

WAKEFIELD



VISITOR GUIDE 2023

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wakefieldcouncil



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WELCOME TO WAKEFIELD

Experience the cultural gateway to Yorkshire, a district with sculpture and art around every corner. Taste world-class restaurant fayre, and enjoy real ale and live music. Pick up hidden gems in independent shops, and relax in sumptuous hotels and accommodation. Uncover industrial heritage sitting alongside green countryside. Be part of centuries-long history and modern stories, show-stopping festivals and exciting events. It's all here, at the heart of West Yorkshire. Come and experience Wakefield.

CONTENTS

4	ART & SCULPTURE
6	HISTORY & HERITAGE
8	MUSIC, THEATRE & FILM
10	FAMILY FUN
12	SHOPPING
14	FOOD & DRINK
17	EVENTS & FESTIVALS
18	WHAT'S ON
20	SPORT & ADVENTURE
22	NATURE & OUTDOORS
24	CASTLEFORD
26	PONTEFRACT
28	WAKEFIELD CITY
30	CHRISTMAS IN WAKEFIELD
32	WHERE TO STAY
34	GETTING HERE
36	WAKEFIELD DISTRICT MAP

Cover: Nostell, National Trust

All information correct at the time of going to print, please check before travelling.



JWA Photography

CAPITAL OF SCULPTURE

The Wakefield district has a deep-seated dedication to art and sculpture. The birthplace of acclaimed artists Henry Moore and Barbara Hepworth, art is in the district's lifeblood. Wakefield is the only place outside London to host two Art Fund Museum of the Year Award-winning galleries.

The first of these is **The Hepworth Wakefield**, a stunning David Chipperfield-designed building on the city's waterfront. It houses an impressive compendium of modern British and international art, with a varied programme of temporary exhibitions and permanent displays. The second, a short journey from the city centre, is the **Yorkshire Sculpture Park**. The park hosts an exciting, ever-changing selection of contemporary and 20th century sculptural works in more than 500 acres of landscaped parkland. The rolling

countryside also provides a backdrop to a sizeable permanent collection, including pieces by both Henry Moore and Barbara Hepworth.

Back in the heart of the city, **The Art House** is a hive of creative activity. The "house that art built" is a small but mighty hub for emerging and established artists to exhibit their work, and for audiences to engage with the creative process. Look out for workshops, open studio days, artist talks and lots more.

A five-minute walk away, **Neon Workshops** showcases the quirky,

esoteric art form of neon sculpture through a programme of vibrant exhibitions.

At all the artistic venues in the Wakefield district, there's a strong focus on getting involved, so watch out for workshops and craft sessions designed for all skill levels to help you get those creative juices flowing!



The Art House

TAKE A WALK ON THE ART SIDE

Have you discovered Artwalk Wakefield? This love-letter to visual arts occurs every other month, and is an evening of art, performance, music, heritage and socialising, held in a series of quirky, independent venues across Wakefield city centre. From prints in a pub to gardening in a gallery, you never know quite what to expect - except the unexpected!

Previous Artwalks have included major exhibition launches by international artists alongside local film festivals, guided historical tours, a homage to Bob Ross for a paint-a-long (in a cocktail bar!) and an interactive parody of 90's favourite Neil Buchanan's Big Art Attack.



Barbara Hepworth, Squares with Two Circles, 1963. © Bowness. Courtesy Tate and YSP. Photo © Jonty Wilde

DON'T MISS!

1. Hurvin Anderson Curates, The Hepworth Wakefield

26 May - 29 October
Hurvin Anderson will curate paintings drawn from public collections in the UK to take visitors on a journey through his influences.

2. Jessie Davies, The Art House

4 March - 9 April
Jessie Davies' painting practice highlights the importance of the UK's fragile and threatened wetland environments.

3. Lindsey Mendick: Where The Bodies Are Buried, Yorkshire Sculpture Park

6 April - 3 September
Installation excavating the artist's memories, history and myths of the Bretton Estate, and cultural experiences from the '80s to the early 2000s.

4. Public Art Trail, Wakefield city centre

From summer 2023
Look out for an exciting new trail of specially commissioned public artworks and sculptures dotted around the centre of Wakefield.



FROM ROMANS TO RHUBARB

Wakefield's heritage goes back thousands of years. Explore the heroes, villains, rulers and ordinary people who've helped to shape its extraordinary stories.

Dating from the early 14th century, **Wakefield Cathedral** has witnessed many of these. The owner of Yorkshire's tallest spire, the cathedral also boasts soaring Victorian architecture, beautiful mediaeval features (including the intricately carved rood screen and blue quire ceiling), and a quiet peace in the heart of the bustling city.

Nearby, its tiny neighbour, charming **Chantry Chapel**, is the oldest and most ornate of England's surviving bridge chapels.

Delve into the country's mining heritage at the **National Coal Mining Museum**.

A former working mine, the museum features more than a dozen galleries, interactive displays, living history interpretation, and more. An absolute must-do is an Underground Tour, led by former miners.

From the salt of the earth to the lords of the manor, **National Trust Nostell** is one of the north's great treasure houses. This Palladian mansion, the work of Robert Adam, contains opulent wonders, including its collection of Chippendale furniture, uniquely residing in the home for which it was designed.



WAKEFIELD MUSEUMS AND CASTLES

Wakefield Museums and Castles tell the story of Wakefield, its people, and their impact on the world, through a group of three museums and two castles.

From the Roman Legions to Rugby League, **Castleford Museum** is a treasure-trove of stories. Kids will love the chance to dress up as a Roman legionnaire and handle ancient objects.

Once known as the Key to the North, **Pontefract Castle** is a space for family fun, with intriguing ruins to explore. See if you've got what it takes to be a Civil Wars soldier! See the country's first secret ballot box, marvel at the glittering beauty of the **Ackworth Hoard**, and try out liquorice-themed soft play at **Pontefract Museum**.

The site of the Battle of Wakefield (and mentioned in Shakespeare's *Henry VI, Part 2*) **Sandal Castle's** romantic ruins provide a picturesque backdrop to views across the Calder Valley. **Wakefield Museum** is a multi-sensory experience - use an iron age quern, hear rhubarb growing, make yourself cosy in the front room and lots more!

Wakefield Museums and Castles offer a year-round programme of exciting events, workshops, talks and tours. Visit **Experience Wakefield** for details.

DON'T MISS!

1. Life with the Lionesses: Women in Rugby League, Pontefract Museum

Until 26 August

Explore the story of the trailblazing female pioneers of women's international rugby league.

