

MESSAGE FROM THE ACTING CHAIR



Welcome to the latest newsletter.

As many of you will know by now, Roger Owen, who was Chair of Better Wetherby for over 5 years, recently passed away.

Roger was not only an excellent Ambassador for Better Wetherby, he was a popular and extremely well-liked man. His wife, Lena and family, have our heartfelt sympathy and also our gratitude for Roger's work on behalf of the Wetherby community.

In the void left by Roger's sad passing, I am acting as Chair of BW, having been BW's Chair before Roger and most recently

Vice-Chair. This is my eighth year now volunteering along with others to achieve BW's aims.

Firstly, let me make it clear, **Better Wetherby will continue**. Early this year BW applied to obtain charitable status, which involves a lengthy administrative procedure, and we continue to experience significant delay from the Charity Commission due to their workload. We are confident our application will be successful and as planned, have progressed BW to cease as a company limited by guarantee. Our voluntary application to Companies House was successful at the end of last month, and there follows a two-month routine wait for this process to be finalised.

The timings to transition BW from a company to a charity may be slightly out due to the workload of the Charity Commission and Roger's passing, but all at BW are committed to making this happen.

The immediate issue we face, and the focus of this newsletter, is a new application by the developer Hallam Land in a re-run of the Stockeld Park/Hallam application which was refused after a Public Inquiry over 5 years ago. This recently submitted application by Hallam Land is to build 210 homes on the North Yorkshire side of the Wetherby boundary - exactly the same number and on the same land as the application refused in February 2020.

Further details about the application are shown below, along with the reasons why this application will have adverse consequences for Wetherby and why it should be opposed. BW strongly opposes the application and **we urge local people to submit individual objections by the deadline of 27th July**.

Thank you for reading.

Peter Swales

Acting Chair: **Better Wetherby Partnership**

STOCKELD PARK / HALLAM LAND / NEW PLANNING APPLICATION: (25/02006/OUTMAJ)

Supporters of Better Wetherby will recall that the organisation was formed in response to the serious concerns of many local people about an application in 2018 by Stockeld Park and Hallam Land to build 210 new houses on the North Yorkshire side of the boundary with Wetherby.

After a 2-year campaign by BW, and with the support of hundreds of local people, the application was, after a 4-day Public Inquiry, [finally refused in February 2020](#).

"Working to ensure that the physical character of Wetherby and District is protected and developed for the benefit of the community of both current and future generations"

Better Wetherby Partnership Ltd (Company Number 11855009)



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[Hallam Land recently submitted a fresh](#), almost identical application to the one that was refused, to build 210 new houses on the same land, directly onto Wetherby's boundary. It will basically be an extension of the town, despite the new houses being within the North Yorkshire Council area.

The serious concerns expressed by BW when opposing the original application remain. It will be transformational and harmful to the landscape, character and local environment. A precious swathe of agricultural land will be concreted over and an attractive gateway to Wetherby will be disfigured for all time. This will have a negative and damaging impact on Wetherby and nearby villages. It will contribute to a worsening of Wetherby's existing highways, congestion and air pollution problems. It will place even further strain on already overstretched Wetherby services such as doctors, pharmacies, dental practitioners, schools, policing, social services etc.

This is not a 'NIMBY' reaction to the application by Better Wetherby. The fact is that over the last four decades Wetherby has grown considerably. High levels of house building have taken place, arguably more than in many other parts of the Leeds City Council area. Over 1,000 homes have been built in the town during the past 10 years.

The expansion of Wetherby is continuing. The developer, Taylor Wimpey, recently started the building of 780 new homes on Racecourse Approach. An application by Persimmon Homes to build a further 130 homes on other parts of that site is currently in the planning pipeline.

There are also proposals for around 3,000 new homes to be built in the Maltkiln development near Cattal, 5 miles north-east of Wetherby, in North Yorkshire. Being only a short car journey away, this is likely to bring more vehicles and pressure on the town's overburdened road infrastructure.

Moreover, following the government announcement in July 2024 of ambitious plans to build 1.5 million new homes within the current parliamentary term, it can be reasonably anticipated that there will be even more applications to build in and around Wetherby. Indeed, when North Yorkshire Council (NYC) recently announced their Local Plan 'Call for Sites' document ([see out January newsletter](#)), this led to considerable interest in the potential construction of large numbers of new homes on land in and around the northern boundary of Wetherby with North Yorkshire.

Better Wetherby strongly oppose the Hallam Land application. We urge local people to register an objection by the deadline of **27 JULY 2025** quoting the reference **25/02006/OUTMAJ..**

The application can be seen on the North Yorkshire planning portal ([see this link](#)), where it is possible to view all details, together with comments etc. It is also possible to submit your comments/objection directly onto this portal; alternatively your objections can be submitted by email to: planningcomments.har@northyorks.gov.uk or by letter to Support Team (PSEG), Improvement, Development & Support, North Yorkshire Council, PO Box 787, HARROGATE, HG1 9RW.

LEEDS CITY COUNCIL LOCAL PLAN CONSULTATION 2022-42

As we had anticipated, LCC launched its review of the [Leeds Local Plan](#) on 7th July and BW have already started planning for how to engage before the consultation ends on 15th September 2025.

We will share more information in our next newsletter, but in the meantime, we wanted to draw your attention to a drop-in event **LCC are hosting in Wetherby Town Hall on Thursday 24th July between 3-7pm**, which you may wish to attend.

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CAN YOU HELP ON 17 JULY WITH SOME BALSAM BASHING?



The Himalayan Balsam on the Ings is coming into flower again! This is an immigrant to the UK which spreads along riverbanks to the detriment of native wild flowers. Over several years members of Wetherby Civic Society have hand pulled the Balsam and it declined. However, due to adverse weather last year the 'bashing' was cancelled and the weed is back. So, WCS is once again having a Balsam Bashing event to remove it.

WCS members will be meeting at 7pm on Thursday, 17 July, at the Archway at the bottom of the steps leading onto Scaur Bank. Everyone in Wetherby is welcome to participate. Please cover your arms and perhaps wear gloves as some of the balsam is amongst stinging nettles. Robust shoes are necessary. Volunteers should not get too close to the river or take any risks. The plants that cannot be reached should be left.

If the weather is wet, then the event will be cancelled, but at present the forecast for the day is good. Please come along and help.

PARKING CHARGES – STILL NO FINAL DECISION

It's now over 18 months since LCC first announced the intention to introduce parking charges on the Wilderness and Old Station car parks. In the face of huge opposition, a public consultation took place ending on 14th March. The results of that exercise and a final decision from LCC are awaited.

JOIN US: If you wish to be included on our mailing list, please send a request via our website or by email to betterwetherby@gmail.com. Please feel free to share this newsletter - the more people that are aware of these important local issues, the better.