



Five Wonders of Wakefield

Nostell NT
 Sandal Castle
 The Hepworth Wakefield
 The Chantry Chapel
 Heath Village

Wakefield Parks

Anglers Country Park
 Pugneys Country Park
 Newmillerdam Country Park
 Walton Colliery Nature Park

Points of Interest

1. Walton Hall
2. Haw Park Wood
3. Barnsley Canal
4. Old Chevet Branch Line
5. Kettlethorpe Hall



Wakefield District Cycle Forum is a voluntary organisation which promotes and campaigns for better cycling facilities for all cyclists within the Wakefield District. To join, find out more or volunteer as a helper or ride leader visit: www.cycling-wakefield.org.uk

Improving Cycling Infrastructure The Cycle Forum works with a number of partners, in particular Wakefield Council, to improve on the off-road infrastructure for cyclists and develop a comprehensive network of cycle routes. The Cycle Forum also helps to maintain the off-road network with its volunteer force.

Cycle Rides The Cycle Forum runs a programme of guided cycle rides throughout the year which start from Agbrigg, Castleford, Darrington, Fitzwilliam, Nostell NT, Pontefract, Pugneys and Thornes Park. These rides are primarily intended to help people who want to cycle but lack confidence and range from Easy rides, which are very short, flat and off-road, through Steady, slightly longer and a bit faster, to a more challenging road ride for those with more fitness and confidence. All rides are free and people who do not have their own bike can often borrow one.

Cycle Events The Cycle Forum runs and attends events throughout the district to promote cycling and provide information about cycling in the district. Some events have a skills course for youngsters in particular to try out their cycling abilities. These events are publicised on our Facebook page and the cyclewakefield.co.uk website.

Membership You can join the Cycle Forum free of charge by submitting the application form available from our website. The larger our membership, the greater our influence on all things cycling. Members of the Forum are kept up to date with developments through regular newsletters, our website and Facebook page: [facebook.com/groups/WDCF1](https://www.facebook.com/groups/WDCF1).

Wakefield District
Cycle Forum

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Wonders of Wakefield Cycle Trail



Wakefield District Cycle Forum, with the support and assistance of Wakefield Council and the National Trust, has linked 22 miles of these cycle paths together to create a circular route named the Wonders of Wakefield – the WoW. Since the last WoW map was produced, the route has been updated to avoid roads that have become busier, take advantage of path diversions or to bring the route closer to one of the Wonders. If in the future you find a conflict between this map and the route signs, we recommend you follow the signs unless it is clear that these have been maliciously tampered with.

The surroundings of the WoW change through the year and it is well worth revisiting regularly. Bare branches that allow extended views and snowdrops are replaced by bluebells, unfurling leaves and bursting blossoms. In the heat of summer, the tree canopies offer shelter from the sun or summer showers, whilst the autumn colours can be magnificent.

The WoW is signposted in both directions but we recommend that you ride clockwise on



your first trial of the route. This ensures that the steepest sections are downhill and when the sun is low in the sky it's not shining straight into your eyes.

You can complete the WoW in a morning or make a day of it, exploring one or more of the Wonders or making a note of what's available for future family visits. Do check opening times first.

Cycle Maps When you've completed the WoW, why not try the Wakefield Wheel, known as 'the Wheel'? It's a 38 mile route encircling the City of Wakefield and can be identified by the wheel logo on the direction signs.

Maps of these two trails appear in the Maps section on both the Forum's website www.cycling-wakefield.org.uk and the Cycle Wakefield site www.cyclewakefield.co.uk

Five Wonders of Wakefield

Nostell NT (National Trust) is a Georgian treasure house set in 300 acres of rolling parkland. It was built by the Winn family between 1727 and 1785 on the site of a disused priory. Work was started by James Paine and completed by the fashionable architect Robert Adam.



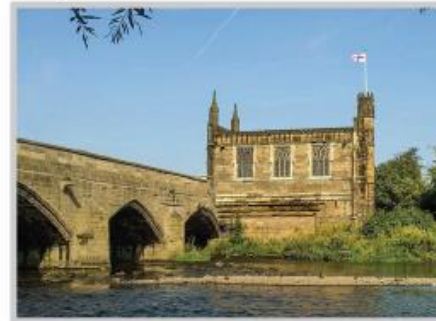
The house contains a world-class Thomas Chippendale collection, together with a rare 18th century doll's house, an exquisite painting of Sir Thomas More and his family and one of the first longcase clocks made by the famous local inventor, John Harrison.