2. Rescue!, National Coal Mining Museum

18 March - 1 October

See how mine operators learn from mining disasters to create a Mines Rescue service with state-of-the-art equipment.

3. Heritage Open Days, Wakefield District

8 - 17 September

Peek behind the scenes, see hidden places and try out new experiences at heritage properties as you celebrate our history.

4. Wheelfest, Pontefract town centre

10 June

A display of vintage classic cars, bikes and more. Plus, a market, craft fair, rides, entertainment and more.



Shaun Hugh

SHOWTIME!

When people think of Wakefield's creativity, they probably call to mind mid-century sculpture or bold modern art. But the district's artistry isn't just visual, it's audible, too, with festivals, gigs and concerts taking place all across the district.

Best known is **Long Division**, an award-winning festival showcasing emerging grassroots artists and legends of Indie and DIY. Long Division's previous headliners have included The Cribs, Billy Bragg, British Sea Power, The Fall, Ash and more. Less-known but no less eclectic, the annual **Clarence Park Festival** is Yorkshire's longest-running free music festival, covering all genres.

Proms at the Castle is an evening of stirring classical music in the atmospheric surroundings of

Pontefract Castle, with a spectacular fireworks finish. **Friarwood Festival** in Pontefract keeps the good times going, presenting the best local bands and artists alongside fringe activity. Roaming festival **Yonder** features outdoor DJ sets and indoor live acts alongside its artisan stalls and street-food vendors.

It's not just festivals, though. There are scores of smaller gigs and concerts everywhere you look. **Bodys** and **Philophobia Music** programme 2-band line-ups of exciting emerging

artists from the district and beyond in unusual spaces across the city.

Wakefield Jazz hosts "West Yorkshire's favourite Friday night", featuring the best British, European and American jazz musicians.



Meanwhile **Venue 23** provides a permanent home for a variety of live music acts, including a plethora of tribute bands and theme nights.

Experience the soaring acoustics of **Wakefield Cathedral** with weekly, free lunchtime concerts.

Of course, music's not the only performance you'll find in the district: **Theatre Royal Wakefield** has every genre you could possibly want, and more, with creative director John Godber overseeing a packed schedule of comedy, drama, musicals and more. Find out more at expwake.co/MusicTheatre



John Jowett



CINEMA FANTASTIQUE

Quirky is a Wakefield speciality, and why should cinema be different? **Catacomb Cinee** at **Westgate Unitarian Chapel** is a unique experience. Where else can you see classic black and white films in a mysterious, eerie crypt? Let's hope the catacomb "residents" are film lovers...



Anthony Longstaff



MAKE SOME MEMORIES

We'll be honest, we're in Yorkshire, the sun doesn't always shine, and the weather could be described as changeable to say the least, but that doesn't stop the fun!

Wakefield has a multitude of exciting, action-packed, and inspiring experiences for families, regardless of the weather!

Plan a fun-fuelled day out at **Xscape Yorkshire**: test out your skill, nerve and reflexes on the new e-karts, bounce your way around **Gravity**, sledge down the real snow ski slope or take in the view from the 70ft high skycoaster. With all this and more, you may need to stay for a while!

Get kitted out with a miner's helmet and lamp and take the cage down 140m into the dark depths of the mine at the

National Coal Mining Museum. There's also loads more to explore above ground, including a nature trail, adventure playground and the handsome resident pit ponies.

From one type of digging to another... have you ever fancied having a go at driving a real digger? We have just the place. **Diggerland** has 20 themed rides and drives, providing plenty of fun for kids (and big kids too!).

Speaking of rides, **Pugneys Light Railway** is a 7¼" gauge, passenger-carrying miniature railway,



providing train rides for all the family, located in **Pugneys Country Park**. All aboard!

For outdoor fun, discover the Room on the Broom Trail at **Anglers Country Park**. Follow the clues around the lake to find Witch, Cat and other characters from the well-loved children's book by Julia Donaldson.

March to the top of the keep at **Sandal Castle**, explore the dark dungeons at **Pontefract Castle** or play as you learn at the district's three museums in **Wakefield, Pontefract and Castleford**.

Yorkshire Sculpture Park is ideal for families. Kids can burn off steam in the picturesque parkland while taking in world-class sculpture.

For more culture, find inspiration in the sculptures at **The Hepworth Wakefield** and create your own works of art with the help of the gallery's Explore & Draw kits.



DON'T MISS!

1. Dragon Egg Hunt, Pontefract Castle

1 - 9 April

Help Ilbert the Dragon find all the eggs, take part in storytelling, eco-friendly activities, outdoor games and a Dragon Parade!

2. Easter @ Pit: The Wild Escape, National Coal Mining Museum

1 - 16 April

Sparky the canary has escaped! Make a model of Sparky and see what plants and animals he discovers around the site.

3. Pumpkin Festival, Farmer Copleys

October

Pick your own pumpkin and enjoy tractor rides, fancy dress, pumpkin carving, craft workshops and lots more.

4. World Coal Carrying Championships, Gawthorpe

10 April

Whether you take part in this quirky race or watch from the finish line, it's sure to be a most memorable day out!





RETAIL THERAPY

Shopping in the Wakefield district is an exciting experience. We're home to a variety of shopping centres housing the biggest brands, as well as a fantastic selection of independent boutiques and craft makers.

If you want to get all your shopping done in one place, you can't go wrong at Wakefield's **Trinity Walk** and **The Ridings Shopping Centre**, or at **Carlton Lanes Shopping Centre** in Castleford. Want to bag yourself a bargain? **Junction 32** serves up outlet shopping with up to 60% off in over 85 of the high street's biggest names.

We all like to have something a bit special, an item that no one else has seen before, and that's where Wakefield's independent retail shines. Whether you're after unique gifts for

loved ones, cool new hobby equipment, or something stunning to show off in your home, the Wakefield district has an independent shop that's perfect for you.

For something even more special, why not track down something that's been made here, too? Pontefract's **Forever After Market**, Wakefield's **Made & Found In Yorkshire** and **The Art House Shop** are hives of creativity, selling items that have been lovingly made by artisan makers across the district. From ceramic home - wares to handcrafted jewellery,

art prints to apparel, the best thing about shopping here is that no two items are the same, and you can be sure of picking up something truly unique.

And wherever you choose to get your retail fix, you can find regular and speciality markets taking place throughout the year. The markets offer a variety of locally grown produce, handmade crafts and gifts galore.

So, whether you're looking for a bargain, the latest trends or something truly unique, you'll find it all in the Wakefield district.



