



Free Press

Est 2021 Facts & Integrity

Your Not-for-Profit Community Newsletter

Full Issue at www.pkmarketing1.com/wetherby-free-press



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Contents overleaf



Promo copies at *Morrisons, Pubs, Cafés, Dentists, Care Homes, Churches, Hairdressers, Shops ...*

MEET THE EDITOR



Thurs 14 Nov, 10 - 11

& Sun 17 Nov, 2.30 - 3.30



Come and say 'Hello' and let's have a chat about anything you want. It's YOUR community newsletter and we'd like to know what you think. Perhaps you can improve it by writing something for it yourself?

Meet the Editor and judge his character yourself. Hear the truth about the nonsense you may have been told. The Wetherby Mafia (see back page) will use any means possible to stop uncomfortable facts and valid opinions from reaching residents. It seems that some Wetherby people in authority are gullible and naïve, and don't question what they are told. This is their chance to hear another side so that they can make their own judgement. Cllr Lamb has met me twice so must think I'm OK.



Not one of our constant critics attended last year. We sincerely hope they make the effort this time. Of course, they can criticise the contents of the newsletter but they have yet to provide any specific examples of their grievances in 3 years of publishing. If they bring examples along, we can have a mature conversation and discuss it in detail. Our ultimate objective should be to improve this town - so let's do it. *cont'd overleaf*

Council Apologises Over Data Breach

The Town Clerk of Wetherby Town Council, Iona Taylor, has said sorry for identifying people and email addresses in a recent email they sent.

The Editor informed them of the breach of GDPR rules and the



Town Clerk informed those affected and those on social media of her regret and explained her actions to stop it happening again.

The Council had to apologise in July for a separate incident (Issue 66).

On this occasion the Council has acted quickly and responsibly. But it is concerning that no Councillor or the Town Clerk noticed the error themselves. We have written before on their apparent lack of checking procedures (eg missing bus station off town map)

In their post on social media, the Council mentioned 5 people being identified, but not the fact there were 13 email addresses on their list. *cont'd overleaf*

Free Press Boosts Chances of 'Spoons Progressing

Thanks to the Editor's posts on social media, the chances of Wetherspoons obtaining planning permission have increased. Many people want this pub chain in the town as soon as possible, and are constantly asking on social media for the latest news. The Editor looked on the Leeds City Council planning portal and was surprised to find that only 6 people had supported the application. He posted this fact on various social media platforms to motivate supporters to make their voice heard. He put a link in the post and told them it was a simple quick procedure to register and tick the 'support' box before the deadline of 17 Oct. Within hours many had done exactly that.

Final Figures: 155 Support (6 before Editor's post) 2 Against (1 before Editor's post)

On many issues in this town there is much apathy and lack of practical action eg bus blocking, but not on this one. Only a tiny minority don't realise that a Spoons would be great for this town, and attract 1000s of visitors (off the A1(M)). It would benefit the quality pubs in the town if Wetherby becomes a popular night-time destination again. Those that offer something different like live TV football and events like quizzes, have nothing to fear from a Spoons. The Town Council give their view on Page 6.

J D WETHERSPOON Free House



The post with this image got 3500 views on Nextdoor, a good community group on social media

100s of Articles Written and Not One Retracted - Proof We State Facts & Reasonable Opinion

Send your News & Views to: WetherbyFreePress@PM.me Twitter / X: [WbyFreePress](https://twitter.com/WbyFreePress)

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Guide to Social Media - The Best Groups Page 5

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Singing Group at In Bloom Awards Page 6

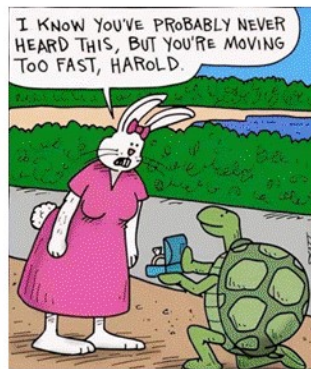
Sept Town Council Meeting Pages 8 & 9



* You know what! The shovel was a truly ground-breaking invention. But it was

the broom that truly swept the nation.

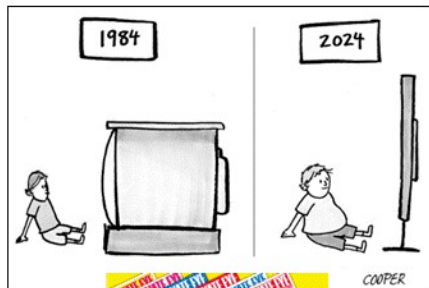
* If there's anything that makes me want to throw up, it's my dartboard on the ceiling.



* I knew my time as a graffiti artist was coming to an end. The writing was on the wall.

* A mate of mine has a social media addiction. It's so bad he has to be tweeted in hospital.

(Thanks to Tony Blackburn for that one)



* I don't know any prickly plant jokes so thistle have to do



MEET THE EDITOR *cont'd from front page*

Sadly, some people think it acceptable to insult the Editor personally. We say to them:

- * To insult or criticise somebody online you've never met **and not do it to their face when given the opportunity** is an act of cowardice
- * To insult or criticise somebody online, **knowing they cannot respond** is an act of even greater cowardice
- * To insult or criticise somebody online **from a fake profile anonymously** is also a clear act of cowardice.

It's a shame people cannot restrict their criticisms to the newsletter. Why make it personal? Usually it's because they have no argument against what is written so they have to distract readers from the issue ie shoot the messenger.



The Editor invites all critics and those in authority unwilling to cooperate with the only general newsletter in Wetherby to join him on these dates. If they cannot make it to either date, he is willing to meet at another time.

Article on how people can spoil social media on page 5.

Next Wetherby Town Council Mtg

Tues 12 Nov at 7pm, Town Hall
Agenda at www.wetherby.co.uk



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£1.25 per bag

Concerts have finished

Council Apology *Cont'd from front page*

We asked which Councillor had responsibility for the area of data breaches? We assumed it was Cllr Mulhall, Chair of Comms Ctte, but he would not inform us if it was him.

