

BRIEFING NOTE ON WEST YORKSHIRE JOINT SERVICES

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Briefing to: Leeds City Council Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Board

Role of West Yorkshire Joint Services (WYJS)

West Yorkshire Joint Services deliver a number of high-quality shared services on behalf of the five district Councils within West Yorkshire via a Joint Services Committee arrangement made up of members from each Local Authority. These services either fulfil a statutory role on behalf of the five Councils such as Archaeological Advisory Services, Archives, Ecology Services and Trading Standards or those such as Archaeological Services, Asbestos and Calibration Services provide a first-class commercial resource, delivering vital services to local businesses.

WYJS Vision: To support social and economic prosperity across West Yorkshire and operate as a modern and forward-thinking service.

WYJS Mission: Delivering trusted shared services that:

- encourage a growing economy
- support safer, stronger and healthier communities
- preserve the past, serve the present and protect the future
- promote and conserve the natural and historic environment

WYJS Priorities: WYJS focuses on four main interconnected priorities:

- Business and the economy
- Environment and heritage
- Safer, stronger and healthier communities
- Operating as a modern and forward-thinking service

Archaeology Advisory Service

The Archaeology Advisory Service's principal role is to provide informed and authoritative advice and information to the Planning Authorities in West Yorkshire to help conserve the most significant heritage sites that are affected by development proposals. The Service helps inform and influence sustainable developments within West Yorkshire and promotes an informed understanding and high level of appreciation of those heritage sites.

Archive Service

The Archive Service collects, preserves and makes available for public use over 21,000 individual collections of the region's historic records dating back to the twelfth century. These records are used for research and learning. WYJS also holds one of only five surviving Registry of Deeds in the whole country used for legal purposes or for family and local history.

Ecology Service

The Ecology Service provides informed and authoritative advice and information to the Planning Authorities in West Yorkshire to help conserve the most significant biodiversity habitats and species. The Service holds 501,000 records of individual species (including over 105,000 protected and other notable species) which are mapped on a geographical information system (GIS). The records are accessed or consulted by developers' ecological consultants, nature conservation organisations and the public.

Trading Standards Service

WYJS has several specialist teams within Trading Standards Service covering a wide range of legislation to protect both West Yorkshire businesses and consumers. The Service uses an intelligence led approach to respond flexibly to emerging threats and demands and ensures issues that cause the highest levels of detriment to consumers and businesses across West Yorkshire are addressed as a priority.

The key activities based on risk and harm, which warrant heightened intervention are:

- Doorstep crime and scams: prevention and detection of rogue trading, scams and frauds, disruption of illegal trading and the recovery of money and assets obtained from criminal activity.
- Safeguarding and maintaining the integrity of the human food supply chain including the safety and legality of animal feed.
- Disrupting the supply chain and availability of illicit tobacco.
- Protecting consumers from purchasing unsafe second-hand cars.
- Product safety: ensuring goods placed on the market are safe and disrupting the sale of age restricted products (for example; alcohol, tobacco and vapes) to minors.

Through partnership working this Service also encourages economic growth by proactively engaging with and supporting the West Yorkshire business community (both Primary Authority and non-Primary Authority businesses). Another example of partnership working is the West Yorkshire Financial Exploitation and Abuse Team (WYFEAT) which is hosted and run by this Service. WYFEAT undertakes activities across West Yorkshire to protect vulnerable residents from financial abuse; detecting and investigating incidents of scams, frauds, doorstep crime and family, friends and carer abuse, undertaking effective safeguarding of victims and potential victims, helping residents to be safe, healthy and independent.

West Yorkshire Archaeological Services (WYAS)

The Service operates as one of the leading units delivering efficient archaeological and heritage solutions across the UK with an extensive portfolio of sites from housing developments, quarries, road, rail and other infrastructure projects. The Service's approach is focused on delivering customer-focused commercial services, engaging at all stages of development to provide desk-based assessments, heritage statements, geophysical surveys, landscape surveys, watching briefs, trial trenching and excavation services.