Tatiana Hepplewhite



Tatiana Hepplewhite

GREAT INDIE FARM SHOPS

Looking for locally-sourced, farm-to-fork goodness? Wakefield's the place for you.

Farmer Copleys, in Pontefract, is a farm shop where you can do a whole week's shopping in one place. With an excellent vegetable stall and fantastic butchery, see if you can put off being tempted by their amazing pies and craft beers.

One of the first farm shops in the district, Wakefield's **Blacker Hall Farm** prides itself on the fact that more than 75% of everything sold in the shop is produced and prepared on-site, especially their famous award-winning beef products.

If you're looking for a good, honest down-to-earth farm shop with no frills, Castleford's **Methley Bridge Farm Shop** is the one! The shop isn't huge, but it has everything you need - meat, seasonal vegetables, bread, dairy, fruit and preserves.

It doesn't get more Yorkshire than rhubarb, and John Edward Dobson, owner of the Carlton-based **Rhubarb Triangle Farm Shop**, was one of the first to develop the Yorkshire forced rhubarb technology.



In addition to being rhubarb pioneers, the Rhubarb Triangle Farm Shop sells a wide variety of local farm produce and boasts a tasty delicatessen counter.

Find out more at: expwake.co/Shopping



TREAT YOUR TASTEBUDS

Wakefield is serious about food and drink - we've got festivals dedicated to our most famous culinary exports, after all!

The Wakefield district's food and drink offerings allow you to span the globe without making a big dent on your carbon footprint.

For a taste of the Mediterranean, enjoy traditional Greek meze at **Nikoz Greek & Mediterranean Restaurant**, Italian cicchetti at **Fino** and Spanish tapas at **Jose's Tapas Restaurant**. Want to travel further afield? You can't go wrong with contemporary Thai and Vietnamese at **Tét** or aromatic Indian at **Lalas**.

Coffee lovers will find plenty of fantastic cafes dotted around the district. In Wakefield city centre try connoisseurs **Kraft Koffee**, stylish **Bakes by Vanilla Bean** or ever-popular **Marmalade on the Square**. In Pontefract, visit picture-perfect **Blondies**, delectable **DJs** or the **Castle Coffee Shop** at **Pontefract Castle**, while over in Ossett and Horbury you can globetrot to Greece

with **Olympus Bakery & Café** or Scandinavia with **ØL**.

Wakefield lives up to its nickname the "Merrie City" with a fantastic range of cosy pubs and quirky bars. Real ale lovers will be in heaven at **Ossett Brewery's The Hop** or **The Kings Arms**, while **The Junction** and the **Bradley Arms** serve up pints from more of the district's breweries, such as **Five Towns Breweries** and **Revolutions Brewing Company**.

For cocktails and good vibes check out **RBT Video** - a speakeasy designed as an 80s video store. More top cocktail venues include **The Mad Ox**, **Supper Club** and **The Golden Pineapple**.

These are just a small selection of the eclectic mix of high quality food and drink venues across the Wakefield district. Visit our website to discover more. Cheers! Find out more at: expwake.co/Food

BE-LEAF THE HYPE!



More and more people are switching to a vegetarian or fully vegan diet. Whether you're looking to get healthy, help the planet or you're a big-time animal lover, Wakefield has a whole bunch (pardon the pun) of plant-based restaurants and cafés for you to choose from.

Wakefield city centre restaurant **Corarima** is a great place to start. Their menu is naturally vegan-friendly so you won't find plant-based substitutes, or vegan alternatives - here, plant-based is the delicious, moreish star of the show. Oh, and it's also gluten free, too!

Throwback Coffee House Wakefield city centre, is something of a misnomer, they're actually more of a throw-forward: featuring



a super-cool interior (inspired by tattoo artists, plants and all-round good vibes), a menu full of vegan treats, and ethically sourced coffee (and oat milk, of course), it's a trailblazer, and the perfect spot for those of a plant-based persuasion.

Those with a sweet tooth will love **Doboy Donuts**. With branches in Wakefield and Castleford, Doboy has a menu full of huge, extra-special donuts packed full of flavour, topped with all manner of delights, baked fresh 7 days a week - and proud to be vegan friendly!

With seasonal variations and special creations appearing on the menu throughout the year, there's a gooey, indulgent treat for everyone.

Like Doboy, **Ego** has a couple of venues in the Wakefield district: **Ego at The Bull's Head** in Horbury, and **Ego at The Beverley Arms** in Ackworth. Both boast menus packed full of delightful dishes from





around the Mediterranean - including French, Spanish, Italian, Greek and Moroccan food - and have a dedicated vegan menu, so you can indulge in fine dining, guilt-free.

Located in the heart of Wakefield city centre, **Tết** is a chic, stylish East Asian restaurant featuring slick, modern decor and serving delicious Vietnamese and Thai food. They have a dedicated vegan menu with classic staples and seasonal delicacies, including tom yum mushroom, tofu panang curry, and sweet corn cake.



BRILL BRUNCH SPOTS

1. Mocca Moocho, Wakefield city centre

Offering everything from full English breakfasts to tasty pastries and homemade sweet treats, they also have a fabulous brunch menu, for those who wake up a little later.

2. Whisk, Walton

A small but cosy coffee shop in the beautiful village of Walton, offering breakfast and sweet treats (try the freshly cooked waffles!).

3. Boogie Woogie Bagel Bar, Wakefield city centre

Home to the finest bagels and filtered coffee in Wakefield! Mix it up with sweet or savoury fillings as you relax to the beat of smooth jazz. Nice.

4. Ma B's Kitchen, Stanley

Looking for a hearty way to start the day? How about a stack of fluffy pancakes? Home baked cakes? Luxurious hot chocolate? Bean-to-cup coffee? You'll find it all at Ma B's!



TEMPTING FÊTE!

Since mediaeval times, Wakefield has been known as the “Merrie City” and whether you’re a foodie, an enthusiastic heritage buff or just looking for free family fun, look no further than the Wakefield district for vibrant events and festivals.

Food fanatics should head to the **Rhubarb Festival** with its famous food and drink market, lively street entertainment, chef demos, craft workshops, live music and array of fringe activities. Or why not satisfy your sweet tooth at **Pontefract Liquorice Festival** for all the above, but with a liquorice-themed twist? Make words count as **WordFest** takes over local libraries with a whole month of non-stop free activities including everything from author talks and storytelling to music and film showings.

