



ISSUE 11  
until  
Fri 4 Feb  
2022

# Free Press

Est 2021 Facts & Integrity

online at [www.pkmarketing1.com/wetherby-free-press](http://www.pkmarketing1.com/wetherby-free-press)

Editor *Paul Kirby* [WetherbyFreePress@PM.me](mailto:WetherbyFreePress@PM.me) Twitter: @WbyFreePress

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To



You  
Our  
Readers

## We Are Still Here & Will Be For a Long Time to Come!

We have published 11 Issues (Congrats to us) 😊



Some would like to see us disappear but we aren't going anywhere.

We will continue to speak truth to power and tell you exactly what is going on in your name.

Many individuals and organisations in Wetherby continue to ignore us. They give no reason.

**Ask yourselves why.**

Especially when we offer a Right to Reply and free space to anyone who wants it. Especially when there is only one other publication containing Wetherby news.



Especially when we can prove our online readership of 1000s.

**The other publication** costs £1.90 and few people we know read it now, as it is 90%+ Harrogate & North Yorkshire (where we do not pay council tax). Readership of local papers has been plummeting for years and costs have been cut drastically. There isn't even a free copy in the Library to read.

**We believe there is a chumocracy** in this small town, as shown in the first 10 issues. With talking to many townsfolk and business people, we have heard about issues that have not been addressed satisfactorily or where actions (or lack of) have not been questioned.

**In future issues** we will compare Wetherby with Otley to show just how much we believe this town has fallen behind in some areas.

**Please take this unique opportunity to tell us your thoughts and experiences** (anonymously if necessary) and let's try to improve things. Our email address is [WetherbyFreePress@PM.me](mailto:WetherbyFreePress@PM.me)

**Are we politically biased or motivated?** No, we are not.

*The Editor has highlighted poor performance and lack of action from Labour's Leeds City Councillors. And criticised their lack of monitoring of the bureaucratic monstrosity that is West Yorkshire Combined Authority (Metro). The Liberal Party only seem to come out at Election time. The Independents keep a low profile too. The Editor has also criticised the local Green Party candidate for her unsubstantiated generalisations about local buses.*

*Free space for all of them to explain their positions - but expect waffle to be challenged!*

## But Will Boris?



Let's Party! Tough Times for the Tories.  
What Does our MP think? See Page 4

### Inside

Clr Norma Harrington

Wetherby Food Bank

Tree Planting

Alec Shelbrooke

Underpass Flooded again

Leeds NE Police

What's On



One for Leeds Utd Fans

Big Local Story Coming in the Next Few Weeks

# Wetherby Foodbank - Poster Competition for Primary Schools

Bryony Hudson is Project Coordinator of Wetherby & District Foodbank, a Charity based at Thorp Arch.

**She tells us:** "Wetherby and District Foodbank would like to thank all our supporters in 2021 - as a small independent charity we rely on the kindness of our community and are incredibly grateful to each and every person who has helped us to help those in crisis over the last 12 months. We appreciate each and every donation; whether it be a can of vegetables or financial support.

**Sadly, the challenges facing our community** are only set to increase in 2022 with the cost of living rising above and beyond anything anyone could have predicted. As a foodbank we are here to support those experiencing crisis due to a myriad of reasons, and if we have learned anything from the Covid-19 pandemic it is that nobody is immune from needing help.

**In these cold winter months,** families will be making the impossible decision whether to heat their home or put food on the table, and so Wetherby's support is needed more than ever. For this reason, we're kicking off 2022 by holding a poster competition for pupils at local primary schools.



**We would really like to get the children** of our community engaged with the issues surrounding food poverty, and how they can help the foodbank to support those experiencing it. From each school one winner and two runners up will receive a prize, with the winning entries being published and posted in and around the local area.

**We have contacted most schools directly** but if any primary schools are interested in taking part please do email us at [info@wetherbyanddistrict.foodbank.org.uk](mailto:info@wetherbyanddistrict.foodbank.org.uk) to register your interest. We will be circulating full information in the coming weeks. The competition opens on the 14 February and closes on the 31 March, with winners announced in the week commencing 4 April.

