



ISSUE 5

Free Press

Est 2021 Facts & Integrity

A Warm Welcome to  **PRIVATE EYE** readers

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Thank
You**



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PLACE**

**DENTAL
PRACTICE**

for
sponsoring
this issue

Inside

Find out what's
upset our MP

Another Award
for Friends of
S'ham Park

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Forum

Cllr Paul
Bradley

What's On
Leeds Utd

1000 Printed Copies Available at:
Bob Shop *Mason House Stores*
Costello's

Castlegate Stationers
Coop on Ainsty Rd
MIND shop

Why is Charity WISE not open with the Public about how they are run and spend our money?

Extreme Lengths taken to Avoid Answering Questions

Last week's main story was hard to believe and this one is connected to it. Another story of public interest that was ignored. The WISE Manager & Trustees have gone to extraordinary lengths to stop a former volunteer, resident and taxpayer (the Editor) asking simple questions about how our money is being spent and other issues.

Wetherby in Support of the Elderly, WISE, is a much-loved charity (1163698) that arranges many social activities, runs a café and befriending service, and provides advice for the elderly in our community. I know because I used to work for them as a volunteer driver. The elderly ladies and gents love the activities that bring much joy and friendship into their lives.

This organisation is publicly-funded, but has no desire to be accountable to members of the public, like me. In 19/20 Leeds City Council funded WISE with at least one half of its £244,000 income. WISE always has a year end surplus of many thousands. Like most organisations it's major cost is staff. It was just over half of total expenditure in 19/20 for 6 staff, some part-time.

The story starts 4 years ago and culminated in a failed criminal charge of 'harassment' against me (see Issue 4).

Mark Dobson was appointed as Operations Manager in 2016. He lives in Garforth and is an Independent councillor there. He has strong anti-Labour opinions having left the party in 2017.

In 2017 Cllr Dobson used the WISE Twitter account for political purposes and I asked why. cont'd



Cllr Mark Dobson, WISE Manager



WISE Twitter account used for political purposes in 2017.
No newspapers reported it

Another 8-Page Issue! Read it online at www.pkmarketing1.com/wetherby-free-press

Editor *Paul Kirby* WetherbyFreePress@PM.me Twitter: @WbyFreePress

WISE cont'd

It is one of the few regulations of the Charity Commission that charities must be non-political. Mr Dobson blocked me after sending a tweet then deleting it. I was a volunteer driver for WISE. I complained to the Chair of Trustees, Sarah Goodwin, about his actions. She would not confirm whether anyone was disciplined over the matter. She was the person who gave me an apology, not Mr Dobson.

The WISE Twitter account was closed and Mr Dobson went on sick leave, sending an email to all staff and volunteers blaming me for his illness. That same week Mr Dobson was on BBC Look North news looking well and demanding that Leeds City Council Labour Leader, Judith Blake, be sacked (for Leeds failure to become City of Culture).

Soon after, I was sacked as a (popular) volunteer driver because of this issue. It is clear that a manager with a strong personality, who has shown such poor judgement, needs close monitoring by Trustees.



The Editor before he was sacked

A couple of years later a new Chair of Trustees, Mark Storey is appointed and the WISE Twitter account is resurrected and a new Facebook account appears. I informed Mr Storey of what had happened previously and asked whether WISE had a social media policy. In every email I have received from Mr Storey he has provided almost no helpful information and said that no regulations have been broken and there is nothing to be concerned about.

I wondered why WISE would not answer such a simple question, and what qualifications and experience Mr Storey had to be Chair of Trustees of a charity. There is no information in the public domain and he refused to

provide any. I discovered that he lives in Doncaster, 30 miles away and has another Trusteeship in Bradford.

I hoped to have more success with Conservative Town & City Councillor and Trustee, Norma Harrington (Trustee since 2013) asking similar questions about WISE policies and procedures but received the same unhelpful replies.

Suspecting a chumocracy, I then wondered how Trustees were appointed. Again, no information from WISE, their website or anywhere in the public domain. Why is that when their only target in their 2019/20 Annual Report was to recruit 2 more Trustees? They have failed and are still short of Trustees with only 4: N Harrington, M Storey, John Wardley (Lions) & C Rowe.

The only time WISE have been accountable to the General Public is when they used to have an Annual meeting. In July 2017 I brought up the issue of a Transport Coordinator (the only other male in the office), leaving his post without notice.



