



Protecting and celebrating Whitby's rich heritage and promoting civic pride

Charity Number 1055396

Since 1996 in its current form

President Mrs Betty Bayliss

Annual Report 2025

The Annual General Meeting of the Society will be held on

9th February 2026



Welcome to Whitby Civic Society's Annual Report for 2026

Contents	Page
2025 Officers and Committee members	3
President's report	4
Vice Chair's report	5
Secretary's Report	6
Treasurer's Report and Annual accounts 2025	10
Planning Group Report	12
Membership Secretary's Report	14
Whitby Building Preservation Trust (WBPT)	15
Thank YOU – our members	16
Membership information	17

2025 Officers and Committee members



Officers 2025

Chair	Vacant
Vice Chair	Neil Swannick
Secretary	Kat Norrby
Treasurer	Janet Kukk
Membership Secretary	Chris Whitlam
Minutes Secretary	Vacant
Events Secretary	Vacant

Executive Committee Members 2024

Kerry Boardman
Laura Meszaros



President's report.

A big thank you to all our hard working volunteers for their work over the last year. In particular I would like to acknowledge the committee members for their valued support.

In 2025 we focused on the Heritage Open Days which despite the weather was a huge success. We hope to expand the programme and include more people and places for next year. To do this we need to promote our Society with local media publicity and engage the support of local businesses.

Looking ahead to 2026 we will try to focus on expanding our reach to younger members. Once the new committee is in place we will continue to build a more resilient and inclusive organisation.

Thank you for love, support and friendship

Betty Bayliss, President

Chair's report.

Sadly, still unoccupied.



Vice Chair's report.

Our greatest success in 2025 was undoubtedly the relaunch of Whitby Heritage Open Days on the 20th of September - in spite of the day being one of the wettest in living memory! A total of over 560 people (we think a lot more residents than tourists) turned out to visit the six venues: Ripley's Yard, the Masonic Hall, Abbeville - the little yellow cottage, the Victoria Spa Well, Pannett House and Union Place. One of our visitors even made a YouTube video. Late additions to the event, in particular St. Mary's and St. Ninian's churches were also busy.

Whitby Civic Society organised many activities over the year including 9 lectures at the Coliseum (or "presentations" as we now call them), a consideration of all the Whitby planning applications during 2025 with submissions to the Planning Authority on many, the refurbishment of 2 Blue Plaques, and responses to the many enquiries the Society receives, fielded by our over-worked secretary, Kat.

You will hear reports at the AGM of our membership holding up at 122 (exactly the same number as last year) and a healthy bank balance (some £500 better than last year!). So Whitby Civic Society, you might think, looks positive going into 2026.

The only downside to report as Vice-Chair, apart from apologies for a late cancellation by our speaker in November and insufficient interest to go ahead with the Christmas meal, is the shortage of active members. Our Executive Committee which organises all the activities is only just big enough to meet our legal requirements as a charity, and that means the Society's future is not secure. We have made some progress on finding possible recruits to our Planning Group, but if we are to organise a successful programme of presentations over the next year, and bigger and better Heritage Open Days in 2026, we need more volunteers. We are very lucky to have a wonderful secretary, an active President and stalwarts holding the fort, but, at the time of writing, we still don't have a Chair and we need more trustees on the Executive Committee.

Please give seriously consideration to putting your name forward to take on a role in Whitby Civic Society in the forthcoming year.

Neil Swannick, Vice-Chair.

From the Secretary

This was my first full year on the Executive Committee and I hit the ground running as Secretary; especially when following Janet who did such a sterling job. So my first thanks go to the rest of the Committee for their support, patience and help to navigate the way. We have such a small group that it really is all hands on deck and with that comes a struggle at times but I can truly say I enjoyed it, on the most part. I also couldn't have done it without the support of our members and it really does make a difference when someone has taken a minute of their day to send an email or a thanks and when asked have given their time and knowledge and a helping hand. So my second thanks goes to those members, former members and to those people I've stopped in the street! Could you imagine how much we could achieve with more active members; yes being Secretary is a big job but there are so many smaller roles that wouldn't take up much time and plenty of drop in and out things we could do with a hand with which don't need a regular commitment. Its easy to be critical and look at what we haven't managed to achieve but I am proud of our Society and hope we can build on the achievements we have managed and build on that.