**We have already had fantastic support from some local businesses** in offering gift vouchers to use as prizes, but we do need more! So if you are a local business and would

like to help Wetherby Foodbank by providing a £5 or £25 gift voucher, please contact [bryony@wetherbyanddistrict.foodbank.org.uk](mailto:bryony@wetherbyanddistrict.foodbank.org.uk).

**Full details on the poster competition** will be published on our website in due course, but in the meantime further information can be found on our website here:

[www.wetherbyanddistrict.foodbank.org.uk/2022/01/05/poster-competition/](http://www.wetherbyanddistrict.foodbank.org.uk/2022/01/05/poster-competition/)

*The Wetherby Free Press believes this is a local charity worth supporting. There are more and more people who need their help - please give what you can.*



Bryony Hudson

## Enthusiasm in Spades - Tree Planting Community Action

**The Boston Spa, Wetherby & Villages Community Green Group** has been working with Leeds City Council to find appropriate areas to increase tree planting. A member of the Group, Mike Gadd, spotted an area of land between the two roundabouts by the A1(M) motorway junction and the service road down to Bramham. He tells us:

**"After well over a year of negotiations** and the help of Leeds City Council, we managed to complete the planting last weekend. With over 30 volunteers from the Group and Rotary Club, it was a great communal effort in planting a good diverse mix of mostly native species such as hawthorn, Scots pine, bird cherry, mountain ash, gorse, oak and crab apple to enhance wildlife in the area and sequester a little carbon.



**It took a lot of organisation,** but it was really exciting to see it all come together. Let us know if you have an area that could support some trees, or if you would like any help or advice regarding planting, tree species for specific areas and any other related matters".

**He adds that it would be really appreciated** if you'd like to join and support the group. Details on their website

[www.bostongreengroup.co.uk](http://www.bostongreengroup.co.uk)

where you can keep up to date with environmental issues.



Keith Jackson, Ian Grainger & David Batty

## Call Out to Schools

*If you want to inform the folk of Wetherby what's happening behind school gates, get in touch*



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## TRANSPORT NEWS



A58 weekend road closure near the Wellington Inn for new Ring Road works from 7pm on Fri 21 Jan to 6am on Mon 24 Jan

### £7M to Progress Bus Franchising

Transport Authority Metro/WYCA are asking to spend £4M to £7M of our money on themselves, looking into ways of taking control of bus services in West Yorkshire. See Issue 2 for their incompetence in installing bus stops. Do you think the £millions would be better spent on improving current bus services and infrastructure? Plse tell us, and our Leeds City Councillors – Cllr Lamb, Cllr Harrington & Cllr Richards.

Fuel prices for Unleaded: Correct on Thurs 20 Jan to nearest penny

Morrisons £1.48 Shell £1.50

Harrogate: Sainsburys £1.45 Morrisons £1.445

Difference b/w 2 Morrisons to fill av. tank is £1.90



### £1 Fare after 7pm continues



with Harrogate Bus Company until 31 March

The Editor was taken by surprise when he took a commuter bus from Leeds this week. There were very few passengers indeed. He noticed earlier that there were no queues at bakers and coffee shops at lunchtime, suggesting that few people are venturing to shop or work at the moment.



Noone staying on at Bus Station for Aire / Ainsty Road Estate

That is not a good thing for our city centre economy or society in general.

Let's hope the relaxation of Covid rules now in operation means more people on our buses. Otherwise services will decline.

**Back to Bus - They Are Safe**



Commuter Buses far from full

The 17.33 Commuter X98 bus in Leeds

It's YOUR Newsletter **3** Got a Talent? Please Tell Us

# The Alec Shelbrooke Page

Alec Shelbrooke is 45 and been our Conservative MP for 11 years. In the last election he got 58% of our vote beating Labour by over 17,000 votes. He campaigned to remain in Europe. His basic salary is £82K. He has 15,800 followers on Twitter. His email is [alec.shelbrooke.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:alec.shelbrooke.mp@parliament.uk). From Dec '19 to Nov '21 he has voted 357 times (out of 392) and has never rebelled against his party whip.

Space in this box for Alec to inform us of anything he wants, unedited. Nothing sent.

