



Annual Report 2012

Who we are

Established in 1969, Pontefract Civic Society is a registered charity promoting supporting the well-being of Pontefract in all its aspects.

Charity No. 513509

What we do

An extract from the Constitution clause 2:

2. OBJECTS

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.

Mission

To raise the profile of Pontefract as a place to live, work, do business and visit, by protecting and enhancing the environment.

Vision

By 2020, through innovation and lobbying, to raise the profile of Pontefract and the Pontefract Civic Society in the Leeds City Region by promoting good land use, architectural, environmental and transport changes to achieve a range of inter-related and farsighted objectives which conserve the best features of the town, encourage regeneration and improve the quality of life for residents.

These achievements will be publicised in a variety of ways for the benefit of Pontefract citizens, businesses and visitors.

Values

* Professional * Inclusive * Proactive *
Educational and Influential in promoting
Civic Pride in the Pontefract district *

Objectives

1. To promote an understanding of the changes facing Pontefract and district,
2. To assess the possible effects of these changes on the town's environment and on quality of life. Town environment includes the built-up area, transport facilities, public open spaces and surrounding countryside,
3. To oppose undesirable change, promote changes to enhance high quality design of buildings and spaces,
4. To encourage the conservation and improvement of public spaces and built structures that are either of historical interest or contribute to public amenities,
5. To liaise with local authorities, English Heritage, Metro and other bodies about changes in the area, to represent local interests at public inquiries and on other occasions when the above issues are under consideration,
6. To help raise awareness of the above matters by arranging public meetings, workshops, events, lectures and exhibitions,
7. To publish reports and other material in support of the above objectives,
8. To maintain links with the Civic Voice (our national umbrella body), and with other relevant local and regional bodies.



Contact Us

Honorary Secretary:
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Our Trustees

President - Vacant

Executive

Chairman Peter Cookson
Secretary Paul Cartwright

Treasurer

Co-opted Alan Bell (May-Oct 2012)
Co-opted Stephen Lofthouse (Nov, 2012)
Paul Cartwright (cover throughout 2012)

**Conservation, Environment & Planning
Chair - Peter Taylor**

Land Use & Transport Chair
Peter Cookson

Publicity & Events Chair Vacant
Paul Cartwright (covered during 2012)

Co-opted Derek Vaux
Co-opted Charlotte Ledger (Oct-Nov, 2012)
Co-opted Dr Colin White (Nov, 2012)

Parks & Open Spaces Chair Vacant

Our Committees

**Conservation, Environment & Planning
Committee:-**
Peter Taylor, Paul Cartwright,
Christine Cartwright, Mick Turner

Land Use & Transport Committee:-
Adrian S. Pope, Peter Cookson,
Sir Bill O'Brien, Derek Vaux, Anthony Dee

Parks & Open Spaces Committee:-
Dormant, now supporting via Friends Groups

Publicity & Events Committee:-
Paul Cartwright, Kath Evans, Mollie
Garbett

Membership

Member Fees

Personal membership	£12
Corporate - Bronze	£40
Corporate - Silver	£75

Corporate - Silver

- Rogerthorpe Manor

Corporate - Bronze

- Jolie Maison
- Pomfret Gallery
- Yorkshire Society

Member Offer

- Bi-monthly Newsletter
- Talks & public meetings
- Society Communication
- Vote
- Visits (possible charge)
- Annual Dinner (chargeable)
- Website & email alerts
- Insurance
- Corporate window sticker



Chairman's Review of 2012

2012 has been an arduous year for the Society. A number of important challenges faced us at the time when the Executive was numerically at its weakest. It is for this reason, at the beginning of this report, that I would like to thank the five members of the Executive, who put in such hard work.

We have spent a good deal of time considering our strategy and how we might best accomplish our aims for the benefit of the town. An intrinsic problem is that our concern is for the town as a whole, which can sometimes become generalized and diffused and this may contrast unfavourably, with the aims of single-issue groups, whose concerns are narrower and more focused. Much of our effort is spent in arguing a case and lobbying for change; the outcome of this effort can be difficult to evaluate and might not bear fruit for some time. However, this must continue, whatever the outcome.