The Council now seem to be acting less defensively, which is most welcome, but we still have yet to receive an apology for:

- * Providing wrong figure for cllr attendance (Issue 67)
- * Incorrect bus info on website (Issue 62)
- * Poor website an uninspiring leaflet
- * And, of course, we have yet to see a Councillor or Chair of a Ctte individually apologise for anything that they personally have done.
- * Missing the BUS STATION off a town map (Issue 54)
- * Cllr Payne's inappropriate response to a serious incident (Issue 66)
- * Council meetings that are inquorate or cancelled

As we know, they are perfect and never make a poor decision or waste our money on a vanity / self-interest project.

Simple - You Send it, we Publish it. It's Your Newsletter

Bus Timetables in Pub Hub Removed

The Editor left some bus timetables in the Kirk Deighton community hub phone box. They were the no. 8 bus that runs through the village to Wetherby & Knaresborough / Harrogate. A couple of weeks later they had gone. He was a little suspicious so he left some more and checked a couple of days later. They weren't there.

The 8 is the only bus service in the village. What sort of a person would remove such valuable community information?

Maybe this person has a grievance against buses or the Editor, who knows.



We wrote to KD Events who look after the Hub and asked if the bus timetables were welcome (maybe they don't want to promote their only bus service!). We have not yet had a reply.



Cllr Alan Lamb runs the pub where the phone box is situated. He is involved in improving bus services so perhaps he can sort this out. Or a village councillor.

But at the moment it looks like one person or perhaps more in the community don't want valuable community information in the community hub! It's disappointing and the opposite to the attitude we have found in the village of East Keswick regarding buses.

We feel sorry for Kirk Deighton passengers and potential passengers. The 8 is a rural route and will always be under constant threat of being withdrawn, if not used.

Please get in touch if you want the Editor to leave timetables there.

Alec Shelbrooke - Shadow Transport Minister

Alec Shelbrooke is our Conservative MP for Wetherby & Easingwold. He was made Shadow Transport Minister in July 2024. None of the 3 main towns in his new constituency has a railway station. Boroughbridge, Wetherby & Easingwold are all reliant on buses. In the July '24 general election he did not mention buses once in campaign literature.

Since his appointment these are his tweets or posts about buses.

8 July - 17 Oct: **1 Tweet / Facebook Post**

On 30 August he asked the Transport Minister "What assessment has she made of the potential impact of parked cars outside bus stations on levels of delays on regional bus networks?"

We have informed Alec about the many bus issues we face in Wetherby and area, including

- Parked vehicles blocking Wetherby Bus Station Exit
- Cut of 7 rte from half-hourly to hour exactly 2 years ago
- Lack of Saturday & evening services to York

He has yet to respond to us about any bus issue.

3 Months in Post and Only One Tweet or Post about Buses!

It is clear to us and surely most right-thinking people that Alec has very little interest in buses. But if you think differently, please send us the evidence and we'll publish it. His question to the Transport Minister was pointless and we ask him how the answer would improve bus services in his constituency (it wouldn't). Even the question was not phrased properly - he should have used the word 'vehicles' not 'cars'. Lorries and vans also cause blockages.



Tad to Whitby for £2 but



..... it takes 3 hours. Less if you catch the bus in York. The bus is the 840 Coastliner. There are no evening buses back to Wetherby from either place.

The route over the North York Moors was featured on the One Show with some fabulous drone shots. The reporter mentioned that it was voted the 'Most Scenic Bus Route in Britain' in 2018. The Editor carried out this national survey attracting over 15,000 votes from all over the country. It was on the national news when the result was announced six years ago and the Editor was interviewed. The route has featured on programs like 'This Morning' too. Nobody has done a similar survey since.

The £2 single fare continues for the rest of the year but it is unclear what will happen in 2025. It would be good to know what Alec Shelbrooke's view on this is. Would the Conservatives like to see it scrapped?

Only £2 single to Leeds, Harrogate, Otley, Garforth & York

Reminder of Bus Facts for our Councillors & MP, Alec Shelbrooke (Shadow Transport Minister)

- ◇ Transdev's route 7 to Harrogate & Leeds via B Spa was reduced to hourly from half-hourly in Nov '22
- ◇ The late night route 7 service from Harrogate at 11.30pm was cut in Nov '22. The last bus is now 10.20pm
- ◇ There is NO Saturday service to York (Connexion's route 412) or Otley (Connexion's route 923) since May 22
- ◇ WYCA/Metro made a big mess of installing new bus stop flags in 2021. Half the stops are still the old type
- ◇ WYCA/Metro have stopped printing their 7 invaluable network maps. Not displayed at W'by Bus Sta either

Metro's Invaluable Maps Not Printed or Displayed. Online only.



Bus Blocking - No Cllr Support for Simple Temporary Measure

Wetherby Town Council has no committee that covers the vital public service bringing people into town to spend money in our shops and businesses - buses. That means the Council can ignore problems like this one if they want. Compare that to the very large interest they take in the car park charging issue. They put all their efforts into helping car owners avoid paying for parking. Car park charges exist in most UK towns and cities, and helps to encourage use of public transport. Revenue raised can be used to improve the buses too.

But since June 2024 it now has an agenda item "Highways and Transport" in their Full Council meeting. After so many years they decided that buses may be worth discussing. It was just "Highways" before that time. Perhaps your community newsletter had something to do with that?

However, a change of name has not resulted in any interest in the bus issues that we raise. Nothing in the last 4 months about bus blocking despite it happening regularly and highlighted in these pages. A couple of councillors have the cheek to say they are interested in buses but there

is no evidence to back that up. They clearly do not care (evidence please if you disagree). We wonder if the reason they ignore this major issue is because the Editor raises it. Surely they could not be that immature.

In the last issue we informed Councillors that we

would put a large "No Parking" notice up in the empty property shown in the image, if they supported this better-than-nothing temporary measure. No response from any of them.

