

Report for Full Council 9th October 2023, Cllr R Knowles

YORKSHIRE DAY – 1st August

Yorkshire Day on 1st August each year is the day chosen to celebrate the historic county of York and all that is special about Yorkshire. It is promoted by The Yorkshire Ridings Society as a good way of protecting the county's individuality and character for the last 48 years since 1975.

1st August was chosen to celebrate Yorkshire Day - the day when Yorkshire Soldiers who had fought in the Battle of Minden in Germany picked white roses as tributes to their dead comrades. 1st August is also the day on which slavery was officially abolished, following the campaign led by Yorkshireman and MP William Wilberforce.

The event has grown in popularity and is now celebrated in towns and villages throughout the county that consider themselves part of the 'real' Yorkshire. Yorkshire Day Celebrations range from gatherings of family and friends to civic ceremonies or can be as simple as reminding each other what is great about Yorkshire.

Since 1985, many Yorkshire councils have hosted a joint civic celebration: in York in 1985 and in dozens of towns since including Leeds in 1993, Bradford in 1997 and 2005, and Keighley in 2022. Many towns hold their own public celebrations on the first Sunday in August.

The public declaration by the Mayor or Council Leader states:

"I, [Name], being a resident of the [West/North/East] Riding of Yorkshire [or City of York] declare:

That Yorkshire is three Ridings and the City of York, with these Boundaries of [Current Year minus 875], so for 2023, 1148 years' standing; That the address of all places in these Ridings is Yorkshire; That all persons born therein or resident therein and loyal to the Ridings are Yorkshiremen and women; That any person or corporate body which deliberately ignores or denies the aforementioned shall forfeit all claim to Yorkshire status.

In 2013, Eric Pickles, the Government's Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government formally recognised and acknowledged the continued existence of England's 39 historic counties, including Yorkshire its largest county. On 23 April 2014 a new initiative was announced to support the 'tapestry' of traditional English counties, including the removal of a restriction preventing the names of traditional counties being displayed on street and road signs. In August 2014, the first road sign was erected to mark the boundary of the historic county of Yorkshire. The Government has changed rules to allow local and county flags to be flown without planning permission and encouraged a new community flag to be designed and flown by local communities. The flags of England's historic counties have been flown from Government offices in support of these identities. In July 2019 the UK Government published official guidance on Celebrating the Historic Counties of England, stating that "the tapestry of England's historic counties is one of the bonds which draws our nation together".

Proposal:

Baildon Town Council resolve in principle to hold a Baildon Yorkshire Day celebration and declaration in August 2024. To consult with neighbouring Town and Parish Councils about the format and cost of their Yorkshire Day events before deciding what is appropriate for Baildon.