

WETHERBY TOWN COUNCIL

The Town Hall, Market Place, Wetherby, LS22 6NE

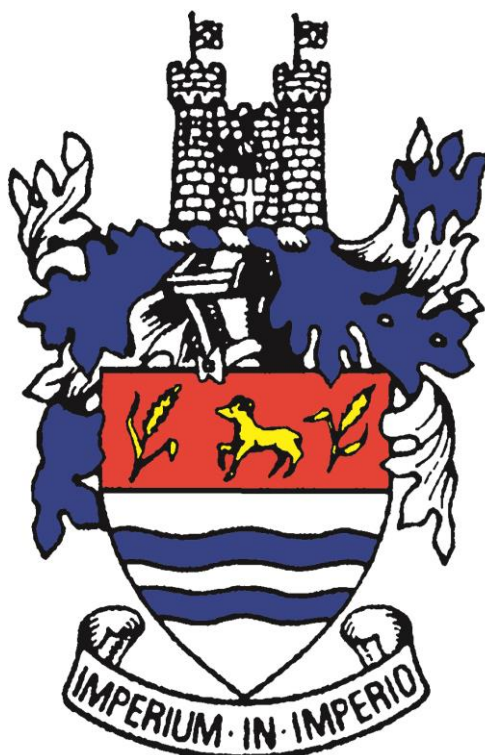
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ANNUAL TOWN MEETING

held in the Micklethwaite Room
Wetherby Town Hall
at 7.30 pm on Thursday 30th May 2013



This meeting is an opportunity for local residents to meet their councillors and to ask questions about any issues that might be affecting them and to get information about what is happening in the town

The Mayor will provide a review of the work of the Town Council during the last 12 months and provide information on plans for the next 12 months.

MEMBERS OF WETHERBY TOWN COUNCIL

A new councillor has recently been co-opted to the Town Council and they will join our councillors in standing for office in two years time.

Cllr Alan Lamb (Mayor)

Cllr Ron Aitken

Cllr Cindy Bentley

Cllr Julie Brady

Cllr Harry Chapman (Deputy Mayor)

Cllr Norma Harrington

Cllr Edna Hilditch BEM

Cllr Kazia Knight

Cllr Galan Moss

Cllr Derek Nicholson

Cllr Neil O'Byrne

Cllr John Procter

Cllr John Trower

Cllr John Wardley

Cllr Gerald Wilkinson



Market Town of Wetherby

It certainly does not seem nearly 12 months ago since all the planning came together for the Jubilee Celebrations.

This was a weekend to remember for the people of Wetherby with the climax being the Last Night of the Proms event. The success was very much due to team work and the many superb community groups who made a huge contribution. I know it has been said before, but many thanks to all those concerned. The Wetherby Jubilee Celebrations were certainly something we have a right to be proud about.

Then, before we could blink, we had the Olympic Torch make its way thorough town where the route was lined with about 2,000 cheering schoolchildren all waving flags. Whilst the torch was only in Wetherby for 20 minutes the memory for the 10,000 people who actually witnessed this truly historic event will last a lifetime.

THE YOUNG PEOPLE OF WETHERBY

This year the Mayor wanted to recognise the achievement and role that young people play in the town. These are some of the opportunities where we have been able to learn more about some wonderful young people who are certainly a credit to their schools and family.

Annual Wetherby Jubilee Award

This annual award will ensure that we always acknowledge and remember the Queen's Diamond Jubilee of June 2012. The award is given to a special young resident who has made an outstanding contribution to the community.

The qualities of the young people nominated for this very first award were truly outstanding. The very first recipient of this prestigious award was Danny Laycock, a pupil at Wetherby High School, who devotes his spare time to caring for the elderly. His name is the first on the Jubilee Scroll which can be found in the Bramham Room of the Town Hall.

We will seek nominations for the 2013 Award in the autumn when we will no doubt once again be amazed by the achievements of many of our young residents.

Wetherby Youth Council

Wetherby has recently established a Youth Council which will work in a similar way to the Town Council and we look forward to hearing more about their plans in the months to come.

Despite all the bad press the majority of young people are social, not anti-social and it is therefore important that young people are involved in the decisions made in the local community that affect them.

It is early days for the Youth Council but their enthusiasm knows no bounds and they are certainly conscious of the communities in which they live and have some excellent ideas on how they can make a positive contribution.

WETHERBY CIVIC SERVICE

St James's Church played host to the Wetherby's Annual Civic Service when the theme was to recognise the contribution made by the young people who attend local schools.