After such a long time, we have become stoical and laugh at the absurdity of the situation.



A Large "No Parking" A3 laminated sign on this window would have been a simple deterrent for the last 2+ years



But we wait until it happens again and many hundreds of bus users are inconvenienced yet again.

Why Still No Saturday Buses to York & Otley?

There is no logic as to why the residents of Wetherby are denied a trip to York and Otley on Saturdays. And likewise Otley and York folk are denied a day out in our town, enjoying the river and spending money in our shops. We cannot take advantage of the £2 single fare on the weekend to visit a major city on our doorstep. Or the popular town of Otley with its market, 'Spoons & Chevin'.

It's now 2.5 years since these services were cut. Both routes are tendered services ie subsidised by the taxpayer and both are run by Connexions Buses on weekdays. We asked company boss Craig Temple the reason for the situation and if there is any hope of getting the Saturday service back in the near future. He replied "It is up to the relevant councils to pay for these - we are tied by them. There has been talk recently about there being a tender coming out for the 412, but I've not seen anything".

Wetherby Town Council have never raised this as an issue at their full council meetings. Do they care? There is no evidence that they do.

We asked our 3 Leeds City Councillors Harrington, Lamb & Stables what they are doing to get these services back eg sending emails to Metro / WYCA / Mayor or raising it at meetings with them. No response.

Sat Service

Sat Service

No Sat Service

No Sat Service

Sat Service

Sat Service

Sat Service

Double-decker to York weekdays but nothing on Saturdays!

The benefits are obvious - you can exchange information and views with other people. And it's free. The downside is that people abuse it and can spread misinformation and unpleasant views.

Difference between X / Twitter & Facebook

It is surprising that some people think that these two platforms are the same. They are clearly not.



X / Twitter Intelligent discussion on serious issues is very rare indeed on this platform. Too many people have opposite views and won't budge. The limited number of characters means there is no depth to any discussion. Mature exchanges are rare and often spoilt by offensive language, aggressive tone and extreme views.

Use it to put forward your point of view if you like but you can expect the dregs of society to respond; don't expect too much. The trouble with X / Twitter is that you can quickly and easily set up an account, and not have to prove you are who you say you are. Or have any picture of yourself. In other words, you can be anonymous. That means the keyboard cowards (they are not warriors) can write what they want with no consequence, unless you have time and money to sue for libel, assuming you can somehow identify them. It is pointless reporting any offensive poster to X / Twitter; they spooilers will simply set up another account. Just block them and try to ignore them. It is far too easy to be anti-social on this social media platform. It is best used only to find certain information and see the views of your fav celebs.

facebook

Facebook You are more likely to get a civilised exchange on Facebook because you should be identifiable. The clue is in the name FACEbook. You should have a face because when people know who you are, you are far less likely to insult somebody. Yet Facebook allows anonymous accounts. This means cowards can hide behind fake profiles to harass and insult, as we know only too well at the Free Press.

Group Administrators have a lot of power and can ban decent people for no good reason. There is no proper procedure of justice if you are unhappy with the Admin. They can easily be swayed by a complaining group of people who can use their positions in the community to deny freedom of speech. Admin don't have to explain their reasoning or logic. There is no democracy; Admin are judge and jury. Many of the larger groups have got far too big (posts are drowned out by the sheer number of them) and they don't have the time to police all the fake profiles.

Of course, there are some excellent Facebook groups, like Boston Spa Grumbler & East Keswick Parish Council which are run properly. Their Admin do a fantastic job for the community and we thank them for their hard work.



No community forum is perfect but we would recommend Nextdoor at www.nextdoor.co.uk. It is monitored by moderators and complaints about posts and posters are voted upon by many different people. There are fewer adverts from people and it just seems more civilised.

How To Deal with Personal Insults - An Example of a Faceless Profile

A 'John Scott' recently responded to a post with the image below, which made a simple suggestion to brighten our town up.



'John' calls me a 'complete fool' in the first post and 'complete tool' in the second. Childish stuff and perhaps the person is a child. We could not verify John's identity so have no idea if he is 'John Scott'. There were no images or any information about his family / friends on his

profile. Nothing either in his infrequent posts to offer a clue as to who he was. He was faceless on Facebook.

So I asked 'John' to verify his identity and meet me in person. I wanted to meet him in person for a civilised discussion on his views but no response. Both posts disappeared ie he or Admin deleted them.

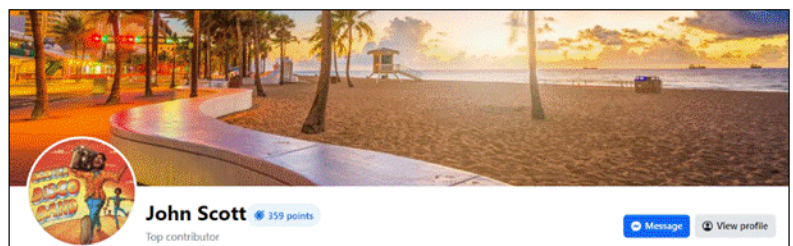
Perhaps 'John' will respond now and hopefully offer an apology.

Personal abuse is not acceptable on a community Facebook forum, just as it would not be acceptable on the streets.

Sadly, there are much worse social media group members than 'John Scott'. There are some very unpleasant characters out there who express extreme views with extreme language. It's often an outlet for their anger and is often nothing to do with you so don't take it personally. They seem to be full of hate and we must pity them. They always generalise and give no details to justify their abusive messages so an exchange is pointless.

Whatever you do, **Do Not Respond**. Their only desire is to get a reaction from you. Rise above it. Do not descend to their level. It's a natural instinct to defend yourself but try not to in this particular way. It's difficult but remember that normal intelligent people reading their offensive posts will realise that such extreme views are not coming from a reasonable person. Saying nothing is not a sign of weakness but strength.

Instead you should keep screenshots of all extreme personal insults and inform your antagonist, if possible by messenger or a similar private method, that you are greatly upset by their behaviour and that it must stop. A warning about possible legal action if it continues is advised.



