

Visit to Newlathes Manor House, Newlathes Road, Horsforth, and Kirkstall Abbey

Sunday 2 March 2025 led by Peter Thornborrow

Print this document and bring it with you.

Meet at 10.30 am, first half hour outside.

Two years ago I visited Newlathes Manor, Horsforth, with Dr Alastair Laurence when he showed the local history group round. The owners have agreed to permit me to bring up to 20 members to visit.

It's a complicated building but in essence is an aisled hall with a rear aisle under a low sloping catslide roof heated by a large segmental-arched stone fireplace set next to the original rear Tudor-arched doorway – probably the kitchen originally. It has a separate *Housebody* with 17th century panelled walls, and original doors with metal catches. Its ceiling has a pair of hefty, chamfered spine-beams with unusual timber sleeves that probably cover scarf-joints – evidence for a bressummer fireplace (now gone).



The attached former two-storey *Parlour* wing, now a small cottage, has the remains of timber-framing (wall-plate, corner posts and braces) and a large external chimney stack for fireplaces on both floors.

Of greatest interest is the four-bay aisle arcade visible at the first floor in a corridor the length of the building with board-and-muntin panelled walls set between jowled posts, with mortices for large braces, and principal rafters that have trenched purlins supported by an aisle-tie with an angled strut. The end bay has stone walls and windows on two sides with an angled

corner fireplace. Here the timber structure is covered by more plank wall panelling, the styles with reeded edges, incorporating nine panels of Tudor linenfold panelling, very fine and rare carved with a cross design suggesting ecclesiastical origin; perhaps from the Prior's lodging at nearby Kirkstall Abbey which we will visit in the afternoon.



The south front is very unexceptional and has walls rendered with stucco struck with false joints suggesting it may be Regency alteration c1800, except for the stone cottage that projects forward.

The listed building description ends with '*History: occupied by Pollard family (purchased by them in 1566) until c.1800. Development of the building complex and obscure*'. So, it would appear that after the dissolution of the monasteries (1545) the house, perhaps a grange of the Cistercian Abbey (founded in 1147) was sold with the Manor of Horsforth in 1566 and some of the fine 16th century panelling was incorporated into the building.

Directions to Newlathes Manor House

From Horsforth Roundabout on the A6120 Ring Road, come via the A65 **New Road Side** (towards Kirkstall and Leeds) and continue some way into the middle of the town, passing **Tesco Express** (on right). After traffic lights by a modern shop, *Rainbow*, turn right down **Newlay Lane** and continue until it bears to the left. Turn right here up **Newlathes Road** – a long straight road, go on to just before the bottom, until you meet a junction with **Newlay Grove** (on left) and **Abbey Court** (on right). The road to the **Manor House** is near the entrance to Abbey Court. Park on one of the nearby residential roads with consideration for the local residents.



Lunch: After our visit we will depart in convoy going direct to Kirkstall Abbey - to eat in their own café; some tables outside in the grounds. It advertises that it 'serves a changing range of sandwiches from local award-winning artisan producers *Proper Tasty* (large range including vegetarian). Cakes and bakes, hot food and drinks'. Excellent looking coffee and sandwiches.

Kirkstall Abbey

After lunch, a visit to the abbey guided by **Sue Wrathmell**, author of the excellent book: *Leeds (Pevsner Architectural Guides: City Guides)* which provides a detailed plan and description of the abbey. We'll start our visit in the museum street, roughly at 1.30pm; Kirkstall Abbey closes at 4pm. Entry to the abbey is £6.20 unless you are a Leeds resident when it is free (you need proof of residence – utility bill, driving licence etc.) It has two museums, one in the former cloister features a re-created Victorian street, done by Peter Brears when he was director of Leeds City Museums, inspired by the one at the Castle Museum York where Peter was previously director.

To book

Ring Peter's mobile on 07304 048 049. Please confirm by email to peterthornborrow@gmail.com giving your name, email address and contact phone number, in case of cancellation.

Peter Thornborrow