Take a journey through time at **Castleford Roman Festival** and discover the history beneath the streets whilst enjoying family friendly activities.

The Wakefield district is also a great place to celebrate each other - **Wakefield Armed Forces Day** takes place in the beautiful grounds of Pontefract Park and Racecourse whilst **Wakefield Pride** returns each summer with its iconic parade - don't forget your flags!

Summer holidays are kickstarted with an evening of beautiful music and fireworks at

Proms at Pontefract Castle before it's time to grab your bucket and spade as **Grand Day Out** brings the seaside to Wakefield with sand, sun, street entertainment and more.

As the nights draw in, get yourself into the festive spirit with **Light Up** marking the start of the Christmas season. Expect a series of magical events lighting up the district.



WHAT'S ON

There's lots happening all across the Wakefield district this year - we've picked some of our stand-out favourites for you to put in your diary.

HER PERFORMANCE IS TAKING PLACE AT THE BEGINNING AND END OF THE WORLD

The Art House

29 March - 13 May 2023

The work of some of the most exciting emerging female artists working today.



Hurvin Anderson, Flat Top, 2008.
© Hurvin Anderson. Courtesy the artist and Thomas Dane Gallery. Photo: Hugh Kelly

WAKEFIELD CLASSIC & AMERICAN CAR & BIKE SHOW

Wakefield city centre
30 April

Wakefield BID presents a display of American and classic cars and bikes.



SUCKER PUNCH

Theatre Royal Wakefield
23 - 27 May 2023

Leading British dramatist Roy Williams explores being young and black in the '80s

HURVIN ANDERSON: BARBERSHOP

The Hepworth Wakefield

26 May - 5 November 2023

This exhibition focuses on Hurvin Anderson's Barbershop paintings including the largest and final work in the series.



CASTLEFORD ROMAN FESTIVAL

Castleford town centre
10 June 2023

Explore the town's Roman heritage with a themed market, demos, family activities and entertainment.



LONG DIVISION

Wakefield city centre
10 June 2023

Final outing for the award-winning music festival, featuring the best emerging grassroots artists alongside legends of indie and DIY.



Erwin Wurm, Big Kastenmann, 2012.
© Studio Erwin Wurm, VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn

ERWIN WURM

Yorkshire Sculpture Park

10 June 2023 - 28 April 2024

Wurm's first UK exhibition, presenting sculpture, painting, photographs, video and drawings.



BOLD AS BRASS

National Coal Mining Museum

17 June 2023

Celebrate the association between brass bands and coal mining with marching bands and an entertaining contest.



WAKEFIELD ARMED FORCES DAY

Pontefract Park

17 June 2023

Military extravaganza featuring displays, stalls, military bands, children's entertainment and more!



PONTEFRACT LIQUORICE FESTIVAL

Pontefract town centre
9 July 2023

Enjoy liquorice food and drink as well as dancers, musicians, street entertainers plus food, craft and gift stalls.



PROMS AT THE CASTLE

Pontefract Castle

15 July 2023

An evening of beautiful music in the historic grounds of Pontefract Castle, with a colourful fireworks finale.



CLARENCE PARK MUSIC FESTIVAL

Clarence Park

29 - 30 July 2023

Yorkshire's longest running free music festival, with an eclectic mix of musical styles, local DJs, bar, delicious food and a variety of stalls.



A GRAND DAY OUT

Wakefield district

August 2023

Bringing the seaside to the district, enjoy all the fun of a day at the beach, including a giant sandpit.

WAKEFIELD PRIDE

Wakefield city centre

13 August 2023

Support and celebrate the LGBTQIA+ community with workshops, live performance and the iconic parade.



LIGHT UP

Wakefield district

17 - 26 November 2023

Kick off the festive season in style, with a series of events bathing the district in light and colour!



RHUBARB FESTIVAL

Wakefield city centre

16 - 18 February 2024

Celebrate everyone's favourite pink vegetable with the legendary food and drink market, street entertainment, chef demos and lots more.

For prices, booking and more information, check [ExperienceWakefield.co.uk](https://www.experiencewakefield.co.uk)



THRILLS, SPILLS & CHILLS...

Looking for adventure? Wakefield is the ideal destination, whether you're watching from the sidelines or right in the heart of the action.

The Wakefield district is known for its rugby league heritage, and fans will love the authentic atmosphere as they cheer on local Super League rivals **Castleford Tigers** and **Wakefield Trinity**, and the Championship's **Featherstone Rovers**.

One of the district's must-do sporting experiences is a day at **Pontefract Racecourse**, Europe's longest continuous flat racing circuit. Even casual racegoers will love the season's many theme days, including Flat Cap and Whippet Day (celebrate everything Yorkshire!) and the iconic Ladies Day (posh frocks at the ready!).

If you'd rather participate than spectate, there are ample opportunities. Wakefield's got some great golf courses for you to practise your swing, including the **City of Wakefield Golf Club**, an 18-hole, par 72 course set in undulating mature parkland.

In Pontefract, **Aspire @ the Park** offers a Climbing Zone, 4G football pitch, 10-lane swimming pool, and bike hire. Other state-of-the-art leisure facilities can be found at **Featherstone Sports Complex** and **Thornes Park Stadium**.

Burn up the track at **Wakefield Indoor Karting**, featuring one

of the most challenging tarmac circuits in the country. Don't get caught out on the hairpin bends!



Yorkshire Tactical Activities is a woodland paintball, airsoft and laser tag venue with 100 acres over multiple game zones so you and your friends can battle it out across tanks, castles, villages and more.

Taking the fear factor up a notch, **Yorkshire Scare Grounds** is a seasonal thrill you won't want to miss. When Halloween comes around, the scream-park invites thrill-seekers into terrifying haunted houses, scare mazes and scare zones, with horrifying roaming characters and lots more!

For a truly retro experience, pull on your skates and roll on down to **Fusion Skating**. Try out a beginner's class until you find your feet and feel ready to join in regular open skate sessions.



FIND YOUR NEXT ADRENALINE RUSH

Those with an adventurous spirit will love **Xscape** in Castleford. Hit the real snow slopes at **Snozone**; battle through the laser labyrinths at **LaserZone**; take on the climbing walls at **Gravity Rocks**, bounce around at **Gravity Trampoline Parks**, fly through the skies at **Gravity Aerial Adventures**, zip around the unique track at **Gravity E-Karting**; tackle golf with a twist at **4D Golf** and **Volcano Falls Adventure Golf**; go bowling at **Tenpin**; enter a virtual world at **Immotion VR** and solve the fiendish clues at **The Escapologist**. All that plus delicious food and drink venues, and **4DX Cineworld**... you need a whole day to explore it all!





