

BREAKING NEWS

The Communications Ctte has disappeared. Chair is Cllr Connor Mulhall

The last time it appeared was ONE YEAR AGO in July 2025. The minutes said:

12. Date of the next Communications Committee meeting.

The date of the next meeting of the Communications Committee was confirmed as taking place on *Monday 8th September 2025 at 7:00pm.*

But NO TRACE OF THAT MEETING anywhere!



Minutes of May 2026 General Meeting - Communications Ctte not there.

Disappeared - no explanation

e) Chairmanship of Committees

The Chairs of Committees are as shown below:

- Appeals Committee – Councillor Moss (Chair)
- Budgets & Governance Committee – Councillor Newcombe (Chair)
- Community Infrastructure Levy Committee – Councillor O'Byrne (Chair)
- Co-option Advisory Committee – Councillor Mulhall (Chair)
- Finance & General Purposes Committee – Councillor Mulhall (Chair)
- Markets Committee – Councillor Bradley (Chair)
- Planning Committee – Councillor Carr (Chair)
- Property Committee – Councillor Newcombe (Chair)
- Staffing Committee – Councillor Harrington (Chair)
- Town Hall Management Committee – Councillor Moss (Chair)
- Welcome to Wetherby – Councillor Buckle (Chair)

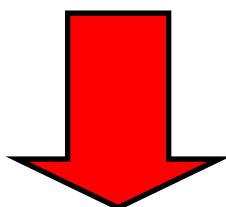


What is going on?

The WFP Team inform you of the facts. We have other interests and do not have the time to report on all this AND make official complaints about incompetence, inaction and unaccountability on your behalf. It's up to you.

Please take action YOURSELF

Issue 93





Your
Not-for-Profit
Community
Newsletter
with
REAL News

WETHERBY
ISSUE 93 - July 26

Free Press
Est 2021 Facts & Integrity

Hot Weather & Road Chaos



Perhaps nothing to do with the hot temps, but two accidents within days of each other. The first involved the X98 on an evening journey towards Wetherby, approaching the Wellington pub roundabout. One other vehicle was involved.



It's hard to fathom out how this car ended up on its roof in a 30mph zone. It's on North Street between the two petrol stations.



Scan the QR Code for the best and latest images of traffic and police incidents, courtesy of Yappapp

Crack in Town Hall Wall to cost us £600 or £6000?

If we had a Facilities Manager, like we used to, we would be in a better position to know. One contractor's quote says it's not serious, one says it is. See page 6



Town Council Needs Help From Free Press

with organising a general family day / show / gala / festival, despite

- having 15 Councillors
- a paid 'Events Officer'
- experienced organisations like the Lions & W'by Business Association

who should all be capable of doing it.



Cllr Matt Nicholson

We politely declined Cllr Matt Nicholson's offer, particularly when this Town Council have ignored our sensible suggestions and treated the Editor and all our readers with contempt for 4.5 years. There is no evidence they have suddenly changed their attitude towards us - no apologies, no acknowledgement of past poor behaviour or low standards. As we said to Cllr Nicholson, we could not risk wasting our time on a possibly fruitless exercise with people we find it hard to trust. The Labour Councillor's request for help came when we suggested a fairly obvious event they could organise - a **RIVER FESTIVAL**.



Could Never Happen Here



The Wharfe is our best asset and there is plenty of land on the Ings to accommodate an event. Duck races are surely possible. Well-known filmmaker Mark Barrow, the *Clean Rivers Group* and the *Green Group* (& *Yorkshire Water!*) could surely be involved organising educational and fun activities? It would be unique in Yorkshire and could even possibly get on the local TV news, like Otley, Ripon and Knaresborough often do.

This is all pie in the sky, we know. This Council could not organise a party in a brewery in our opinion. And the community spirit to make it happen is simply not there. Marching brass bands is the town's limit.

Sorry folks, but there won't be a general show, gala or festival for many years to come. They won't prove us wrong, let alone give reasons / excuses why it can't happen. £100 to charity if they do.

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



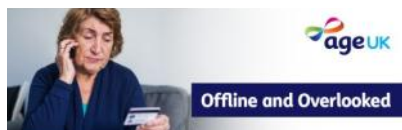
We cater for the 1000s of **DIGITALLY EXCLUDED** with a **Full Copy at Library, Phoenix Café**

& promo copies at *Morrisons, Pubs, Cafés, Dentists, Care Homes, Churches, Takeaways etc*

Plse send your News, Views & Events to: WetherbyFreePress@PM.me

Don't Miss Out - Join our Large Mailing List by emailing: WetherbyFreePress@PM.me

We Don't Forget the many 1000s of people who are offline - those who do not have (or want) internet access or a smartphone.



We ask all organisations to include a phone no. and put information on PAPER eg leaflets, posters



* Look, autocorrect, I am getting a bit tired of your shirt.

* I asked my gran how she's enjoying her new stairlift. She said it's driving her up the wall.

