

# The WEST PARK CHRONICLE

The Community Newspaper for West Park November 2015

[www.westparkresidents.org.uk](http://www.westparkresidents.org.uk)

## A Busy Year—But Not as Busy as 2014

Compared to 2014 when the trolleybus Inquiry loomed as a daily presence, 2015 has been relatively quiet. Nevertheless plenty of things have been happening and as well as dealing with the usual queries from members, WPRa has been involved with some important issues including:

- ◇ Transport planning
- ◇ Development plans for Spensfield House
- ◇ Future development plans for Leeds
- ◇ The future of West Park Fields

### NGT News

We still don't know when the report on the NGT Trolleybus Inquiry will be published or when a decision will be made. It could be 'any day', or 'early Summer 2016'.

The latest information is in a letter dated 30-11-2015 to Greg Mulholland MP from Lord Ahmed, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Transport, who is the appointed decision maker.

He writes "We are making good progress in preparing our decision on the NGT scheme and I hope to be able to announce it shortly; but at present I cannot be more specific about the timing". (The [full letter](#) is on the WPRa site under \The Association\Handouts\Docs for Nov 2015 Chronicle).

The whole issue seems have become caught up with Government plans for devolving powers to local regions concerning funding, transport, and establishing locally elected mayors. Also, unlike South York-

shire there appears as yet no agreement as to the exact definition of the West Yorkshire "region".

In the meantime WPRa has been working, alongside other resident associations in North Leeds as part of North West Leeds

Transport Forum, to lobby local councillors and national politicians pointing out the pitfalls of the NGT Trolleybus proposal—the ones that were forcefully expressed by objectors at the inquiry.

The NWLTF website at [nwltf.org.uk](http://nwltf.org.uk) is a mine of

information about the case against NGT, including links to a full set of audio recordings made during the inquiry sessions. Especially relevant is the document Alternative Transport Strategy Discussion Document, which was prepared by Peter Bonsall (Emeritus Professor of Transport Planning), and which highlights the extent to which traffic movements on the A660 could be improved *without* a trolleybus scheme.



## ***Plans for Spenfield House***

As you'll be aware from WPRAs circulars, development plans for Spenfield House have been 'in the news'.

During the year WPRAs spent several months convening with local residents and members of the Victorian Society and the Civic Trust to assess the impact of the proposals and to consider the future use of Spenfield.

The building is grade II\* listed and the plans proposed subdividing and altering the interior of the house to create six apartments, a studio flat in a partitioned single room, and building eight (three-storey) terraced houses on the original walled-garden area.

After perceived delays by Leeds Planning Department, the developers appealed to the Planning Inspectorate for a decision. However the appeal was dismissed on 24-11-2015, not so much because of the impact on the interior of the building but mostly on the impact of the new buildings on its external setting.



Although this planning application has been refused, further ones are likely to be made and this underlines the importance of maintaining discussions with the Council and the developer so as ensure that future development plans for Spenfield respect the nature and setting of this unique building.

The full [Spenfield House Appeal Decision](#) can be viewed on the WPRAs website (under \The Association\Handouts\Docs for Nov 2015 Chronicle). Also in Handouts you might like to click on [Spenfield House Interior](#) where the pictures will remind you of what all the fuss is about.

## ***Future development plans for Leeds***

The Draft Site Allocations Plan (SAP) for Leeds was recently opened for public consultation. The SAP identifies sites for housing, employment, retail and green space to ensure that enough land is available in appropriate locations to meet the growth targets set out in the Core Strategy.

This includes, as appropriate, any on-site requirements developers will be expected to provide, for example green space and local infrastructure (roads, schools, and flood storage). It also sets out a time schedule for development of the various sites. The plan is a key document for Leeds. It identifies specific allocations for housing, employment, retail and green space from 2012 to 2028

There's little mention of West Park, apart from the re-designation of the West Park Centre site for educational purposes. Previously this site had been designated for

housing development. WPRAs have written to the Council welcoming this change.



Considerable concern was expressed across the city about the designation of green spaces for housing development. Leeds is planning to build an extra 66,000 new houses, with allocations affecting our close neighbours in Weetwood and especially Adel and Bramhope.

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The pressure on green space evident in the SAP vindicates the hard work by WPRAs and local councillors to gain Fields-in-Trust status for the West Park fields. This status

protects the fields from development except for community use. Just imagine how many houses could have been built in the fields without it.

### West Park Fields

Since the dedication of the fields as part of the Queen Elizabeth II Fields-in-Trust scheme, the group Friends of West Park Fields (FWPF) has been re-established as a subgroup of WPRAs. This happened earlier in the year and at the AGM local residents were encouraged to get involved.

Subsequently there have been two joint visits to the site by representatives of FWPF jointly and Leeds Parks and Countryside officials. The idea was to work out how best the fields can be managed and maintained for the benefit of and with the help of the community, and also to discuss a proposed wild flower meadow and its location.