Mark Storey Chair of Trustees

TRANSPORT NEWS

Free Bus Sunday

Bus travel throughout West Yorkshire will be FREE on Sunday 31 October 2021 to mark COP 26 and help raise awareness of next month's United Nations Climate Change conference in Glasgow (COP 26).

Try it for a day
for a better tomorrow



A welcome initiative but First & Metro do some excellent value tickets at the weekend anyway. Relevant buses on a Sunday running from

Wetherby are the X99 to Leeds via Scarcroft and the 7 to Leeds via Boston Spa. Both are hourly. DalesBus 874 runs too.

Let's hope it persuades some car users to use the bus if they're going to Leeds, or villages on the routes, or

*Roundhay Park / Roundhay Tesco on X99 route
Bramham Park, Seacroft Tesco, Seacroft Hospital,
Killingbeck superstores on 7 route.*

Fuel prices for Unleaded: Correct on Thurs 28 Oct to nearest penny

Morrisons £1.44 Shell £1.48

For av. tank of 55 litres, that's a £2.20 difference

Up 7p & 6p in 3 wks



There were no further public meetings after that, and the Transport Coordinator was not replaced.

Worse Service for Transport Users. Despite claims by WISE to the contrary, service users are getting a worse transport service. The hours when they can ring to arrange transport have been reduced twice - from 5 days a week at the start to 3 days now.

In Summer 2020 at the height of the pandemic, WISE were providing almost none of their normal services. It was therefore surprising to see a campaign for donations launched at this very difficult time for many people. With furlough in place they should have saved a lot of money on staff wages. They gave no details of what our donations would go towards, so I offered £200 if we were told. My offer was ignored.

Official Complaint I made a detailed official complaint to WISE about this and other issues of accountability. They decided to change the complaints policy whilst I was going through it **without telling me!** The new policy meant that the manager and Trustees of WISE would never have to meet the complainant (me) in person. They dismissed all my main complaints. I appealed to no avail.

Manager's Promotion Six months later, between Christmas 2020 & the New Year, Mr Dobson announces his promotion or 'enhanced role' on a single Facebook post. He is renamed 'Chief Operating Officer' from 'Operations Manager'. There were no details and no press release. Leeds City Council later informed me that a review of Mr Dobson's management position was carried out by a private company. The Council provided no details of: who instigated it, which company it was, how it was chosen ...

Wetherby on Telly



THE YORKSHIRE VET **5** **my5** Tuesdays 8pm

In Episode 6 (12 Oct) poor Julian was bitten by a poorly pet rat recovering from an operation, much to the amusement of his colleagues. The rat was one of 18 kept by a customer. In the next episode he injected himself !! with anaesthetic whilst performing a castration on a squealing rescue pig called 'Pigley Scott'. Dangerous job being a vet, but very entertaining to watch. Episode 8 saw Julian clip the beak and claws of a boystrous parrot. Shot of Wetherby Whaler too.



Unusual drone shot of Hallfield Lane/York Lane X-roads
We can see our house. Can you see yours?

WISE cont'd

and how much the process cost.

A New PR Position at WISE! In Dec 20/Jan 21 WISE expands with a brand new post, employing a Communications Officer. The charity Bramley Elderly Action in Leeds have 15 staff compared to WISE's 6 and they do not have a Communications Officer. There was no evidence of this post being publicly advertised. There is no recruitment procedure on their website. Voluntary Action Leeds normally promotes all voluntary sector vacancies on their Twitter feed but I found nothing on it. I asked them if it was advertised but they ignored my emails.

As a taxpayer I would prefer my money to be spent on expanding services (like Transport service hours), not non-essential staff. There are no minutes of meetings to tell us how these things are agreed. There is no public forum to suggest services, like providing or hiring a minibus for outings. Otley's elderly group has their own mini-bus.

In January 2021 I wrote to Mr Storey for the first time in 6 months regarding the manager's promotion. He replied in a perfectly normal email, starting 'Thank you Please accept my apologies for the delay' and ending 'Best Regards'. The next thing I know a letter from West Yorkshire Police in Bradford drops on the mat, with him accusing me of harassment. Utterly bizarre.

'Unbearable' I was confused so asked Mr Storey to clarify his position and he replied in a very different tone. He found my actions to be 'unwarranted harassment' and that they had 'become unbearable'. What had caused this extreme reaction all of a sudden? And why did the Police take it seriously, wasting their time and mine? See last issue for the actions of West Yorkshire Police and the 'No Further Action' outcome.