* Tablets were replaced by scrolls, scrolls were replaced by books. Now we scroll through books on tablets.

* I find jigsaw puzzles to be very pieceful activities.

* I'm going on that TV series

about hoarders. No spoilers from me - I don't want to give anything away.

* My uncle used to circumcise elephants. The pay was terrible, but the tips were massive.

More funnies on back page



Wetherby News Ignores Town's Main Annual Event!

Not a mention or photo of the Drovers Day event that the Lions & Councillors were so proud of recently. Just how bad does our local 'newspaper' have to get before anyone in authority has the courage to criticise it?

You can hardly believe that the next 2 printed editions after the event dedicated many pages to Ripon's Tractor Fest and Knaresborough's Bed Race. Let that sink in. In the **Wetherby News**.

This must be the worst local paper in the country. It's £2.30 for usually one or two charity press releases related to our area.

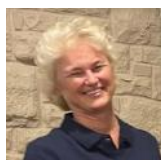
We asked **Wetherby Lions** president, Ruth Holt, pictured, to comment on this, see page 9.

Ripon's Tractor Fest - Nothing about Drovers Day!



But, as our critics often remind us, this so-called newspaper doesn't highlight the low standards of them or their friends. So, that's alright then (as *Private Eye* would say).

Dear me, **Wetherby Deserves Better**, doesn't it?



Wetherby Town Council Attendance at 78% - Mayor Mulhall One of Worst Attenders

Attendance at meetings is an indicator of just how serious our Councillors take their role. And one of the few ways we can tell how much effort they put into it. None of them report on how many phone calls, emails, other meetings, resident interactions they have or issues they take up. It would be useful if they did, just to give us an idea, as we suspect some do a lot less than others.

We checked the 25/26 figures as a previous Town Clerk got a figure wrong by averaging percentages (which nobody noticed except us) and are pleased to say we have 100% confidence in the calculations of the current Town Clerk, Dianne Rickaby.

Large Difference b/w Best & Worst



Cllrs Bradley & Lavocah have improved since this in Issue 83

Indicator of a Councillor's dedication to the role of spending £675,000 of our money.

It is good to see that the worst attenders last time, Cllrs Bradley & Lavocah, have improved from very low figures, to now 78% & 81% resp. And heartening that the difference between the best and worst is a lot less than last year. Our monitoring them perhaps makes a difference.



Alex Riddell
73%



Connor Mulhall
71%

Excluding the Councillors who have informed us of illnesses and those who have not served a full year, it is surprising that our Mayor, Conservative Cllr Mulhall comes out at the bottom of the pile. He missed 1 in every 3.5 meetings (12 / 42). We think he should focus more on this democratic part of the job than enjoying all the

benefits of being Mayor, which he tells us about on social media. Labour's Alex Riddell was second bottom with 73% attendance.

Dean Buckle had the best full year attendance record of 97% (which shows that the Chair's presence has nothing to do with the effectiveness of a committee, in his case *Welcome to Wetherby*).



Galan Moss 94%

Cllr Moss was second best with a 94%



attendance record. His consistency is to be applauded and should encourage others to do the same.

WTC should compare general attendance with other Town Councils, like Otley.



Dean Buckle 97%

Next Wetherby Town Council Mtg

Tues 14 July at 7pm

www.wetherbytowncouncil.gov.uk

01937 583584 admin@wetherby.co.uk



As well as the *Wetherby Free Press* page on **facebook** there's the *Wetherby Deserves Better* page too.



* Both are independently run from the newsletter

TADCASTER ALBION FOOTBALL CLUB

Pre-Season Friendlies

	VS SOUTH LEEDS	THURS 2ND JULY 1930 YOUNG GUNS ARENA
	VS SCARBOROUGH ATHLETIC	SAT 4TH JULY 1300 YOUNG GUNS ARENA
	VS HARROGATE RAILWAY	TUES 7TH JULY 1930 YOUNG GUNS ARENA
	VS UFCA	THURS 9TH JULY 1930 YOUNG GUNS ARENA
	VS GUISELEY AFC	TUES 14TH JULY 1930 YOUNG GUNS ARENA
	VS MARSKE UNITED	SAT 18TH JULY 1500 YOUNG GUNS ARENA
	VS BRIDLINGTON TOWN	TUES 21ST JULY 1930 YOUNG GUNS ARENA

PLEASE KEEP AN EYE ON SOCIAL MEDIA FOR CHANGES & UPDATES

W C S

WETHERBY CIVIC SOCIETY

Proudly Serving Our Town

Bashing the Balsam

As part of meeting their objective of “promoting Civic Pride” and the “wellbeing of our town”, Wetherby Civic Society are holding their annual “Balsam Bashing” work on

Wed 29 July at 7pm

meeting beside the river at the Leisure Centre car park.