Asbestos Services and Calibration Services

Calibration Services protect and support businesses, Local Authorities and other customers by ensuring accurate testing and calibration of weighing and measuring equipment regulated by the Weights and Measure Act 1985. The Service offers UKAS accredited mass calibrations, legal verification of weighing and measuring equipment, and operates two weighbridge test units. The client base includes weighing instrument manufacturers, engineering, pharmaceutical and medical companies, factories and retail users of weighing and measuring equipment.

Asbestos Services provides asbestos testing services to both private businesses, and Local Authorities. This includes asbestos identification and air monitoring which supports compliance and safety for the Service's clients. The asbestos work is also accredited to ISO 17025:2017 standard through the UKAS accredited quality system.

Recent Case Studies

Some examples of the WYJS activity in the Leeds District are highlighted in Appendix 1.

Leeds City Council Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Board

Case studies of WYJS activity in the Leeds District

West Yorkshire Archaeological Services (WYAS)

The WYAS team excavated a site near Garforth, which unearthed high status Roman and post-Roman burials. The on-site works were completed in 2022 and work is ongoing with the post-excavation processing of finds, samples and skeletons.

The team excavated 62 human skeletons and a single cremation. Based on their grave goods, some of these individuals were Roman and some were Early Saxon in date. WYAS are currently awaiting a suite of radiocarbon dates to be returned which will confirm the dates of some of the burials, and date, for the first time, those without any grave goods.

The photographs below show some of the burials and finds that were recovered.



Of particular significance was the recovery of a lead coffin. As there are no known examples of post-Roman lead coffins, the assumption made is this burial is Roman in date. Due to the weight of the coffin and its contents, it required a team of conservators and specialist lifting equipment to excavate. The coffin, was transported to a lab to opened and was found to contain the body of a female, aged 26-35 years. She was buried with a necklace of glass beads and a bangle.

The photograph below shows the excavation of the lead coffin.



The intention is to undertake DNA and isotope analysis of the skeletons once they have been carbon dated. Carbon and nitrogen isotopes are useful indicators for diet, while strontium and oxygen isotopes relate to geology and climate so are most useful for providing information about where an individual grew up. The DNA analysis will allow experts to consider issues such as weaning, infectious diseases such as leprosy, genetic relationships between individuals and migration. This exciting site still has so much to tell us about the local history of the area.

Trading Standards Service

To support the Leeds district business community, the Service provides the Primary Authority scheme to deliver a comprehensive package of advice and support to partner businesses. This is a statutory scheme which is a chargeable service and demonstrates WYJS commitment to form a positive relationship between the business and Local Authority. There are ten Primary Authority businesses based in the Leeds district, which include the likes of Arla, Asda and Symingtons. Partnership working is also established with the West Yorkshire LEP to provide a route to Trading Standards advice for start-up businesses.

The Service operates a Motor Trade Partnership (MTP) as part of its work to protect consumers from purchasing unsafe used cars. 13 businesses in the Leeds district are members of the MTP and benefit from guidance on compliance with legislative requirements. Members are audited annually and during the 2022 audit cycle, 9 of the 13 Leeds businesses achieved an award for Excellent Customer Service.

In respect to the work of the food team, enforcement interventions were required following a routine inspection of a Leeds based food wholesaler. This business was supplying grated red and white cheddar to businesses, schools, and care homes in the West Yorkshire area and beyond. Samples of these products were taken by Trading Standards and submitted to the Public Analyst who found both products to contain a high amount of undeclared vegetable fat. The products were found to be a cheaper alternative consisting of a cheese/vegetable oil blend in nature, otherwise known as 'cheese analogue.' As a result of the WYJS enforcement interventions the wholesaler has delisted these products and now only supplies 100% grated cheddar to its customers.

During the summer holiday season, Trading Standards received a complaint over an incident at Leeds Bradford Airport (LBA) where a 13-year-old girl had experienced an allergic reaction. The case had chilling similarities to that of Natasha Laparouse (her tragic death was as result of eating a Pret A Manger baguette bought at Heathrow airport). The child at LBA had unknowingly been served wheat pancakes from one of the lounges run by LBA despite her mother informing them that her daughter was a coeliac and had a severe allergy to gluten. An allergic reaction occurred during the flight and she luckily recovered after being rushed to hospital in Menorca upon landing.