I asked Cllr Harrington for her view on Mr Storey's action as I couldn't quite believe it. She asked me not to write to her council email addresses and to adhere to Police 'advice'. She doesn't have a WISE email so I couldn't write to her again in any case!

Cease and Desist. I had not emailed Mr Storey, or any WISE staff, since 31 Jan 2021 but he took it upon himself to contact me with a 'cease and desist' email in June 2021, three months after the Police's NFA decision. I did not open the email as I thought it was clearly intended to harass me and restrict my civil liberties. I told him not to write to me again, unless it was through a solicitor. WISE has not contacted me since.

This case shows that charity management and Trustees can spend our money on larger outgoings without any public consultation, without publicising it properly and most importantly without providing any explanation for their actions. And we have no access to basic policies like social media, whistle-blowing and recruitment. It is none of our business apparently, yet is clearly in the public interest. Who monitors the monitors? Next issue - Charity Commission, Leeds City Council, Local Councillors and our MP.

Speakers at Wetherby Men's Forum in 2021

All on Wednesday:

3 Nov Alun Pugh - Dai's War

10 Nov Chris Helm - Caribbean Pirate

17 Nov Keith Lister - Occupation: Past,
Present and Future

24 Nov Jeremy Burton - The Tailor of Taste

1 Dec Lesley Newnham - Where Oceans Meet

8 Dec Tony Burkett - Lincoln Cathedral

15 Dec Forum Christmas Lunch, Bridge Inn, Walshford



New Recycling Bins

New orange and yellow 'on-the-go' recycling bins mean that we'll now be able to recycle cups, cans and plastic bottles.

We can recycle empty **coffee cups in the orange bin** at the Wilderness car park (non-recyclable lids should go in the adjacent black litter bin).

Some cafes use compostable coffee cups which cannot be recycled in the new orange bins as they are processed in a different way - ask at your café, says Leeds City Council.

5 new **YELLOW** bins are dotted around Wetherby for **cans and plastic bottles only**.

The Alec Shelbrooke Page

Alec Shelbrooke is a married 45 year old and has been our Conservative MP for 11 years. In the last election in 2019 he got 58% of the vote, the safest seat in West Yorkshire. He beat the Labour candidate by over 17,000 votes. The Conservatives have governed the country for the last 11 years. He campaigned to remain in Europe. An MP's basic salary is £82K. His email is alec.shelbrooke.mp@parliament.uk. Alec's voting record in parliament can be found at www.theyworkforyou.com



This Photo Upset Alec! The Editor saw Alec in town recently and took this photo with his phone, taking just a few seconds. We used the image when asking on Twitter, Facebook and Nextdoor for constituent's views and experiences of Alec, good and bad, for this page. Alec tweeted that 'we didn't need to skulk around' and that I was "hiding behind benches and taking snaps to try and create a story". He went on to say I was 'purporting to be a journalist'.

We asked Alec to explain why he used such exaggerated language and what story could be created from such a perfectly ordinary photograph and what evidence he had of such sensationalism in the first 4 issues of WFP. We said that if there was some understandable explanation or regret expressed by him, we would not print the story that, ironically, he himself has created. No response came.

The Editor denies skulking or hiding or being a proper trained journalist. MPs do not need any qualifications to do their job. An editor mainly needs common sense, a curious mind, good writing skills, independence and the courage to tell the truth.

Reaction to Our Request on Social Media. Not surprisingly it was mixed. To make it as fair as possible, we would like to print articles where Alec has shown persistence and tenacity to help you, and where he hasn't. So if you have examples of either, please get in touch. Thank you for all your responses online and emails so far.

We have offered Alec Shelbrooke space in our publication to say what he wants and it will NOT be edited - quarter to half a page to share important information.

On the remainder of this page we will raise issues with him and ask him to be accountable for his actions/inaction.

Firstly, we'll ask Alec what he thinks of the *Wetherby Free Press*. He has yet to tell us after we asked him for a message (of goodwill), like we did all our other public representatives. This is surprising since the fundamental philosophy of his party is that competition is good, and indeed vital, in a vibrant economy.

So does he welcome *WFP* as the only competition to the *Wetherby News*? Surely a challenging newsletter like ours is good for democracy and accountability.