Himalayan Balsam is an invasive non native annual (with pretty flowers!) which overwhelms the growth of native wild plants and spreads by seed over a wide area. It is particularly common near streams and rivers as the seeds can be carried in water. If widely spread over river banks, it overwhelms native perennials so that in winter the banks can be bare and so liable to flood damage. However, the plant is easily pulled up, which stops its seeds spreading.

Over the last five years, Wetherby Civic Society has undertaken significant Balsam removal on the Ings and has had an impact on this pest. This means that annual pulling is necessary to eradicate this pest. Some of the Balsam is intermingled with stinging nettles so arms and legs should be covered and perhaps bring gloves. Obviously wear suitable footwear to suit the weather conditions. No tools are needed as the Balsam will all be handpulled. Please be aware of the dangers of being near the river and we do not pull Balsam too close to the water.

Everyone is invited to come and help control this pest and to ensure the riverbank has native wild flowers flourishing. The more Balsam pulled; the more wild flowers can grow back.

TOCKWITH SHOW!

~2026~

SCHEDULE

SUNDAY 2ND AUGUST 2026

TOCKWITH & DISTRICT AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY

Admission: Adults £16 Children 13-16 years £5 12 and Under Free

Free Vehicle Parking. Postcode: YO26 7QH

www.tockwithshow.org.uk

At the show Cllr Arnold Warneken of Tockwith is taking part in **Brave the Shave** to raise money for Macmillan Cancer Support.

Please support him at:

www.bravetheshave.macmillan.org.uk/shavers/
and search for Arnold Warneken



Wetherby Foodbank

July 2026

Foodbank Wish List

- Tinned cold meats – corned beef, ham etc
- Meat & fish pastes
- Instant mashed potato
- Tinned chilli con carne
- Tinned custard
- Ketchup & mayo
- Tinned peas/ carrots/sweetcorn
- Instant coffee – small jars please
- Instant hot chocolate
- Jams & spreads
- Tinned fruit
- Shampoo
- Deodorants (roll-on)
- Washing-up liquid
- Loo roll
- Or... make a donation via our website

Thank
you!

The Free Press thanks all the many volunteers in Wetherby & Boston Spa for their fantastic work

"Good News" re Bus Blocking on Castle Gate

A concerned resident tells us:

“ There are a number of white notices around Wetherby concerning proposed traffic measures.

Whilst most look like they are trying to deal with the rise in inconvenient parking around the town following the introduction of parking charges, one addresses the issue of parking on Castle Gate. The long standing problem with parking blocking buses etc leaving the Bus Station.

I have been in touch with Leeds City Council Traffic Engineering, Highways & Transportation and they have confirmed that they intend to install "No Loading" restrictions which will eliminate the right to park even with a Blue Badge.

The e-mail states:-

".....as such the advertised proposal includes the introduction of a "No Loading at Any Time" restriction on Castle Gate, which would address the issue you have highlighted.

The purpose of a loading restriction is to prevent loading and unloading activities from taking place on the existing double yellow lines, in addition to prohibiting any parking. As a result, the restrictions will apply to all vehicles, including those displaying a valid Blue Badge.

The intention is to ensure that Castle Gate remains clear of parked vehicles, allowing buses and other larger vehicles to travel along the road safely and without obstruction."

Good news, yes! ”

It is good news, indeed. We thank the resident for keeping us informed and for taking an interest in this important issue. It has taken over 4.5 years for something to be properly done about this problem. Our Town Councillors have shown no interest in highlighting the inconvenience it has caused, let alone resolving it. Cllr Lamb, member of WYCA board, has not informed us of his recent actions or progress on the issue. It is way down his list of priorities, if indeed it is on it. We know top of his list is helping motorists not pay for parking.



4.5 years so far and nothing done. Finally, definite action?



your view

We publish ALL letters sent. Unless they are clearly defamatory. We will even print those who spout nonsense or offensive views (against us or any of our many supporters) for political or personal reasons. We trust people to judge such letters themselves. Yet strangely our harshest critics have yet to send us an email or meet us face to face.

“ Dear Sir,

I have recently discovered your wonderful local paper (through Nextdoor) and have been enjoying reading what is happening locally without having to scroll through lots of adverts, click on links or sign up to this and that. Which is a blessing to me as I am no spring chicken!

I have been prompted to write after your recent criticism on the Conservative councillor who sent thank you notes to everyone after the council elections. I thought this was very nice. I moved to Wetherby less than a year ago and the contact information on the back was very useful.

I have been reading the back issues and learning about the town. When the Green party got elected in Boston Spa (not my area so maybe I am missing something) I am told that this lady also sent thank you notes, even though there were people that did not vote for her too. Yet I cannot find any criticism of her for doing the same thing in your back issues? I believe it was admirable of both ladies to be so polite. It is reassuring that despite the political differences of these parties both ladies have demonstrated respect towards the electorate.