Contrasted with this is work done in support of individual schemes. In this context, things have changed over the last year or two, new focus-groups have been set up to concentrate on specific issues and the Society works also through them. Friends of Pontefract Park, Friends of the Friarwood Valley Gardens, and Pontefract Dispensary and Hermitage Action Group are all organisations, within which the Society is heavily involved, and whose aims are specific and focused. We feel though, that there is still an opportunity for us to deliver small public realm schemes in the town, which will greatly improve its attractiveness.

The Society has been delighted to receive a substantial legacy from the estate of our former Treasurer Malcolm Macaskill and this should help us in delivering small schemes to the benefit of the town and in memory of him.

We have been very fortunate in being able to welcome on to the Executive during the year, our new Treasurer, Stephen Lofthouse and Dr Colin White who is very active in other groups also. This has very much strengthened our hand.

Details of our activity will be found elsewhere in the committee reports and will not be repeated here, but there are larger concerns that will exercise our minds also. The recent announcement that Tesco's are pulling out of a £40m development in town will affect the contingent development of Tanshelf, and the continuing lack of investment in the town as a whole is also a concern.



The Authority is attempting to advance the development of the Prince of Wales site, and we should find out within the next year or so whether funding bids will have been successful.

There is obviously much to do in the next year and the Society will continue to do its work on behalf of the town.

It remains for me now to emphasise that the Society is more than simply the Executive and I should like to thank all

who have worked in any capacity to help our cause – but not forgetting those, who for various reasons, are unable to give practical help but simply support us. All are valued.

Peter Cookson – Chairman



*Queen's Diamond Jubilee Concert
& Beacon Lighting, Pontefract Castle*

Secretary's Report

2012 has been a tough year, personally, with employment in Bridlington, though I did manage to attend a couple of the Bridlington Civic Society evening talks. Being distant from Pontefract meant I've attended fewer mid-week events, and much of my impact has been achieved via Executive meetings, weekend events, and email.

As a key communications tool, I've retained ownership for the Society's website www.pontefractcivicsociety.org.uk, which is getting some great traffic, and features highly on Google searches – this is the Society's shop window!



I've continued to plan '2012 Talks & Tours', and until May, and covered as Treasurer, until Alan Bell volunteered, and then later Stephen Lofthouse.

Throughout the year, Christine and I have attended fewer meetings of Civic Voice (Leeds) and YHACS (Leeds & Ossett), due to personal commitments, though we've attended regular meetings with other Societies across the Wakefield District.



In March, 2012, I managed the Design Awards and AGM process, and also the September EGM.



Façade of the Year 2012 –Flowerworks

At the AGM, Peter Cookson (Chairman) had the pleasure of presenting the Society's first Honorary Membership certificate to past-President and Society Founding Member, Allan R Blaza.



Peter Cookson & Allan R Blaza

Paul Cartwright – Secretary

Treasurer's Report

I was invited to join the Executive, as Treasurer, in the latter part of 2012, and therefore my comments here are brief.

I was able to backtrack through the financial records to create the Annual Accounts shown at the end of the Annual Report.

The Society is in reasonable shape comparing income and expenditure, and the recent significant legacy received should be managed wisely. The Executive will shortly be discussing both investments and local projects to benefit the Society, and more importantly the town.

Once I become more familiar with the Society, I'll be able to comment more fully, in future publications, though I feel member recruitment is a key issue.

Stephen Lofthouse – Treasurer



Conservation, Environment & Planning Committee Report

One of the roles of the Society and particularly the CEP Committee is to monitor alterations and changes which occur within the town centre, with reference to buildings contributing to its historic and townscape character.

Quality design can contribute to an interesting environment and economic success.

There have been no major new buildings and only a few redevelopment schemes within the town centre in the year, but numerous small changes, not always requiring planning approval.

Replacement of signage, repainting of upper facades and roof repairs has in their small way contributed to at least maintaining a reasonably attractive town.

The planning process is undergoing significant changes aiming to stimulate the economy. It would appear that these are unlikely to affect development in the Conservation Area or Listed Buildings. Comments made on planning applications have resulted in proposals being withdrawn or modified before being granted approval by the local authority.



The Society seeks to encourage and enhance redevelopment schemes, not just to criticise.

The CEP Committee continues to monitor changes and looks to promoting the high quality development the historic centre deserves.

