

2011

Our Review



Addingham Civic Society	Caistor Society	Grimsby & Cleethorpes District Civic Society	Melton Mowbray & District Civic Society	Salisbury Civic Society	The Ramsgate
Ainsdale Civic Society	Cambridge Past, Present & Future	Hale Civic Society	Merseyside Civic Society	Sandwich Society	The Stokesley
Aire & Wharfe Civic Society	Canterbury Community Association	Halifax Civic Trust	Mid Mersey Civic Society	Scarborough Civic Society	The Stowmarket
Albion DHC Heritage Group	Canterbury Society	Harrogate Civic Society	Midvale Civic Society	Selby Civic Society	The Sudbury
Aldershot Civic Society	Canterbury Heritage Trust	Harrow Heritage Trust	Midvale Association	Sevenoaks Society	The Sydenham
Allesley Civic Society	Chelmsford Society	Hartford Civic Society	Skegness Civic Society	Sharncliffe Civic Society	The Wavertree
Conservation Society	Cheltenham Civic Society	Hartford Conservation Group	Skipton-in-Craven Civic Society	Sheffield Civic Trust	The West Derby
Alnwick Civic Society	Chesham Society	Hartlepool Civic Society	Sleaford & District Civic Society	Shildon Vale Association	The Wickham
Alrewas Civic Society	Chichester Civic Society	Heath & Hampstead Society	Southgate District Civic Trust	Skegness Civic Society	The Wilmslow
Altrincham Civic Society	Chilworth Civic Society	Hereford Civic Society	Southwell Civic Society	Skipton-in-Craven Civic Society	The Wimbleton
Angels Civic Society	Chilworth Civic Society	Hertford Civic Society	Southwell Civic Society	Sleaford & District Civic Society	The Worthing
Ashton-under-Lyne Civic Society	Chilworth Civic Society	Holme Valley Civic Society	Southwell Civic Society	Southwell Civic Society	Thirsk & Spalding
Atherstone Civic Society	Chilworth Civic Society	Honley Civic Society	Southwell Civic Society	Southwell Civic Society	Timperley Civic Society
Banbury Civic Society	Chilworth Civic Society	Horbury Civic Society	Southwell Civic Society	Southwell Civic Society	Tipton Civic Society
Barnsley Civic Society	Chilworth Civic Society	Horncastle Civic Society	Southwell Civic Society	Southwell Civic Society	Tiverton Civic Society
Bath Preservation Trust	Chilworth Civic Society	Horndon on the Hill Society	Southwell Civic Society	Southwell Civic Society	Todmorden Civic Society
Bathwick Civic Society	Chilworth Civic Society	Hornsea & District Civic Society	Southwell Civic Society	Southwell Civic Society	Tottenham Civic Society
Beccles Civic Society	Chilworth Civic Society	Hove Civic Society	Southwell Civic Society	Southwell Civic Society	Tynemouth Civic Society
Beckingham Civic Society	Chilworth Civic Society	Huddersfield Civic Society	Southwell Civic Society	Southwell Civic Society	Urban Gravesend
Bedford Architectural & Local History Society	Chilworth Civic Society	Hunstanton Civic Society	Southwell Civic Society	Southwell Civic Society	Vale of Evesham
Bedford Civic Society	Chilworth Civic Society	Huntingdon & Godmanchester Civic Society	Southwell Civic Society	Southwell Civic Society	Wakefield Civic Society
Beeston & District Civic Society	Chilworth Civic Society	Hylands Park Action Group	Southwell Civic Society	Southwell Civic Society	Wallasey Civic Society
Belper Civic Society	Chilworth Civic Society	Hythe Civic Society	Southwell Civic Society	Southwell Civic Society	Walsall Civic Society
Berwick Civic Society	Chilworth Civic Society	Ilkley Civic Society	Southwell Civic Society	Southwell Civic Society	Waltham Forum