I clearly do not know the political history of my new home, but I think that in another issue instead of congratulating the Conservative councillor for being re-elected you were rather negative about her win. I met her and she seemed very nice and had lots of information for me about groups I can be part of as a retiree. I think that as a community newspaper but would be a little bit nicer for the reader to keep up the positivity of all parties and remain neutral. Everyone has different values and beliefs and if you endorse one belief you risk alienating another; and that is not good for business.

I will remain a faithful new reader and on a positive note I do enjoy the light hearted jokes you include. It reminds me of the glory days when newspapers were the source of information, but the first thing I used to do was rush to the cartoons before reading them.

Yours faithfully

Roy Anderson

(Wetherby) ”

We thank Roy for his letter and pleased he enjoys reading the WFP.

To respond to the point about Norma's leaflet we only took it up because she gave a "big THANK YOU to everyone who lives in the Wetherby Ward", see right. We wondered why would she thank everyone including children, the adults who didn't vote and those who voted but not for her. We explained to Roy that if Norma had simply said 'thank you for re-electing me', there was no story. We added "But her statement is ridiculously over the top and quite bizarre." We asked Cllr Penny Stables if she had said a similar thing and she confirmed she did not. Her leaflet after her victory said "we want to say a huge thank you to everyone who voted Green". Perfectly normal. Cllr Harrington has not written to us to explain her reasoning.

To add some context, we congratulated Cllr Lamb on his City Council election victory in Issue 62 ("Congratulations to Conservative Cllr Alan Lamb " we said) but since then he has shown us and our readers great disrespect in ignoring reasonable questions. He has also not provided any evidence that the Welcome to Wetherby Ctte is doing an 'excellent job' under Chairman Cllr Dean Buckle, despite overwhelming evidence to the contrary (Issues 85, 86 & 87) . The Editor met Cllr Harrington and agree she seems very nice but it is actions and the written word that matter to us. She has also refused to answer reasonable questions in her role of overseeing £300K+ expenditure on Town Hall staff, see page 7. We have been very patient and 'nice' but found that not calling a spade a spade gets you nowhere in this town. It makes no difference so we will make our point in the most effective way we can, and continue to inform tax-payers what is going on.

Cllr Harrington's leaflet following her re-election. OTT?

I wanted to drop you this note to say a big THANK YOU to everyone who lives in the Wetherby Ward. I'm so grateful for the support we received at the recent election. And whether you voted for me or



We Give Away 2 Tickets to Real Community Heroes

Our Promotion on Social Media



Like real Yorkshire Country Folk, we **CALL A SPADE A SPADE**

Two Free Tickets for
14th - 17th July 2026

GREAT YORKSHIRE SHOW



Just Tell us Why You or Somebody Else Deserves Them before midday Friday

Great Yorkshire Show 2026

All Days except Friday are Sold Out
(at time of publication)



The countdown is on for the 167th Great Yorkshire Show which is already a near sell-out!

Significant investment has been made in the car parks at the showground and organisers are encouraging visitors to use public transport where possible.

The Show funds free double decker shuttle buses which are run by the Harrogate Bus Company. These run every 10 minutes from Harrogate Bus Station to the Showground's White Gate every day of the Show from 7:20am.

Visitors can travel to Harrogate Bus Station on any of our regular bus services from Leeds, Ripon and Wetherby, with single fares capped at just £3, before transferring to the free shuttle bus to the showground.

The Great Yorkshire Show sees 8,500 animals exhibited in pursuit of prize rosettes as the best of British agriculture is showcased alongside first-class showjumping, entertainment and shopping. All aspects of farming, food and the countryside are celebrated across 21 sections, from a packed programme in the Food Hall, cookery theatres and Cheese and Dairy Show, to forestry, farriery, the Garden Show and hives and honey.

The Ariat GYS Stage features fashion shows, chat shows and meet and greets with celebrity guests, the future of farming is the focus of a dedicated Agri-Innovation Village and families can enjoy free activities in the Discovery Zone.

Tickets prices for the 2026 Great Yorkshire Show are frozen at the same rate as last year, priced Adults £36.50, Children £13 and Families £89. Go to www.greatyorkshireshow.co.uk/ticket-information

Businesses and events held at the Great Yorkshire Showground in 2019 contributed £73.7 million to the economy.

Tory Town Council Need a 'Pledge' on How to Behave!



Wetherby Town Council
Executive Summary
June 2026

Property

- Show garden flower beds rested and prepped
- Court Room under repair - new lintel to be installed.
- New bark chippings ordered for Scaur Bank play area

Town Hall/Markets

- Markets - recognised by Love your Market with our social media trader profile posts
- Successful Dementia Event held in the Town Hall.

Governance

- New Market Policy approved.
- Civility and Respect Pledge signed.
- Councillor Newcombe elected as Deputy Mayor for second year.
- Councillor Mulhall elected as Mayor for second year.
- AGAR to the 31st March received by Council
- New councillor co-opted - Councillor Daniel Roberts.

