

## **Baseline Assessment of Parish**

### **1. Context**

Walton Parish covers an area of 738 hectares, and comprises the Village of Walton; part of Walton Colliery Nature Park; Haw Park Woods; Waterton Park and surrounding agricultural land. The Parish of Walton sits between Crofton, Ryhill, Notton and Sandal. Crofton is the nearest key service centre (2 miles) which provides secondary (and sixth form) education; two top up supermarkets (with ATM), a medical centre and chemist. The Sandal/ Kettlethorpe District Centre lies some 2 miles from the centre of Walton and provides a large format supermarket (Asda); a GP Practice; chemist; dentist and Kettlethorpe High School is close by. Wakefield City Centre is some 3 miles from the centre of Walton and provides a full range of employment, retail and cultural facilities. Walton is highly accessible by car to the motorway network and the regional capitals and employment centres.

### **2. Walton Village**

Walton Village is a 'true' village in that it is separated from other urban areas by open countryside. Walton has evolved organically from its original history centred upon Waterton Park/ Walton Hall. A key influence on Walton in its more recent history has been Walton Colliery which has now closed and been replaced by the Walton Colliery Nature Park.

Walton has:

- a Primary School
- a Community Library
- a Post Office
- Two Hairdressers
- Two general stores
- One Hot Food Take Away
- One Village Pub
- One Golf Club with restaurant
- One Hotel with restaurant and leisure spa
- Two Churches (with meeting rooms)
- One Village Hall
- A Community Centre with sports pitches
- Allotments
- a Care Home
- a Recreation Ground with play equipment
- a Country Park

- Tennis Courts
- a Farm Shop
- Riding Stables

### 3. Brief Synopsis of Walton Statistics

#### Population

Walton has a population of 3231 (2011 Census) of which 2,426 are aged 16 to 74. There is roughly equal gender split (1547 males/ 1684 females).

#### Households

Walton has	1387	Households
	1098	Households own their property
	31	Households have shared ownership
	164	Households are in social rented
	84	Households are in private rented
	0	Persons are sleeping rough

#### Dwellings

Walton has	1430	Dwellings in total
	483	Detached dwellings
	658	Semi-detached dwellings
	195	Terraced properties
	98	Flats
	2	Caravans or mobile homes

#### Economic Activity

Walton has	1635	Economically active residents
	514	Retired persons
	114	Students
	52	Long term sick or disabled

### 4. Comparative Assessment of Crofton, Ryhill and Walton Wards

#### Population Change

The population of Wakefield Rural has only grown by 2.2% over the past ten years, less than the district growth rate of 3.3%. Over the last ten years the under-14 age group has shrunk in size by 10% and the 65+ age group has grown by 20%, to 8,489 people. This growth rate in the size of the older population is almost twice that seen across the district as a whole.

#### Employment

The 2011 Census showed that residents of the Wakefield Rural area were more likely to work in senior management and professional occupations. Correspondingly, fewer people worked in low skilled occupations. Only 3.6% were unemployed in Wakefield Rural

compared to 4.9% in Wakefield and 8% were self-employed in Wakefield Rural compared to 6.9% in Wakefield.

### **Benefits**

In the Wakefield Rural area in February 2012, 3,135 working age people (10.8%) were claiming one or more key out-of-work benefits, lower than the district rate (15.4%) and the Great Britain rate (12.5%). Levels of benefit claiming vary across the area, with the highest rates in Belle Vue, Kettlethorpe, Hall Green and Ryhill and Havercroft.

916 working age people (3.1%) in Wakefield Rural were claiming Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) in November 2012, lower than the district and the GB rates. Of these claimants, 295 (32.2%) were aged 18-24 years, meaning 8.5% of young people in Wakefield Rural are claiming JSA, lower than the 9.8% across the district as a whole but higher than the 7.0% across Great Britain as a whole.

### **Economy and Business**

Information from the latest Business Register Employment Survey (BRES) shows that Wakefield Rural has above average numbers of jobs in the education, retail, and accommodation and food services sectors. Most other sectors employ numbers fairly close to the GB average, although contrary to Wakefield District as a whole there are relatively large numbers of professional, scientific and technical jobs in Wakefield Rural. There may be a few jobs in agriculture but the numbers are small (less than 50) and are not disclosed.