New ideas and future activities are considered and discussed with Conservation Officers from the local authority, attendance at meetings of YAHCS and contacts with other Civic Societies are maintained.

The CEP Committee assisted in producing a Mary Portas bid for monies to enhance the town centre. Part of this bid involved the idea of adding 'colour' to the upper facades of buildings. Although unsuccessful at the first attempt, a small grant has been awarded WMDC & the Town Centre Partnership to assist in improving the market stall hoardings.



The appointment of a permanent Townscape Heritage Initiative Officer will bring some rewards in the future. A great deal of background work has been done but the economic situation, lease agreements and absentee landlords are hindering progress. Any obvious changes may be small but in accumulation can lead to significant improvements.

I would like to thank members of the CEP Committee for their help, enthusiasm and interest in contributing to the Civic Society's aims in relation to the town.

Peter Taylor – CEP Chair

Land Use & Transport Committee Report

Under the Local Authority's Local Development Framework (LDF) several sites in Pontefract have been earmarked for substantial housing development and three of these have been prominent in the public mind over the last year. Two of these sites: Hardwick Road/Ackworth Road and Cobblers Lane have predictably been opposed by local residents, mainly on the grounds of traffic congestion and the development of virgin land.

Development of the third site - the former Prince of Wales Colliery - is, by contrast, generally supported because it would transform a derelict brownfield site into an attractive residential part of the town. The problem is that the sites the public least want to see developed are easier to deliver and the one that receives the most support is the hardest to deliver, but all present problems for our road system.



Town End, where all the major routes through Pontefract converge, remains an almost intractable problem. The solution of replacing the traffic light system by a double (unequal) roundabout system has

been accepted, but detail design work is proving awkward and the final outcome may not be much better than the status quo, especially at peak times. The Society supports the stance taken by SELRAG in advocating the resurrection of the link road from the end of the Hemsworth Bypass to the M62 (Jn31) via Brackenhill, Went Lane and the A645 junction at LinPac. This 30-year-old proposal creates a new North/South route through the district and has the virtue, not only of reducing the traffic flow through Pontefract, but of easing problems in Ackworth and Featherstone also - though at the expense of extra pressure on Jn31. In the short term, solutions in Pontefract have to concentrate on dilution of traffic flows so that traffic can be spread around more and ease congestion at pinch-points such as Town End. To this end various junction improvements to the A645 have been proposed by WMDC; these include those at Baghill Lane and Tanners Row, but the Society believes that those at Friarwood Lane/Station Lane and at Cobblers Lane/Water Lane should be added. In addition, improvements to the junctions of Mill Dam Lane with North Baileygate and also with Ferrybridge Road are also proposed in connection with the development of a new road from Jn32 to Monkhill, north of and parallel to the railway line. The Society has taken a particular interest in the road pattern of the Monkhill area in connection with the delivery of the Prince of Wales site and the need to improve transport connectivity for Pontefract. Improvements at this level will much depend on the Authority's success in attracting external regeneration funding from government sources.

In the context of rail transport the situation in Pontefract remains very unsatisfactory. The Society has presented its own plan for Monkhill station, which received widespread support, but delivery of material improvements has been very slow. The building of Glasshoughton station, while obviously needed to service the Freeport/Xscape complex, has had a very damaging effect on Monkhill in reducing the footfall there. A survey by the Society showed that over half the people using that station came from Pontefract, having been (understandably) attracted by the safe, free car parking, but this has weakened the financial case for developing Monkhill, which is desperately needed. There is a plan for improving the car park there but it is being revised at present and will be dependent on the soundness of its business case.



News of the proposed improvement of service by extending the current Wakefield Kirkgate service through to Westgate and Leeds is a little more encouraging, in that Metro regard this as a high priority, with a very good economic case to support it and it is hoped that this may be in place by 2014. However, the financial case is not so strong and the improvement would require extra subsidy, which is the obstacle to be overcome. We remain convinced that the

Society's plan for bringing bus and rail services together at Monkhill is essential for the proper working of public transport in the town and we will continue to advocate this.

There is nothing to report on possible service enhancement through the district to destinations outside West Yorkshire, as service development has been caught up in re-franchising problems and the existing franchises will remain in force for longer than anticipated; however, the Society will keep these matters under review.