Discussions have also taken place with Urban Orchards concerning the possible planting of a small community orchard in one corner of the fields. Further meetings are examining the orchard idea with the help of the organisation "Helping Britain Bloom".

FWPF has already carried out a planting of spring bulbs near Thornfield Road in conjunction with St Chads' school and along Spen Lane with the help of volunteers.

Possible future activities include a music afternoon in the Summer with perhaps a brass band event on the fields, and at a



more mundane level, the annual litter pick will be go ahead in the Spring.

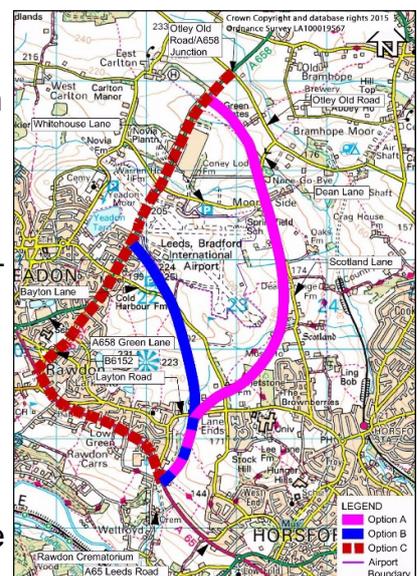
As a community we should really value these fields that are on our door-step. As well as the examples above there will be other ways in which you could help to look after the amenity so that, in effect, we 'own' the fields. If you would like to get involved, the contact is Tony Ray, and there is an email link through the WPRAs website.

### Road Links to the Airport

Plans have been announced concerning road links to the Leeds-Bradford airport. The initial public consultation will run from Monday 23rd November 2015 to Sunday 24th January 2016.

Details of the three proposed options for initial consideration, a map (shown here), supporting information, and a consultation questionnaire are available at [www.leeds.gov.uk/AirportLinkRoad](http://www.leeds.gov.uk/AirportLinkRoad). Comments can also be emailed to [AirportLinkRoad@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:AirportLinkRoad@leeds.gov.uk).

Improving surface access to the airport has been identified as a key need to support its future growth as well as tackling existing congestion and traffic issues in the local road network. This phase of public consultation seeks views on three options for improving access to the airport.



## ***Far Headingley, Weetwood and West Park Neighbourhood Design Statement (NDS)***

The latest review of the NDS extends the boundary of the West Park character area across Spen Lane to include Moor Grange Drive and View, the Butcher Hill shops and the houses on Spen Lane which face the fields (down to Spen Croft).

In addition a new character area includes the West Park Fields, Beckett's Park and the Leeds Met (now Leeds Beckett University) Campus.

The completed new document is a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) and as such will be used to guide the determination of planning applications.

Copies of the NDS have been bought by WPRa and it can be read or downloaded from the WPRa website. If you prefer, printed copies are available from WPRa at a subsidised prices of £5 each. Alternatively copies can be borrowed free of charge. In either case please contact [chair@westparkresidents.org.uk](mailto:chair@westparkresidents.org.uk).



### ***Special Christmas Bin Collections***

As below from Christmas Day until Sunday 10-01-2015:

If your normal bin day is:	Your Christmas collection days and dates will be ...
<b>Monday</b>	Tuesday 29 December; Tuesday 5 January
<b>Tuesday</b>	Wednesday 30 December; Wednesday 6 January
<b>Wednesday</b>	Thursday 31 December; Thursday 7 January
<b>Thursday</b>	Saturday 2 January; Friday 8 January
<b>Friday</b>	Sunday 27 December; Sunday 3 January; Saturday 9 January
<b>Saturday</b>	Monday 28 December; Monday 4 January; Sunday 10 January

### ***Lawnswood School***

WPRa is pleased to welcome the Head teacher Jo Bell to the WPRa committee meetings. These provide a forum for keeping abreast of the school's activities and exploring ways in which the school and local residents can assist one another.

We're also pleased that Lawnswood is increasingly seen as a community school which is recruiting more and more pupils from local primary schools.

### ***A Guest Advertisement***

#### **Community Choir looking for new members**

- Never sung in a choir before?
- Experienced singer looking for a new opportunity to sing?
- Sung in a choir in the past and would like to start again?
- Interested in starting a new activity in the New Year?

**Come to the Friends of Lawnswood School  
Community Choir 'Taster' session on Thursday, 14<sup>th</sup>  
January, 7.00-9.00pm  
at Lawnswood School.**



We are a friendly community choir that enjoys singing a range of music from different cultures and traditions. No need to audition - our director, Tricia Kyte, encourages everyone to believe they can sing with confidence.

For further information: visit our website [www.lawnswoodcommunitychoir.org](http://www.lawnswoodcommunitychoir.org) or email the choir secretary: [percysmithjanie@gmail.com](mailto:percysmithjanie@gmail.com).

### ***A Seasonal Message***

The next edition is due in February, with AGM details. In the meantime, warm seasonal greetings to all our readers from the elected volunteers at WPRa, and best wishes for 2016.