### **Economic Activity**

Crofton, Ryhill and Walton have more self-employed; and part time employed people than the Wakefield average. Crofton, Ryhill and Walton has 18.6% retired persons compared to 16.1% in Wakefield.

### **Education and Skills**

Around 25% of working age residents (9,447 people) in Wakefield Rural have no qualifications - this is lower than the districtwide figure of 31%. Around 19% of working age residents in Wakefield Rural are qualified to degree level or equivalent - this is the highest of all seven areas and higher than the district-wide figure of 18%. At the time of the 2011 census, around 240 people (0.6%) could not speak English well, and 62 people couldn't speak English at all.

In Wakefield Rural, the proportion of young people not in education, employment or training (NEET) is lower than the district average. In September 2012, 63 young people entered higher education, compared to a district rate of 26%.

### **Housing Stock**

Proportionally, more households in Wakefield Rural own their own homes (outright or with a mortgage) than across the district as a whole, and levels of owner occupation are the highest of all the seven areas. Conversely, a smaller proportion of households rent from a social landlord.

## **Household Structure**

Wakefield Rural has a similar proportion of over 65 families (12.8%) compared to the Wakefield average of 13%.

## **Transport**

In the Crofton, Ryhill and Walton Ward, 19.9% of households have no car or van compared to 26.9% across the district as a whole. More people drive a car/van in Crofton, Ryhill and Walton to work (73% compared to 66% as a whole. Only 5.3% travel to work by foot compared to 10.1% in Wakefield as a whole.

## **Life Expectancy**

For the most part life expectancy at birth in the Wakefield Rural wards is not significantly different from the England average, but in Crofton, Ryhill and Walton female life expectancy is significantly higher than the England average.

## **Mortality**

Wakefield Rural performs better than the district average for many of the issues that affect health and well-being including levels of mortality and premature deaths. Levels of mortality due to cancer and respiratory disease are the lowest of all the seven areas, but the number of excess winter deaths is the highest of the seven areas. Levels of mortality from cardiovascular disease (CVD) vary within the area, with the highest rates in Agbrigg and Havercroft. The CVD mortality rate in the Belle Vue Priority Neighbourhood was 118.0, higher than the district average.

## **Inequalities**

Wakefield Rural performs better than the district average for many issues that affect health and well-being, but there are higher levels of attendance for emergency admissions for heart disease and circulation. There are also higher than average levels of referrals to social care for hospital discharge and requests for carers assessments and higher levels of initiation of interim care, and transport in social care services. Of those people that are eligible, 12.4% participate in the NHS Health Check Programme, higher than the district rate (9.5%) and the highest of all the seven areas.

## **Lifestyle Choices**

Of all the seven areas, Wakefield Rural has the lowest or second-lowest levels of physical inactivity, smoking prevalence and excess weight. Only 19% of adults in the Belle Vue Priority Neighbourhood are physically active, the second-lowest rate of all the 12 Priority neighbourhoods, and below the district average of 27%.

## **Mental Health**

Mental health and well-being issues (14.6%) are lower than the district average (18.5%). The rate of hospital admissions due to self-harm (211.4 DSR admissions per 100,000, 2007-2011) is also lower than the district rate (276.4) and the second-lowest of the seven areas.

## **Crime**

Crime rates tend to be below the district average, although domestic burglary crept up towards the end of 2011 and beginning of 2012. These problems have reduced. Levels of violent crime tend to be seasonal, with a peak in Quarter 2. The springtime peak occurred as usual in 2012, but didn't reach 2011 levels.

## **Anti-Social Behaviour**

There were 603 incidents of anti-social behaviour (ASB) reported to the police in the six months to September 2012, a rate of 13.4 incidents per 1,000 population, lower than the district rate (20.7) and the lowest of all the seven areas. In the Belle Vue Priority Neighbourhood the rate was 32.2 incidents per 1,000 population. In the 12 months to December 2012 the perceptions of ASB problems were amongst the lowest in the district. Over the last 12 months there has been a significant increase in the Figure 14 Recent trends in crime rates. The proportion of people saying there were problems with social behaviour calls indicates two main hotspot areas of Agbrigg, and Crigglestone / Chapelthorpe and Kettlethorpe. The calls for service in the Agbrigg area are mainly in relation to youth nuisance and neighbour related ASB. The calls for service in the Crigglestone / Chapelthorpe area are mainly in relation to youth nuisance and damage. The calls for service in the Kettlethorpe area are mainly in relation to youth related problems.

