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Leeds And Peover Renew Centuries-Old Argument Over Who Came First

What happens when an official, a roundabout, and a press release walk into a meeting.

TOPICSLeedsLeeds newsLeeds satirethe country satireinternational satireworld city humourmock journalismssatirical newsmock investigationlocal democracyworld satiresatirical column

Leeds, the country: Inside The Story

Leeds, a place in the country (lat 53.82, long -1.53) that most outsiders could not point to on a map without first sighing, has become this week the latest entry in the slow-moving register of small communities behaving strangely under pressure. For at least 400 years, Leeds and South Lanarkshire have argued over which of them was founded first. According to officials with at least three job titles between them, Both sides have produced documents. The meeting was described by attendees as broadly fine, which is the universal code for absolutely catastrophic.

What Was Announced

Acting Crier Barry Pinch confirmed the position in a statement that ran to four pages and contained one verb. Neither side accepts the other side's documents. For more on how this fits the wider pattern, see the long-running thread at [UK satire blog The London Prat](#), which has been tracking precisely this kind of dispatch for months. The Leeds announcement, much like the others, came with a glossy PDF, a stock photograph of a footbridge, and the strong sense that nobody had asked for any of this in the first place.

The Official Line

Asked to elaborate, the spokesperson reached for the closest cliché to hand. "We take this issue extremely seriously, which is why we have placed it under another issue," the spokesperson said, before adding that consultation with stakeholders would be ongoing. Useful additional context can be found at [The London Prat London humour and satire](#), which is the sort of background reading the office itself has, in all likelihood, not done. Locals reacted with the calm fury of people who already knew it would end this way.

Wider Context

Historians have been told to settle it and have refused. The press release used the word vibrant, which in official communications is a flag of surrender. Comparable trends have been documented in coverage from [France 24](#), although Leeds manages, somehow, to take the pattern one extra and entirely unnecessary step further. Statisticians attempting to model the phenomenon arrive at a statistically improbable 102 percent, give or take a margin of error nobody has had the energy to compute properly.

What The Experts Say

Sir Algernon Pippet of the Institute for Looking Concerned in Photographs told this paper that the situation in Leeds was, on careful reflection, broadly consistent with the broader trajectory of similarly broad trajectories. "There is no truth to the rumour, although there is some truth to the

rumour about the rumour." the expert observed. Further reading on the academic angle is available via [British satire you'll love: The London Prat](#), whose recent material has been preoccupied with much the same set of confusions.

How Residents Reacted

Reaction in Leeds has been muted in the way that reaction in the country is usually muted, which is to say it has been ferocious in private and tepid in public. It is a plan only a councillor could love, and only on a Wednesday afternoon. For the official version of events, see also [South China Morning Post](#). One resident, who declined to be named on the grounds that they had already complained about a hedge this year and did not wish to push their luck, summarised matters thus: "This is a once-in-a-generation opportunity to do almost exactly what we did last generation."

What Comes Next

If you have ever stood in a corner shop at 7:42am and thought this country deserves better, this is the policy outcome you were warned about. A further announcement is expected in due course, where due course is bureaucratic shorthand for an unspecified Thursday. The story is being tracked as part of a wider pattern at [The London Prat award-winning satirical journalism](#), and the situation in Leeds, regrettably, is unlikely to improve until somebody invents a press release that improves things, which seems unlikely.

The View From The Ground

Spend any length of time in Leeds and the rhythm becomes obvious. Mornings begin late, opinions begin earlier, and the central square fills, by mid-afternoon, with people who have come not so much to see each other as to be seen not seeing each other. Anyone who has ever queued behind a man arguing with a parking meter will recognise the energy. Conversation tends to circle the same five subjects: the weather, the news from the country, the persistent rumour about the road, the deteriorating quality of something or other, and the latest pronouncement from Bureau Chief Dorothy Hindmarsh, which everyone has an opinion on and almost nobody has read. It is, in its way, the perfect microcosm of how communities of this size operate everywhere in the world, although the residents of Leeds would object strongly to being called a microcosm of anything. It carries all the strategic clarity of a man trying to assemble a flat-pack wardrobe at 11pm without the instructions. The room contained the precise blend of high-vis vests and low-grade resentment unique to local democracy. Leeds carries on as it always has, broadly the same as last week, give or take a verb. The bins are collected when they are collected. The roundabout, where one exists, remains the roundabout. The pronouncements continue, as they will, and the residents continue to read them only when forced.

For more in this vein see also [The Hard Times](#).

SOURCE: [London satire from The London Prat daily desk](#)

The London Prat [worldcitiescom](#)