For more information visit Wetherbytowncouncil.gov.uk

Cost efficiencies/Revenue Generation

- Movement of CIL funds into high interest accounts at CCLA - more to be allocated to community groups/donations/grants

Forthcoming Meetings

- Budgets & Governance - 14th July
- Full Council - 14th July
- Planning Committee - 21st July
- Welcome to Wetherby - 21st July

For venues, agendas and minutes, please visit our website

Events

- Working with LCC youth service on an event in August to be held on Mason Field.
- Grant of £500 to Wetherby Privas Twinning Association.
- Hosted a Dementia Bus and Liver Bus on the Market.

Honestly, you could not make it up. Wetherby Town Council spends its time on producing a document telling people how they should behave - a 'Civility and Respect Pledge'. You have to laugh when at the same time it has a policy of ignoring legitimate questions from a resident of 30+ years and the only community newsletter the town has.

This 'Executive Summary' shows how little this Town Council actually does for the £750K of our money it spends (half of it on staff). It cannot even produce a newsletter despite having the luxury of a 'Communications Officer'.

We spent 5 minutes looking for this Exec. Summary on the Town Council website. Nothing - it is not on. Is it even printed for those offline?

They expect the general public to know what AGAR, CIL, CCLA stands for! Parish councils can produce village newsletters at virtually no cost and our Town Council produces this after many years of nothing.

NO details of our new Councillor Daniel Roberts are included, not even a picture. Nothing on website either (still an image of deceased Kazia Knight on website though).



Such low standards, it is truly astounding. You have to laugh! Or you'll cry. Mayor Cllr Connor Mulhall & Town Clerk must take some responsibility for this.



BREAKING NEWS

The Communications Ctte have disappeared. We will investigate

Town Council Continue to Ignore Our Legitimate Questions

Town Hall Management Cttee - Mar '26. Chair Cllr Moss.

Mtg lasts 1hr 15 mins. 3 out of 7 Cllrs were absent.

Crack in Wall to Cost £600 or £6000? They got 2 quotes, one saying it's structural and very serious, one not. *A qualified Facilities Manager would know if it was or not. WTC had one but they couldn't keep him - he could not work with them. This building already costs us 10s of £1000s every year but they never discuss selling it or moving out.*



Galan Moss
Conservative



Heritage Open Day would be 'a considerable cost'. The Council will only let Wetherby Civic Society conduct tours if they pay for all costs. *Quite amazing. One of the town's most attractive buildings and they are not in the least bit willing to educate people about it. Welcome to Wetherby!*

Town Council refuse to fund an Open Day at the Town Hall. Useless Tourist Info sign still up proving just how much they care about visitors.

Town Hall Management Cttee - Apr '26. Chair Cllr Moss.

Mtg lasted 42 mins. 2 out of 7 Cllrs were absent.

Another Crack in Court Room Wall To be investigated. *See above, more £1000s needing to be spent?*

Quote for Quinquennial Review is £2200 + VAT. *No explanation for residents as to what a 'quinquennial review' is - poor minuting.*

TOWN COUNCIL FULL MEETING Apr '26. **Chair Cllr Mulhall**

Cllrs Riddell, Nicholson & Newcombe were absent. 7 members of public attended. Mtg lasted 1hr 30 mins.

Conservative Leeds City Cllrs Lamb & Harrington reported mostly on issues affecting motorists, nothing about our bus services.

The Lions were given the full £1000 they requested for the Drivers Day event. *But as you see above, nothing at all for the Civic Society towards educating residents and visitors about the Town Hall!*

Police Matters - Low Figures & Nobody Arrested Yet for Boots Break -In. *Far more residents are affected by the state of our bus services than are affected by crime. Yet this Conservative council has a standing agenda item about crime but not public transport (unlike Otley Town Council). Why is this? (because none of our Cllrs travel by bus, obviously).*

Welcome to Wetherby Apr '26 Chair Cllr Buckle
Cllr Nicholson was absent.

No reps from any Wetherby organisation were present. *When will this Council wake up and realise nobody wants to work with this committee. Like Starmer, it's time for change!*

It lasted 35 minutes. *Just 35 minutes! No wonder nothing much happens in this town when there is such little interest in discussing ideas (we give them plenty of suggestions in every issue).*



Connor Mulhall
Conservative



Dean Buckle
Conservative

Planning Cttee - Apr '26. Chair Cllr Carr (Payne). This meeting lasted 30 mins, like the previous one (the one before that only 17 mins). There were 18 applications to consider, including tree work.

Planning Cttee - June '26. Chair Cllr Carr (Payne). This meeting lasted 30 mins, like the previous two (the one before that only 17 mins).

Half the 6 Cllr members were absent. One resident attended.

There were 16 applications to consider, including tree work. *Clearly very little discussion goes in this committee.*

TOWN COUNCIL FULL MEETING May '26. Chair Cllr Mulhall

Cllrs O'Byrne, Newcombe, and Buckle were absent. 4 members of public attended. Mtg lasted 2 hours.