Recent Activity

John Scott commented on your post: "Who does Kirby think he is? It appears that he's encouraging graffiti, along with making the place look like a shanty town. I wish is cheap inkjet printer would break down and he would get banned from Facebook. Complete fool."

John Scott Kirby moaning because I described him as a complete fool. It was a typo error, I meant complete tool. I mean come on, who would advise people to illegally graffiti Telecoms boxes with pictures of psilocybin magic mushrooms like the one in the picture he posted, along with spray painting walls etc. He must be short of content to keep on wittering about me. I think I need to block his profile.

Don't respond to negativity with more negativity. Just put your head down and prove your critics wrong.



Boston Spa, Wetherby & Villages Community Green Group

To engage the community in September, we held a bat walk around Boston Spa which was attended by about 30 people of all ages.

And we were 'batty' because it was wet! Although we did get to see the odd bat that evening.



pipistrelle

Bats are the world's only flying mammal and are threatened by a range of issues such as habitat loss, habitat fragmentation and the reduction in their food supply (insects). All species of bats are protected by law in the UK.

We started with an introduction into the species group and explained that bats navigate using echolocation. This is where they will make a series of clicking sounds and listen to the returning echoes. To hear their vocalisations, a piece of equipment known as a bat detector must be used to convert the calls into a frequency humans can hear.

Read the rest of this report in October's newsletter on the website www.bostongreengroup.co.uk

Contact Adrian, Chair at : adrian.balcombe@bostongreengroup.co.uk

Boston Spa, Wetherby and Villages Community Green Group is non-politically affiliated and is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (Registered Charity Number 1204438).



Council thinks Spoons will have 'risk of congestion on High St'

It is unknown whether the all-Conservative Planning Committee of Wetherby Town Council gave their overall support to the planning application of a Wetherspoons in the former Angel pub. Cllr Connor Mulhall is chair of the Planning Committee and they submitted this on 14 Oct to Leeds City Council:

WETHERSPOONS

"While Wetherby Town Council has no objections to the interior designs proposed, it does raise concerns as to the significant risk of congestion caused on High Street due to the proposed design for waste management and deliveries. The council requests that the following be considered as part of the drawing up of resulting conditions: Regulation of operating hours for deliveries and waste collection to outside of peak hours as to ensure the amenity of neighbouring residents and vehicles is not compromised. Regulation of the programme of deliveries so as to minimise detrimental impact of the proposed drop off zone on traffic along High Street. Requesting the provision of accessible toilet facilities through the implementation of Changing Places toilets where possible"

We wonder what their evidence is to justify a 'significant' risk of congestion. Are they for a Spoons overall or not? Most Councillors have kept pretty quiet about their views. Cllr Lamb has clearly stated that he would welcome a Wetherspoons.

We need this extremely popular pub chain asap to attract people to the town. The decline of the Thursday market and the long-term empty shops and businesses are there for all to see. The town does very little to attract people to the town and is poor at marketing its best asset, the river (no sign yet to Salmon Leap bench or any info displays of ducks, fish or other wildlife like Otley)

Spirit of Harmony sing at Yorkshire in Bloom Awards



Spirit of Harmony is a male voice, close-harmony, acapella singing group based in Wetherby.

They sang at the Yorkshire in Bloom (YiB) Awards event at the Riley Smith Hall in Tadcaster recently. The Hall is celebrating its 100th anniversary this year and the YiB organisation its 60th. It is a regional part of the national 2024 Britain in Bloom competition.

So 'Happy Birthday' was an obvious choice and they tell us they changed the words of the song 'My Wild Irish Rose' to - you've guessed it - 'My White Yorkshire Rose'.

"It was a thoroughly enjoyable evening" said Chair of the group, Dean Whitehouse. The guys are great company and he would love to welcome more members to the group, if any of our readers fancies it.

Dean adds "Ranging from 24 to 93 we're a really friendly bunch of guys and we'll make you feel as comfortable as we can. And the best thing is: No previous experience is required."

Practice is at Wetherby Methodist Church Hall on Thursday evenings from 7.30pm.

Pop along or contact Dean at jdfwhitehouse@gmail.com or call him at **07923 957488**

Their website is www.spiritofharmony.co.uk/



Performing at the Riley Smith Hall in Tadcaster

Can You Help at East Keswick's Climate Change Garden?

The official launch of East Keswick Village Hall's Climate Change Garden has taken place and was a great success.

But they need your help to give a helping hand, no skills or knowledge necessary though greatly appreciated. The Trustees of East Keswick Village Hall recently raised the money to buy the field at the back of the hall after a tremendous fund-raising effort involving the whole community. It has now unveiled its future plans for this exciting project.

East Keswick Village Hall is a thriving and very popular village amenity. More information can be found at www.eastkeswickvillagehall.org



East Keswick Village Hall Secures Funding and Confirms Purchase of Illingworth Field

East Keswick Village Hall has secured over £105,000 in financial support towards purchasing Illingworth Field and its future development.

THE FINANCIAL SUPPORT INCLUDED:

Source	Amount	Percentage
Climate Change Grant Leeds	£38,800	37%
East Keswick Parish Council	£1,000	1%
Emmerdale Section 106 Fund	£25,000	24%
Garfield Weston Foundation	£10,000	9%
Leeds Outer North East Community Committee	£8,000	8%
Public Donations and Fundraising Events	£17,200	16%
Bernard Sunley Charitable Foundation	£5,000	5%

We could not have done this without you!
Please see the next page for details of our exciting plans...

"I'm pleased that the community has been able to work together to provide additional amenity space for the village, including a grant from the Emmerdale Fund, which was established to support the restoration of heritage assets or the provision of new recreational projects"

Councillor Ryan Stephenson, Chairman of the Emmerdale Fund

Our Grant providers include:

Exciting plans ahead... East Keswick Climate Change Garden (EKCCG)

The Illingworth Field public consultation results gathered during 2023/24 helped inform the design and development plan of East Keswick Climate Change Garden. A summary of public consultation results is available on East Keswick Village Hall website: Public Consultation - Illingworth Field.