The schools were quick to give their support to this Service with members of Wetherby High School producing a video of 'What Wetherby Means to Me'. There was a piano recital and pupils performing a number of songs. Deighton Gates pupils did a prayer and a reading. Crossley Street helped hand out the service sheets and presented a posy of flowers to the Lord Mayor of Leeds.

The congregation thoroughly enjoyed the service and the applause they gave to the young performers was something we had certainly not anticipated.

TOWN PERSON OF THE YEAR AWARD

Claire Stubbs a dedicated volunteer was unanimously chosen from seven entries as the 2012 Town Person of the Year.

This recognition was thoroughly deserved for all the hard work she puts in, not only for the Wetherby Sports Association, but for the town in general.

Claire's role in the Jubilee Celebrations was tremendous and she certainly was a worthy winner.

PLANNING

Twelve months ago we were having the debate about the town supporting another supermarket and decisions have now been made following further supermarket interest in the town.

In July the Sainsbury's Store plans were rejected by Leeds Planning for the Mecure site.

Asda's bid to build a 24 hour supermarket on land off Sandbeck Lane has also recently been turned down by Leeds City Council.

These two planning applications were against planning policy and these decisions have ensured that Wetherby remains a market town and not a supermarket town.

Morrisons have been granted approval for the 10,000 sq ft expansion and this scheme will include the replacement of a number of shops in the Horsefair Centre. They also plan to develop the Hallfield Lane Car Park (Lorry Park) but we have no dates as to when this work will commence.

WETHERBY NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

As promised last year, we have launched the Wetherby Neighbourhood Plan and held an initial exhibition in the Town Hall in December. This gave residents the opportunity to have their say on the future of Wetherby.

The main concerns raised were parking, supermarkets, affordable housing, new schools, road safety and improvements to the Leisure Centre.

From the visitors to this exhibition we have established Steering Groups that will look at the specific development aspects in Wetherby. They will formulate a draft plan setting out how we want our community to grow and develop over the next 15 to 20 years. The Plan will enable us to protect the green space areas and have a direct influence over the sites that are earmarked for housing development.

It will be at least nine months before we have a draft Neighbourhood Plan. During this period there will be a number of consultations enabling residents and public bodies to comment on the document prior to the final plan being produced. It is up to all of us to set out the kind of infrastructure the town will need and to determine how our schools and healthcare provision should look, how the road network needs to develop etc.

Once the Wetherby Neighbourhood Plan is finalised this will then be subject to a referendum providing every resident with the opportunity to vote for it.

If more than 50% vote for the plan then it will be legally binding on Leeds City Council and developers. They will then have to pay contributions to the delivery of the plan for each piece of development they wish to bring forward. For each new house built, thousands of pounds will come directly to Wetherby to deliver our plan.

ROADS AND GENERAL HIGHWAY POINTS

Crossley Street – Following a re-design of the scheme the additional crossing near to the public bridleway has been approved by Leeds City Council and we are just waiting for a date when the work will start.

There continues to be a problem with motorists parking illegally outside the school and we do bring this issue continually to the attention of the police.

Spofforth Hill – We now have the long awaited 30 mph speed limit on Spofforth Hill and the road markings are a good reminder to motorists to slow down.

In conjunction with the local police, we have plans to do speed checks in the foreseeable future with the Speed Indicator Detector on Spofforth Hill and also on Deighton Road.

Sandbeck Lane – We now have yellow lines on parts of the Sandbeck Estate and this has eased congestion.

Westgate – The new mini roundabout at the junction of Westgate, coupled with the double yellow lines on Westgate has had the desired effect of reducing the traffic bottleneck.

North Street

There are now a number of designated parking bays from Bright Ideas down to the Royal Oak and yellow lines are now in place down the east side. These parking restrictions have certainly provided a much needed and better traffic flow in and out of the town centre.

PARKING

Parking has long been a problem for Wetherby and we have been trying to come up with a solution since the early 1970's.

We are exploring the possibility of having 'Permit Parking' and this would be something completely new for Leeds City Council.

Shoppers need available parking of more than two hours if they are also going to dine out and then there are the people that work in the town wanting all day parking. These, and many other parking issues will be the priorities for the next twelve months.

WETHERBY IN BLOOM

Wetherby Bar THR3 won the 2012 Wetherby in Bloom floral pub competition and was delighted to be the holder of the crystal rose bowl for a year. The pubs certainly add to the colour in the town and they do put a lot of time and effort into the displays.