Peter Cookson – LUT Chair

Publicity & Events Committee Report

Our 2012 talks, I'm led to believe have been quite well accepted, as I've not been able to attend any of them, with my work taking me to Bridlington each week.

In January, Peter Cookson spoke on Transport, which was followed in February by Dr Mae Collins (former Treasurer) speaking at Rogerthorpe Manor on the building's original family, the Saltonstall's, and Warde family.

In May, Waldemar Kripp came to talk about the work of Groundwork Wakefield, which led the way for a beneficial meeting and site visit for the Friends of Friarwood Valley Gardens Committee; you'll remember, the Society was the catalyst for the Group via two public meetings in Pontefract Town Hall.

The Society donated £100 to enable the Friends Group to open a bank account, and they've been supported by Christine Cartwright, as a Committee member.



An autumn talk on Methodism in Pontefract was gratefully delivered by Mollie Garbett.

What is evident from attendance at our Talks is that we get varied support, and we'd like to see more Members and Non-members participating.



After our 2011 visit to Selby, we entertained Selby Civic Society in 2012 with a walking tour commencing at the Anglo Saxon origins of Pontefract, moving through to the Castle and up into the town centre. Our visitors were delighted with the tour provided by Peter Cookson, supported by Allan Blaza and myself.

Both our March Annual General Meeting and the September Extraordinary General Meeting were lively affairs.

In June and July, exchange visits were made with Market Weighton Civic Society, with each group enjoying each other's towns.



Yorkshire Day flags in Market Weighton

When it came to the Queen's Diamond Jubilee weekend, the Society participated in WMDC's event in Pontefract Castle, by way of a publicity stall.



We were fortunate at the last minute to support the 'Heritage Open Days' national activity, and we're grateful to our hosts Tom Dixon, Col. Delaney, Allan Blaza, plus WMDC colleagues, Ian Downes, Julian Ellis and John Lambe.





Replica of the Nelson Room casting

Our final event of 2012 was a return visit to Rogerthorpe Manor Hotel, where a splendid Christmas Dinner was well received as ever.

For 2013, it's all change, with a re-energised Publicity, Events & Admin Committee with Allan Blaza at the helm, ably supported by Mollie, Kath and Paul, with new addition, Colin White. An exciting, and innovative programme is underway, with the return of some usual favourites. Please visit the Society website and Facebook page, to keep up to date.



We also hope to see more publicity in 2013, with a functioning committee, which will raise the profile of the Society within the town, and we hope gain new members!

Paul Cartwright - Secretary



Olympic Torch Relay 2012 in Pontefract

Talks & Tours 2013

Although this report is for 2012, we'd like to take this opportunity to keep you updated on our 2013 programme, which is now being led by Allan Blaza. If you have ideas for additional events, please let Allan know.

- Tues 15 Jan Talk: John Gully MP and Prize Fighter
~ Stephen Carlisle
- Tues 19 Feb Talk: Paralympics 2012
~ Kevan Baker / Roger Ellis
- Tues 5 Mar Design Awards & AGM
- Tues 30 Apr St. Giles' Reborn
~ Fr Bob Cooper
- 15 - 29 May Love Your Local Market
[National Campaign]
- Tues 14 May Talk: Button Park / Friarwood Conservation Area
~ Adrian Pope
- Sat 25 May Visit to Goole Civic Society
- Sat 22 Jun Civic Day
[Civic Voice initiative]
- Tues 9 Jul Day at the Races
[Pontefract Racecourse]
- Sun 13 Jul A Night at the Proms
{WMDC}
- Sun 14 Jul Pontefract Liquorice Festival
[WMDC]
- Sat 17 Aug Visit from Huddersfield Civic Society
- 12 - 15 Sep Heritage Open Days
- Tues 15 Oct Talk: Queen's Mill Project
~ Alison Drake
- Fri 15 Nov Talk: The Ackworth Hoard
~ David Evans
- Tues 3 Dec Christmas Dinner

All talks are at Carleton Grange unless otherwise stated.

Members £2 and Non-Members £3.00.

Design Awards 2012

The Conservation, Environment & Planning Committee has maintained a list of potential contenders during 2012. In order to make the final decisions, a number of short walks around the town centre made it possible to arrive at our final choices to celebrate some good work in making Pontefract a more attractive place.

