society** Sort Code: **05-02-37** Account No. **27597439** and please use your name and "**CAL**" as the reference e.g. "Smith Cal".

## **Creativity unwrapped 2023**

A big thank you to all the volunteers who helped with Heritage Open Days. We had over 12000 visitors to the venues in Beverley, Bishop Burton, Goole and Aike. Obviously, the Gaia installation at the Minster has brought a large number of visitors into town and this and the excellent weather meant that many places had increased footfall.

Some of our venues were featured on local radio (Barges on the Beck, Secret Garden and the Guildhall) and the volunteers from Barges on the Beck were also interviewed by Yorkshire Television. This all helped to advertise the event and in each case their enthusiasm for the subject was evident.

This year's theme of Creativity Unwrapped was ably demonstrated by three of Beverley's artistic celebrities, Anna Ingleby, Philippa and Peter Naylor. I am sure that those who attended the talk in the Memorial Hall will have been overwhelmed by their creative talents.

At the Memorial Hall students from East Riding College displayed their 13 winning images which will feature in the 2024 Civic Society calendar.

PS A bright pink Heritage Open Days banner which was on the railings of the Jubilee gardens (corner of Railway Street and New Walkergate) has gone missing. Any thoughts to its whereabouts would be appreciated.



Mr Dick Lidwell, Chairman of Beverley Civic Society, presents awards to a student from East Riding College  
- Sandra Williams



Volunteers preparing for a busy Heritage Open Day on the Beck - Sandra Williams

## **What inspires Art?**

Members of the Society may be interested at an event taking place at Ferens Art Gallery on Friday 10<sup>th</sup> October from 2pm-4pm. The talk, on 'What Inspires Art' will be given by Dr Kevin Byron.

Booking is essential:

email: [marti.hall@btopenworld.com](mailto:marti.hall@btopenworld.com)

Tel: 07801 985299 / 01430 423586



## **Civic Society Subscriptions**

Civic Society subs are now due, still at the bargain price of £15.00 ! We thank those members who have already renewed their subscription.

Can we remind members that bank charges are now in place when cheques are processed and so the preferred method of payments are as follows

- 1 - Standing order
- 2 - BACS transfer via web banking app
- 3 - By debit or credit card using SumUp at a monthly meeting
- 4 - Cash at a monthly meeting
- 5 - Cheque

If you would like to pay at the next monthly meeting, this will be at the AGM on 12th October in St Mary's Church Hall

## **Revised Agenda for the A.G.M.**

Following the notice of the A.G.M. given in the last newsletter we have updated the agenda to include the re-election of the Chairman and to elect the Vice-Chairman. The revised agenda is shown below.

### **Annual General Meeting**

of the Beverley and District Civic Society to be held at 7:30pm on Thursday 12th October 2023 in St Mary's Church, Beverley.

#### **AGENDA**

- 1) Numbers Attending
- 2) Apologies for Absence
- 3) Minutes of the 2022 AGM
- 4) Matters Arising
- 5) To receive the Executive Committee's reports
  - 5.1) Chairman's Report
  - 5.2) Honorary Treasurer's Report and Financial Statements up to 30th September 2023
  - 5.3) Honorary Secretary's Report
  - 5.4) Membership Secretary's Report
- 6) To elect the Officers of the Society and Members of the Executive Committee for 2023-24
  - 6.1) Mike Farrimond for a further 3-year term as an Executive Committee member
  - 6.2) Richard Lidwell for a further 3-year term as an Executive Committee member
  - 6.3) Angela Mulford for a further 3-year term as an Executive Committee member
  - 6.4) Richard Lidwell for a further 3-year term as Chairman
  - 6.5) Lesley Blucke for a 3-year term as Vice Chairman
- 7) Any Other Business

# BEVERLEY CIVIC SOCIETY



## Slavery and the East Riding Of Yorkshire

An illustrated talk by Dr Nicholas Evans



**Thursday, 12<sup>th</sup> October 2023 7.30 p.m.  
St. Mary's Church, Beverley**

Non-members welcome £5.00

[www.beverleycivicsociety.co.uk](http://www.beverleycivicsociety.co.uk)

### DISCLAIMER

The Beverley and District Civic Society assumes no responsibility or liability for any errors or omissions in the content of this Newsletter.