Beverly Civic Society	Chilworth Civic Society	Ipswich Society	Southwell Civic Society	Southwell Civic Society	Wandsworth Civic Society
Bewdley Civic Society	Chilworth Civic Society	Isle of Wight Society	Southwell Civic Society	Southwell Civic Society	Warminster Civic Society
Birmingham Civic Society	Chilworth Civic Society	Kidderminster Civic Society	Southwell Civic Society	Southwell Civic Society	Weald of Kent
Blackburn Civic Society	Chilworth Civic Society	King's Lynn Civic Society	Southwell Civic Society	Southwell Civic Society	Weaverham Civic Society
Blackheath Society	Chilworth Civic Society	Kingscliffe Society	Southwell Civic Society	Southwell Civic Society	Wellington Civic Society
Blackpool Civic Trust	Chilworth Civic Society	Kingston upon Thames Society	Southwell Civic Society	Southwell Civic Society	West Lancashire
Blue Flash Music Trust	Chilworth Civic Society	Kirton in Lindsey Society	Southwell Civic Society	Southwell Civic Society	Wetherby Civic Society
Bollington Civic Society	Chilworth Civic Society	Lancaster Civic Society	Southwell Civic Society	Southwell Civic Society	Weymouth Civic Society
Bolsover Civic Society	Chilworth Civic Society	Leeds Civic Trust	Southwell Civic Society	Southwell Civic Society	Whaley Bridge
Bosmere Hundred Society	Chilworth Civic Society	Lewisham Environmental Trust	Southwell Civic Society	Southwell Civic Society	Whitby Civic Society
Bourne Civic Society	Chilworth Civic Society	Lichfield Civic Society	Southwell Civic Society	Southwell Civic Society	Whitstable Civic Society
Bournemouth Civic Society	Chilworth Civic Society	Littleborough Civic Trust	Southwell Civic Society	Southwell Civic Society	Wigan Civic Society
Bradford Civic Society	Chilworth Civic Society	Long Sutton & District Civic Society	Southwell Civic Society	Southwell Civic Society	Wimborne Civic Society
Bridlington & District Civic Society	Chilworth Civic Society	Louth Civic Trust	Southwell Civic Society	Southwell Civic Society	Windermere
Brierley Hill Civic Society	Chilworth Civic Society	Lyn Valley Society	Southwell Civic Society	Southwell Civic Society	Windsor & Eton
Brighouse Civic Trust	Chilworth Civic Society	Lytham St Annes Civic Society	Southwell Civic Society	Southwell Civic Society	Wirksworth Civic Society
Bristol Civic Society	Chilworth Civic Society	Maidenhead Civic Society	Southwell Civic Society	Southwell Civic Society	Wisbech Civic Society
Broadstairs Society	Chilworth Civic Society	Malmesbury Civic Trust	Southwell Civic Society	Southwell Civic Society	Wokingham Civic Society
Bromley Civic Society	Chilworth Civic Society	Manchester Civic Society	Southwell Civic Society	Southwell Civic Society	Woolton Civic Society
Bromsgrove Society	Chilworth Civic Society	Margate Civic Society	Southwell Civic Society	Southwell Civic Society	Worcester Civic Society
Buckingham Society	Chilworth Civic Society	Market Harborough Civic Society	Southwell Civic Society	Southwell Civic Society	Wotton-under-Edge
Buntingford Civic Society	Chilworth Civic Society	Market Weighton Civic Society	Southwell Civic Society	Southwell Civic Society	Wyandham
Burnley Civic Society	Chilworth Civic Society	Marple Civic Society	Southwell Civic Society	Southwell Civic Society	Wyke Civic Society
Burton upon Trent Society	Chilworth Civic Society	Melbourne Civic Society	Southwell Civic Society	Southwell Civic Society	Yateley Civic Society
Bury St Edmunds Society	Chilworth Civic Society		Southwell Civic Society	Southwell Civic Society	