## A 'Bust' start to year for Alec

Below are Alec's Tweets from 11 Jan to 19 Jan

- 11 Jan - Furore over Party in Downing Street. No Tweet
- 12 Jan - Boris apologises at PMQs about No 10 party. No Tweet
- 13 Jan - Tweet about Booster Rollout in UK compared to other countries
- 14 Jan - Boris apologises to Queen about party before funeral. No Tweet
- 15 Jan - Tweet below: "A bust start to 2022 in Elmet & Rothwell"



In the Facebook link he spells 'busy' correctly and tells us that he visited a business in Allerton Bywater, raised issues of energy costs and global security threats in the "UK House of Commons" and held his usual surgeries.



Alec in PMQs on 12 Jan. Anyone know what he's thinking?

- 16 Jan - Six Tory MPs say Boris should resign. No Tweet
- 17 Jan - Tweet about Cervical Cancer
- 18 Jan - Tweet about unemployment, job market & GDP
- 18 Jan - Tweet about email address (above) for constituents to contact him and his website
- 19 Jan - Tory MP defects to Labour and Senior Tory MP say Boris should resign at PMQs. Tweet about meeting with @JewishLeeds

## Free Press Comment. Why is Alec on Twitter?

The public do not expect much from our politicians. But they do expect to know what their MP thinks about the big issues. Alec has stayed silent about the behaviour of Boris Johnson. Not a hint of what he thinks. His body language at PMQs gives us no clue. Does he support Boris or not? Why is he keeping quiet?

Twitter exists mainly for people to make their opinions known. It is an effective tool to communicate with the world. We wonder why Alec uses the platform at all when he doesn't use it very often, doesn't monitor it and doesn't tell us what he is thinking. It doesn't show much care is taken when he makes an obvious spelling mistake. Surely constituents deserve more from their elected representative.



Papers of Sat 15 Jan. 5 days later still no clue as to what our MP thinks

**In Oct 2021 we asked for opinions on Alec.** We shall print all of them in order received.

JP wrote: "Contacted the MP via email at the start of the Covid-19 epidemic re vaccinations - he sorted out the invitation problem I had within a couple of days.

Have you asked the MP to write a column for your free paper? Sure he could provide a few paragraphs every couple of weeks.

We do need to hear what he's up to, not what the paper believes he's not doing."

WFP Response to JP. We totally agree. As stated above, we have offered Alec free space in every issue but he declines to use it.

You're having a larf!

- ◆ I had a dream that I weighed less than a thousandth of a gram. I was like, Omg
- ◆ I don't trust stairs - they're always up to something
- ◆ 6:30 is my favourite time of day, hands down
- ◆ I used to run a dating service for chickens but I was struggling to make hens meet
- ◆ My toddler is refusing to nap. Surely, she's guilty of resisting a rest



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Leeds North East - West Yorkshire Police

Email: [nel.npt@westyorkshire.police.uk](mailto:nel.npt@westyorkshire.police.uk)



One Facebook & Twitter Message relating to Wetherby 5 Jan - 20 Jan

5 Jan - Relating to several instances of graffiti in the area, 'a man has been arrested'

Website Neighbourhood Priorities for Wetherby (updated on 5 Jan)

**Public Priority - Road Safety** – speeding has been raised as a concern across the ward. We are currently working with colleagues from Safer Roads, in an initiative funded by local Councillors, and are conducting dedicated days of action targeting excess speed. The local NPT will conduct high visibility patrols and use both the Pro-Laser and a speed indicator device to raise awareness of the dangers of speeding. We will work with the local authority to seek post implementation reviews of 20mph zones to assess the effectiveness of these areas in reducing speed.

**Antisocial behaviour** – we will conduct intelligence led, high profile patrols to deter antisocial behaviour and instances of damage and will be focusing on Wetherby and Stables Lane.

**Police Priority - Residential Burglary** - In the residential communities in Wetherby itself and the villages of Boston Spa, Clifford and Bramham. Day time offences of opportunity, e.g. sneak in burglaries. We will tackle this through crime prevention to target harden and intelligence led patrols at the key times to disrupt and deter offences.