Whilst the premises at LBA may be classed as lower risk generally, the consequence of there being an allergy incident are that much more severe, particularly as in this case when the pilot could not contact anyone at the LBA based food business. A full internal investigation was conducted by the food business during which the chef was suspended. In this particular case the chef had mistaken vegan claim for gluten free and no gluten free option actually existed for pancakes. The Trading Standards Officer in the case has worked closely with the food business to put measures in place in all the LBA run airport lounges including improvements to the escalation process for complaints of this nature.

In September 2023 at Leeds Magistrates Court, Aamir Masood of BK Stores of Harehills was fined £3,840 and ordered to pay costs of £1,888 and a £1536 victim surcharge having pleaded guilty to offences under the Food Safety and Hygiene (England) Regulations 2013. WYJS officers had conducted a routine inspection at BK Stores in November 2022, and discovered 47 items of food past their use by date. The items of food collectively were 2,772 days past their use by date. The food items consisted of five packs of sliced chicken that were each 104 days past the use by date, a further nine packs of sliced chicken each 90 days past the use by date, three packs of sliced beef that were each 97 days past the use by date, four packs of turkey rashers that were each 90 days past the use by date and five packs of sliced turkey that were each 83 days past the use by date.

Underage sales enforcement activity is undertaken based on an intelligence led basis. WYJS operates to strict criteria in responding to complaints about the sale of age restricted products to children, particularly alcohol and e-cigarettes, and unsafe consumer goods. WYJS works in partnership with Leeds City Council to contribute to the Council's 'Best Council' objectives. Some examples of WYJS work that support the health and well being of Leeds District residents include:

On 23 June 2023, Mr Sheraz Ahmed appeared at Kirklees Magistrates Court regarding the sale of an oversized disposable electronic cigarette to a 14-year-old child from his business Diamond Vapes UK Ltd, The Headrow, Leeds. Mr Ahmed pleaded guilty on behalf of the company and was fined £2,000 and ordered to pay a surcharge of £800 and costs of £3,000.

In addition, Mr Shaheer Muhammed, an employee of the company, pleaded guilty to selling the disposable electronic cigarette to the child. Mr Muhammed was fined £100 and ordered to pay a surcharge of £40 and costs of £344.

This investigation was carried out after WYJS received multiple complaints about the premises allegedly selling vapes to children and also the widespread perception within communities that city centre shops were routinely breaching underage sales laws and openly selling vapes to minors.

On the 31 October 2023, Yalaw Shop Limited trading as The Yellow Shop, Station Road, Horsforth appeared at Kirklees Magistrates Court in relation to having on sale counterfeit cigarettes and tobacco along with cigarettes and tobacco which were not in plain packaging or carrying the Health Warning in English. The company also had for sale disposable electronic cigarettes which had a tank capacity in excess of the permitted 2 ml and nicotine strength greater than 20 mg/ml. Khabat Ahmad, the Director of the company pleaded guilty to committing the offences under the Trade Marks Act 1994, the Standardised Packaging of Tobacco Products Regulations 2015 and The Tobacco and Related Products Regulations 2016. The company was fined £4,000 and ordered to pay a surcharge of £1,600 and costs of £2,753.

The Botulinum Toxin and Cosmetic Fillers (Children) Act 2021 makes it an offence to treat, or make arrangements to treat, an individual under the age of 18. Enforcement of this part of the legislation sits with WYJS, (other sections are the responsibility of the Police to enforce). WYJS carried out a trader education project across West Yorkshire to write to all businesses providing botulinum toxin (Botox) and cosmetic filler services that could be identified. A total of 145 Leeds businesses were identified and advised of their obligations. Businesses were asked to sign and return a declaration confirming they had received the advisory letter and that they understood their legal obligations. Any enforcement work arising will be based on an intelligence led approach.

WYFEAT Fraud Prevention Advice & Training

The delivery of an on-going project involving the coordination of WYFEAT training across the West Yorkshire District areas raises awareness of fraud and financial abuse of vulnerable adults and the reporting mechanisms. WYFEAT have delivered numerous different training sessions within the Leeds District since the project started. Recently, the WYFEAT safeguarding team have reached out to different partner departments from Housing associations to NHS staff and community social work teams, delivering 7 training sessions to 165 professionals within the Leeds district within the last 12 months, covering topics around financial exploitation and abuse.