As a rural village, we are very proud and fortunate to have our own Wildlife Trust. East Keswick Wildlife Trust have been working with and guiding the Village Hall Trustees since the inception of this project. The primary aim on the development of this field will be the retention of community green space, incorporating a focus on the challenges of climate change for the local environment and the Village Hall's sustainability.

Our key objectives are to:

- Enhance biodiversity by creating new habitats, thereby improving and connecting existing local multi-functional green corridors. This offers the potential for wider links around the parish and beyond, including Ellikers Nature Reserve to the north of our East Keswick Climate Change Garden.
- Provide outdoor learning space for the local and wider community to reinforce how careful environmental husbandry contributes positively to climate change.
- Work towards the Village Hall achieving carbon neutral status by 2030 from its current annual emission rate of 2,644 kg CO2 by introducing creative green solutions.
- Foster an inter-generational approach that creates a positive environmental legacy for future generations.
- Broaden the range of inclusive, safe and healthy outdoor activities and events.

Get Involved - Please Give A Helping Hand...

You don't need special skills or loads of time to get involved. Email us to learn more about how you can help make East Keswick Climate Change Garden a reality. If you are interested in offering a helping hand or specialist advice in the area of carbon reduction, building retrofitting and renewable technologies, please email: climatechange@garden@eastkeswickvillagehall.org

It raises our spirits to receive something like this. It shows a village with true community spirit making things happen.

In the last issue we described how the Village Council pressured a bus company into providing a better service. This is something Wetherby Town Council with many more councillors has failed to do. East Keswick can produce high quality information sheets, like those above without a massive budget. They also have a Wildlife Trust (as does Otley) but despite the lovely river Wharfe and surrounding countryside, Wetherby does not.

Let's hope this village is an inspiration to others.



What is happening at the BBC?

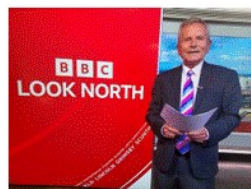
Swingeing cuts have taken place across the country at local BBC TV and radio stations in recent years.

But we expect to see the local weather forecast covering our area, not somewhere else.

One weekend, BBC Look North gave us the weather from Cumbria and the North East. The news presenter did not bat an eyelid. She ignored it as if it was normal practice now.

Maybe it is, and with the news too. During the week we were treated to Peter Levy and his Humberside & Lincolnshire news for the main 6.30 bulletin.

What is going on?



Wetherby Town Council - Who is on it & What they do



Image we had to put together - New Website Will Not State Political Allegiance. Why?

We thank the 15 Wetherby Town Councillors for being unpaid volunteers.

Unlike most volunteers they have power and are responsible for spending over half a million pounds of our money. Most are Conservative and raised our Council Tax precept by 80% in a cost-of-living crisis in 23/24, much of it to pay for new staff.

They claim to be non-political. This is nonsense shown by the Conservatives spending a great deal of time, money and effort to get their person elected in Feb 24.

In July 2024 Councillors agreed to hide a basic fact about themselves - their political allegiance on the website. They are denying information to the public that many would base their vote on. What possible reason have they got for this decision? It proves they do not wish to be open or accountable, if they want to hide such a basic piece of information.

All but one of the 9 Council reps on other organisations are Conservative.

We note every one of the 12 Council Meeting Chairs are Conservative.

The Mayor & Deputy Mayor are Conservative.

The Town Clerk is Iona Taylor. She is manager to an Assistant Clerk (downgraded from an experienced Deputy Clerk in 2023), an Admin Officer (Dawn Murrell appointed in Oct 24), a Communications & Events Officer (Helena Briden since Nov 2023), a Finance Assistant, a Burials Officer, a

Facilities Officer (downgraded from an experienced Facilities Manager, started in June 24) and a Facilities Caretaker.

There are 8 members of staff, more than most Town Councils. Employment costs are over £150,000 a year. Work is also contracted out.

There are no images of Town Hall staff on their website wetherby.co.uk, unlike Otley Town Council's, and no easy-to-find diagram showing the line management structure. We find it strange that there are no official photos of the Town Clerk that we can find. She has been a senior and influential public figure in this town for many years, yet most residents will not know what she looks like. This does not fit well with being an open and accountable council.

What the Council does: Market * Cemetery * Playgrounds * Distribute £5K Worth of Grants * Building Maintenance * Planning Issues * Events * It spent **£562,000 of our money in 23/24**. There were many changes in staff in the past year and recruitment is a costly exercise. Two staff who left in 2023 say they would not work for the Council again.

Are we getting high standards and value from money from this Council? *We provide evidence in many issues of WFP that suggests we aren't.*

Are they open and accountable? *Not in our view. Councillors simply ignore the majority of our reasonable and legitimate concerns and questions.*

The Basic Problem - No one councillor is ultimately responsible for anything. Joint responsibility means no responsibility. If one person is given actions/leadership, things usually get done.

When nobody takes overall responsibility, progress is much slower, standards are usually lower or things don't get done at all. Meetings should have clear actions and deadlines. Few do.

Where everyone is responsible, no one is really responsible.

Albert Bandura, Psychologist

Opportunity for any of our Town Cllrs to Say Anything to Residents

Unedited, max 400 words

Nothing Sent Yet

Minutes from Wetherby Town Council Meeting in September - Lasted less than an hour

Summary: ** Short Meeting ** Only 2 Big Events per Year ** Consider Even More Staff!

** Cllr Ager-Mills Quits All Cttes But Doesn't Resign from Council **

11 out of 15 Councillors attended. Cllrs Buckle, Chapman and Newcombe sent apologies. No residents were present. Leeds City Cllrs Alan Lamb & Penny Stables attended. Also present were 2 members of the Garforth Neighbourhood Planning Forum. *Why were these people not named? This is not an open and accountable council when they will not even name people from public organisations who attend meetings.*

It was not stated who chaired this meeting. Was it the Mayor or the Town Clerk? *Why isn't the Chair clearly stated?*

The meeting lasted less than one hour! *Why was there so little discussion on matters or new issues raised?*

Report from Leeds City Cllrs: Road Safety Improvements. "The 20mph traffic regulation order for Linton Road has now been completed and over the next weeks/months activity will be seen as the schemes are delivered."