“Nowhere should be without its civic society and no-one should be without the voice you can provide”

HRH The Prince of Wales

“I was really encouraged to hear about the launch of Civic Voice. I hope Civic Voice will play a key part in building a stronger, bigger and more responsible society, and will help put the neighbourhood back at the front of our politics”

Rt Hon David Cameron MP, prime minister

“The views of civic societies should be heard. We need a powerful voice speaking out on the issues that matter and helping the civic movement become ever stronger.”

Griff Rhys Jones, Civic Voice president

Across the country literally thousands of people are helping to improve their local area. They are organising town trails, feeding in views on planning and conservation, running Heritage Open Days, making photographic records, campaigning for their high streets to be lively and attractive and caring for the landmarks, buildings and open spaces which mean so much to their community.

This is the civic movement in action. The network of hundreds of civic societies across England works with others who feel the same way, whether they are friends groups, local organisations or just public-spirited individuals.

They are all at the forefront of discussing planning matters, new development, transport proposals and the importance of local heritage. They will do this after work, when they've retired or simply when they get together with other like-minded people over a drink.

People like them have been active for over a hundred years in our cities, towns and villages. They are the communities that care and they are now gathering together into a movement, driven by a desire to make their area better and to ensure everyone can live somewhere they can be proud of. They talk to local councils, owners and developers and feed their practical views and grassroots experience into national debate. They are a source of unparalleled information, experience, insight and expertise at a time when the contribution of local communities is being recognised more.

This movement is brought together by Civic Voice and this first annual review of our work illustrates what it is achieving. Civic societies are full of extraordinary people doing amazing things for their area. I am proud to be their chair.

Paula Ridley
Chair

Strengthened civic societies

- We set up a website to provide information and support and ran a help desk which answered over 1,500 enquiries from local groups
- We delivered nearly 100 talks and workshops for local groups across the country
- Civic societies from across England came together four times during the year and we met over half our member groups face to face
- A regular supply of information and advice was provided through our bulletins and online discussion forum Civic Voice Live
- Our Street Pride campaign tackling street clutter was supported by nearly 100 local groups undertaking surveys and pressing local councils
- We supported cluster meetings of local groups coming together and exchanging experience and ideas
- We gave awards to groups in Cambridge and Brighton for the best civic society newsletter and website
- A series of special briefings on fundraising, working with young people, profile raising, finding volunteers and other issues was produced
- We helped establish eight new groups

What we did

Raised our profile and influence

- Our launch was welcomed by David Cameron, Gordon Brown and Nick Clegg in the thick of a General Election campaign
- We were delighted when Griff Rhys Jones became our President and he toured the country championing our cause with local groups and the media
- Our work was covered over 170 times in the media, including pieces on the national television and radio news and in all the main national newspapers
- The Government made changes to its Localism Bill to recognise the importance of heritage and local voices on neighbourhood planning
- We spoke at a dozen national conferences for planning, design and regeneration professionals
- We found twitter highly effective in raising our profile and have attracted a strong following
- We met eight different Government ministers, appeared in five Government press releases and gave written and oral evidence to two Select Committees
- We are the only community voice on the Government's Planning Sounding Board
- We podcast our interview with decentralisation minister Greg Clark and brought civic societies together to pose questions directly to him on localism

Became more sustainable and independent

- 275 civic societies joined in our first year and they provide over 40% of our core funding
- We established partnerships with Lockton (insurance cover), National Trust (free passes), English Heritage (free passes), National Council for Voluntary Organisations (free membership and support); The Co-operative Bank (free banking with interest) and RUDI (free online information on planning and urban design)
- Our project to write a history of the civic movement was supported by the Townscape Institute

Improved the way we work

- We completed the first survey of civic societies, with support from English Heritage, to know more about what they do and what will help most
- Our trustees met eight times and were hosted by Leeds Civic Trust for an awayday
- Experienced civic volunteers joined our planning panel to provide advice on changes to planning policy and legislation
- Our civic panel of ten like minded national voluntary groups met to provide a sounding board and external perspective on our work
- We updated our strategy to 2015 and started a programme to develop a stronger 'common voice' for the civic movement

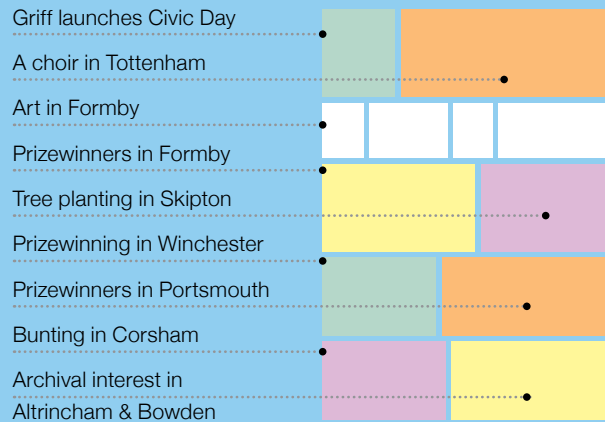
Civic Day '11

“Civic Day unites us with a simple idea – that we can all do something, however big or small, to make our towns, villages and cities great places to live in.”

Griff Rhys Jones, Civic Voice president

Saturday 25th June was a red letter day. It saw over 200 civic societies and other community groups come together in the first Civic Day to run over 350 different events and activities across England. An array of ideas provided a variety of ways for people to get more involved in their area.