In future issues, we hope to question Alec on

- ◆ His voting record (very loyal to the government)
- ◆ His ambitions in government (he has achieved PPS in the past)
- ◆ His record of appearing in public on TV (not as frequent as some Yorkshire colleagues, like Jason McCartney)
- ◆ His proudest achievements for Wetherby
- ◆ His views on issues raised in WFP eg the mess WYCA/Metro made of our bus stops, the actions of WISE Trustees & Manager, the actions of West Yorkshire Police and the existence of a chumocracy (definition in Issue 2)
- ◆ Other important issues like HS2, Mass Transit (tram) for Leeds, Sewage in the Wharfe, mini-roundabouts

Let's hope he takes up our offer of free space and answers important questions an MP can expect in a democracy. Tell us which 3 topics are most important to you, currently.



The Editor & Alec in 2014 when he helped me persuade Metro to fund buses to/from Leeds on Boxing Day



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Find us on Facebook, Instagram & Tik Tok to keep up to date!



Sorry! We Were Wrong (thankfully)

Buses to the Dales from Wetherby are continuing throughout the Winter

We said in our last issue the service ended on 17 Oct. It didn't.

We are lucky enough to have DalesBus route 874 to Buckden run every Sunday until Spring 2022. It goes along the A58 and picks up at all normal X98 stops at Collingham, Rigton Bank, Scarcroft etc.

Visit the Dales throughout Winter

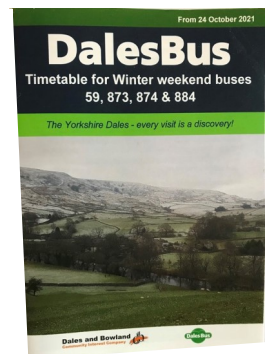
874 to Bolton Abbey - Grassington - Kettlewell - Buckden

SUNDAYS

Wetherby Bus Sta dep 8.35

All stops to Leeds on A58

New Timetables
at Library



**FREE trip out for
the elderly and
other ENCTS
Passholders**

www.dalesbus.org

@DalesBus

874 at Grassington

**Rover Ticket £10
Family 2 + 3 kids £18**

Have you tried the 59 Harrogate to Skipton on Saturdays? Amazing Views, Lovely Town

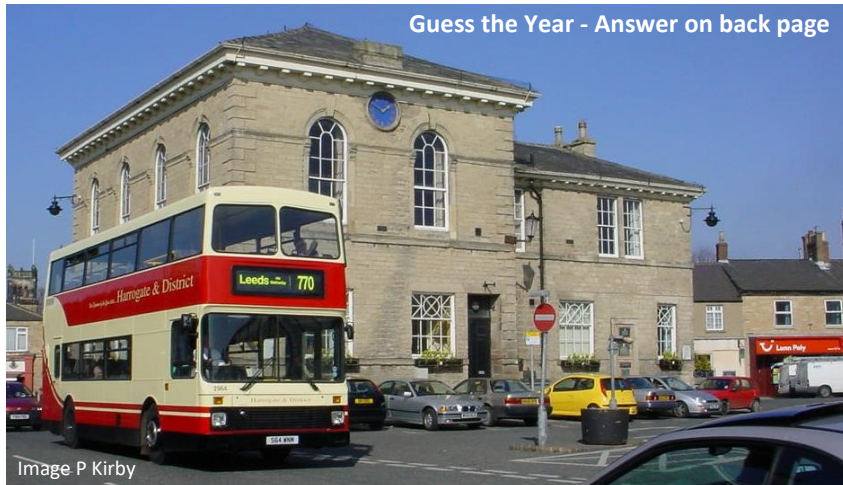


Image P Kirby

Democracy in Action - Spotlight on Our Town Councillors

Another Town Councillor does not wish to introduce themselves to you.

We have 14 town councillors in Wetherby representing us and making decisions on our behalf. It is a job where they are paid expenses and should be accountable to the residents of our town.

We would like to know a little bit more about our representatives, especially as there is very little information to be found about most of them. In alphabetical order we are going to ask the following questions to all our councillors.

Unanswered Questions

- 1 Your party (it is not stated on Town Council website):
 - 2 How long have you been a Councillor?
 - 3 On average how many phone calls or emails from constituents do you receive or send every month?
 - 4 Roughly how many visits to constituents do you make or receive every month?
 - 5 On average how many hours do you spend on council duties per month?
 - 6 Areas of specific interest:
 - 7 Achievements / Difficult Case where you helped resident:
 - 8 Frustrations and Joys of being a Town Councillor:
 - 9 What role does party politics play in this town council? ie why is it relevant what party you belong to?
 - 10 Any specific plans for improving Wetherby before the next council elections:
 - 11 Your preferred methods of contact by constituents (email, phone, social media):
- Thank you.