Council Strategy : Only 2 Big Events to be Held per year, one being the bonfire and fireworks. *That does not sound very ambitious to us. But perhaps just as well as they have put on events costing many £1000s which have benefited only a tiny minority of Wetherby residents eg the King's Coronation big TV screen event.*

"Consideration of appointment of a market supervisor deferred". *Amazing how other similar councils can do without all these extra posts. Why the sudden need for yet another member of staff? More staff can mean manager's salaries are increased.*

Cllr Ager-Mills has resigned from the both the Planning & Appeals Committees, her fifth and final resignations this year. *She does not sit on any Council committees now so why has she not resigned from the Council? No reasons given for any of her resignations.*

Crime Stats: *Pointless us telling you them, as prisons included and no comparisons made with previous months or years. No comments on them from any councillor.*

Police Meeting: Cllr Harrington reports that "there have been a number of recent business burglaries". *That's it, no other information, no figures, no details, no comment from her. A "number"! Is it close to 3, 6, 10, 20, 30? Poor.*

Payments: Grass-cutting in cemetery alone cost £2000 for one month (July / Aug). *Seems a lot for what, one or two cuts?*



Mystery People from Garforth



More on next page

Minutes from Wetherby Town Council Meeting in September - cont'd from last page

Summary: ** Council Stops Using Twitter / X ** Over £250K spent on staff ** Damaged Wall Ignored **

Social Media: "Wetherby Town Council's 'X' account is largely inactive, with most members of the public favouring Facebook for day-to-day use and interactions with the council. It was AGREED to deactivate Wetherby Town Council's 'X' account and open a Wetherby Town Council Youtube account to allow for embedded videos."



Can readers see what's happened here? It is a self-fulfilling prophesy. The Council don't use their Twitter / X account so OBVIOUSLY people will use Facebook instead. They then close X / Twitter saying it's not being used. Hard to believe.

Obvious questions that need to be answered:

- 1 Why did the Council not use X / Twitter? It was and still is a very popular means of finding out what is going on. It is quick and simple to use. Many Councillors use their own X / Twitter frequently, yet the Council have decided not to use it. Doesn't make sense.
- 2 Why don't they use Twitter / X as well as Facebook, giving people a choice? Some people don't use Facebook for many different valid reasons.

The Council have a Communications Officer, unlike many other Town Councils, so we should expect excellent and comprehensive communications via all major social media platforms.

Wetherby Business Association - Cllr Ager-Mills represents this organisation, not its Chair Jamie Hullah. She reported "on the success of a local loyalty scheme".

No figures or research were provided to back up this claim. We heard it was not a success. Of course, it depends on your definition of success.

Staff: Personnel expenditure for this year to date is over £250,000 to date. This seems a staggering amount to us.

An Occupational Health Assessment for a staff member will cost nearly £600.

Property Ctte: A representative of Wetherby Civic Society requested that the committee consider setting aside a small amount of funding to make Wetherby's Georgian Bath House safer for visitors. It was suggested that the railing fixtures on steps into the bath house and fencing around the pool should be prioritised due to the risk of falling posed to visitors.

Damaged Cemetery Wall, right: Why has this wall at the entrance to the cemetery not been mentioned at all yet in any minutes we have seen? A car hit it over 6 months ago. This is very strange.



Church on Corner Damage from in March 24 - No Mention in any Meeting Minutes

Calling Artists in Wetherby - Showcase Your Talent & Let's Brighten the Town Up

Inspiration from other places. Obviously you need permission from the owner.



MP Alec Shelbrooke's 2nd Choice for Leader fails too

Alec Shelbrooke has been our Conservative MP for over 14 years since May 2010.

In 2019 he won 58% of our vote beating Labour by over 17,000 votes. He was a Remainer.
In 2024 he won 39% of the vote in our new constituency of Wetherby & Easingwold by just under 5,000 votes
From Dec '19 to 21 June 2023 he has voted 640 times out of 817 (78%) In that time he has rebelled twice against the party whip. *Source - www.publicwhip.org.uk/*



Alec - Big Supporter of Liz Truss

Alec was a strong supporter of Liz Truss in the Leadership Battle. Prime Minister Truss promoted him to a ministerial MoD post in Sep '22, which he then quit / was sacked after 49 days, the same length of time his boss lasted in post.
Early 2024 Alec was awarded the one of the highest knighthood honours by Liz Truss. The Knight Commander of the Order of the British Empire (KBE) entitles him to be addressed as "Sir". He did not mention his honour on his social media but changed official images to say 'Sir Alec ...'

We do not call him "Sir" as he has shown no respect to us.



Tweet from Alec - His Colleagues Disagree

Space for Alec to Say Anything to Constituents Unedited, max 400 words

After every edition of WFP, we write to Alec for comment. He never responds to our reasonable and legitimate issues.

Nothing received since we began 3 years ago

alec.shelbrooke.mp@parliament.uk



Alec supported Priti Patel in the leadership race and she came last in the first vote. He then put his full weight behind James Cleverly.

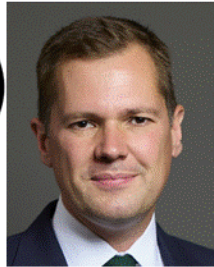
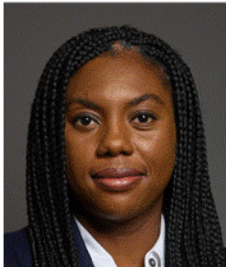
Sadly for Alec, this choice was not successful either.

If you're a gambling person, we would recommend putting a few pounds on the person Alec does not support in the final round.