Over 2,000 people enjoyed Blackpool’s street party while Bracknell Forest feasted around the largest picnic table in England. Malvern made a week of it; Canterbury cleaned up the River Stour, and Ealing ran a competition to find ‘local gems’. The quirky side of Ripon was celebrated in a photographic competition for young people. Coventry invited residents to create an online gallery of commemorative plaques. Kings Lynn drew attention to the problem of empty properties and Winchester worked with the local paper to find the city’s favourite building. Skipton and Marple celebrated 50th anniversaries. Tottenham organised a civic choir, Altrincham and Bowdon put on a display of its successful campaigns. Portsmouth and Formby involved schools and young people and Bristol’s day was managed by local students.



Spring 2010

- ☛ Civic Voice launches on 17 April 2010 with our Love Local campaign revealing three in four people fear something they value in their local area is at risk
- ☛ David Cameron, Nick Clegg and Gordon Brown pause during the general election campaign to welcome Civic Voice and tell us what they love about their constituency
- ☛ Civic societies along the route of the London to Birmingham high speed rail link come together to campaign for a better approach

Summer 2010

- ☛ Griff Rhys Jones becomes president of Civic Voice and announces the first Civic Day
- ☛ Eric Pickles and Philip Hammond call on local councils to 'cut the clutter' and commend our Street Pride campaign to rid local areas of unnecessary bollards, signs, posts and railings
- ☛ English Heritage's national heritage protection plan is revised to make 'local empowerment' a key element in deciding how it spends £50 million each year

Autumn 2010

- ☛ The largest gathering yet of civic societies comes together for our first AGM in Peterborough and calls for a 'people's revolution' to strengthen community input on local planning
- ☛ We join the Big Tree Plant to plant and care for more trees in our towns and cities
- ☛ Our project to write a history of the civic movement gets underway

Winter 2010

- ☛ Our campaigning bears fruit with important changes to the localism bill to value heritage and ensure neighbourhood plan boundaries match what communities want
- ☛ We highlight the damage caused to town and city life by weak community control over alcohol licenses
- ☛ We launch our 101 civic ideas to celebrate the different ways we can all get involved in improving our local area

Spring 2011

- ☛ Alarm bells sound across the civic movement as the government announces changes to the planning system for the benefit of business
- ☛ We join with the National Trust and the Heritage Alliance to take on national co-ordination of Heritage Open Days from 2012 with English Heritage support
- ☛ Civic Day brings our first year to an end with over 200 local groups putting on over 350 different events to involve people more in their neighbourhood

Civic societies provide the heartbeat of the civic movement. Here are just some of their achievements during our first year

☛ **BIRMINGHAM** Civic Society's Trees for Life project in partnership with Birmingham City Council planted 5,000 new trees, involving over 350 school children supported by 100 individual sponsors for sites across the city.

☛ The Jabberwocks – a group of **HALE** Civic Society's young members – undertook over 8,000 hours of community work between them.

☛ The campaign run by **SALISBURY** Civic Society to rid the city of unnecessary clutter won the backing of Communities Secretary Eric Pickles as part of a national crackdown.

☛ The **ST ALBANS** Society led a campaign to raise over £1 million to save a dilapidated Odeon cinema and then won support to involve more people in its future.

☛ A comprehensive Canalside Vision was prepared by **BANBURY** Civic Society detailing the regeneration potential of the Oxford Canal as it runs through the town and providing the basis for future neighbourhood planning.

☛ A blue plaque was unveiled by **LEEDS** Civic Trust at the city's Irish Centre – the birthplace of televised darts.

☛ **OXTON** Civic Society's Secret Garden scheme attracted over 5,000 visitors and raised more than £25,000 pounds for local charities by opening up private gardens and involving local business.

Civic stories

☛ Over 6,000 votes were cast in the annual Civic Pride award, run by **MERSEYSIDE** Civic Society, which was won by landmark sculpture 'Dream', sited on a former colliery in St Helens.

☛ **RETFORD** Civic Society's community survey on the anniversary of its Charter revealed the importance of its park, friendliness of its community and value of its historic buildings, market and theatre to why people love to live there.

☛ Volunteers from **PETERBOROUGH** Civic Society prepared a list of local buildings of historic importance to be endorsed by the local council and given extra protection in planning law.

☛ Major flooding in Cumbria resulted in **COCKERMOUTH** Civic Trust campaigning to avoid hasty repairs and work to improve shop fronts and enhance the streetscape and public spaces to reflect the Georgian look of the town.

☛ Research produced by **BATH** Preservation Trust as part of a Low Carbon Bath initiative showed three quarters of people living in listed buildings are cold in the winter and four in five support solar panels on listed buildings where they respect the roofscape.

☛ A new Restaurant of the Year award was launched by **WAKEFIELD** Civic Society to stimulate interest in the evening economy.