The comprehensive training aims to explore different ways residents here in West Yorkshire can be financially exploited including recognising the signs of abuse and reporting any concerns to the team.

WYJS are undertaking initiatives aimed at reducing the impact of doorstep crime across the districts of West Yorkshire. The project referred to as 'Operation Athena' is intelligence and complaint led to help raise awareness of recent Rogue Trader activity within West Yorkshire communities. In line with further PREVENT and safeguarding work, officers from WYFEAT have carried out community engagement visits with residents of 42 areas within the Leeds District since the start of Operation Athena in December 2022. During these visits, officers distribute awareness and information leaflets and speak with residents about recent rogue trader activity. Officers encourage reporting from within the community and give advice on how to prevent becoming a victim to doorstep crime.

The West Yorkshire Financial Exploitation and Abuse Team (WYFEAT) have been carrying out both investigative and preventative work across the Leeds District. During 2023 WYFEAT have received 69 financial exploitation and abuse referrals regarding Leeds residents and in the same period the value of reported fraud/financial exploitation amounted to approximately £259,000.00. The team are currently investigating 16 cases, an example case is detailed below.

Under the umbrella of Operation Athena, a further project is currently being trialled in the Leeds District to reach those residents most at risk of instances of Doorstep Crime. It is aimed at reaching out to mobile service providers whose clientele are typically elderly, vulnerable residents who receive an appointment service at their home address from services such as mobile hairdressers, cleaners, mobile chiropodists.

This project intends to educate the service providers, as they carry out their appointments on a day-to-day basis, to be aware of distinctive indicators of rogue trader activity. By raising awareness of the typical victim profile, the usual methodology used by rogue traders and how they operate it is hoped that this project will heighten awareness on what to look out for, by professionals who are most likely to encounter rogue traders operating in and around Leeds.

At present, officers are approaching the various service providers, and establishing links with the various Neighbourhood Action groups and similar hubs across Leeds. The Operation Athena Rogue Trader infographic is also going to be featured in the respective resident's quarterly newsletters which the hubs send out to their participants who are in the over 60 age category.

WYFEAT currently have two ongoing investigations involving the alleged financial exploitation of vulnerable adults in the Leeds area.

The first is Operation Link which relates to a complex referral received from the Direct Payment team within Leeds City Council regarding an alleged offender who was a previous LCC employee. The alleged offender had been employed as a social worker and was acting as her mother's social worker without declaring this. The victim is now deceased but had a direct agreement in place and the alleged offender had direct involvement in determining the level of support required. The level of support kept increasing meaning the direct agreement payment increased.

The direct payment agreement was subsequently managed by a second alleged offender who was a family friend. The direct payment money would enter the victims bank account and then the second alleged offender would pay personal assistants based on time sheets received. A third alleged offender in this case was one of the personal assistants who was paid to care for the victim, it is believed that this alleged suspect was out of the country on two occasions when they claimed they provided services to the victim. There are suspicious transactions on the direct payment account. In an audit run by LCC it showed that the victim was over paid and owed LCC monies. The total detriment to LCC is £19,851.68. Two of the three alleged suspects have attended a voluntary attendance interview with WYFEAT. Further investigations are on-going.

The second case involves a banking protocol referral received by WYFEAT regarding a 62-year-old female who had recently sold her house in east Leeds with the intention of moving to Canada to live with a romance scammer who she had never met in person. The female had no previous interventions from Adult Social Care and had no care and support needs. She had reportedly met the romance scammer online 5 years ago and was infatuated with him.

The victim was living in a budget hotel in Leeds following the sale of her property, waiting for the scammer to meet her so they could move to Canada together. WYFEAT and West Yorkshire Police discussed the romance scam in detail with the victim and the financial situation she now found herself in but she refused to believe that she was a romance scam victim and refused to stop contact with the scammer.

Bank account records showed that the victim had been withdrawing thousands in cash but when questioned about it, refused to say where that money was going. A safeguarding referral was made to Adult Social Care Leeds. Actions were taken by WYFEAT to minimise further financial abuse including a limit on cash withdrawals.

