

The WEST PARK CHRONICLE

The Community Newspaper for West Park Spring 2011

www.westparkresidents.org.uk

Annual General Meeting

Rehearsal Room, West Park Centre, 30th March 2011, 7:30 pm

Agenda includes: Lawnswood school, West Park Fields, future of West Park Centre.

Have your say on issues affecting our community.

Meet other West Park residents.

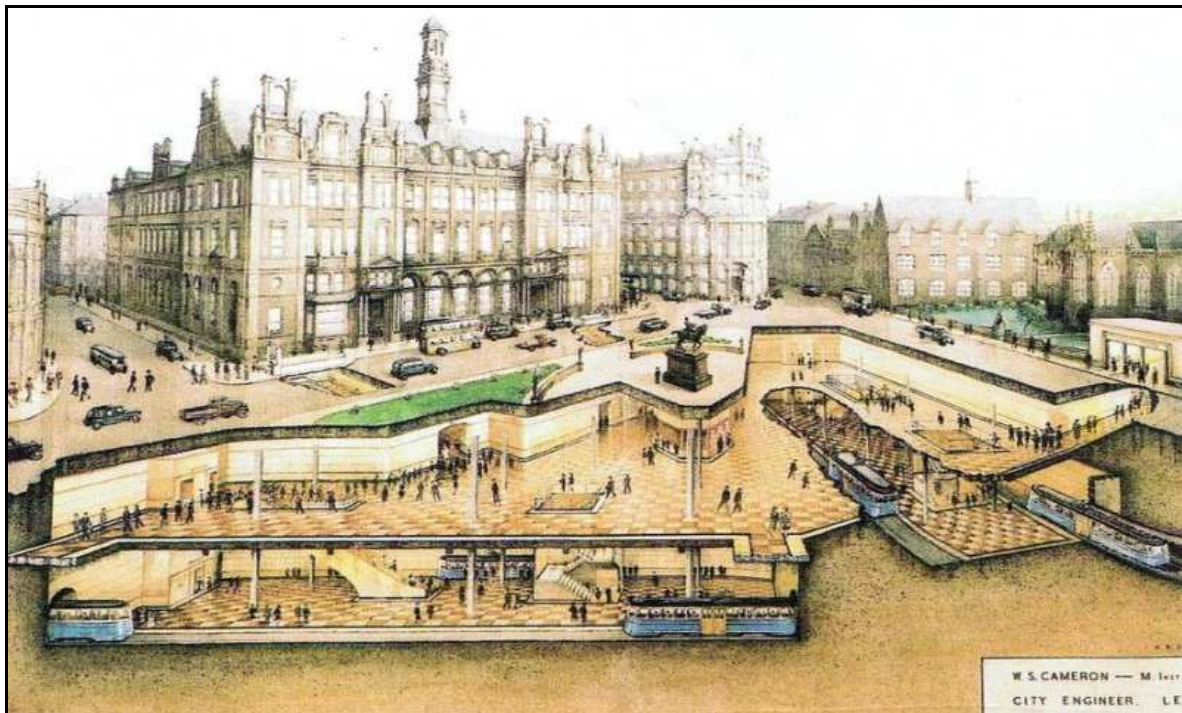
Meet the new Head of Lawnswood School, local councillors, Police representatives, and the WPR committee.

If you can't attend but would like to make a comment please contact Doug Kemp by phone (0113 2758808) or email (westpark.residents@ntlworld.com).

West Park Centre is on Spen Lane opposite Butcher Hill and has lots of car parking.

New Generation Transport

Nothing is definite but it seems likely that the NGT will hit the 'financial buffers'. Ironically many in West Park don't even want such grandiose and disruptive schemes anyway. They'd like a good park-and-ride system.



Even more grandiose than NGT— This is the 1944 plan by the City Engineer for Leeds City Square.

Residents Parking Zone

The Residents Parking Zone has brought some sort of order to the overspill parking from the Beckett Park university campus, but with the predicted side-effect of shifting the parked cars to the Kepstorn Road area.



The Highways Department say they've had only one or two complaints from local residents about the installed scheme so they probably think all is fine.

If as a resident you feel differently, the best way to get the attention of Highways will be to rally support from your neighbours and then for you all to contact Highways about it separately.

West Park Centre

The Spring 2009 meeting of the Executive Board of the council asked Assets Management to consult with Centre users and prepare a report on the possible options for the future of the Centre. To date there has been no consultation, and no sign of a report.



As expected, the Northern Ballet

Theatre moved out in the autumn but also the Attendance Strategy section of Education Leeds also relocated, a move which seriously reduces the Centre's income. Furthermore, it appears that "council officials" have imposed an embargo on renting out any of the space released by these changes.

Despite the support of the local councillors across the political spectrum, one is left with the distinct impression that council officers are happy to let the Centre die from lack of action and neglect.

WPRA and other local resident associations will continue to press for the promised consultation to actually happen, and for some semblance of planning to take place.

Here are some factors that WPRA consider relevant:

- West Park has few if any alternative community resources.