Today, Nostell offers some of the most accessible and scenic family-friendly cycling in Yorkshire. Two dedicated woodland trails form a 4km figure-of-eight loop, with a gentle green route for beginners and a twistier blue option for riders seeking a bit more flow. There is a café in the courtyard, together with a takeaway, toilets and secure bike-racks. When the main gate is closed, you can miss Nostell out by remaining on the A638.

Sandal Castle is best known for the role it played in the Battle of Wakefield during the Wars of the Roses. Richard Plantagenet, Duke of York, was killed in the fighting just outside the castle on December 30, 1460, in a resounding Lancastrian victory. Remains of the 13th century stone castle and the fine motte and bailey stand in a commanding position overlooking the river Calder. Entrance is free and there is a cafe. There is a memorial to Richard nearby on Manygates Lane, Wakefield, WF2 7DQ inscribed "Richard fell here."



The Chantry Chapel of St Mary the Virgin, on the medieval bridge over the river Calder, is the only survivor of four chantries in Wakefield and the oldest and most ornate of the three surviving bridge chapels in England. It was originally built in around 1356 by the townspeople of Wakefield and is a Grade I Listed building. It was closed during the Reformation and only reopened for worship in 1848.



The chapel has had three west fronts; the original medieval façade having been removed to Kettlethorpe Hall in 1843 where it adorned the boathouse there. The main body of the chapel dates from 1847 and was designed by the great Victorian architect George Gilbert Scott. Unfortunately, the stone used for the 1848 front was quickly eroded by the polluted air of what was then a heavily industrialised area of Wakefield. The present front was designed by Sir Charles Nicholson in the 1930s and is built of Denby Dale stone. The chapel is open on all bank holidays and every Saturday from June to September from 11 am to 3 pm.

The Hepworth Wakefield, opened in 2011, was designed by the acclaimed architect Sir David Alan Chipperfield and named after Barbara Hepworth, a world-renowned artist born and educated in Wakefield. The Hepworth houses exhibitions of international modern and contemporary art, including works by Barbara Hepworth, Ben Nicholson, Henry Moore, Frank Auerbach, Eva Rothschild, Maggi Hambling and Anthea Hamilton, as well as the Victorian artist John Atkinson Grimshaw. Entrance is free for Wakefield District residents and there is a café and toilets.



Heath Village near Wakefield has been called the “village of mansions” because of the number of large period houses of historic and cultural importance there. These range from the spectacular Heath Hall built in 1707 to The Kings Arms, a traditional pub with gas lights and open fires, parts of which date back to the 15th century.

The Old Hall is remembered as being haunted by Dame Mary Bolles, who died in 1661. In her will, she directed that the room where she died be permanently sealed. The room was closed off but after fifty years it was opened and from then on the ghost of the infamous Blue Lady haunted the Hall. The door of the haunted bedroom is held in the Wakefield Museum and Castles collection and may be viewed by appointment. You can still see Dame Mary Bolles's water tower. Built in the 1600s over a hillside spring, it contained a water wheel which pumped a water supply to Heath Old Hall on the hill above.



Wakefield Parks

Anglers Country Park is a stunning public open space on the site of the deepest opencast coal mine in the country, which reached a depth of 250 feet (over 76 metres). It features a lake, wildlife habitat, trails, woodland, bird watching hides, an adventure playground, Visitor Centre, shop and café.

The Room on the Broom Trail there is based on Julia Donaldson's book of that name. Pick up an activity pack from the Visitor Centre or the café and follow the flat, accessible and easy to find trail round the lake, spotting statues, animal footprints, trace rubbings and fun activities along the way.

Pugneys Country Park has two lakes, the smaller of which is a local nature reserve with birdwatching facilities whilst a circular walk around the larger lake is flat and 1.5 miles. The park features a pirate play area, a light railway and the Blown Away Adventure trail to try. The trail is based on the book by Yorkshire author Conrad Burdekin and has lots to keep kids entertained. There is a bike hub, J's, where cycles, including electric assist models, can be hired, and a café and toilets.

Newmillerdam Country Park, with its central lake, is in an area once called Thurstonhaugh, an old Norse name, until it became known as New Mylle on Dam when a new corn mill was built around 1285.