## **Playing Pitch Plan**

Wakefield has a Playing Pitch Plan (2005 – 2015) that assesses the need for playing pitches in relation to Sport England's Playing Pitch Model. This indicates a shortfall of 62 junior and 25 mini winter games pitches across Wakefield (84 hectares shortage in total).

## **Greenspace and Wildlife**

Wakefield Rural has a distinct character and contains a high proportion of the District's biologically rich sites, including woodland and designated nature reserves. Woodland cover at around 30% creates a very different landscape to the open areas lying to the east. Access to green space within the Wakefield Rural area is generally good and compares well to the district as a whole. However, access to play areas is relatively poor compared to Wakefield overall as distribution is uneven, with gaps in Kettlethorpe and Sandal for example.

Among the main green space sites, Newmillerdam is a large 97 hectares country park containing a man-made reservoir surrounded by woodland. The restored Boathouse is a public building and there are public toilets nearby. Car parking is charged, but there is also free parking nearby. Anglers Country Park provides a walk around a man-made reservoir and a woodland walk. The site currently holds a Green Flag Award and car parking is free of charge. The Countryside Department is based in the Waterton Discovery Centre at the park. Haw Park Wood is a nearby ancient woodland and also holds a Green Flag Award. It provides a network of paths for walking and mountain biking, and through which the Trans Pennine Trail passes.

The Yorkshire Sculpture Park and Bretton Local Nature Reserve (LNR) form an international visitor attraction, providing a managed landscape with outdoor and indoor art. YSP is on a long term lease from Wakefield Council. It has an attractive visitor centre and café, but car parking is expensive. Pugneys is an activity park providing recreation, water sports and nature within reach of the city centre. It is run by Wakefield Council Sport and Active Lifestyles.

Other main green spaces include:

- Betty Eastwood Park, run by Crigglestone Parish Council
- Calder and Hebble Navigation Towpath
- Castle Grove Park, also known as Manygates Park, is part of the Battle of Wakefield site associated with Sandal Castle
- Newmillerdam Village Green
- Notton Wood LNR
- Seckar Wood SSSI
- Walton Nature Park LNR

Wakefield Rural contains a total of nine Local Nature Reserves (LNR), which between them they host a wide range of plant and animal species.

- Bretton LNR
- Newmillardam LNR
- Seckar Wood LNR
- Haw Park Wood LNR
- Chevet Branch Line LNR
- Notton Wood LNR
- Anglers Country Park LNR
- Walton Nature Park LNR
- Pugneys LNR

### **Heritage**

The Neighbourhood Plan area contains many Listed Buildings, Ancient Monuments and Ancient Woodland, including the nationally famous Waterton Park (Squire Waterton). It also has the Barnsley Dove Canal.

### **Retail**

For a population of 3,231 people, and estimate of the expected retail expenditure per person would be £1,700 equating to a total convenience expenditure of £5.49m (£4.12m main shopping (75%) and £1.37m on top up shopping (25%)). Main shopping for Walton is undertaken at Asda at Sandal, in Wakefield City Centre, at Asda in Castleford or Tesco in Hemsworth. Top up shopping should be available in Walton. Existing provision is currently split between the two existing retail outlets in Walton and the two small supermarkets in Crofton. The available top up shopping expenditure in Walton would appear to support retail floorspace of approximately 200 - 300 m<sup>2</sup> (2150 – 3200 ft<sup>2</sup>) net floorspace. This is based upon Co-op benchmark turnover of £6,040/ metres squared. The scale of the floorspace requirement would however increase if a more localiser operator(s) turnover was used. Existing provision in Walton comprises of approximately 250 m<sup>2</sup> leaving scope for only limited further opportunity for additional retail provision in Walton if it retains a top up shopping function only. All main food shopping and comparison shopping is undertaken outside Walton which is to be expected in a Village of this size.