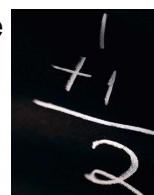
- Local community groups use the centre, and the Centre could develop these activities further
- The Centre is a major focus for music, and especially youth music, for the whole city. Losing the centre could have a big negative impact on these activities.
- Even with the changes in occupancy, the centre is heavily used during the day and in the evening.
- Part of the attraction of the centre is the large hall and rehearsal room, combined with good parking and easy access to the ring road & other routes.
- The car parking spaces at the rear are an important feature and should be retained despite any partial demolition. Otherwise the area will end up as another 'on-street' car park like the streets adjacent to Leeds Metropolitan University's Beckett Park campus.
- WPRA understands that currently there are groups who wish to use the WPC but cannot because of space limitations, and also that there is demand for the extra space which has been released by the Northern Ballet Theatre.

WPRA supports the establishment of a sensible & realistic business plan for the Centre. It should remain a community resource, both for the City and the local area.

Lawnswood School

WPRA is still having regular meetings with the school, allowing us to raise issues of concern to residents and to be briefed about changes the school are making. It's clear that the school considers these meetings to be important and worthwhile.

A new Head teacher, Georgie Sale, is now in charge at Lawnswood. She wants to meet local residents and will be attending the AGM. So if you wish to raise any issues related to the School, please try to attend the meeting on the 30th March.



Please Help Protect Our Verges

"Grass verges are a distinctive and attractive feature of the streets within the West Park Conservation Area. They add colour and soften the hard landscape".

This is from the *West Park Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan*, but in recent years the verges in some streets have taken a hammering, as in Darnley Road (see *photo*).



Once churned up by a vehicle the grass verge becomes unsightly, dangerous to pedestrians, gives a bad impression of neglect, and discourages others from taking care of them.

WPRA believe that our grass verges are a local asset worth looking after. We'd like to achieve a situation in West Park where:

- Residents protect their verges by not parking on them and by deterring others from doing so.
- Visitors follow the good example set by residents.
- And if verge parking is unavoidable due to road width and population density, we'd like the Council to install a grass protection system. This would let the grass grow even if cars do park on it.

The Oxfordshire councillor in the picture below is admiring the mesh that was in-

stalled to protect local grass verges from cars.

Legal Aspects

It's always illegal to park an HGV on a verge. But for cars it's illegal only if there's a traffic control order in force, it causes obstruction, or there's a local by-law.

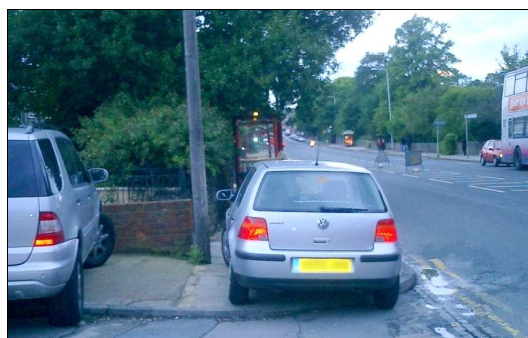


Parking on Pavements

This happens a lot on Otley Road and especially outside the shops at West Park. Pedestrians often have to squeeze past cars parked completely on the pavement—so be glad if you're not pushing a pram.

Wilfully obstructing a public footpath or public thoroughfare is an offence, but despite the high police presence on Otley Road it's rare to see them take any action.

Waiting restrictions such as yellow lines apply to the entire width of a public highway from the centre of the road to the boundary on the same side of the road. So the prize example below (near Salvo's) could be done for obstruction *and* infringing double yellow lines.



West Park Fields – village green proposal

In January 2009 over eighty residents sent emails and letters in support of an application to give village green status to the West Park Fields. This application, together with applications for Butcher Hill fields and the green area adjacent to Old farm Close, was submitted on behalf of local residents by Kirkstall councillor, Bernard Atha.

Although there are various covenants associated with the West Park Fields, and there are (always) 'firm' assurances that there are no plans (yet?) which would affect the fields, obtaining village green

status for the fields would make their development very, very difficult, whilst not affecting their use for sports and recreation.

The Council is objecting to this proposal on the advice of council officers, and it is likely that there may need to be some form of public enquiry. A further update will be given at the AGM.

All the local councillors are firmly against any plans which would affect the West Park fields. However it does seem that the Council Administration can 'push-through' schemes regardless of the view of councillors. Village green status would pretty well ensure that the fields could not be developed.

Good Neighbours

It's been a long cold winter and with this in mind, WPRAs are happy to support the work of STEP, the registered charity providing support for local residents who are over 60. If you think a neighbour could benefit from STEP please give Wendy Moore a call on 2757988, or email her on wendy@stepleeds.org.uk. All referrals are treated in total confidence.

Thank to all members for their support during the past year and for helping WPRAs provide a voice for the community when dealing with local issues

West Park Fields

The **Annual Litter Pick** is being organised by the West Park Fields Group to take place on Saturday 2nd April 10:30 am. All volunteers will be very welcome and are asked to meet in the front car park at the West Park Centre.

Annual General Meeting West Park Centre

30th March, 7:30 pm

Subscriptions are now due for 2011, and a subscription form is enclosed with this Newsletter. The subscription remains at £3 per household.

How to Join WPRAs or Renew For 2011

Send this form or equivalent, with fee, to: WPRAs Treasurer, 26 Ring Road, West Park, Leeds, LS16 6EJ. The fee is still £3.00 per household. The subscription runs from one AGM to the next (April to April).

Please make cheques payable to: Spenn Lane and West Park Residents Association. If you need a receipt, please enclose SAE.

I / We enclose £3, as my / our subscription to WPRAs for the year 2011.

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