Our first year

Our finances 2011

Income

Civic society membership	£69,500
Other supporters	£1,700
Grants	£156,800
Project funding	£17,000
Other income	£3,800

Total £248,800

Expenditure

Staff and establishment	£129,100
Campaigns, events and activities	£23,900
Governance	£9,200
Other expenditure	£2,400

Total £164,600

Net result £84,200

The full trustee report and accounts for the year ending 31 June 2011 is available on our website [Civic Voice > About > Official documents](#)

Facts & figures

Our people

President | Griff Rhys Jones

Chair | Paula Ridley (Merseyside Civic Society)

Trustees | Freddie Gick, deputy chair (Birmingham Civic Society) | David Lovie (Alnwick Civic Society) | Helen Marcus (Heath and Hampstead Society) | Martin Meredith, honorary treasurer (Chester Civic Trust) | Neil Sinden (Friends of Epping Forest) | David Tittle (Coventry Society) | John Walker (Canterbury Society) | Paul Myers (Midsomer Norton Civic Society) (till September 2010)

Staff | Tony Burton, director | Ian Harvey, co-ordinator

Our thanks | The civic movement is indebted to the following for their support in establishing and running Civic Voice | Campaign to Protect Rural England | Department for Communities and Local Government | English Heritage | Esmée Fairbairn Foundation | National Trust | North of England Civic Trust | Royal Institute of British Architects | The Townscape Institute

Who we are

Civic Voice is the national charity for the civic movement in England. We work with a network of hundreds of community-based and volunteer-led civic societies and other groups to make the places where everyone lives more attractive, enjoyable and distinctive and to promote civic pride. We believe everyone should live somewhere they can be proud of.

Over 290 civic societies with over 75,000 individual members have joined Civic Voice.

We are a small light footed organisation. As a national voice with a strong local presence we seek to make a difference where it matters. You will find us lobbying in Whitehall and Westminster, campaigning with local volunteers, speaking out in the media, undertaking research, building partnerships and promoting civic pride. We bring local groups together and give them a national voice. We combine community action with sense of place for the benefit of everyone. We talk civic sense.

Our values

Campaigning | Strong in our advocacy and promotion of the cause

Responsive | Focused on the individual and collective needs of civic societies and the civic movement

Light footed | Maximising the use of existing resources and volunteer expertise

Grassroots | With a bottom-up feel and governance

Independent | Unfettered in our views and approach

Reaching out | Involving the whole community and spreading the benefit

Networked | Making the most of the collective strength of the movement

Our vision

Our vision is for everyone to live somewhere they can be proud of. To achieve this we will provide the civic movement with a strong local presence and an influential national voice. We will be active on the national, city and local stage, working in partnership across the UK. Civic societies will perform at the level of the best today and the civic movement will reach more places and benefit more people from all walks of life.

Our reputation and authority will make us the first port of call for anyone seeking to develop, conserve or interpret the quality, beauty and character of our towns, cities and villages or to engage people in shaping their future. We will be a source of civic pride and people will know us for our independence of thought, challenging perspective and positive outlook. We will listen, advise, support and act on behalf of communities everywhere. Communities will know they have a voice and a champion for the place where they live.

Our style

Rooted in local experience | Our work is based on the 'civic sense' of local groups, not ideology

Celebrating place | We look for the positive and provide practical help and proposals which protect and improve places

Front foot | We seek to shape and not respond to events

Engaging | We seek more opportunities for people to get involved both in the way that we work and what we advocate

Making a difference | We focus on what matters to the civic movement where we can add value and achieve change for the better

Support us

JOIN YOUR LOCAL CIVIC SOCIETY

By becoming a member of your local civic society you are joining a movement of people who take pride in their area.

JOIN CIVIC VOICE

Civic societies, individuals, businesses, community groups, town and parish councils are all welcome to join Civic Voice

VOLUNTEER

We are a small organisation with a big agenda. There is a host of opportunities to get more involved by volunteering from home or in our Liverpool office

DONATE

Every donation will help support and strengthen the civic movement across England


LEAVE A LEGACY

If you share Civic Voice's vision then please consider leaving a gift in your will. With the advice of a solicitor, writing a will or changing it in order to include a gift to Civic Voice is very simple.

**CIVIC
VOICE**
talking civic sense

Unit 101
82 Wood Street
The Tea Factory
Liverpool L1 4DQ

T 0151 708 9920
E info@civicvoice.org.uk

www.civicvoice.org.uk
 @civic_voice

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