Despite numerous actions from the victim's bank and WYFEAT over several weeks she continued to believe that the relationship was genuine. Eventually the banks put a stop on all transactions leaving the victim unable to pay her hotel bill. This actually resulted in the victim finally admitting she had been sending cash to the romance scammer. She is believed to have sent an estimated £80k - £100k. WYFEAT supported the victim to find emergency accommodation following her leaving the hotel. The victim has now been offered a retirement flat in another area of Leeds and a relative is supporting her with her finances going forward. The victim is no longer in contact with romance scammer.

WYJS has the responsibility of enforcing legislation in relation to The Tenant Fees Act 2019. This legislation was introduced to prohibit certain types of 'tenant fees' with the aim of making renting fairer and more affordable for tenants. The Service is currently undertaking Operation Titan aimed at improving awareness and compliance within the property rental sector to inform landlords and letting agents of their responsibilities as part of this legislation. WYJS also aims to provide tenants with information about their rights, responsibilities and how to gain redress. As a first step in this project WYJS are identifying Lettings Agents within West Yorkshire in addition to using records provided by the five West Yorkshire Councils' housing teams. The identified Lettings Agents are being contacted and asked to provide key information in relation to their compliance with The Tenant Fees Act 2019. Any identified non-compliances will be recorded on the WYJS intelligence database and dealt with by providing advice or undertaking enforcement action where appropriate. This will help build an intelligence picture of the lettings sector landscape in West Yorkshire and inform future enforcement activity. To date 79 Leeds based agents have been contacted.

The project also aims to strengthen the links between WYJS and the five District Housing Teams to create a stronger intelligence sharing network. WYJS have met with Leeds District housing team and facilitated the team's access to IDB, an intelligence database used by Trading Standards. WYJS officers will be assisting the housing team regarding the use and benefits of the IDB system and how to adopt an intelligence-led approach.

Tobacco

At the start of 2023, West Yorkshire Trading Standards seized its 10 millionth illicit cigarette. In respect to the work undertaken on disrupting the supply chain and availability of illicit tobacco, below are the key outcome headlines for the Leeds district over the last nine years:

- over 3 million cigarettes seized
- 1,280 kg of hand rolling tobacco seized

In addition, the team has also seized more than 6,500 illegal oversize vapes.

In the last twelve months, 80 Inspections at businesses within the Leeds district including 38 Test Purchases at businesses where intelligence and complaints received indicate illicit tobacco is available. At over 80% of these businesses, a positive sale was recorded which reinforces the importance and value of community led intelligence. The total illicit tobacco seized in the last 12 months in the Leeds District is 524,500 cigarettes and 111.8kg of hand rolling tobacco.

The tobacco team has been working alongside several partner agencies for the latest operation as part of a sustained campaign of action targeting serious and organised crime in the Harehills area of Leeds. As part of the 'CommUnity Harehills' project, a wide-reaching initiative based on the Home Office's 'Clear, Hold, Build' tactic to improve areas blighted by organised crime, officers from the Leeds East Neighbourhood Policing Team were joined by staff from Leeds Anti-Social Behaviour

Team, Licensing, West Yorkshire Trading Standards, HM Revenue & Customs, the Department for Work and Pensions, Immigration, and the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency.

Through a combination of targeted enforcement and community work, the initiative sees police and partner agencies clear an area of organised criminal activity, hold that location to prevent another group from filling the void, and build resilience so the area is less susceptible to criminal groups.

A recent two-day operation saw 5 people arrested, 9 vehicles seized, and 25 closure warning letters issued to licensed premises. Three Community Protection Notice warning letters were also issued. An emergency Misuse of Drugs Act warrant resulted in a cannabis farm being located, and an offensive weapon being seized. A total of 3,129 cans of beer, 428 bottles of wine, 255 bottles of spirits, 2,230 illegal vapes and approximately 150,000 cigarettes were also recovered during the operation. A number of premises licence reviews are being supported by WYJS as well as a closure order of a persistent offender. The photographs below show some of the products seized and a concealed panel in a van.