So what does being the Secretary comprise of

Emails, Social Media and Website, News Round Up and Newsletter and Committee Meetings

A lot of the day to day work is computer based with email being our main contact point. We get a lot of enquiries regarding local history or family connections and we are very lucky to be able to signpost these enquires to the Library and Archive at Whitby Museum. We have recently received an email from an elderly gentleman who was looking to reconnect with his cousin who he last met up with almost 30 years ago. This has been forwarded to the lady in question. A good news story all round.

While the website is kept up to date the details of upcoming Events and News a refresh of the contents is in the top section of my list of things to do for 2026. Note I say section not just list. If you have anything you would like to see or some time to offer the help would be much appreciated. Our town has so much more content that could be shared on there.

We do try to keep our Social Media up to date with coming events and in between posts to promote our publications and shining a spotlight on various parts of the town. A favourite is highlighting things we can often overlook as we walk through town by encouraging people to look up rather than down at a phone screen. This coming year I will change how we use Facebook by incorporating the scheduling function so we share more regularly in a hope to increase our reach and presence. At the moment we don't utilise the other platforms.

The regular News Round Up I hope is well received and I will try to ensure it is less sporadic. This is our main point of contact with our members and functions primarily

to update on what we are doing and what is coming up with ourselves and with other local charities. I did successfully reincarnate the Newsletter in the Autumn and another instalment is planned for Spring. This briefly updates on what as a Society has been doing but is more about stories and articles. You know what I am going to say don't you? If you could "Get Involved" we really do need articles to keep this going; it can be a short paragraph, a photograph or a larger topic.



In 2025 we held 9 Executive Committee meetings and 8 Planning Group meetings (7 within the Executive Committee meetings), all of which need agendas, papers and minutes produced and archived. As we had to hold the Planning Group Meeting within the Executive Committee meeting this year this increased not only the duration of the meetings it also increased the amount of work. My thanks go to Neil for his collation of Planning Applications and the production of Planning Notes to make adding the to the North Yorkshire Council Planning Portal much easier. We are hoping that after the AGM we will be moving the Planning Group to a separate Zoom based subgroup format as it previously has been as we welcome new members to the group.

Presentations, Publications and Heritage Open Days

A huge amount of time is taken up with the organisation and coordination of the lecture, now renamed presentation, programme and we were pleased to bring you 8 presentations during 2025 with unfortunately the 9th, the November instalment, being cancelled at the last minute due to illness. Our thanks go to Pam Whitlam for her continued hard work producing the monthly poster and for organising and running the raffle. Thanks also to Chris for running the Membership Table, Janet and Neil for chairing and Martyn for understanding the lights. The biggest thank you though goes to our speakers for their time; without them there would be no presentation programme!

We do worry that attendance numbers are dropping and would appreciate feedback on why and suggestions on what would help to draw you back in. We currently struggle to break even and are conscious that we do not want to use funds to finance their future. The flip side though is this is when we get to see you face to face and also to reach out to non-members so we feel its an important part of our outreach. Sadly it was lack of interest that meant we didn't go ahead with our annual festive

meal this year. On a positive note one of members, David James, has offered to return to the Executive Committee as Events Secretary to take some of the pressure off myself and work on continuing the 2026 programme and hopefully organise a trip or visit or two.



Our publications are still popular with the Blue Plaque Trail booklet topping the table. The Blue Plaque trail is available to buy at Whitby Museum and the Tourist Information Centre alongside the White Rabbit Trail and Ghost Sign Quiz leaflet. All publications are available at the monthly meetings. We also updated the leaflet we produced a few years ago for the Victoria Spa Well House on Bagdale. This year we were featured in the Whitby Foghorn magazine, YHACS Newsletters and formed the centre spread in the Visit Whitby 2025 Guide with an article on Whitby Ghost Signs. Ghost signs are fascinating echoes of the past such as a faded advert or the name of old businesses, in the form of painted letters and illustrations on buildings. We continue to keep an eye of any building developments to try to preserve these fabulous reminders of our history.

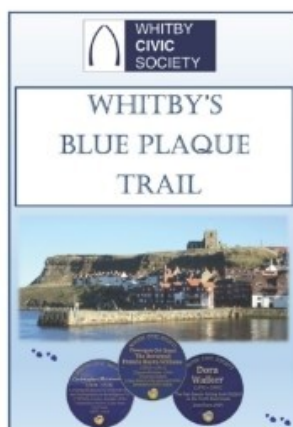
The biggest stand alone task for this year was the return of Heritage Open Days to Whitby. Smaller and more compact than it has been previously but a manageable return that we are hoping to build on. Can I take this opportunity to thank our members for their support on the day and their help behind the scenes. Saturday the 20th of September was a total wash out weather-wise but you didn't let us down and there was a steady stream of soggy people all day; many familiar faces of our

members. It made all the hard work worth it. All in over 560 people visited the 6 listed venues with many of you visiting all 6 and others just choosing one or two.