As you can see the questions give them the chance to tell us about their achievements and plans. It is an opportunity for our councillors to promote themselves and tell us what their work entails.

In the last issue Cllr Sam Bennett declined to answer any of the questions and gave us no reason for not answering them, despite wishing us luck with the newsletter.

Cllr Paul Bradley has done exactly the same! He wishes us luck too but no answers. He says "There is some information, reference the Town councillors, on our website". But there is literally no information about him. No biography at all, unlike Cllr Bennett who wrote a couple of sentences about herself.

Do you think the questions above are unreasonable? They should not be difficult to answer. If you have any experience of Cllr Bradley's work as a councillor, good or bad, please share it with us.

If you Google "Cllr Paul Bradley Wetherby" there is one result about litter picking in Nov 2020 in the Wetherby News.

His Register of Interests has N/A written in every box. His email address is paul.bradley@wetherby.co.uk

Next issue we (hope to) introduce you to Cllr Dean Buckle.



Image: Wetherby
Town Council

Cllr Paul
Bradley



I was once bitten on the bum by a German Shepherd.

He looked very sorry about what he had done afterwards.

He even introduced me to his dog.

Source: Steve Wright Show, BBC Radio 2

Wetherby Grumbler:



Eleven plus two is an anagram of twelve plus one!

And both equal 13!!

Source: Jon Mitchell of ITV Calendar Weather!

Wetherby Bonfire

No Bonfires organised by Leeds City Council this year eg Roundhay Park, so why not go to Wetherby Ings on **Sat 6 Nov**

Gates will open at 5.30pm and the bonfire will be lit at 7pm with fireworks starting at 7.30pm

Tickets now on sale from

- ✳ Candy Shop
- ✳ Castlegate Stationers
- ✳ Library
- ✳ Touchwood
- ✳ Wetherby Sports Association

£5 per ticket - admits one adult and two under 16s



Another Award for Friends of Sandringham Park

The Park has won its 10th community award! That's 10 years running now.

Scoring for the Green Flag Award is out of 100 on seven different aspects and the volunteers manage to reach between 90 & 96 each year.

Kazia Knight says "I am thrilled to be chair of a small group of hardworking and committed volunteers who year in year out win many awards with their dedication to our community".

To put this magnificent achievement into context, Harrogate area has NO Green Flag award winners. The only winners in Leeds are council-run parks, like Roundhay, Golden Acre & Temple Newsam. They are in a separate category for councils who pay staff to maintain the parks. To check out all the winners in our area, visit

www.greenflagaward.org/award-winners/



If you would like to be involved with the Friends, please email kazia.knight@btinternet.com

What's On

Wetherby Film Theatre Fri 29th October - Thu 11th November

No Time To Die (Action/Adventure) A
No Time To Die is the 25th spy film in the James Bond series



1st week:
FRI 19:30 | SAT 19:30 | SUN 15:30 | MON 15:30 | TUE 15:30 | WED 19:30 | THU 19:30

The French Dispatch (Romance/Comedy) A
A love letter brings to life a collection of stories published in "The French Dispatch."



1st week: FRI 16:30 | SAT 16:30 | SUN 19:30 | MON 12:30 +19:30 | TUE 19:30 | WED 16:30 | THU 16:30

Dune (Sci-fi/Adventure) A
Feature adaptation of Frank Herbert's science fiction novel, about the son of a noble family entrusted with the protection of the most valuable asset and most vital element in the galaxy.



2nd week: FRI 19:30 | SAT 16:00 | SUN 19:30 | MON 12:30 +19:30 | TUE 16:00 | WED 16:00 | THU 19:30

More films and information at wetherbyfilmtheatre.com

Engine Shed

Megaslam Wrestling - Megaslam returns this November! An amazing 2 hour family spectacular.
SUN 7th November - Doors at 14:30

Soul Train - A fabulous opportunity to relieve the Motown era with a 8 piece soul/motown tribute band!
SAT 13th November - Doors at 19:30 - Tickets £12.50

More information at engineshedwetherby.co.uk

Wetherby Markets and Fairs

Market Place

Weekly Market: Every Thursday
Artisan Market: SUN 21th Nov, 10:00 - 15:00

All information is subject to change.