WYJS officers also undertake partnership working to contribute to the Tackling Illegal Tobacco for Better Health programme. Officers deliver free education sessions to community groups, schools, colleges and front-line professionals. To date, during 2023, 13 sessions have been delivered in the Leeds District to 478 participants which includes schools, youth groups, NHS, neighbourhood policing and Leeds City College. A number of sessions have already been booked in for the next three months for schools and charities.

West Yorkshire Archaeology Advisory Service

During 2023, the Service has made responses to 36 planning applications and additional ongoing developments in the Leeds District. Work has included responses to new housing developments, solar parks, industrial sites, a disused city centre church and developments in the District's rural villages and farms. The team continue to deliver work associated with the East Leeds Outer Relief Road which has also been the source of new archaeological information. The excavation of archaeological sites range from the Bronze Age to Norman conquest in date.

The Service has also provided advice for projects across the District including the Trans-Pennine Railway upgrade east of Leeds, works at Leeds Railway station, sites put forward by the White Rose Forest and Leeds City Council estates department.

The team are contributing to a community project at Temple Newsam House and are helping LCC's curators and a community archaeology group design a project to look closely at the gardens and to investigate evidence of the house's Tudor origins and later alterations. Work will focus on the gardens where the Tudor plan is hidden below later schemes from the 17th and 18th centuries.

The photograph below shows the outline of the 18th century riding school's foundations seen from the roof of the house during a dry summer in the late 1990s, This is a target for future survey and investigation.



Portable Antiquities Scheme (PAS)

The WYJS Finds Liaison Officer held 28 'Finds Surgeries' within the Leeds District in the last twelve months. These surgeries are opportunities for finders of archaeological objects to bring them in for examination and identification, and if they meet the criteria, the finds are recorded onto the Portable Antiquities Scheme database.

The Finds Liaison Officer is supported by a team of volunteers to help identify, photograph and record archaeological finds submitted to the Service. In the last twelve months, 1,025 finds from 'findspots' in Leeds have been processed and recorded. These finds cover the Mesolithic, Roman, Medieval and Post Medieval periods.

One of the most significant finds recorded from Leeds is an Irish threepence of Edward VI in the name of Henry VIII (posthumous coinage) dating from AD 1547 – 1550. There are only 5 examples of this type of coin recorded among the 1.6 million objects recorded on the PAS database.



The most spectacular Treasure case from the Leeds District in the last 12 months was a hoard of Roman coins which was found by a metal detectorist near Kippax in January 2023. Research using the West Yorkshire Historic Environment Record identified that the location was close to a known crop mark of an enclosure, perhaps a Roman farmstead. A small archaeological excavation was undertaken by WYAAS staff and a pot containing an estimated 5,000 small coins were discovered. The coins are of a type called radiates and are mainly copper alloy with a tiny amount of silver, about 1%, also present. Radiates date to the late 200s AD and there are several hundred hoards recorded in England and Wales. This distribution is taken to be an indicator of political and economic stress.

The excavation established the coins had been placed in a pottery vessel that was buried in a small pit. The pot, which was about 25cm tall, was sitting on its base. Vertically set stones had been used as packing to keep the pot upright. There was no sign of a lid, but the upper part of the pot had been damaged by ploughing, so this may have been lost. The whole process had to be carried out with care and precision and the pot with most of its contents of radiate coins was lifted from the ground intact.

The pot and its contents were wrapped and lifted together and delivered to the British Museum in London for excavation in their laboratory where X-ray images will be taken, and where the coins will be catalogued. This work will include determining ownership, identifying, and valuing the coins and then determining the distribution of any reward. At present it is hoped that the hoard will be acquired by Leeds Museum and put on display. The photograph below shows the intact pot, wrapped up for protection during the excavation.



Archive Service

The mission of the WYJS Archive Team for the Leeds District is to preserve and make accessible the unique documentary heritage of the region and help members of the public to use and enjoy these records. Each year the Service produces around 8,000 historical documents from the archive stores and engages with over 10,000 people, answering their enquiries, responding to Freedom of Information requests and promoting the city's rich heritage resources to a global audience. WYJS supports Leeds City Council to manage their corporate memory by ensuring that its records are preserved and managed appropriately in accordance with recognised standards and relevant legislation.