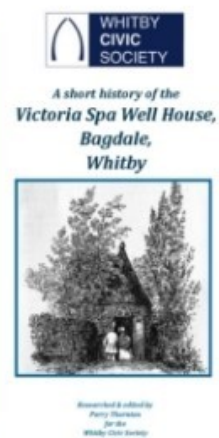
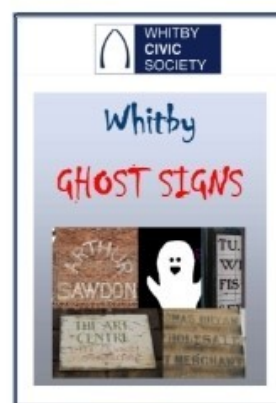
This coming years theme is “Everyday Histories” and most likely on the same weekend in September; we will confirm very soon. “The butcher, the baker, the candlestick maker; what did your ancestors do? From factory floors to kitchen counters, school desks to sailor’s docks, serving halls to vegetable gardens. In 2026 Heritage Open Days will be exploring the daily life of local people; the daily routines, skills required, people that did them and places that housed them all.” Over to you ... we would love help to make this coming years event bigger and better and to include additional venues and events. Suggestions very much welcome, help even more so and information, photographs and stories to form storyboards for the day vital. We can’t do it without you.

So a busy year and at times I have floundered but on the whole I have enjoyed it and I hope achieved more than just getting by. With your support I am willing to do it again and this time I maybe know more about what I am doing. I will keep saying though please do “Get Involved”. Could you spare some time regularly or on a one off occasion? Do you want to help keep Whitby special and promote our wonderful town? Our members include residents and visitors and while some have Whitby connections that go back generations others just a fell in love with our town recently. The link is we all love our town and all of us can play a role in keeping it special. Could you help with providing content, articles and inspiration for our website, social media and newsletter, join our committee or sub groups such as the planning group or events group, help organise our popular Heritage Open Day and restart walking tours, distribute publications and generate new guides and trails, complete surveys within the town or progressing targeted projects. Many hands make light work and what we could achieve could be amazing.

Kat Norrby, Secretary



WHITBY'S WHITE RABBIT TRAIL





Treasurer's Report

With a closing balance of £9144.74 for the 2025 year end the Society recorded an increase to funds of £540.00 for the year. This being in the main due to there being no requirement for publication re-printing and minimal expense on Blue Plaques. Disappointingly our lecture programme struggled to break even with lower attendance than the previous year, and a greater reliance on visitor entrance and the raffle. Publication receipts are mostly for sales of the Blue Plaque Trail which continues to be stocked by the Tourist Information Center and Whitby Museum Shop.

Looking forward to 2026 the healthy year-end balance will enable us to look at progressing work on continued Blue Plaque refurbishment, and other projects in the pipeline such as information boards and 2026 Heritage Open Days.

I therefore present the 2025 accounts as follows:



Registered Charity No: 1055396

Notes to Accounts for the year ended 31 December 2025

Income:

Gift Aid claim £199.13 for 79 members in 2024 (retrospective)

Membership: Taking the year end total receipts, less the 16 advance payments, the accounts record receipts of £1140.00 for 2025 memberships (114 members plus 3 life)

Donations: Thanks go to Pete Craggs for his Whitby Treasures/ghost sign talks during the year with donations for his presentation of £30.00 passed to the Society. This income is accounted for as lecture income. All other donations are from members or public.

Expenses:

Meeting room hire for Exec & Planning meetings for 2025 is for the monthly subscription to Zoom.

Lecture costs are for hire of the Coliseum Theatre, raffle prizes and presenter expenses.


Misc web site domain renewal

Blue Plaque Scheme 2 x refurbished plaques. R E Pannett, Storm Jameson (Saxonville) off set by £100 contribution from Saxonville net expense £224

Subscriptions annual for the Yorkshire and Humber Association of Civic Societies (YHACS) and Civic Voice.