It was once part of an estate owned by the Pilkington family, who built nine lodges there in the 1870's to house the gamekeepers who protected the site from poachers. Two lodges can still be seen today guarding the Dam.



The Arboretum, with its stone identification signs in front of specimen trees stating their common and scientific names, is a great place for nature lovers. There are waymarked trails through the woods for

walkers, joggers, cyclists and horse riders. Little ones will love the Gnome Roam- a simple walking trail encouraging children to use signs and clues to spot carved statues of gnomes, a bear and wildlife.

Walton Colliery Nature Park, a local nature reserve featuring ponds and grassland, was created on the site of Walton Colliery, which closed in 1979. The park is bounded on three sides by railway lines and the Trans Pennine Trail and National Cycle Route 67 go through it. It is popular with walkers, cyclists and horse riders.



Points of Interest

1. Walton Hall, now the Waterton Park Hotel, sits majestically on an island, the only access being across an iron bridge. Walton Hall was originally the home of Charles Waterton, an eccentric traveller, conservationist and naturalist born in 1782. He created the world's first nature reserve by building a 3 mile long 9-foot-high stone wall around his estate costing £9,000 (around £3 million today) as a barrier to poachers and protection for animals on his estate.

Waterton fought a long-running court case against the owners of a soap works built near his estate, as the chemicals it sent out damaged his trees and polluted the lake. He eventually succeeded in having the works moved.

2. Haw Park Wood, sometimes called 'Walton Wood' or 'Wally Woods' has a great history. It was once part of the much larger Don Forest and was later used to grow conifers to provide timber for local coal mines. It still has remnants of the old canals that carried trees to the main Barnsley canal.

It has historic links with the nearby Walton Hall Estate and one of Charles Waterton's original wildlife observation hides still remains in the woodland. The woodland is designated a Site of Specific Interest and Local Nature Reserve because of its value to wildlife.

3. Barnsley Canal was 16 miles long and had 20 locks. Construction work started on 27 September 1793 at Heath Common and the Barnsley Canal finally opened in 1799, providing a transport link from coal reserves at Barnsley to a wider market. The canal was replenished from the reservoirs at Winterset and Cold Hiendley.

Unfortunately, the canal suffered from constant subsidence problems due to mining. In 1911 there was a spectacular failure at the southern end of the Barnsley viaduct, closing the canal for eight months. This was followed by a huge breach at Littleworth in 1946, which directly led to the canal's closure in 1953. The company had decided that it was cheaper to compensate canal users than continuously repair it!

4. Old Chevet Branch Line The construction of the Chevet Branch Line bridleway was the biggest project undertaken by Wakefield District Cycle Forum. At over 5 kilometres, it was the longest of the "missing links" identified by the Forum as crucial to completing a comprehensive network of cycle paths in the district.

Completed in December 2014 after nearly 2 years of work, the path extends from Wood Lane near Newmillerdam to Old Royston in Notton Parish and consists of a mixture of woodland, limestone grassland and associated scrubland. Several locally rare plant species occur here, including Maiden Pink Dianthus, Kidney Vetch and Vipers Bugloss.

5. Kettlethorpe Hall is a Georgian house on the outskirts of Wakefield, built by the Pilkington family in 1727.

In 1843, the façade of the 14th century Chantry Chapel on Wakefield Bridge was moved to Kettlethorpe Hall and attached to a boathouse folly beside the hall's artificial lake. In the West Riding of Yorkshire volume of Pevsner Architectural Guides, Nikolaus Pevsner described the boathouse as "the most precious of all boat houses". In 2014, stones from the frontage were put in the secret garden at Thornes Park in Wakefield.

Nowadays, the house is privately owned, but the grounds are a public park. In 1953, Kettlethorpe Hall became a Grade I listed building.

Wakefield's industrial past brought great wealth to some, leading to impressive buildings like those featured as Wonders of Wakefield. It also resulted in the area being crisscrossed by canals transporting coal, stone and manufactured goods, later replaced by railways. Pit heaps and mining subsidence scarred the landscape and the later death of coal industry and closure of the pit railways brought a sense of desolation.

Years of reclamation work have created country parks with lakes and wetlands teeming with wildlife and woodlands full of birds and wild flowers. Footpaths and cycle paths along the route of disused railway lines and abandoned canals and bordering rivers allow people to enjoy these more natural attractions of Wakefield.