THE CALL OF THE WILD

The Wakefield district is 70% rural. Whether you're looking for cosy pastoral fields, the sun-dappled sparkle of lakes and waterways, the splendour of ancient country estates or the sacred hush of wild woodland, you'll find it here.

The district has a large number of country parks, in many cases the result of post-industrial rewilding. **Pugneys Country Park** is one such. The site of a former opencast mine, little visitors will adore the Blown Away adventure trail, zipline, adventure playground and more, while walkers can take their time as they loop round the park's two lakes - the smaller is a designated nature reserve - then head up the hill to explore the ruins of **Sandal Castle**.

Historic **Anglers Country Park** is the site of the world's first nature reserve, and is still a fantastic space for wildlife watching as you make your way through the park. Anglers is conveniently located next to the magnificent

Haw Park Woods and **Winterset Reservoir** (the location of the West Riding Sailing Club).

The serenity of **Newmillerdam Country Park** features a magical lakeside path and woodland. Take in a variety of bird species and the serenity of the Arboretum. The Gnome Roam gives children something to focus on during a trip, and a walk is not complete without stopping at **The Boathouse** for locally-sourced treats.

From coalface to wild place, **RSPB Fairburn Ings** is a sanctuary for birds and animal life of all kinds, with such diverse habitats as open water, wet grasslands, deciduous woodlands and lagoons providing a haven of peace and tranquillity for some of the UK's rarest birds.



ACTIVE ADVENTURE

There are some wonderful walks and cycling trails in Wakefield. The **Wakefield Way** is a 70-mile rural ramble around the district's boundary, taking in hidden gems as well as Wakefield's best-known spots.

The **Wakefield Wheel** is a circular cycling route through quaint villages, pretty towns and stunning open countryside.

The **Transpennine Trail** takes visitors through some of the area's most beautiful landscapes, and either walking or cycling this route is a great way to immerse yourself in the glories of the natural world.

If you'd prefer urban exploration, **The Art House's** cycle stations invite you to "cycle to culture", while the city of Wakefield itself is full of walking trails pointing out some of the area's special sites and hidden histories.

Find out more at: expwake.co/Nature

DID YOU KNOW?

Anglers Country Park, the world's first nature reserve, was created in the 1800s by pioneering Victorian eco-warrior Charles Waterton.

A local landowner, and inhabitant of nearby **Walton Hall** (now a world-class hotel), Waterton was passionate about wildlife and the need for conservation. He built a wall 9-feet high and more than 3 miles long, around his estate to keep out poachers (and the local fox population).

Furnishing the wildlife in his haven with various proto-nesting boxes and birdhouses, he even set up dummy-birds to fool any poachers who did manage to sneak into the park, and hides so he could record the species that made their home there.

Over 30 years, he recorded well over a hundred species of birds in Walton Hall Park.



EXPLORE CASTLEFORD

The birthplace of artists Henry Moore and Albert Wainwright; a place with a proud rugby heritage and a history going back to the Iron Age, the market town of Castleford is a hive of activity.

The site of a Roman settlement, Castleford has seen more history than most. Uncover the town's unique history in **Castleford Museum**. See an ancient Iron Age Chariot, learn about what life was like in Roman Lagentium and relive days gone by in the photography of Jack Hulme. Don't miss the beautiful Henry Moore sculpture in the library on the floor below! Shoppers will love Castleford's indoor and outdoor markets. Browse the colourful stalls and pick up anything and everything from the finest freshly caught fish to clothes,

books, games and lots more. Or pop into **Carlton Lanes Shopping Centre** for high street names, then treat yourself to a delicious pick-me-up in one of the town's independent eateries and tearooms. Standing proudly on the banks of the river Aire, **Queen's Mill** is the world's largest stone grinding flour mill, with twenty pairs of stones. The site has housed a working mill since Roman times, and flour has been produced here for an almost unbroken period of more than 900 years. Although it still produces its own flour, these days Queen's Mill

is home to **Queen's Mill Tea Rooms**, local coffee roasters **Recent Beans**, **Yorkshire Craft Beers**, **Riverside Paint a Pot** and artists studios, as well as hosting theatre, concerts, craft markets and more throughout the year.



THE HOME OF RUGBY

The hugely popular sport of rugby league was born and bred in West Yorkshire, originating here in 1895. Since that time, the game has spread all over the world, and is now played and watched globally. Its heritage, however, remains deeply rooted in the district, with the very first Castleford club - aptly named Castleford RFC - joining the league in 1896. The town's more famous team, **Castleford Tigers**, was established in 1926, with "Classy Cas" delighting fans and devastating foes for almost a century since. Nowadays, the Tigers are known up and down the country and enjoy a close rivalry with neighbours **Featherstone Rovers** and **Wakefield Trinity**.



DON'T MISS!

1. Junction 32 Yorkshire Shopping Outlet

With nearly 100 brands to choose from, you'll be spoilt for choice when you indulge in some bargain hunting at this superb outlet village.

2. Xscape Yorkshire

Just across the road from Junction 32 is the ultimate fun-fuelled destination offering skiing, climbing, adventure golf, cinema and loads more.

3. Diggerland

Drive and operate real diggers, dumpers and other full-size construction machinery across 20 different rides and drives.

4. RSPB Fairburn Ings

Get closer to nature in this lush green nature reserve, which offers an exciting place for families to create their own wildlife adventures.



HISTORIC PONTEFRACT

With heritage galore, history buffs will be beguiled as you explore this classic West Yorkshire market town's Georgian streets and ancient ginnels, cute cafes, captivating castle and lots more.



A true hidden gem, the picturesque market town of Pontefract is home to the imposing ruins of **Pontefract Castle**. With spectacular views and fascinating dungeons to investigate, it's an adventure not to be missed. Only a short walk away you'll find the historic marketplace. Fine examples of Georgian architecture obscure a network of mediaeval ginnels with the odd burst of street art thrown into the mix.

To uncover more of the town's long and turbulent history visit the beautifully curated **Pontefract Museum**, set in a charming art nouveau building, which offers intriguing exhibitions and family activities.

The town has a vibrant market and a whole

host of independent boutiques, quaint tearooms and cosy coffee shops. Don't miss out on a bit of antiquing at the **Magistrates Market** (and pop upstairs to **Forever After Collective** to pick up a handcrafted treasure!) and end the day unwinding with a quality local brew in one of the town's many quirky pubs, thanks to Pontefract's emerging real ale and craft beer scene.