Donations St Mary's for the Christmas Tree (£25)

Pre-Payments carried forward to 2026 advance membership receipts = £160.00

 WHITBY CIVIC SOCIETY				
Registered Charity No: 1055396				
Accounts for the year ended 31 December 2025				
	2025	2025	2024	2024
	£	£	£	£
INCOME				
Membership 2025	1,140		1,180	
Gift Aid 2024 Membership	199		149	
Lecture income (attendees & ghost sogn talk donations)	393		665	
Lecture income (raffle)	160		208	
Publication Sales	231		281	
Donations	178		20	
Misc	1		1	
Blue Plaque contribution (Saxonville)	100			
	2,401	2,401	2,503	2,503
EXPENDITURE				
Lecture cost (Room hire/Lecture/Raffle)	582		727	
Exec/sub-group meetings – Zoom subscription	179		187	
Stationary/Copying	42		35	
Publication printing	-		447	
Insurance	312		282	
Blue Plaque Scheme	324		372	
Sunscriptions (YHACS/Civic Voice)	189		200	
Donations	25		413	
HOD	193		-	
Misc	16		98	
	1,861	1,861	2,760	2,760
Profit/Loss		540		257
Book balance brought forward		b/f 8,604		8,861
2025 Profit/Loss		540		257
Total book balance carried forward		c/f 9,144		8,604
Represented by				
Book Balance 2025		9,144.74		8,604.74
Plus 2026 pre-payments – membership (16 No.)		160.00		130.00
Held with Virgin Money 31 st Dec 2025		9,304.74		8,734.74
Accounts prepared by: Janet Kukkk				
6 th January 2026				

We would like to extend our thanks to Julia Buck for acting as our independent examiner for the society accounts 2025.

Janet Kukkk, Treasurer

Planning Group

Sadly 2025 started badly for the Planning Group, but the outlook in 2026 seems better.

After abandoning any pretence of a separate Planning Group a year ago, and taking the necessary but frustrating decision to consider all Whitby planning applications at full meetings of the Executive Committee, we are now working towards returning to separate Planning Group meetings again. Far better because more time can be given to discussing individual applications, with a Planning Group comprising Society members with planning skills or experience. And Executive Committee members will not miss out because all submissions in the Society's name to the Planning Authority need sign-off from the Executive.

During 2025, at 1 Planning Group meeting and within 8 Executive Committee meetings, we considered 139 Whitby planning applications and made submissions on behalf of Whitby Civic Society to North Yorkshire Planning Authority on 55. In 2024 the Planning Group meeting separately had considered 136 applications.

Probably the most controversial application in Whitby during 2025 was an application to convert the former Halifax Bank on Baxtergate into an Adult Gaming Centre. Whitby Civic Society objected, as did 528 others. Although it was refused by the Scarborough and Whitby Planning Committee, the applicant appealed to the Secretary of State and the news came through in December that the appeal had been successful and the Adult Gaming Centre can go ahead. Too late for Whitby, the current Government is now considering the legal framework which currently "aims to permit" such establishments.

It appears that the trend towards hotels being converted into holiday lets continues unabated - as well as every other available building, whether commercial or residential. What seemed like a good idea at the time, the Government relaxing the rules to allow permitted development rights to include surplus commercial building conversion into dwelling houses, now seems to be having some perverse consequences. Until the present government completes the legislation for the creation of a C5 use class for holiday lets initiated by the previous administration, the problem of "over tourism" in Whitby is likely to continue unrestrained.

Whitby Civic Society regularly objects to conversions into apartments only suitable for holiday lets, because a time may come in the future when they are needed for residential use. The Society also draws attention to applications in residential areas where conversion of houses into holiday flats would put further pressure on street parking, though in one notable recent application, the applicant described the street as having "a distinctive tourism character" to support their case, a view unlikely to be supported by residents!

The Society has long waged a campaign against glass balconies in the Conservation Area around the harbour, pointing out that in bright sunlight, the reflection produces a dazzle, impacting on views of the Abbey and the classic views of Whitby. Unfortunately it seems we are losing the battle on this Issue as the Planning

Authority has recently allowed a row of houses on Henrietta Street overlooking the harbour to replace wooden balconies with glass.





Whitby Civic Society also regularly attempts to protect the few trees that we have in the town, which a surprising number of residents and businesses seem determined to chop down or pollard to destruction, sometimes supported by specious evidence provided by insurance companies. All trees in the Conservation Area are offered the same protection as trees protected by Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs). As climate change kicks in, future Whitby residents will not thank us if we lose all the shade by decimating the town's tree cover.