More seriously though, it is concerning that Alec's views of the best leader are far removed from his colleagues. What does that say about his judgement? It also means Alec is less likely to get the shadow post he would like.



Alec's choices so far have failed



Ipsos research showed that there was widespread apathy around the election, with 62% of people saying that they did not personally care who became the leader.

There are many die-hard Conservatives in this town who have strong views. All party members will have the choice on 2 November when an online ballot of the final two candidates takes place.

It will be interesting to see whether or not Alec tells us who he chooses out of the remaining two - Kemi Badenoch or Robert Jenrick, left.

With 2 weeks to go, he is keeping schtum.

Our MP's Employment & Earnings in the Register of Members' Interests in 2024

Alec's basic salary is £91,000. He also receives expenses for accommodation, travel, office costs.

The website *theyworkforyou.com* informs us that Alec's extra income so far in 2024 is:

Jan: £1050 for 4 appearances* on Talk TV (4 hours work)

Feb: £225 for completing Ipsos MORI survey (1hr 15mins)

Mar: £300 for 1 appearance on Talk TV (1 hour)

Apr: £1400 for 7 appearances on Talk TV (4 hours 30 mins)

Aug: £1000 for 4 appearances on Talk TV (3 hours)

Aug: £4999 - Support linked to an MP but received by a local party organisation or indirectly via a central party organisation from Oakdale Farms Ltd of Northallerton to the Alec Shelbrooke Campaign Fund.

Sept: £50 for 1 appearance on Talk TV (25 mins)

*appearances can also mean non-appearance when his participation is not needed ie he is paid a cancellation fee.

The total is £4025 for about 14 hours work (about £287 per hour). This figure excludes the August £5K donation.

Talk TV ended its TV channel in May 2024 and is now only available online.

The only thing we would like to know is why Alec only appears on a minority channel that many of his constituents will not have heard of. There are other commercial channels who would surely pay for his views, like GB News or Sky News. Is it because Alec gets a more sympathetic hearing on Talk TV, which is owned by Rupert Murdoch?

We need to see Alec on political shows and the news, both locally and nationally and on terrestrial TV. It is difficult (and always has been) to find out what he thinks on so many national and local issues. The lack of any real local journalism these days means he can hide away with nobody (except people like us) to try to make him accountable.



Presenter Mike Graham of Talk TV - an extreme critic of Labour

Kirk Deighton Calendar Success - Over 100 Images Displayed in Church

Dozens of villagers in Kirk Deighton have exercised their right to vote – by helping to judge entries for the *KD Events* 2025 Calendar! Over one hundred pictures of Kirk Deighton, all taken by residents, went on display at All Saints Church on Saturday 21st September.

There were dramatic snow scenes, aerial shots of the church along with beautiful summer sunsets. The best twelve pictures will now make it into the calendar which will go on sale at the *KD Events* Christmas light switch on, this year held on November 22nd at the Bay Horse pub.

Matt Price from the group, which is entirely voluntary, said “We had the most wonderful evening – people coming together and enjoying the gallery with a glass of wine. Who knew we had so many talented photographers in the village!”

KD Events would like to thank All Saints Church for allowing the event to be held there for the second consecutive year. Proceeds from calendar sales will be donated to The Jordan Legacy, a charity based in North Yorkshire.



Brought to you by Primrose Lane Primary PTA

BOSTON SPA COMMUNITY BONFIRE & FIREWORKS

SATURDAY,
NOVEMBER 9TH 2024

AT PRIMROSE LANE
PRIMARY SCHOOL

GATES OPEN 5PM
FIREWORKS @ 7PM

LICENSED BAR, HOT FOOD,
MULLED WINE, CHILDREN'S
RIDES & ACTIVITY STALLS

TICKETS ON SALE NOW
PRICES HELD FROM 2023:

ADULT TICKET £5 IN ADVANCE OR £7 ON THE GATE
CHILD TICKET £3 IN ADVANCE OR £5 ON THE GATE

ADVANCE TICKETS AVAILABLE FROM DOUGLAS YEADON,
COSTCUTTER OR PRIMROSE LANE PTA REPS
CASH ONLY PLEASE



50s & 60s - NIGHT

with
TOP 50s
BAND **LA BAMBA**



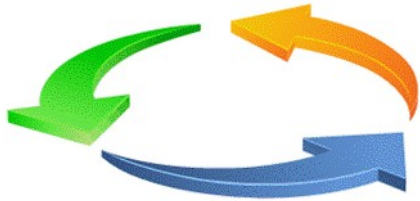
with Special Guest **SCARLETT**

EVERSLEY PARK CENTRE

SHERBURN IN ELMET LS25 6BA **07802 449825**

FRI 25th October - 7.30pm Tickets £15

You send it to us and we'll promote it, space allowing. Many shops in Wetherby put posters up for events outside the town, including Harrogate and even Doncaster!



RAOB A ONE LODGE WETHERBY

COMMUNITY FUND

Supporting Local Good Causes

COFFEE MORNING

BACON SANDWICHES

Saturday 26th October

Wetherby Town Hall **9am To 1 pm**

REFRESHMENTS, BACON, EGG, SAUSAGE, CAKES,
TOMBOLA, MYSTERY PRIZES, TABLE TOP SALE, BOOKS

Bee-Crafty. Markets



Autumn Craft Market

at

Wetherby Town Hall

on

Saturday 19th October



10-3pm

Wetherby News

NEWSWATCH

We are recording the number of **general** news items about Wetherby / Boston Spa & villages. And the no. of letters/ emails from residents about the area in the published paper, costing £2.20, up 10p.

We do this in the hope they will wake up and take up some of our stories. Not so far - they are ignoring many of the serious issues in our great town and do not deserve to have the word 'Wetherby' in their title. It makes our role more important than ever.

Issue of 26 Sep

News Items - 0 Letters - 0

Second week in a row - NOTHING!

Issue of 3 Oct

News Items - 1 Letters - 0

NYCC spend £200K on Spofforth to W'by cycle path

Issue of 10 Oct NO ISSUE AVAILABLE !?