No 2025/26 Training Details Provided. *Looks like it's none of our business whether our Councillors have done any training to do their jobs. Why the secrecy? No or little training would explain the low standards we see.*

No Comments on Attendance Figures or Apologies from those with the worst record. See page 2.

No reason for Delay of Councillor Co-option, following the death of Cllr Knight. Residents in East Ward will not be fully represented until one is co-opted. *Poor.*

Mayor Proposes Civic Service Ceremony for HIMSELF in 2027. It was seconded by his friend Cllr Harrington.

Can you believe that? The cheek of it! We've noticed a certain party loves to pat themselves on their back and promote themselves as often as possible. Amusing and rather pathetic at the same time.



This is the Civic Service this year. We asked the Churches why they seemed to be solely promoting a politician (and just before an election). They claimed the service was for all volunteers.

Nowhere does the poster mention volunteers.

They also had our Tory MP as a speaker just before an election, lecturing on 'the Common Good' (can you believe?). They did not respond to our point about mixing religion and politics so we

asked the Bishop of Ripon, who has not responded. The Archbishop of York says it's nothing to do with him, so we'll ask the top woman at Canterbury what she thinks.

The Methodists & Church of England here have stayed silent about



serious issues of non-accountability and poor behaviour in this town, especially by our Town Cllrs. It seems obvious why from the evidence here.

Would Jesus have said nothing?

Cont'd on next page



The End of Xmas Carol Concert?

Carol Concert & Lights Switch On - Will it Happen This Xmas? Wetherby Business Association (WBA) do not want to do it any more. No reason has been given. Reading the minutes, it looks like the Town Council don't want to do it either. *Great community spirit?*
Live Webcam for Wetherby - would that attract tourists? It is doubtful for the cost. *It would have to be by the river with the bridge & weir in sight. Anywhere else would be rather boring.*

Proof that Welcome to Wetherby Ctte is different to others. "The Council received amended terms of reference for the Council's committees, except terms of reference for Welcome to Wetherby."

ALL Chairs of Committees continue to be Conservative. No power for the Labour or so-called 'Independent' Councillors.

No Change in Most Powerful Committee. Cllr Harrington continues to be in charge of staffing which costs Council taxpayers nearly half the £750K budget. *She won't let go of the most powerful position on the Council, despite being very busy with her Leeds City Councillor work.*

Ear-marked Reserves at over £1 Million! £500 given to Privas Twinning Assoc'n (PTA) to 'support accommodation and hosting of delegates' from France. Four Cllrs are members of the PTA.

£59K given to Town Hall. *This Council gives an awful lot of our cash to the Town Hall.*

Property Ctte - May '26. Chair Cllr Newcombe. Mtg lasted 1hr 20 mins.

Quotation of £33K for Repointing Cemetery Workshop. No budget identified.

"6.3 Friends Of Group It was RESOLVED to defer this item to the following meeting". *Poor minuting - What is 'Friends Of Group'? "Millenium Field". Wrong spelling. They still don't use spell-checking software!.*



The article below was in Issue 92 - No response from either person yet. The tax-paying public deserve answers. We will publish this until they provide them. Ignoring questions in the hope they go away is not a professional (or democratic) way to deal with serious issues.

Unanswered Questions So Far in 2026 - showing WTC is NOT Open & Accountable



Norma Harrington
Conservative



Dianne Rickaby
Town Clerk



Wetherby Town Council (WTC)'s Chair of Staffing Ctte, Cllr Norma Harrington (NH) and the Town Clerk, Dianne Rickaby have not responded to / commented on the following:

- 1 why we were not given any hint of the contents of a 'Confidential Report by Town Clerk' (Issue 87)
- 2 why 3 Council staff were present at a *Welcome to Wetherby* mtg and whether the Council is overstaffed (I87)
- 3 why NH expected an apology to the Mayor's girlfriend from us (I87)
- 4 why NH refused to back up Cllr Lamb's comment that Cllr Buckle does an 'excellent job' as Chair of *Welcome to Wetherby* (I87)
- 5 our claim that the Editor's meeting with NH has resulted in little progress (I87)
- 6 why the staff organisation chart lacks vital information (I88)
- 7 why staff costs have DOUBLED in 3 years and now cost us almost half the £725K budget (I89 Extra)
- 8 why staff costs are now hidden from us in their official documentation (I89 Extra & I90)
- 9 why they did not post anything about the vacancy left by the passing of Cllr Kazia Knight until the last minute (I89)
- 10 why the Council cannot keep staff - the Admin Officer lasted just 1 year. Recruitment is costly (I90)
- 11 why January's Staff meeting minutes were still NOT published 2.5 months after the meeting (I90 & 91)
- 12 the disgraceful slur written in the minutes against us regarding Kazia Knight (I90)
- 13 the obvious error in NH's election leaflet (I90)
- 14 why they added clauses to the complaints procedure so that they can dismiss reasonable complaints as 'vexatious' to avoid difficult questions (I90)
- 15 our view that 'staff remuneration is within guidelines' means they are paid the maximum (I90)
- 16 why they do not compare staff costs with other nearby town councils (I90)
- 17 the claim by a former Cllr that the Comms & Events Officer was employed as 'a knee-jerk reaction' to us, the *Wetherby Free Press* (I90)
- 18 why 2 Admin staff resigned at the same time and why the Council can't retain staff (I91)
- 19 Why there was no summary or anything at all about a 'comprehensive staffing report' in minutes (I91)



ACCOUNTABILITY

It is not only what we do,
but also what we do not do,
for which we are accountable.