The Wetherby in Bloom team continues to work extremely hard in keeping the floral display up to a prize winning standard. Even though it was the wettest summer for years, volunteers were still needed for watering the plants and to replace those that suffered through lack of sunshine.

The many floral displays and hanging baskets are co-ordinated throughout the town and yes, you guessed, it is Wetherby in Bloom that make all this happen with the choice and colour of plants that are ordered.

MARKET

The weekly Thursday Market continues to bring the local people and many visitors to the town. The stall holders have many regular customers and are very protective over their pitch. They do make me smile when they say "this is where my customers expect me to stand" as I am sure they would find them on a different pitch!

Windy weather is always a problem for stall holders with the fears of stock damage as well as having to ensure the safety of their customers. We have to remember that market is their livelihood, so they will trade if it is at all possible. Visitors to the market will know that they are certainly not deterred by cold weather!

We do aim to have a variety of products on the market and, at the moment, we have no vacant stalls. The charity stall continues to be popular and we have to ensure that this stall and space is always available.

You have to remember that the stall holders also take holidays, so if you see spaces on the market it will probably be because of this.

COMMUNITY GROUPS

If you have a particular interest or pastime, then in Wetherby, you are sure to find like minded people in one of the dozen of community groups.

Wetherby and District U3A Group have, with the many sections, something happening or organised every week and these events cater for a huge variety of interests. The singing section hires the Town Hall every month and there cannot be many jobs where you get to be entertained by a choir!

SNOW WARDENS

Did you know that Wetherby has a snow Champion and a couple of volunteers who help clear a couple of bridleways, the pavements in the Market Place and the ginnel?

With more volunteers we would be able to grit and salt more areas especially outside the Junior Schools, so if you are interested please contact the Town Clerk.

GREEN SPACE AREAS

Tree Work

Disease to a number of horse chestnuts trees and wind damage has caused the removal of a number of trees over the last 12 months. This work is not something that is carried out without consulting tree experts and, if necessary, the conservation office at Leeds City Council.

The cost for tree work is very expensive and even with regular checks you just cannot predict where you will need to do work next.

We have just taken a tree down in Raby Park and the next extensive work will be in Sandringham Park where we will be removing three trees. We will be replacing these trees, but this time, will be allowing room for their growth over the next 25+ years.

We do thank members of the public for advising us of broken branches as this does highlight checks that we need to make. It is sometimes hard to see where a branch has broken off, so the information is important to us and it does ensure that we take any necessary action.

Sandringham Park

The Friends of Sandringham Park continue to work hard in improving the area and endorsing its status as a Green Flag Park. The area has also achieved Green standard in the Big Wildlife Garden by the Wildlife Trust.

Sandringham Park has just been confirmed as suitable for recognition as a Queen Elizabeth II Field and we will be receiving a deed of dedication for protecting the site very shortly.

A letter from Buckingham Palace acknowledging that an oak tree from Her Majesty's royal garden had been planted to commemorate the Jubilee, has to be the best item of post received to date by the Friends of Sandringham Park.

Nidd Approach

The small play area in this park has been here for years and it took a telephone call for us to suddenly realise that out of the four swings there was not one suitable for toddlers. There are now two swings for toddlers in this park and they are all being well used.

We are currently looking at the matting under the swings and also providing impact matting at the side of the slide.

Scaur Bank

Do you remember Scaur Bank being flooded right up the top of the climbing frame? You just cannot believe how much water we had over the winter months as this area now shows no signs of any damage.

The play area continues to be very popular and we will be putting more bark down during the next few months as well as carrying out some summer painting of the play equipment.

We have a number of 'keep fit' groups using the park and you certainly have to be fit to run up and down the steps.

Garden of Rest

These gardens always look wonderful and all we need is some sunshine so that people have the opportunity to rest a while on the many seats that have been provided over the years by Wetherby folk.

Jubilee Gardens

The transformation of the gardens over the last 9 years by the Friends of Jubilee Garden is just superb. They can be found every Tuesday (weather permitting) working, not only to keep these gardens in keeping with the Georgian Bath House, but also by making changes that have added to the overall design and beauty of this spot.

This garden never fails to give enjoyment to visitors. We certainly have a right to boast about this unspoilt setting right in the heart of town.

WETHERBY PATHS PARTNERSHIP

Members have agreed to assist in the completion of a survey of the 44 paths and bridleways in Wetherby. The information about the repairs or improvements noted will then reinforce the data recorded in the Wetherby Rights of Way Improvement Plan.

Wetherby Scouts, as part of their Community Week activities, have already cleaned/washed and will be painting the finger post signs on the Harland Way. This is another example of the work of the young in the town.