Issue of 17 Oct

News Items 1 Letters - 0

Pub Renovation in Tockwith.

The Wetherby News is not available in the library or on Leeds Libraries PressReader

Town Hall Staff now write for the Y Post. Where are the real "journalists"?

WE DESERVE BETTER

Wetherby Foodbank

October 2024 Foodbank Wish List

- Loo roll
- Tinned chilli
- Puddings
- Tinned sweetcorn
- Tinned carrots
- Tinned potatoes
- Tinned tomatoes
- Tinned fruit
- Tea bags (small boxes please)
- Instant coffee (small jars please)
- Tinned/cartons custard
- Hot chocolate
- ReadyBrek/instant porridge
- Long-life fruit juice
- Sugar (small packets please)
- Washing up liquid
- Shampoo
- Soap/body wash

Thank you!





As we stated in Issue 67 a couple of months ago, Elland Road looks like a throw back to the 70s inside the ground. So we are not surprised the club have announced plans to increase capacity from 37 to 53,000.



On the pitch in the Championship, United have drawn 2 away games and lost one at home to Burnley. These mixed results have left them in 5th place after 9 games. Fellow Yorkshire side Sheffield United have made a good start to the season and are in second place. It will be a full house for the big game on Friday.



Lorgie Ramazani scored on debut

- Utd v Sheff Utd on Fri 18 Oct at 20.00
- Utd v Watford on Tues 22 Oct at 19.45
- Bristol City v Utd on Sat 26 Oct at 12.30
- Utd v Plymouth on Sat 2 Nov at 15.00
- Millwall v Utd on Wed 6 Nov at 19.45

All games on **sky sports**

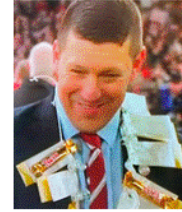


In June (Issue 62) we lamented the state of football in Yorkshire with so many teams being relegated and now not one in the Premier League. The comparison with Lancashire is embarrassing.



Well, sadly the same is true in Rugby League. Just look at the final table. Only one team this side of tut Pennines (Hull KR) in the top 6 and the play-offs. And no Yorkshire success in the Challenge Cup either; Wigan beat Warrington in the final. The Lancs town of Leigh did better than Leeds this season!

In the Grand Final Wigan beat Hull KR 9 - 2



Wigan dominated the season and won everything. Coach Matt Peet celebrates with his favourite chocolate bar round his neck. Season starts again in Feb '25.

Team	P	W	L	D	Pts
1 Wigan	27	22	5	0	44
2 Hull KR	27	21	6	0	42
3 Warrington	27	20	7	0	40
4 Salford	27	16	11	0	32
5 Leigh	27	15	11	1	31
6 St Helens	27	15	12	0	30
7 Catalans	27	15	12	0	30
8 Leeds	27	14	13	0	28
9 Huddersfield	27	10	17	0	20
10 Castleford	27	7	19	1	15
11 Hull FC	27	3	24	0	6
12 London	27	3	24	0	6

Final Super League Table



Free Press
Est 2021 Facts & Integrity

News, Funny Stuff & Improving Accountability

www.pkmarketing1.com/wetherby-free-press



"You're not a journalist" Correct, there are no journalists in Wetherby. We strive for the highest standards and the Editor has the enquiring mind of an investigative journalist. The question is why critics would prefer no news publication in Wetherby, except the two items a week max in Wetherby News.

"You're always criticising people but what do you do for the community?" Yes, we criticise people in authority and who spend our money or represent the town, and we clearly state the facts our views are based upon. The fact there is much to criticise is not our fault. The question is why our critics think that such criticism should not be published (when they have the opportunity to write in and put a different view, but don't take it). WFP is full of other non-critical news and information but that is ignored by critics.

As for what the Editor does for the community, he:

- * volunteers * campaigns for better buses * has raised £2500 for local charity so far * edits this newsletter * promotes the town to outsiders on Social Media * picks litter up *



In 2023 we Supported **25** Local Charities & Organisations

Send us your **GOOD NEWS!** to WetherbyFreePress@PM.me

Your Community Newsletter Editor: Paul Kirby



Email: WetherbyFreePress@PM.me
Tel: 07840 862861 Twitter/X: @wbyfreepress

Everyone mentioned in the WFP has a right to reply. The reply will be published unedited.

If facts are wrong, we will apologise publicly and correct the error.

We don't do interviews, as we are not professionals (but have high standards). We are not 'journalists' - we simply say what we see.

We encourage everyone to write to us with their views, whatever they are. People have died for our Freedom of Expression so never be afraid to use it. You can remain anonymous if you wish. We or you cannot be sued for libel/defamation as long as what is published is:

True or Honest Opinion or in the Public Interest

Unjustifiable threats of legal action can be seen as harassment

The Editor has had 4 'Meet the Editor' events so far. None of our harshest online critics have turned up yet to have a civilised face-to-face debate.

Please donate online at

www.pkmarketing1.com/wetherby-free-press

to cover printing costs **Thank You**



There are people in this town who want to restrict free speech

- ◆ They do not want this community newsletter to exist
 - ◆ We call them the *Wetherby Mafia*
 - ◆ They contact our supporters and 'persuade' them to stop supporting us
 - ◆ There has been a conspiracy of silence between the 2 parties so far
 - ◆ The *Mafia* seem to have some influence in the town and use bribery, misinformation or fear on their victims
 - ◆ They refuse to write to us and debate the issues they are upset about
 - ◆ They refuse to meet the Editor face-to-face
 - ◆ They are anonymous cowards and bring Wetherby into disrepute
 - ◆ This is a small cliquy town and many must know who the *Mafia* are
 - ◆ Inevitably the *Mafia* will be found out and legal action will be taken
 - ◆ These sad individuals have failed - *Wetherby Free Press* gets stronger
- If you know who they are, please do the right thing**

In April 2024 we had 1000 online visits in 2 days

NEXT ISSUE Fri 8 Nov 2024