It's YOUR Newsletter **5** Please Donate & Keep Us Going

# Democracy in Action - Spotlight on Our Town Councillors



Image from Town Council website

**We are introducing you** to all our town councillors in alphabetical order. It is a chance for them to tell residents who they are and what they do for us.

**Cllr Norma Harrington is a Town Councillor and a Leeds City Councillor.** She did not answer our questions directly as we put them to her.

1 Your party (it is not stated on Town Council website): *Not stated anywhere but all Wetherby councillors are conservatives*

2 How long have you been a councillor? *Almost 9 years*

3 On average how many phone calls or emails from constituents do you receive or send every month? *No answer*

4 Roughly how many visits to constituents do you make or receive every month? *No answer*

5 On average how many hours do you spend on council duties per month? *On average 35 to 40 hours per week*

6 Areas of specific interest: *Housing issues, transport and traffic issues, planning issues, education places and health provision, safeguarding and policing issues*

7 Achievements / Difficult Case where you helped resident: *No answer*

8 Frustrations and Joys of being a town councillor: *No answer*

9 What role does party politics play in this Town Council? ie why is it relevant what party you belong to? *No answer*

10 Any specific plans for improving Wetherby before the next council elections: *No answer*

11 Your preferred methods of contact by constituents (email, phone, social media etc): *No answer*

In addition, please could you also:

1 comment on Cllr Chapman's assertion that WTC is non-political, when you are clearly political in your role as a Leeds City Councillor. How do you separate your 2 roles when sitting on the Town Council? *No comment*

2 clarify which email residents use for which type of issue. Your last communication was very unclear. *No clarification*

3 comment on the main story in Issue 5 of WFP as a Trustee of WISE. *No comment*

## Cllr Harrington's Response:

*Good afternoon Mr Kirby,*

*I am providing you with the following information which I hope will assist your readers.*

*As a Wetherby Town Councillor, a wholly voluntary role, I was re-elected unopposed at the last all-out Town Council election. I have served on the Town Council for almost 9 years, including two years as Mayor. Wetherby Town Councillors, in the same way as parish councillors work as a collective to discuss issues affecting the town and proposing solutions to problems that fall within the Town Council's remit. The way for residents of Wetherby Town to raise issues is for them to attend the monthly Town Council meeting and put their question at the beginning of the meeting. Any Town Councillor approached outside the meeting will raise the question with the town hall staff or at the next town council meeting. We do not act unilaterally.*

*Wetherby Town Council has a website where there is a wealth of information about the workings of the Town Council and any member of the public can look at my biography and find out which committees I sit on.*

*As I am also a Leeds City Council Ward member, the Town Council may from time to time ask me to look into issues that are brought to their attention that are specific to Leeds City Council. I will then report back at a future meeting.*

*As a Leeds City Councillor I was elected four years ago to work alongside my two ward colleagues to represent the residents of Boston Spa, Bramham, Clifford, Thorp Arch, Walton and Wetherby on Leeds City Council. All information about which committees I sit on, my register of interests and contact details are available for anyone to see on the Leeds City Council website.*

*Information about the roles and responsibilities of Town/Parish councillors and Leeds City Councillors are also available on the LCC website. I would say that I spend on average 35 to 40 hours per week carrying out this role. Unfortunately due to confidentiality reasons, which I am sure you will understand, I am unable to discuss individual cases but my casework over the past 4 years has covered housing issues, transport and traffic issues, planning issues, education places and health provision, safeguarding and policing issues. As a Leeds City Councillor I have oversight not only of things that happen in Wetherby Ward but across the whole city. Regards.*

*Leeds City Council issues). No clarification of how Cllr Harrington separates these 2 roles, or which issues are town and which are city council issues. She did, however, find time to write about her 'hopes' for 2022 in the Wetherby News this month. No specific actions were stated.*

*Being involved in so many local organisations may mean many residents could be afraid to challenge (for business or other reasons) such an influential figure. And if nobody ever challenges people's actions in a small town, this can lead to low standards. A chumocracy can form, especially when people have the same political allegiance. If this is not the case in Wetherby, we welcome any evidence to the contrary, examples where our non-political independent-thinking councillors have highlighted low standards, or even just simply disagreed with, a colleague or any other senior figure in the town. There seems to be no healthy debate.*

