

LOVE WHERE YOU LIVE... HEADINGLEY



Loving life in city's number one suburb

Woodhouse Ridge.

Richard Tyler, founder-member of Headingley Development Trust, shares the five things he loves most about Headingley.

My wife and I have lived in Headingley all our adult lives, and some of our family also still live here.

To us and to many residents, Headingley is Leeds Number One Suburb. Not a boast, just a fact!

Headingley village became Leeds first suburb when the town's first regular bus service ran here (the No1 still goes through).

It has the finest notable villas. And since local residents founded Headingley Stadium, it's probably more

famous world-wide than Leeds itself!

To keep up this momentum, we set up Headingley Development Trust (HDT) in 2005 which now has well over a thousand local members.

1. Headingley Enterprise and Arts Centre (HEART)

HEART in the heart of Headingley is a great place to meet up with neighbours. It has an inviting café, the Assembly Bar and Kitchen, and there are always events of one sort or another going on.

Many residents knew HEART when it was Bennett Road School and their kids went there – we've published a book of memories.

When the school moved, HDT campaigned hard to bring the building into community use and since 2011 it's

been a very nurturing place, now hosting a playgroup and a plant shop, as well as providing work spaces, exhibition spaces and rooms for hire – we celebrated one of my significant birthdays there!

2. Headingley Hill Ginnel

Running over Headingley Hill is the longest ginnel in Headingley, slipping unseen between the old stone houses (including the one recently featured in *A House Through Time*).

It's very mysterious and dramatic and we remember pushing a pram through when our kids were small.

It's only recently that I've discovered that the path is the best part of 1,000 years old, once heading towards the medieval corn mill on Meanwood Beck.

It became a ginnel when the fields on the hill became the grounds of grand villas – and this ginnel was dug into the hill, so as not to spoil the view!

3. Woodhouse Ridge

The ginnel takes you to Woodhouse Ridge, lovely for walks, an adventurous place for kids to play – and a lifesaver during the pandemic.

In 1876, Leeds bought the Ridge and the Victorians cleared the woods and laid walkways, put up shelters with views over the valley and built an ornate bandstand (the base still stands) for Sunday concerts. The trees have since reclaimed the land, now it's mostly woods, cared for by Woodhouse Ridge Action Group.

4. The Bear Pit, Cardigan Road

The Ridge was by no means the first park around Headingley.

Long before, the Zoological and Botanical Gardens opened in 1840 south of Headingley Hill.

A focal point of the gardens was the Bear Pit – which now stands in isolation in Cardigan Road, looking like an abandoned miniature medieval castle.

We used to pass it every day, walking our children to school (and of course, they had to run along the low wall in front).

The gardens were intended for the welfare of the Leeds workforce, but unfortunately they proved an unsuccessful venture and now house many grand villas.

5. Community Shopping in North Lane

Headingley community has made a huge investment here.

First, HDT launched Headingley Farmers' Market, in response to the loss of many local fresh food shops.

It's now the place to shop and meet friends on a Saturday morning.

HDT also stepped in to help take over the Natural Food Store, when its owners wanted to step back; the shop is now a co-op, owned by its members, local shoppers themselves.

And then, three years ago, HDT took over the greengrocer, opposite the store.

If you want to meet your neighbours, shopping in North Lane is a good place to go – we're reclaiming our high street!



The Bear Pit in Cardigan Road.



Headingley Enterprise and Arts Centre.