



Wetherby Civic Society

AUTUMN 2026 NEWSLETTER

Dear Member(s),

This hot summer has been a period of mixed fortunes for our endeavours to keep Wetherby a beautiful place to live.

VISITS AND TALKS

Unfortunately, numbers wishing to come on our June visit to Markenfield Hall were insufficient and we had to cancel.

Our visit in July, to East Keswick, was on a very hot day, but was very interesting. Who would have thought that such small village could have so many interesting and well researched buildings? If you are interested in Mouseman furniture, go and look at the pews in the church – wooden mice everywhere. Also significant were the memorials to those who lost their lives in the First World War. As well as the usual boards of names and a memorial, each of the trees in the avenue leading to the village has an individual plaque commemorating one who had lost his life.

We all enjoyed our Summer Talk, “Privas –Wetherby’s Twin French Town since 1992”: given by Cindy Bentley in August, 14 August. The talk was excellent; both presentation and social afterwards and the room was surprisingly cool on such a hot day.

Our final visit of the year is a guided tour of Temple Newsam on Wednesday, 23 September, at 11a.m. Our final event of the year is a talk on “RAF Boston Spa – A Brief Operational History” by Roger Taylor at St James Church Centre. **Please note that we are having to re-arrange the date of this meeting, which we will send to you separately.**

BALSAM BASHING

This year members and non-members attacked the Balsam on the Ings just down from the Sports Centre. Despite the hot weather, turnout was good and after a couple of hours we had cleared a significant area. Thank you to everyone who came. A further Bashing has been arranged for Wednesday, 26 August (subject to weather conditions), at 7p.m. meeting again by the footpath down from the Swimming Pool. We would welcome everyone, both non-members and non members to participate. Please spread the word.



Happy Bashers

SPOFFORTH HILL/HARROGATE ROAD PLANNING APPLICATION

The Stockeld Park application to build 210 houses in North Yorkshire but beside Wetherby was delayed from going to Planning Committee several times but eventually was set for 11 August. However, at the last hour, North Yorkshire planners recommended that it be remitted back to them because a swathe of further objections had been received containing significant points. Most notable of these was from Leeds City Council pointing out that none of the S106 monies was going to Leeds to provide extra school places in Wetherby despite this being the destination school for all the children on this proposed development.

We think that it is unlikely that these objections will be resolved quickly and that it is most likely to come before the Planning Committee on 13 October. We shall ensure that you are informed of the date once it has been announced.

OTHER PLANNING MATTERS

There has been no further movement on the planning applications on the North Yorkshire border for 100 houses on Sicklinghall Road and 593 on Hudson Way.

One success was that we contacted the LCC Enforcement Officer over the Hearing Centre Signage and the poor state of the Yorkshire window in the top rooms. The signage has now been removed and the windows have been repainted.

We are now trying to have the height of the enormous EV charging station sign in Morrisons' Car Park reduced as we believe that it is higher than was approved.

We have written to North Yorkshire Council to support the building of a few houses on the footprint of the former Italian POW adjacent to the former A1. This development will preserve some elements of the historical building and uses a brown field site.

FORMER WETHERBY RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL OFFICES

At long last, there is small, but hopeful, movement in our attempts to utilise the former Council Offices and to preserve their unique Art Deco decoration. Leeds City Council and Wetherby Town Council have agreed to commence discussions on a management and financial structure to utilise these building as a Community Centre. Along with the existing tenants of WISE and Tempo Fm, it is planned that the Library will be moved into the building.

HERITAGE OPEN DAY

For Heritage Open Day Festival this year, we had planned to have an Open Wetherby Day, which would have included access to all the main buildings in the town. Unfortunately, the rules of the scheme prevent this being included in their events, even though it was included in 2022, and so we have had to abandon this. However, we are planning to include it in the 2027 Wetherby Festival

BLUE PLAQUES

Two of our members, Angela Winterbottom and Kathryn Taylor, spent a day cleaning grime from the blue plaques. Our thanks to them for their efforts. They identified that the plaque for the Manor House needs the lettering repainting, which we shall do shortly.

We have approved the erection of a Blue Plaque to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the erection of the Masonic Hall on Deighton Road. We hope this will be unveiled in 2027 on the centenary of the laying of the foundation stone.

CIVIC VOICE

We are members of Civic Voice, which represents all the civic societies in England. This has gone through some difficult times, but is currently being reformed. Our representative in this process is our Vice Chairman, Malcolm Gardner, who is having to spend significant time identifying all the contacts at all the Civic societies. Work is progressing and it is very important that the organisation continues, in order that we may make our voice to preserve the best of England, heard in Westminster and to help other societies who are having similar planning problems to Wetherby. Our thanks to Malcolm for his efforts.

MEMBERSHIP

We are striving to maintain Wetherby as a pleasant place to visit and live. We would be delighted to hear from anyone who wishes to play a more active part in our work and anyone who wishes to join the Society. You can contact our treasurer by email at angela.winterbottom@hotmail.co.uk and can find out more at our website at www.wetherbycivicsociety.org.uk. Note that new members joining now will receive their 2027 membership included in this year's fee.

Please feel free to pass this newsletter on to others.