If you need a break from the hustle and bustle, take a stroll through the green spaces of **Friarwood Valley Gardens** or visit **Pontefract Park** and its neighbours **Aspire @ the Park** and **Pontefract Racecourse**.



THE KEY TO THE NORTH

From its construction in 1070 to its demise following the Civil Wars, the once-fearsome fortress of **Pontefract Castle** dominated Yorkshire and beyond, bearing witness to some of England's most momentous historical events earning itself the name of the Key to the North!

Today, the castle is a place of family-friendly adventure, with wide open spaces to explore and play, and fascinating ruins to investigate. Climb to the top of the keep and see the surrounding Yorkshire countryside, and visit the castle gift shop for a colourful range of souvenirs, gifts, books and ice creams.



ALLSORTS OF FUN

Pontefract's historic link with liquorice dates back to the Middle Ages. Sap extracted from the roots of the plant was used medicinally by monks until George Dunhill, a Pontefract apothecary, added sugar to the recipe and produced the first 'Pomfret Cakes' sweets in 1760.

Today, Pontefract is still home to world-renowned confectionery brand Haribo and "Pontefract Cakes" can be bought at **Pontefract Castle** (still stamped with a stylised replica of the castle, as is tradition).

The town is so fond of liquorice that it hosts **Pontefract Liquorice Festival** every July, with **Liquorice Shoots** celebrations for the locals.

Find out more at expwake.co/DiscoverPontefract



Jason Ingram

24 HOURS IN WAKEFIELD

Go on a whistle-stop tour of Wakefield, as we show you how to get the most out of a day in the city!

MORNING

The best way to get your bearings is to look up: there you'll see the 247-foot spire of **Wakefield Cathedral** (the tallest in Yorkshire!). Located in the heart of the city, it's an excellent base to help you find your way around.

From there, make your way through the **Civic Quarter**, taking in its beautiful architecture, and head to **The Art House**, a creative space for artists and makers with a programme of inspiring exhibitions, courses and workshops. A short walk away is **Wakefield Museum**: discover a wealth of local treasures and learn surprising facts about the city.

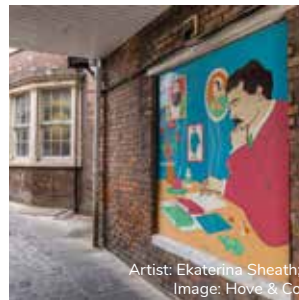
AFTERNOON

Your next stop is **The Hepworth Wakefield**, an award-winning art gallery on the city's historic waterfront. While you're there, take a moment to immerse yourself in the beautiful garden, a tranquil space combining sculpture with nature. A few yards away you'll find **Tileyard North**, a creative industries hub.

Looking for some retail therapy instead? With two shopping centres, **The Ridings** and **Trinity Walk**, and a huge array of independent shops, - to choose from, selling anything from vinyl and handcrafted gifts to blankets and skateboards. Don't forget your wallet!

EVENING

Theatre Royal Wakefield offers a great night out - with a full programme of something for everyone, you're sure to find a performance to suit your taste. If you're more in the mood for a cocktail or a real ale to top off your busy day, the city has an eclectic mix of bars and pubs offering space to kick back and relax, or dance the night away to live music.



DID YOU KNOW?

1. The home of neon...

Established in 2010 by artist Richard William Wheeler, **Neon Workshops** specialises in the development and manufacturing of neon lighting. The Wakefield-based facilities are home to a gallery and public resource library, while visitors can also book onto neon-making courses and workshops.

2. Westgate Heritage Action Zone

Westgate boasts some of Wakefield's most beautiful buildings including the Grade II* listed **Theatre Royal Wakefield** and the early 20th century **Unity Hall**. A self-guided walk showcases the unique history



David Lindsay

available free on the Love Exploring app or at **Theatre Royal Wakefield** while new artworks can be seen throughout the area celebrating Westgate's heritage.

3. Explore catacombs

Westgate Unitarian Chapel is a fine Grade II listed Georgian building with its own catacombs. These may be the earliest in the country to be opened for public burials. Many industrialists, innovators, merchant princes, members of Parliament and political radicals are interred there. Look out for open days and events!





A MERRIE LITTLE CHRISTMAS

Christmas in Wakefield is a truly magical affair! With enchanting decorated venues to explore, a whole horde of jolly Father Christmases to meet (and convince that you're definitely on the nice list), vibrant markets, delicious food and drink, showstopping live events and lots more, your Christmas stocking is full to the brim with lovely things.

The start of the season is heralded by **Light Up**, a festive extravaganza of light and colour across the district. Enjoy seasonal food and drinks, pick up gifts at one of the accompanying Christmas markets, or take part in family entertainment.

Speaking of Christmas markets, **The Hepworth Wakefield's Festive Market** is a fantastic place to start your Christmas shopping and support independent makers, with dozens of stalls selling ceramics, homeware, prints, textiles and more.

Another Wakefield Christmas stalwart is **Theatre Royal Wakefield's** legendary pantomime. This Christmas must-have experience features dazzling sets, spectacular costumes and good old belly laughs. 2023's pantomime is fairytale classic **Sleeping Beauty** - spinning wheels and sassy fairies at the ready! To get even the biggest Grinch into the Christmas spirit, take a trip to **National Trust Nostell**. See the palatial house dressed to the nines in the finest festive foliage,

enjoy blazing log fires, and be lulled by seasonal music. If you've been good, you might even see dear old St Nicholas himself strolling around the wintry grounds.



From a feast for the eyes to a treat for the ears: the Wakefield district is host to several special concerts throughout the Christmas season. Chief among them is **Wakefield Cathedral's** flagship concert, **Carols by Candlelight**, a splendid evening of carols, presented by the sublime Cathedral Choir, in the atmospheric surrounds of the candlelit cathedral.

If you're looking for an opportunity to get hands-on, look no further than one of the district's many workshops. So you can flex those creative muscles while making your own decorations, wrapping or gifts.

Visit **Experience Wakefield** to help plan your festive break.



A TALE OF TWO SANTAS

It wouldn't be Christmas without Santa, and while there are ample opportunities to meet the jolly old man all across the Wakefield district, there are a few quirky options, too. **Pontefract Museum's** famous **Liquorice Santa** is resplendent in his sweet-themed grotto, accompanied by sweetie-themed crafts and workshops.