The team are collaborating with Leeds 2023 to ensure that the archives of the Year of Culture are preserved for future generations. A hugely significant digital archive, these records will enable residents to reflect on the long-term impact and success of 'Letting Culture Loose' and capture a pivotal point in the city's history. WYJS staff, as part of the steering group for 'Libraries in Leeds,' are leading the development of this new collaborative network.

The archive staff are also working in partnership with the National Trust and Nidderdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty to deliver the 'Skell Valley Project' which aims to preserve the landscape and heritage of the River Skell which runs through Fountains Abbey. The archives of Fountains Abbey, a World Heritage site, are owned by Leeds archives. The project looks at issues around tackling climate change, protecting the heritage of the region, conserving nature, and providing access for everyone. This heritage lottery funded project is an excellent example of partnership working across local authority boundaries which benefits both regions. West Yorkshire residents are benefitting from volunteering opportunities to learn new skills using the archives held locally.

The WYJS Archive Service co-ordinates a Community Archives Accreditation Scheme. A key element of the scheme is to recognise the importance of community

archives and archiving and the need to support local groups with caring for their own collections. The WYJS staff are currently providing support to the volunteers at Lotherton Hall, who are working with the archival collections at the Hall towards gaining accreditation status.

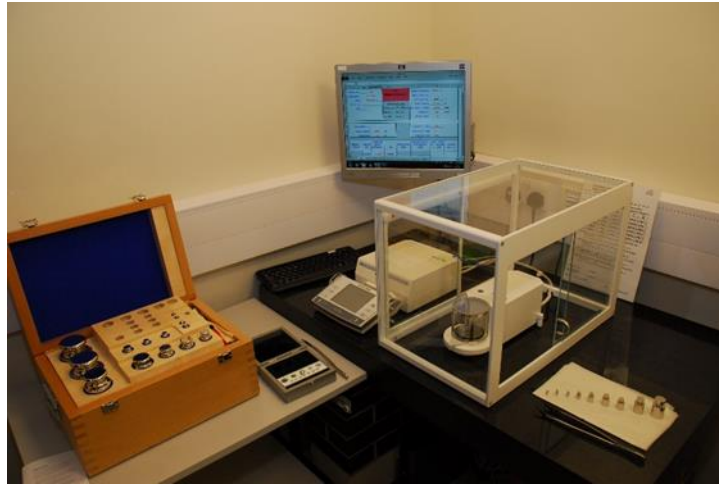
Over the past 18 months almost 18,000 boxes of archives held for the Leeds District have been surveyed to check for mould following an earlier outbreak. Almost 1,000 affected boxes have been identified and cleaned and are now safe again for the public and staff to access.

The current WYJS exhibition, 'The Medieval Magnified,' opened at the West Yorkshire History Centre in May 2023. This features some of the fantastic medieval archives held by the Archive team for the Leeds District, dating from 1138-1485. These items have survived through wars, natural disasters and periods of enormous change and are as magnificent as when they were first made. The exhibition takes a close-up look at these documents, revealing the stories of how they were made; why they were created; and the incredible journeys that brought them to West Yorkshire.



West Yorkshire Trading Standards Calibration Services

Over the past 12 months West Yorkshire Trading Standards Calibration Services have continued to actively support local business of Leeds District alongside those within the wider West Yorkshire area through its calibration, verification, and enforcement activities. In addition, the work has continued to contribute to protection of the public from short measure goods.



The WYJS UKAS accredited mass labs have provided a route for calibration and precision measurement to a broad range of businesses servicing over 750 submissions in the past year. A further 160 submissions of other measuring equipment have also been calibrated. These have included submissions from Leeds based businesses including precision weights from a medicine manufacture, as well as weights and other equipment for many Leeds based food and non-food manufacturers, packers, and suppliers.

As residents and businesses have felt the effects of the cost-of-living crisis, WYJS has focused its weights and measures enforcement visits on areas where the impact of high fuel prices have been most felt. Accuracy of measurement is critical for ensuring that the public are getting what they have paid for. During the past year, in the Leeds District officers have visited 23 fuel service stations and tested 454 fuel dispensers. Officers have also inspected two solid fuel packers/distributors and at a purpose-built tanker bay at the Morley site, officers have tested 68 bulk fuel delivery tankers.