*At least one piece of information is incorrect in Cllr Harrington's biography on the Town Council website, which is still not being kept up to date. There is a picture of a councillor who left over 2 years ago. And it is still not stating that all our councillors are Conservatives. The Town Clerk has ignored our request for an explanation for this omission.*

## Information on Wetherby Town Council Website:

In 2016 Cllr Harrington was elected as Mayor of Wetherby, having been co-opted on to Wetherby Town Council in 2012. She has served on the Council's planning and finance & general purposes committees and is also a member of the Neighbourhood Planning group.

Born in Scotland, Councillor Harrington's family moved around the country with her father's work until settling in Thorp Arch where she attended Tadcaster Grammar taking employment with Barclays Bank in Wetherby after leaving full time education. Cllr Harrington started a successful career in the prison service in 1988, progressing through the grades to become Governor of HMP Wealstun in 2008.

Cllr Harrington is married with 2 daughters, a step-daughter and 6 grandchildren. She met her husband Tom whilst living and working in East Anglia and they moved to Wetherby 8 years ago after she took up her post at Wealstun Prison. Her daughters still live locally with their families and she counts her hobbies as music, reading, flower arranging, foreign travel, walking and spending time with her family.

Taking early retirement, has allowed Cllr Harrington to become involved with a number of community organisations in Wetherby. She is now a trustee of WISE (Wetherby in Support of the Elderly), Chair of Trustees for the Wetherby and District Foodbank and an active member of Wetherby Methodist Church.

## Comment

*It seems being a town and city councillor is a full time job (35-40 hrs per wk). Cllr Harrington also takes on two Trusteeships in local organisations. That is a lot of responsibility and work. She responds more than any other councillor to local*

*issues on social media. We must credit her for these efforts for the community.*

*But it is disappointing to see no response to many of the simple questions above. Particularly the issue of party politics which, it is claimed by one councillor, plays no part in Wetherby Council matters (but clearly does for*



# MYSTERIES OF THE WORLD

How did a local letter get delivered to the wrong address in Wetherby instead of Collingham?



Miss S Pollard ← **correct**  
 1 Chapel Hill ← Number correct, road name 3 letters different  
 Heswall ← **correct**  
 BOURNEMOUTH ← **correct**  
 BH1 1AA ← **correct**

*Our reader hand-delivered the Christmas card to the address in Collingham*

## A Book Club with the Author!

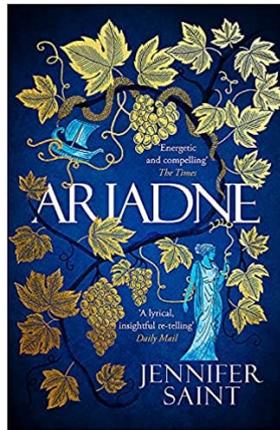
Reading Roots Bookshop runs a monthly book club (in-person & online) where the author joins the conversation too!

Next meeting: Thurs 17<sup>th</sup> February 2022, 7pm

### Ariadne by Jennifer Saint

*A mesmerising retelling of the ancient Greek myth of Theseus and the Minotaur*

Simply buy the book from the bookshop (with a 15% discount) and get added to the list!



Market Place, Wetherby  
 01937 918140 [www.readingroots.co.uk](http://www.readingroots.co.uk)

## Wetherby on Telly



This 16.30 BBC daytime show visited Wetherby and many other towns in the area on their search for bargains. Roo Irvine, pictured, bought a ring from shop owner David which bombed in the auction. Her colleague fared much better with big profits; £10 item sold for £100 and £15 item for £130!

# What's On

The Engine Shed on York Road do not want us to promote their events.