Then, head to the **National Coal Mining Museum** and descend 140 metres below the earth for **Santa Underground**. Join this truly unique St Nick in his atmospheric, subterranean grotto. Good children will receive a present and certificate while naughty ones will get - what else! - coal.





STAY A WHILE

With so many things to see and do during your visit to Wakefield, you'll need a place to stay for a while - here are some of our top picks.

From self-catering farm stays and cosy B&Bs to sumptuous luxury hotels, you'll find an excellent choice of places to stay to suit all budgets across the Wakefield district.

Set on a lake surrounded by historic woodland, **Waterton Park Hotel** and **Walton Hall**, with its relaxing spa, is the perfect tranquil retreat.

Wentbridge House Hotel offers opulence and escapism: with award winning fine dining experiences, this country house hotel provides something special for the discerning foodie.

Only a short drive from the buzz of the city centre but with enough distance to relax in its peaceful setting, **Best Western Hotel St Pierre** in Newmillerdam makes a wonderful base to explore the area.

Characterful **Rogerthorpe Manor Hotel** is steeped in history and charm, ideal for families or a weekend with friends.

Set in 8 acres of landscaped grounds, **Kings Croft Hotel** in Pontefract offers the best of both worlds: an idyllic countryside setting, just 1 mile from the M62 and A1.

Visitors looking for a budget break should check out the **Holiday Inn Express** in Wakefield city centre, or the superb value **Premier Inn** and **Travelodge** hotels around the district.

For a home from home experience, where you'll always be guaranteed a warm Yorkshire welcome, choose a cosy B&B like **Tower House Executive Guest House** in Pontefract.

Find out more at expwake.co/Stay



SELF-CATERING SPOTLIGHT

Nothing beats a home-away-from-home, and Wakefield has an abundance of self-catering options.

Looking for luxury? **Skyhold Stays**, a renovated Victorian villa in the heart of Wakefield, has everything you need - including a games room with Smart TV, PS4 and more.

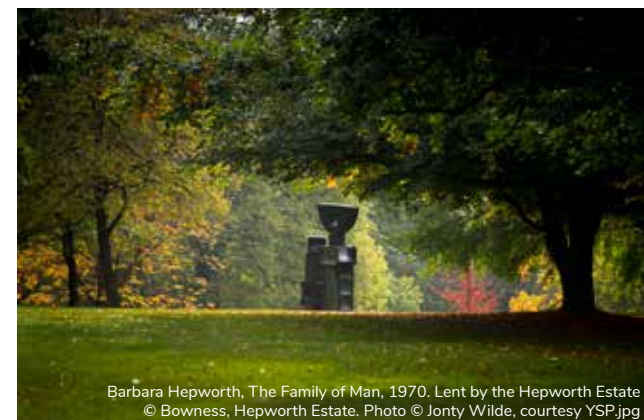
Down to earth? Stay on a working farm at **The Farmhouse**, Farmer Copleys' on-site accommodation. Stylish and spacious, it even has a hot tub - for serious relaxing.

Enjoy the finer things at **Luxury Suites and Studios by Bootique**. Offering high-end comfort at affordable

prices, this collection of suites are chic, modern and close to the city centre.

Culture vultures will love charming **Smithy Ridge Mews**, located right next door to the **Yorkshire Sculpture Park**.

Perhaps cutest of all is **The Lambing Shed**. Tucked away in the village of Ryhill, this shepherd's hut makes a cosy hideaway for up to 2 people (did someone say Valentine's staycation?).





GETTING HERE AND AROUND

The Wakefield district is ideally located at the heart of West Yorkshire and is easily accessible by all methods of transport.

Wakefield is situated at the crossroads of the **M1** and **M62** and the **A1/M1** link road, and is only 10 minutes from Leeds and 2 hours from London by train. The city is a 40-minute drive from **Leeds Bradford Airport**, and just over an hour from **Manchester Airport**.

Wakefield is also within striking distance of other major tourism destinations in the area, including the cities of **Leeds**, **Bradford**, **Sheffield**, and even **York**, as well as within easy reach of the **Pennines**, **Peak District**, **Yorkshire**

Dales and **Yorkshire Moors** - making it the ideal base for a longer stay to explore the region.

Wakefield is easy to get to and it's even easier to navigate once you're here.

Wakefield city is served by two train stations, **Westgate** and **Kirkgate**, with regular train services from **London Kings Cross**, **Leeds**, **Sheffield**, **Doncaster** and **Manchester**.

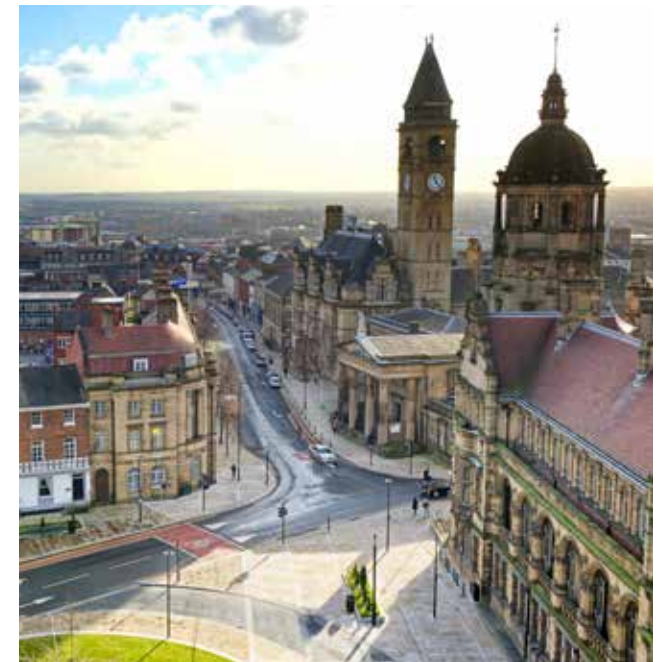
Once you're here, Wakefield's bus network makes visiting all our attractions easy,



stopping right outside even countryside venues like the **National Coal Mining Museum**, **National Trust Nostell** and **Yorkshire Sculpture Park**.

Visit wymetro.co.uk for information.

Within Wakefield city centre, hop on a free city bus and let someone else do the driving! The free city bus connects Westgate and Kirkgate railway stations with the bus station and many city centre attractions, including **Wakefield Museum**, **Trinity Walk** and **The Ridings**



shopping centres, **The Hepworth Wakefield** and various retail parks. The district's twin market towns of **Pontefract** and **Castleford** are located just a short drive from Junction 32 of the M62 and are both easily accessible by public transport.

