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Timeline of Wakefield 1960-1970

The 1960s

The 1960s was the era of 'bigger is better' with continuing redevelopment! Wakefield got its first high-rise flats, its first supermarkets (the first was Hillards in Providence Street, but I don't have a date) its first multi-storey car parks, and the M1 Motorway was opened fully from Leeds to London, with three access points to Wakefield, in 1968.

The authority's love-affair with tower blocks led to its proposing in 1964 to build a block in the nursery-garden area of Thornes Park but this plan was abandoned after public protest spearheaded by the newly formed Civic Society.

It was also the era that saw the near death of the cinema industry locally as well as nationally and the rise of Bingo in its place. For a time in the early 1960s the Regal/ABC and the Playhouse tried to woo audiences with live performances by Pop stars.

It isn't always to pin precise dates down! The local studies indexes to the Wakefield Express are patchy to say the least! The Council minutes are not indexed for the 60s as they were in previous decades.

1960s

1960 Wakefield-born writer David Storey's first novel, *This Sporting Life*, published. Wins the Macmillan Fiction Award. Later made into a film.

1961 January, Carr House, Kirkgate, Wakefield's first tower-block of flats opened.

1961 Civic Theatre opened in former Primitive Methodist Chapel, lying between Queen Street and Market Street

1961 October, Wakefield Corporation water undertaking was taken over by the new Wakefield and District Board.

1961 October, the opening of Wakefield Crematorium, Kettlethorpe

1963 11 March, Gala performance of the film of *This Sporting Life*, based on the novel by local writer David Storey and partly shot at Wakefield Trinity's ground at Bellevue.

1964 16 June, the West Riding County Library headquarters, Balne Lane, now Wakefield MDC Library headquarters, opened by novelist Thomas Armstrong (*demolished 2014, replaced with residential housing*)

1964 The present Market Hall opened after demolition of the Victorian market hall on the same site (*subsequently demolished in 2008 for the Trinity Walk development*)

1964 Wakefield Civic Society formed in response to what was perceived as massive damage to the Wakefield environment and its historic buildings.

1964-5 The Beeching 'axe' falls on local railway lines and stations including the line from Wakefield to Bradford via Dewsbury and Batley, and the services to Crigglestone and Haigh, and to Ossett.

1966 New offices for the Wakefield and District Water Board opened on the corner of George Street and Southgate.

1966 Old Roundwood Colliery closed, heralding the gradual demise of the local coal industry.

1967 Westgate Station built to its present design, with the demolition of its major local landmark, the clock tower. (*subsequently closed and replaced with new station 2014*)

1967 23 August, three men killed when the bridge under construction to carry the M1 Motorway across the River Calder at Durkar, collapsed.

1968 26 April, last coal brought to surface at Crigglestone Colliery before its closure. East Ardsley Colliery closed at much the same time.

1969 25 September, the Asda Queen's Discount Centre (the forerunner of the Asda supermarket at Sandal) opened in Kirkgate Way with parking at the new multi-storey car park adjacent.