Your Notice, Your Ad Your Message to Wetherby

This size is £40 or £130 for 4
HALF the cost of Ad mags

Please help us keep going

This is YOUR newsletter

Many of the stories and articles in this newsletter you will never read anywhere else

Remaining Issues in 2021:

Issue 6 on 12 Nov
Issue 7 on 27 Nov
Issue 8 on 10 Dec

Thank you

Last week's issue highlighted people in powerful positions simply not willing to be accountable to the public. This issue shows the same.

We believe there is a 'chumocracy' in Wetherby. Those in authority seem to stick together and ignore serious issues or deflect responsibility onto others. The local paper have not reported on these local stories that are clearly in the public interest. But we need some help.



Free Press
Est 2021 Facts & Integrity

Email WetherbyFreePress@PM.me
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Fridays Every 2 Weeks - Online & Print

Bottom Line - We're Losing over £100 per Issue

We promised to be honest with you about costs. For the first 4 issues:

Major Costs including Printing: £803 Income of Ads & Donations: £347 Loss: £456

Minor costs are not included, like admin, computing and petrol. And of course nobody is paid. Our local printer is giving us a very generous deal. There are no costs to cut, so it really is up to the residents and businesses of Wetherby - how much do you want a Free Press? We will continue to subsidise it as long as we can but there will come a point when we can't.

Some of you have already been very generous and we are very grateful to you. **THANK YOU.**

If you can afford to, please donate in our collection boxes in Coop on Ainsty Road, Costellos, the Bob Shop (Mason House stores) and Castlegate Stationers.

Contributions by direct payment or cheque would be most welcome. Please email us for details.



NO RESPONSE from WY Police

to Last Issue's Front Page Story



Chief Const John Robins

At the end of the article we said "Let's hope Chief Constable John Robins will respond to this story and clarify exactly what those letters mean. Or withdraw them."

Silence so far from Chief Constable Robins, the Officer involved, the Officer's Line Manager, WYP Standards Dept and their Press Office. And Leeds North East division.



Deputy Mayor Alison Lowe

Tracy Brabin, Labour Mayor of West Yorkshire and her Deputy, Alison Lowe are supposed to oversee West Yorkshire Police and make them accountable. Their response: they can't do anything if a complaint is involved. I assured them no complaint is in process or will be made in the future - the Editor has better things to do with his time. We await a response.

ART EXHIBITION

Town Hall Sat 6 Nov 10-4

Barry Pickersgill, Professional Artist of 60 years
Sarah Perry, 2021 Pet Portrait Finalist

J D WETHERSPOON
Free House

A Rumour that 'Spoons are coming here has been posted on Wetherby Grumbler. Whether

true or not, the Editor wondered what effect the one in Otley has had on pubs and other businesses there. He asked the townsfolk on their main Facebook Group 'Otley Our Town' (27,000 members). Results in next issue. Do you have any evidence of them being a good or bad thing? Knaresborough has one too, of course.

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1/4 page (size B/C) - £40 or £130 for 4 issues

1/2 page (size D) - £60 or £200 for 4

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Leeds United managed a point at home against Wolves last Saturday (23 Oct) in a 1-1 draw. But the Whites need all 3 points, especially when they play at home. They lost 2 - 1 at Arsenal in EFL Cup on 26 Oct.

Norwich v **Utd** on Sun 31 Oct at 14.00

Utd v Leicester on Sun 7 Nov at 14.00

Harrogate Town FC were winning 2 - 0 at Hartlepool last Sat (23 Oct) but managed to lose 3 - 2. Still near the top of League 2.

Town v Bristol Rovers on Sat 30 Oct at 15.00

Town v Wrexham on Sat 6 Nov at 15.00 in the FA Cup

York City FC continued to climb their league after another victory on 23 Oct against Chester, a rival Roman city. Three days later the Minstermen lost 3 - 1 at Boston Utd.

City v Blyth Spartans on Sat 30 Oct at 15.00

City v Buxton on Sat 6 Nov at 15.00 in the FA Cup



Leeds Knights v Raiders IHC Sat 30 Oct at 18.30

Bees IHC v **Knights** on Sun 31 Oct at 17.00

Knights v Telford Tigers on Sat 6 Nov at 18.30

Telford v **Knights** Sun 7 Nov at 18.00



Wetherby Races Fri 29 Oct at 12.55 Sat 30 Oct at 1.25
Peter Scudamore's **Mighty Thunder** may appear