Countess of Ross Façade of the Year Award

Independent business

❖ Jollys - Ropergate



“New business established making full use of the building. A welcoming ground floor café, with well-designed fascia and signage”.

National multiple business

❖ Vodafone



“Well-designed fascia, frontage and signage in attractive colours in-keeping with a Listed Building”.

❖ Nationwide



“Minor alterations to the front elevation have produced a well-balanced ground floor frontage façade, relating well to its upper floors. Internal works have created an improved customer space”.

Special Commendation

❖ Bus Station - Winner



“The panel thought that the well maintained and welcoming public area of the interior was a credit to the staff. Little noticed is the flower border on the side which adds colour and interest”.

Improvement Award

❖ The Green Dragon - Winner



“An imposing Grade II listed Public House in the centre of the Conservation Area, which has been sympathetically repainted and improved to retain its attractive character”.

❖ The Malt Shovel - Runner Up



“Both the internal and exterior refurbishment of the whole building, including the walkway to the side and to the rear have retained some character and style, in an appropriate form”.

Heritage Award

❖ Tanshelf House (Haribo) - Winner



“Office refurbishment of imposing Georgian building also listed Grade II. Exterior frontage restored to its former glory including the windows and iron railings”.

❖ St Giles Church - Commendation



“Award given for its first phase of development, which includes moving the northern entrance to Church, to give access to interior refurbishment providing cafe use, shop, meeting rooms, and community facilities, and disabled access on the Southern entrance”.

**On behalf of the Conservation,
Environment & Planning Committee**

Annual Accounts 2012

Treasurer's Report for the year ended 31 December 2012

Membership

	2012	2011	2010
Corporate	3	8	-
Household	66	52	73

Pontefract and District Civic Society

Income and Expenditure Account

For the year ended 31 December 2012

	<u>2012</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>2010</u>
Income			
Annual subscriptions received	559	516	277
Blue plaques	-	658	-
Grants and Gift Aid	-	675	-
Donations	380	126	114
Revenue from events	493	776	1,053
Legacy - From the estate of M Macaskill	21,938	-	-
	<u>23,370</u>	<u>2,751</u>	<u>1,444</u>
Income from monetary assets			
Bank interest	1	2	2
Total Income	<u>23,371</u>	<u>2,753</u>	<u>1,446</u>
Expenditure	<u>2012</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>2010</u>
Direct charitable expenditure			
Civic Voice subscription	64	51	48
YHACS subscription	50	50	40
Expenses at events	473	1,371	608
Donations	125	30	42
	<u>712</u>	<u>1,502</u>	<u>738</u>
Other Expenditure incurred			
Membership Refunds	28	-	-
Insurance	250	245	250
Postage	332	376	61
Blue Plaques and Guides	-	771	167
Campaigns	-	48	91
Payments Outstanding	-	-	517
Purchase of equipment	-	725	924
Total expenditure incurred	<u>1,322</u>	<u>3,667</u>	<u>2,748</u>
Overall Excess/Deficit of Income over Expenditure	<u>22,049</u>	<u>-914</u>	<u>-1,302</u>

Statement of Assets of Liabilities as at 31 December 2012

	<u>2012</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>2010</u>
Monetary Assets			
COIF	57	57	57
Barclays investment	23,818	2,379	2378
Barclays current	1,111	501	1151
	<u>24,986</u>	<u>2,937</u>	<u>3,586</u>
Reconciliation of cash movements to bank balances	£	£	£
Total bank balances at 31 December 2011			2,937
Total cash receipts		23,371	
Less: Expenditure		<u>1,322</u>	
Total cash inflow			<u>22,049</u>
Total bank balances 31 December 2012			<u>24,986</u>

Treasurer: J S Lofthouse (2013)

<p>I have examined the Receipts and Payments for the Year 2012 and found it to be in accordance with the records and vouchers produced.</p> <p>Signed:.....Date:..... P Cartwright Secretary</p>	<p>The Income and Expenditure Accounts for the year ending 31 December 2012 and the Statement of Assets and Liabilities as at 31 December 2012 set out above are as approved by the Executive Committee.</p> <p>Signed:.....Date:..... P Cookson Chairman PCS</p>
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www.pontefractcivicsociety.org.uk

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Photography: Christine Cartwright