(Moliere)



The minutes of all meetings are ultimately their responsibility. Many are not of a high standard as we have stated many times eg in Issue 87.

Cllr Harrington and the Town Clerk should respond immediately to the most important of the above issues that we have highlighted in bold. It is not too late.

Meanwhile, if you want to know the answers to any of these questions (and pass the responses to us), please write to them at

clerk@wetherby.gov.uk & norma.harrington@wetherby.gov.uk and copy us in please.

Too often Cllrs hide behind joint responsibility, so that no one person is responsible for anything.

The above proves beyond any shadow of a doubt that this Town Council is NOT 'Open & Accountable' to the Editor and our readers. It is a disgrace to democracy.



Where everyone is
responsible, no one is
really responsible.



Wonderful World of Nature at Goosemoor, nr Cowthorpe

Tired of the World Cup? Get yourself out to an oasis of calm. You should see plenty of wildlife at *Goosemoor* nature reserve down War Field Lane in Cowthorpe. It has 2 *Facebook* groups - Nature Reserve and Nature Reserve Group. The latter has more wonderful images like these.

It is a peaceful place to sit and watch some amazing wildlife. Not just a fantastic variety of birds but also bats, bugs, newts, moths, butterflies and small mammals.



**Great
Spotted
Woodpecker
fracas**

Who knows what you may see, squabbling woodpeckers perhaps.

Or a stunning bird of prey like the sparrowhawk.

If you would like to help out at the reserve, they always welcome new volunteers. Details on the internet or contact us if you aren't online.

Thanks to Andrew Selwood for both images

Sparrowhawk



Sandringham Park - Special? Worthy of Awards & Good Value for £250K+?

In many of our early issues of the *Free Press*, we promoted **Sandringham Park, its Friends and the awards it won.** We had no reason to think that anything was untoward.

Since over £250K of our money has been spent on it, we have been keeping a closer eye on it. Particularly when politics comes into it and the Friend's leading light became a Town Councillor.

As a frequent walker through the Park, the Editor began to notice a few things. Firstly, he wondered why it won awards as there seemed nothing special about it at all; No proper signs educating children (and adults) about flowers or wildlife. No marked out sports pitch. No benches to sit down and rest outside the play area. Not a single bird box. Nothing special about it at all,



Small Sand'ham Park Bug Hotel compared to Boston Spa's 4-5 times larger with info, below



compared to imaginative, colourful parks you find in parts of the UK & Europe. Many abroad have table tennis tables.

In Issue 86 we reported on the unsafe exercise equipment, which was not replaced. No clear explanation why and not publicised by the Town Council, of course (good news only from our 'Comms Officer').

We reported on the uncared-for sign of the Friends. Couldn't any of the Friends' volunteers re-paint it? No, they simply got rid of it. This seems to be their / the Council's solution to matters.

In one recent issue we said that there was not a bug hotel in the Park. A Town Councillor corrected us and said there was one. It is no wonder the Editor did not notice it, see image. You would have to be looking for it to notice it. It is so small and there's no sign saying what it is. Why would any child take an interest in that? Compare it to Boston Spa's.

When the £250K+ play area was finally finished (and opened by a child who was a relative of Town Council staff / Councillor we heard), one item of equipment that made a noise was vandalised. It shouldn't have been installed - a cock-up.

Like many other facilities in this town, it is far from perfect. It doesn't matter whether people are volunteers or not. The older generation were always taught if a job's worth doing, do it properly.

No response from the Town Council or the Friends of Sandringham Park to any of the issues we highlighted.

Wetherby Deserves Better!



Blocking noticeboard



Friends & Town Council let it get into this state. Then removed it without replacing it.



Bright & Creative Signs in a Park in South Yorkshire

Wetherby Lions Stays Silent on Use of AI & W'by News



In the last issue we pointed out that the *Wetherby News* did not even mention Drovers Day, let alone have any pictures of the joyful event.

We wondered what the organisers, the *Wetherby Lions*, felt about the coverage from the so-called professional press. We wrote to them:

“ Please could you comment on our article on page 7. Was your text a little exaggerated and written by AI? Could the poster attract a wider audience (6 photos of brass bands is excessive and unnecessary, isn't it)? Did you promote it on other local facebook groups like we did?

Will you do any research with or without our help?