## **New Housing Provision**

The Wakefield Core Strategy indicates an overall annual housing requirement in all villages of 5% of the housing requirement for the District (Policy CS3). This is not disaggregated by village. The current Annual Monitoring Report (2012) demonstrates that planning permission has already been granted for more dwellings in villages than the total need for the plan period (check). There is therefore no need to identify new housing sites within the Neighbourhood Plan, as this would be contrary to the LDF Core Strategy and the Site Allocation Local Plan. The Core Strategy also restricts the amount of additional houses to be built in villages to meet local needs up to a maximum of 10 dwellings. The assessment of census data demonstrates no specific local needs for Walton or any housing/ household imbalance. The Neighbourhood Plan therefore only needs to identify an approach to dealing with housing sites that come forward rather than specifically identifying new housing sites.

## **5. What Local People Are Saying**

A number of issues and concerns were raised at the November 2012 round of Area Forums. Those relevant to Walton include:-

- Satellite navigation systems causing problems of HGV's on Chevet lane.
- Need to improve public understanding of issues facing disabled people.
- Need to improve community cohesion.
- Need more activities for young people.
- Need to retain our sports facilities and open spaces, not build houses on them.
- Traffic problems through Sandal and Walton. Traffic needs better management.
- Provision of after-retirement facilities.
- Provision for young people in the district, partnerships between Council and Police.
- Running costs of youth groups (plenty of grants for events, etc, but not for rent, staff, etc.).
- Need to encourage volunteering. Issues and concerns raised at previous Area Forum meetings.
- Fly tipping – Nostell Lane, Winterset, railway banks (on towards Chevet).
- Dog fouling is a problem.
- Need to develop intergenerational working.
- There are areas of deprivation – not all of Wakefield Rural is well off.
- Need to improve cohesion within villages and across villages.

## **6. Key Baseline Conclusions**

### **i. Household composition and age profile**

Wakefield Rural has a declining younger population and an increasing aged (65+) population. This is reflected in the age profile of Walton. Walton has a large proportion of owner occupied properties and a relatively smaller number of social rented stock. Planning for and supporting the needs of an ageing population is a key issue for the Neighbourhood Plan as is the issue of retention of younger people.

### **ii. Economic activity and travel to work**

Wakefield Rural has a higher number of self-employed and professional services employees and higher education and skills levels. It has a lower proportion of people claiming benefits. It has a higher proportion of people using the car to get to work and a lower proportion of people without access to the car. The opportunity to increase further working from home and job creation within Walton should be explored and the need to offer alternative means of transport both to work and to services and facilities should be considered further.

### **iii. Services and facilities**

Walton is not identified in the Local Development Framework as a higher order settlement for growth. It is identified as a village with low overall accessibility in the Wakefield Settlement Technical Paper and a linked commuted and tourist centre in the Regional Spatial Strategy: Settlement Study. It provides a level of local services but is reliant upon Crofton, Sandal District Centre and Wakefield City Centre for many of its services. An audit of current services in Walton shows that consideration should be given to provision of medical (and chemist) facilities; limited additional shopping facilities; and an ATM.

### **iv. Green spaces**

Wakefield Rural contains a high proportion of Wakefield's biologically rich sites and they are a valuable element of Walton's character. The Neighbourhood Plan should consider their role, function and opportunity for enhancement.

### **v. Crime and anti-social behaviour**

Crime rates in Wakefield Rural are below the district average. No specific issues have been identified.

### **vi. Playing Pitches**

Wakefield District has a shortage of junior and mini games pitches. Walton has existing provision within the village and there is a planning application for a new sports facility at Brook Farm which is under consideration by the Council. The Neighbourhood Plan should assess whether there are any local playing pitch deficiencies (both qualitatively and quantitatively) and also any other playspace deficiencies such as for a multi-use games area (MUGA).



**vii. Traffic / Transport**

The impact of traffic throughout Walton has been identified by the Area Forums, and the Neighbourhood Plan should consider ways to improve bus patronage and linkage, pedestrian and cycle routes and the impact of the car on the Village..

**viii. Housing**

No new housing sites need to be identified and the Neighbourhood Plan should rather focus upon an approach to dealing with housing sites that are brought forward by others. It should also consider what role the two large Protected Areas of Search Sites have for the Village.

**ix. Heritage and Character**

The village is a true village surrounded by open countryside. The Neighbourhood Plan should consider how to protect this setting whilst addressing the needs of landowners and farmers. The Neighbourhood Plan should also address the opportunity to preserve heritage assets and tree cover whilst also considering the benefits of visitors and enhanced tourism.