

## Newsletter September 2023

### MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR



A warm welcome to our latest newsletter. Well, after a week of heatwave conditions and high humidity, the cooler weather is welcome. Let's hope for a pleasant autumn.

Although this newsletter may be a little shorter than normal, we believe in keeping in touch with our ever growing readership - in August 21% up on the same month last year and rising all the time. In addition to updates on Lidl and Racecourse Approach, you will find information in this edition about the excellent 'Living Wall' initiative at Crossley Street Primary School, the Wetherby Festival starting later this month, and the Wetherby Lions Dickensian Market in

December.

You will have seen in a [recent email](#), details of changes to the Board of BW. Dave Howard and Les Tyler, MBE have been appointed as Directors, replacing Ward Councillors Alan Lamb and Norma Harrington who have stepped down as a result of changes in Local Government rules. However, I am delighted that Alan and Norma will be continuing as Steering Group members. We also announced a new Honorary Treasurer, and I am pleased to welcome John Cuthbertson, who will be known to a number of Wetherby people as he carries out a similar role for Wetherby Festival.

I am fortunate in having the support of a great team in the BW Steering Group. However, I have yet to find someone to assist with secretarial duties. A volunteer would be welcome, please. It's not onerous, just to attend the monthly BW Steering Group meetings and help with the agenda and minutes. If you feel you can give up a little of your time to help, please get in touch. The contact details are shown in this newsletter and can also be found on the website. Alternatively, if you would care to contact me by phone on 07973 805055 or by email at [roger.owen.3@btopenworld.com](mailto:roger.owen.3@btopenworld.com) I will be pleased to provide more information.

Have a great autumn. Hope to see some of you at the Wetherby Festival!

**Roger Owen**

Chair: **Better Wetherby Partnership**

### LIDL PLANNING APPLICATION

As regular readers of the newsletter will be aware, a revised Planning Application (**Ref: 23/01507/FU**) was submitted by Lidl several months ago to demolish the Mercure Hotel and use the land to build a Store, together with a Residential Development.. The site is not allocated for retail development in the Leeds Site Allocation Plan (SAP) and this is the principle reason why BW has submitted a formal objection. Our letter of objection can be found on the [BW website](#).

The application was to have been heard by the Leeds City Council Planning Committee on 24th August, and we circulated an email to that effect. However, as further work was subsequently required by LCC planning officials the matter was deferred. We understand that the application will be taken before the Planning Committee later in the year. Once the date is known, we will circulate details. In the meantime, people can still register their comments about the application on the [Leeds Planning Portal](#).

*"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"*

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**RACECOURSE APPROACH – UPDATE RE TAYLOR WIMPEY DEVELOPMENT - PLANNING CONSULTATION WITH PERSIMMON**

BW understands that the Taylor Wimpey development, totalling some 762 dwellings, will start on site early next year. As with all such developments TW have suffered with the increased costs of mortgages, materials and energy, but we will soon see the start of building activity which will take place over a period of several years. BW (and others) have contributed significantly to the building and design process over many, many months of [meetings and Design Workshops](#). Hopefully these efforts will result in the exemplar development we have been working towards.

Speaking of our involvement with TW, BW is delighted to have been invited to take a similar role with Persimmon Homes in the development of the next phase of the scheme, adjacent to the Taylor Wimpey site. The initial intention of Persimmon was to build 300 houses. However, it is understood that this figure has been reduced significantly. Although no formal planning application has yet been submitted by Persimmon, BW will be participating in a consultation meeting with the developer on 25<sup>th</sup> September. We will report details of that meeting and the overall situation in our next newsletter.

**AIR POLLUTION – LIVING WALL INITIATIVE AT CROSSLEY STREET SCHOOL**



The impact of air pollution on the health of individuals is a matter of serious public concern. Children are particularly vulnerable, so practical steps to improve air quality around schools are essential. In this respect, the initiative to construct a plant-based Living Wall at Crossley Street Primary School during the recent summer school holiday is very welcome. This is just the start of a long term project which is aimed at improving air quality levels for the children and staff. Monitoring of air quality will be taking place over the coming months.

BW Chair, Roger Owen, said ***'This is an excellent initiative and fully supported by Better Wetherby. I pay tribute to Deputy Town Mayor, Connor Mulhall, Wetherby Ward Councillor and BW Steering Group member, Norma Harrington, and all those involved for their hard work over many months to get the Crossley Street scheme up and running. The issue of air pollution and the serious health risk it poses, is something that Better Wetherby raised in our lengthy discussions, over a period of many months, about the Racecourse Approach development. Our concerns about air and noise pollution levels from the A1(M) motorway were taken into account by the developers, Taylor Wimpey (TW) and LCC Planning Officers and measures will be put in place to mitigate the problem. BW will continue to engage with the relevant authorities to improve air quality in Wetherby in the future.'***



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### **'SAVE THE DATE' - SUNDAY, 10<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER**

#### ***BW at the Wetherby Dickensian Christmas Market and Craft Fayre.***

It's probably a little early to talk about the festive season, but you might want to make a note of the date of this annual charity event, organised by Wetherby Lions. Taking place in Wetherby town centre on Sunday, 10<sup>th</sup> December, there will be multiple festive attractions with entertainment for all ages, together with a range of products and crafts on sale. Proceeds from the event will be used to fund various charity events including a Senior Citizens Christmas Party. Alongside the many commercial stalls there will be various displays from local organisations – including a display by BW highlighting our work and efforts to protect the local environment. Please do come along to see us in the colonnade of the Shambles.

### **WETHERBY FESTIVAL – STARTS FRIDAY, 29<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER**

The Festival is back for 10 days of music, comedy, art, literature, film and much, much more. A packed programme has been designed with something for everyone. Copies of the programme can be found inside the free Excelle magazine which has been distributed locally. The programme is also available in a number of local shops and businesses. If you haven't yet seen a copy then you can find details and book your tickets on the Festival website: <https://www.wetherbyfestival.co.uk/>

BW Chair, Roger Owen commented, ***'We are lucky to have such a super Festival on our doorstep. Great work by the organisers, all local volunteers. Well done to them. I'm looking forward to another great Festival.'***

### **CONVERSATIONS WITH BETTER WETHERBY EVENT**

Following the useful 'Conversations' held at the Bridge Hotel, Walshford on 12th April, a similar event will take place towards the end of the year. Details to follow.

### **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](mailto:betterwetherby@gmail.com). Please feel free to share this newsletter - the more people that are aware of these important local issues, the better.

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