Finally, the Planning Group, at the time of writing, is drafting a response to the consultation on the excellent Whitby Neighbourhood Plan, a monumental effort produced by Whitby Town Council. It is a very detailed piece of work, whose antecedents include the work of the Whitby Civic Society Planning Group and Conservation Group. Whilst it might yet take some time before completion, it is to be hoped that Whitby Civic Society will be able to use the Plan in the future to ensure the continuing protection and enhancement of the Whitby Conservation Area.

***Neil Swannick, Vice-Chair,
on behalf of the Planning Group.***



Search planning applications

 Search ▾  My Profile ▾  Saved Searches  Login

 Register

Hello and welcome to Public Access for Harrogate, Scarborough and Craven Planning Areas

This site shows planning applications received for the former Harrogate and Craven District and Scarborough Borough Council areas

Membership Report

We finished the year with a membership total of 122 of which 24 of these were new members. The total of 122 is exactly the same number as at the end of 2024 so we are holding steady on that front. One interesting statistic is that we have 19 members whose main residence is 10 miles or more from Whitby; however we do have several members that are recorded under their second home address.

My aim this year is to better that total in 2 ways; firstly by reminding people that haven't renewed that they can do that in person at the monthly meetings or by cheque or BACS payment. The details for both are at the end of the Annual Report and on our website. Secondly we will also look at attracting new members to our Society especially those that would like to help out at events or with the committee and subgroups. It would be great if those existing members could tell friends and family about us.

I would like to thank members of our Committee for their assistance in persuading acquaintances to become members of WCS.

Chris Whitlam, Membership Secretary



Membership Application

Should you wish to join Whitby Civic Society please complete this Application Form and send it with a cheque made payable to **Whitby Civic Society** to:

Mr Chris Whitlam, 16 Carr Hall Gardens, The Carrs, Ruswarp, YO21 1RW.

Alternatively, bring this completed form along to one of the Society's monthly meetings or we are pleased to receive payment by bank transfer to:

Yorkshire/Virgin Bank, Whitby Branch

Sort code: **05-09-79**

Account No: **28118870** (Whitby Civic Society)

Ref: **Memb/your name**

Important: Please email the Membership Secretary your application form if payment is by bank transfer:
cjwatchg16@gmail.com

Whitby Buildings Preservation Trust (WBPT)

The Trust was set up by the Society during 2020 and is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO). A Buildings Preservation Trust provides a potential means of acquiring buildings at risk. Various opportunities for funding may then be explored to secure a sustainable future for the building, often incorporating new uses.

During 2025 The Trust has worked in conjunction with Whitby Civic Society on the production of an information board for the Railway Weighing Machine House and with assistance from North Yorkshire Council hope to place an information lectern close to the railway crossing at Bog Hall early in 2026.

The Trust was pleased to see action taken to secure 15 St. Hilda's Terrace during 2025. This Grade II* property remains in a state of deterioration but is presently boarded up and secure from trespass. The Trust will continue to follow up with North Yorkshire Council.

The Trust is also engaging with North Yorkshire Council on the state of the Battery parade and the Powder Houses.

If anyone is aware of any unused listed building which is in a poor state of repair, or would like to become a member of the Trust, please contact the Trust Secretary David Green by email david.green324@btinternet.com

David Green, Secretary WBPT



Finally, we would once again like to thank all our members who continued to support the Society during 2025.



It is only with a strong, supportive membership that the Society can carry on its work for the benefit of Whitby. Please continue your support, get involved and spread the word. Thank you!

GET INVOLVED !
- JOIN WHITBY CIVIC SOCIETY

For more information please look at our website

www.whitbycivicsociety.org.uk

or drop us an email:

whitby_civic_society@yahoo.co.uk



Gentle Reminder. 2026 membership renewal due 1st January

Payment (**£10 per member**) can be made by cheque payable to Whitby Civic Society to:

“The Membership Secretary, Whitby Civic Society, c/o 16 Carr Hall Gardens,
The Carrs, Ruswarp YO21 1RW”

Alternatively, payment can also be made by BACS:

Virgin Money

Sort code: 05-09-79

Account No: 28118870 (Whitby Civic Soc)

Ref: Memb/your name

(Virgin Money do not subscribe to the ‘safer payment scheme’ so you may receive a warning to double check your request)

Renewal can also be left with our Treasurer to save a stamp: pop your membership through the letter box in the garage door to No. 10 St Hilda’s Terrace (garage door at rear along Back St Hilda’s Terrace)