Also, have you considered having a presence in

one of our many empty shops in town, like the Salvation Army does? (and the Lions in Otley, Bridlington)?

Have you thought of organising a 'Riverside Festival' (with a duck race) to attract all members of the community, collaborating with Wetherby Town Council?

Please could you send us 5 or 6 jpg photos of this year's Drover's Day event (each 400KB - 1MB in size) so that we can use them in our next issue. Were you aware that the truly pathetic 'Wetherby News' this week had full pages of photos of Knaresborough Bed Race & Ripon's Tractor Fest but NONE of Drovers Day, no mention at all of it? Plse could you comment on this.

Thanks very much. ”

no answers

We received no response from John Wardley or Ruth Holt, president of Wetherby Lions.



This is a familiar story. Like Wetherby Business Association, Wetherby Town Council & Cllrs Lamb & Harrington, the Wetherby Lions have no desire to be accountable to a resident of 30+ years or the readers of the Free Press (you). We are sure some of them do some great work for the community but refusing to answer reasonable questions shows what sort of people run this town. All of them ignore our sensible suggestions to improve Wetherby for residents and visitors.

We believe they all contribute to the culture of this town as being 'no change - things are fine as they are'. Wetherby is so far behind imaginative, creative, accountable, non-political towns like Otley. Look at the time and effort some of them waste trying to stop a now accepted part of normal life - paying for parking (while they do nothing to improve our buses).



Wetherby has plenty of empty shops the Lions could use. This one's in Bridlington.

Wetherby in Bloom - Not Just Doing the Wonderful Flowers

We recently received an email about the poor state of the riverside area by the river around the benches.

There was no space to include it but we are very pleased that it has now been dealt with. You would expect it to be the responsibility of the *Town Council* (Welcome to Wetherby?) or the *Weir Preservation Society* or perhaps the *Wetherby Bandstand*.

No, it was the one and only *Wetherby in Bloom* volunteers who got on with the job. We don't know how they find the time and energy in this heat. All the summer plants are in now and you will see them about town in the early evening watering the plants. Why not tell them what a great job they're doing next time you see them? (we know many do already).



Before



Before



After

Two Ex Leeds United Managers Fail at World Cup

Any excuse to publish the photo of the great Marcelo Bielsa with the Editor.

You could always see him around town and he was always willing to have selfies taken and meet the fans.



Sept 2021 - Bielsa in Costa with the Editor

But, as manager of Uruguay in the World Cup, Bielsa had a torrid time. His team drew 2 games (one against tiny nation Cape Verde) and lost the other, therefore not reaching the knock out stage. He said nobody was interested in what he thought and lost his temper at a press conference.



Jesse Marsch - strange character. Shirt & tie one match, jeans the next!

Jesse Marsch was never a fans' favourite at Elland Road. You could see why as manager of Canada, one of the host nations. He really is an irritating person on the touchline. Far too expressive - the opposite of cool, calm and controlled. Who wants such an excitable character as a manager? Thankfully, Canada were well beaten 3-0 by Morocco in the first knock-out round.



Rhinos 4 Points Ahead at Top of Super League

The Headingley side are two wins ahead of second place Warrington. They have won 11 out of their last 12 matches.

Rhinos are playing their best rugby for many moons.

Recently at the Magic Weekend at Everton's new ground in Liverpool, they overcame Bradford by 50 - 16. A record 77,000 attended the 6 matches at the waterfront stadium. It's good to see another West Yorkshire side near the top - Wakefield. Trinity are joint second after some very strong performances.



Magic Weekend was magic for Leeds



Ash Handley's celebration after a hat-trick raises more money for MND



Free Press
Est 2021 Facts & Integrity

News, Funny Stuff & Improving Accountability

Your Not-for-Profit Community Newsletter

www.pkmarketing1.com/wetherby-free-press

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 we get important facts wrong, we will apologise publicly and correct the error.

We don't do interviews, as we are not journalists. Professional journalists are very rare indeed now. Most are 'cut & paste from press releases' merchants. We have high standards and not afraid to say what we see.

We encourage everyone to write to us with their views, whatever they are. Our countrymen and women have died for our Freedom of Expression so do not 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 8 'Meet the Editor' events so far. None of our harshest online critics have turned up yet to have a mature face-to-face discussion.

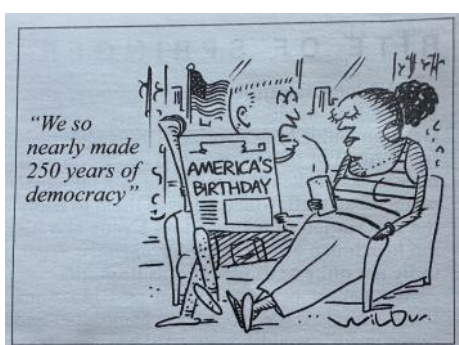


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Issue 81 of WFP had over 2000 online visits - Thanks for Reading