As part of the Jubilee Celebrations, this group are planning to place an Interpretation Board overlooking Scaur Bank showing the Harland Way and linking footpaths.

TWIN TOWN – PRIVAS

Wetherby Twinning Association has had a very busy 12 months with two separate groups visiting. The visitors stayed and were entertained by local families and we do owe them a huge thank you.

The Mayor of Privas and party who joined us for the Jubilee Celebrations were particularly delighted to visit at that time, as it was the twentieth anniversary of the twinning. They left with wonderful memories and, to see them all waving Union Jacks as enthusiastically as any locals at the Last Night of the Proms, says it all.

We hope that this exchange of young people continues in the years to come.

CEMETERY

The many bulbs that we planted in the woodland area have provided spring colour and the sponsored flower bed in front of the memorial walls all help make the extension look as though it was always part of the cemetery.

Two additional benches have been sponsored and a recently donated tree has also been planted.

We would welcome additional sponsors for trees and benches for the new section and anyone interested should contact the Deputy Town Clerk.

REMEMBRANCE DAY

Hundreds of people once again lined the streets in Wetherby to pay their respects to fallen service personnel on Remembrance Sunday.

Many young people were among those to lay poppy wreaths at the Cenotaph and these included, Wetherby Brownies, Guides, Scouts, Head Boy and Girl from Wetherby High School, representatives from local Junior Schools and Wetherby Air Cadets.

CHRISTMAS IN WETHERBY

Lights and decorations, which include more than 200 Christmas trees suspended above shop windows, were put up again this year by an army of volunteers. The Christmas lighting display gave Wetherby that magical Christmas atmosphere and made our market town look wonderful.

The Christmas Window Display Competition organised by the Welcome to Wetherby Group was a huge success with over 33 traders taking part.

The schoolchildren who formed part of the judging panel enjoyed being involved and certainly passed a critical eye over the window dressings.

CHRISTMAS CAROL CONCERT

We could not have picked a colder, wetter night for the Carol Concert it was simply raining buckets, so what better place to keep warm than the Town Hall?

It was a bit of squash for everyone to fit into the Bramham Room but we somehow managed and the hot punch was still very welcome and everyone even coped with the spillages.

We are hoping for one of those crisp dry evenings this year!

WETHERBY COMMUNITY BONFIRE

The cancellation of the 2012 event was a disappointment to many but we had no alternative due to the area being totally waterlogged. You may recall we had floods down on the Ings due to the continual heavy rainfall.

We surely cannot have such another wet October and we are aiming for a bigger and better event this year which is on Saturday, 2nd November.

WELCOME TO WETHERBY

The priority for this newly formed group, headed by Councillor Cindy Bentley, is to find ways to encourage locals and visitors to shop and support the town.

The starting point for promoting Wetherby has been the completion of a Market Town Benchmarking Survey providing a report showing the statistical analysis of Wetherby. The report reinforced many of the views that were already held about Wetherby. Loud and clear in the report is that parking has to be a priority for the town.

This group have already produced a Welcome to Wetherby Leaflet which is available from the Tourist Information Centre/Library and a number of other outlets in the town such as hotels and also to other Tourist Information Centres in the area.

There is a Welcome to Wetherby Booklet on its way and this will certainly provide visitors with information on what to see and do in Wetherby. Many of the local shops are sponsoring this publication.

KEEPING WETHERBY CLEAN

Litter is a problem everywhere and Wetherby, unfortunately, has this issue as well. There are bins everywhere and why people cannot use them is a question to which we would all like the answer.

We spend money getting Privas Way litter picked to find that the following morning there is already litter that has been thrown from passing vehicles.

Dog fouling is a problem in every area that we manage. We do realise that that most dog owners are responsible but unfortunately there are those that are not. This lazy, selfish attitude does spoil the freedom of our children playing on the fields, as you have to constantly remind them to be careful where they are treading.

We are going to bring together various representatives from Leeds City Council and local groups to see if we can come up with some initiatives to help keep our town clean.

TOWN HALL

We are still endeavouring to put money aside to pay for a new roof but with the cold spring we have not been able to save money on the heating bills.

The hall is still used by many community groups, some of whom are not making as many bookings as in previous years. They are struggling to find volunteers to put on events and are also finding that their takings are down. We continue in our endeavours to keep the Town Hall painted and carpets cleaned. It is not easy when you come in on a Monday morning to find coffee spilt on newly cleaned carpets and lumps of paint missing from the walls. We want people to use and enjoy the Town Hall, but to also take care of it.