Pontefract also has a regular direct train service from London. And remember, however you arrive, you can be assured of a warm Yorkshire welcome when you get here!





WAKEFIELD CITY CENTRE

PARKS & OUTDOOR SPACES



CLARENCE, HOLMFILD & THORNES PARK
WF2 8SY

SOUTHERN WASHLANDS
WF1 5SY



WALTON COLLIERY NATURE PARK
WF2 6NB

HEMSWORTH WATER PARK
WF9 5JB



ANGLERS COUNTRY PARK
WF4 2EB

PUGNEYS COUNTRY PARK
WF2 7EQ

HAW PARK WOODS
WF4 2EB



RSPB FAIRBURN INGS
WF10 2BH

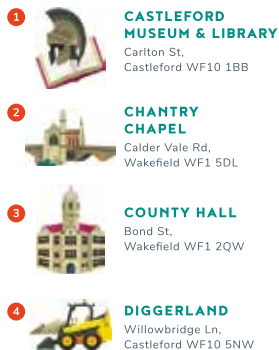
NEWMILLERDAM, BOATHOUSE & SECKAR WOODS
WF2 6QP

NOTTON WOODS
WF4 2PB



Map designed by Rhubarb Design House

WAKEFIELD DISTRICT ATTRACTIONS

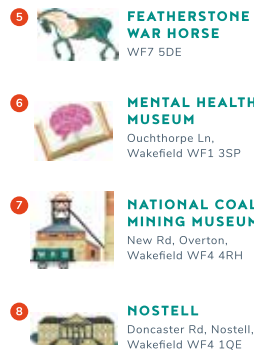


CASTLEFORD MUSEUM & LIBRARY
Carlton St,
Castleford WF10 1BB

CHANTRY CHAPEL
Calder Vale Rd,
Wakefield WF1 5DL

COUNTY HALL
Bond St,
Wakefield WF1 2QW

DIGGERLAND
Willowbridge Ln,
Castleford WF10 5NW

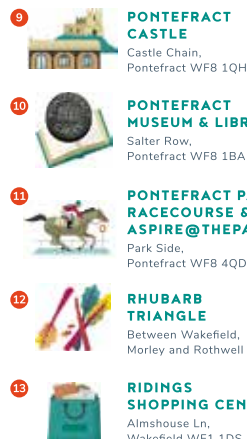


FEATHERSTONE WAR HORSE
WF7 5DE

MENTAL HEALTH MUSEUM
Ouchthorpe Ln,
Wakefield WF1 3SP

NATIONAL COAL MINING MUSEUM
New Rd, Overton,
Wakefield WF4 4RH

NOSTELL
Doncaster Rd, Nostell,
Wakefield WF4 1QE



PONTEFRACT CASTLE
Castle Chain,
Pontefract WF8 1QH

PONTEFRACT MUSEUM & LIBRARY
Salter Row,
Pontefract WF8 1BA

PONTEFRACT PARK, RACECOURSE & ASPIRE@THEPARK
Park Side,
Pontefract WF8 4QD

RHUBARB TRIANGLE
Between Wakefield,
Morley and Rothwell

RIDINGS SHOPPING CENTRE
Almshouse Ln,
Wakefield WF1 1DS



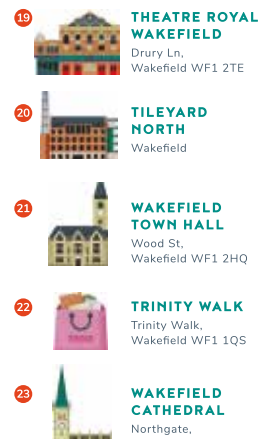
QUEEN'S MILL
Aire St,
Castleford WF10 1JL

ROSSE OBSERVATORY
Carlton Rd, Carlton,
Pontefract WF8 3RJ

SANDAL CASTLE
Manygates Ln, Sandal,
Wakefield WF2 7DS

THE ART HOUSE
Drury Ln,
Wakefield WF1 2TE

THE HEPWORTH WAKEFIELD
Gallery Walk,
Wakefield WF1 5AW



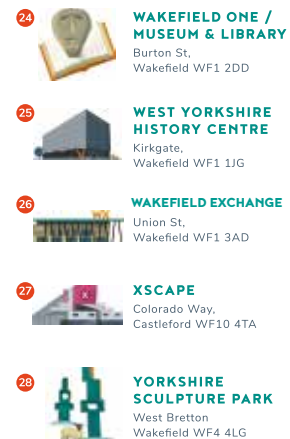
THEATRE ROYAL WAKEFIELD
Drury Ln,
Wakefield WF1 2TE

TILEYARD NORTH
Wakefield

WAKEFIELD TOWN HALL
Wood St,
Wakefield WF1 2HQ

TRINITY WALK
Trinity Walk,
Wakefield WF1 1QS

WAKEFIELD CATHEDRAL
Northgate,
Wakefield WF1 1HG



WAKEFIELD ONE / MUSEUM & LIBRARY
Burton St,
Wakefield WF1 2DD

WEST YORKSHIRE HISTORY CENTRE
Kirkgate,
Wakefield WF1 1JG

WAKEFIELD EXCHANGE
Union St,
Wakefield WF1 3AD

XSCAPE
Colorado Way,
Castleford WF10 4TA

YORKSHIRE SCULPTURE PARK
West Bretton
Wakefield WF4 4LG

RAILWAY STATIONS


1. Castleford
2. Featherstone
3. Fitzwilliam
4. Glasshoughton
5. Knottingley
6. Moorthorpe
7. Normanton
8. Outwood
9. Pontefract Baghill
10. Pontefract Monkhill
11. Pontefract Tanshelf
12. Sandal & Agbrigg
13. South Elmsall
14. Streethouse
15. Wakefield Kirkgate
16. Wakefield Westgate

BUS STATIONS

- A. Castleford C. Ossett E. South Elmsall
B. Hemsworth D. Pontefract F. Wakefield


RUGBY LEAGUE

- WT Wakefield Trinity CT Castleford Tigers FR Featherstone Rovers




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www.ncm.org.uk



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Museums
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Discover the Extraordinary with Wakefield Museums & Castles

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For visitor and access info scan the QR code
or visit bit.ly/WMandCInfo



wakefieldcouncil

THE HEPWORTH WAKEFIELD

One of 'the coolest places to visit in Yorkshire'

Condé Nast Traveller

Gallery open Tue – Sun
10am – 5pm

Free for Wakefield district residents,
Members and under 18s

Garden open daily, free
hepworthwakefield.org

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