To see what's on there, visit [www.engineshedwetherby.co.uk](http://www.engineshedwetherby.co.uk)



[www.wetherbyfilmtheatre.com](http://www.wetherbyfilmtheatre.com)

Main Features are:



### THE ELECTRICAL LIFE OF LOUIS WAIN

Rating: 12A Duration: 1 hr 50mins

The extraordinary true story of eccentric British artist Louis Wain, portrayed by Academy Award® Nominee and BAFTA-winning Benedict Cumberbatch (Doctor Strange, Patrick Melrose, The Imitation Game), whose playful, sometimes even psychedelic pictures helped to transform the public's perception of cats forever. Moving from the late 1800s through to the 1930s, we follow the incredible adventures of this inspiring, unsung hero, as he seeks to unlock the "electrical" mysteries of the world and, in so doing, to better understand his own life and the profound love he shared with his wife Emily Richardson (Emmy® Winner and BAFTA Nominee Claire Foy - The Crown, First Man).



### WEST SIDE STORY

Rating: 12A Duration: 2 hrs 36mins



### ROH: TOSCA ENCORE 2022

Rating: PG Duration: 1 hr 40mins

## Speakers at Wetherby Men's Forum in 2022

All on Wednesdays:

- 2 Feb Duncan Verity - Fun and Laughter
- 9 Feb Brian Hull - Parlington Hall
- 16 Feb Gillian Waters - English Civil War in Yorkshire
- 23 Feb John Clithero - Made In York: John Barry and Dame Judi Dench



For more details contact Mike Earle on 07526 007508

- 2 Mar Neil Hanson - Inn and Out at the Top
- 9 Mar Terry Burns - Arnhem Battlefield
- 16 Mar Tricia Stewart - Original Calendar Girl
- 23 Mar Geoff Queen - Wild West Wanderings
- 6 Apr AGM
- 15 Apr Alec Shelbrooke MP



After losing to West Ham in the FA cup the previous week, Leeds United had an exciting 3-2 victory in London on 16 Jan, despite a weakened team. Jack Harrison scored a hat-trick in an impressive performance live on Sky TV that took Leeds 9 points above the relegation zone. Sadly not live on TV is their next match at Newcastle, a team that is now very wealthy but is second from bottom. It should be a terrific match.



Near Elland Road

Image P Kirby

Newcastle v Utd on Sat 22 Jan at 15.00  
No Prem League matches w/end 29 Jan



After suffering two 4 - 0 defeats in the past 2 weeks, mid-table Harrogate Town FC hope to bounce back with good performances in the League and in the EFL Trophy Quarter Final. Busy 2 weeks ahead:

Town v Oldham on Sat 22 Jan at 15.00  
Sutton Utd v Town on Tues 25 Jan at 19.45  
EFL Trophy  
Stevenage v Town on Sat 29 Jan at 15.00  
Town v Mansfield on Tues 1 Feb at 19.45



Mid-table York City are on a good run of form, having won their last 3 matches 1 - 0.  
Kidderminster v City on Sat 22 Jan at 15.00  
City v Bradford Park Ave on Tues 25 Jan at 19.45  
City v Gateshead on Sat 29 Jan at 15.00

**Wetherby Races** Thursday 27 Jan 7 races  
First Race 13.10 Last Race 16.17  
£6.50 adv - General Admission, 1 adult to Course Enclosure (£8 on day)  
£18 adv - One vehicle containing up to 4 adults to Course Enclosure (£23 on day)



www.wetherbyracing.co.uk

Always Check for Cancellations & Changes

## Frustration for Walkers



**Not the most important issue** in the world but it still matters when walkers are prevented from enjoying some pleasant exercise along the old railway line.

**This flooding of the underpass** by Freemans Way under the A1 is a frequent occurrence. Large-scale works have taken place to resolve the problem - to no avail.

**This was first brought to people's attention** on the Wetherby Grumbler Facebook group on 10 Jan. A councillor responded but 10 days later it is in exactly the same state.

**Wetherby Town Council** have made no effort to make it passable (placing more planks of wood or large stones) before Leeds City Council get round to fixing this drainage problem.



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

## Useful Info

- W'by Town Council:** 583584 www.wetherby.co.uk  
admin@wetherby.co.uk  
Facebook @wetherbycouncil Twitter wetherbytc
- Leeds City Council:** 0113 222 4444 www.leeds.gov.uk  
Facebook @LeedsCouncil Twitter @LeedsCC\_Help
- W'by Library :** 583144 libraryenquiries@leeds.gov.uk
- W'by Tourist Info:** inside library 582151
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