

Lowton East Neighbourhood Development Forum (LENDF)

Email: lendf99@gmail.com

Minutes of Meeting Monday 13 August 2023 at Lowton Social Club

Chair: *(Position Unfilled)*
Secretary: Liz Brown (LB) *Chaired the meeting*
Treasurer: Irene Thomson (IT) *Took the minutes*

Apologies:

Minutes Secretary - Gill Turner
Deputy Secretary - Julie Shawcross
Cllr Jenny Gregory
Gill Dickenson

Councillors Present:

Cllr Kath Houlton (KH)
Cllr Garry Lloyd (GL)
MP James Grundy (JG)

No. of attendees = 22

1. Welcome and Previous Minutes

Minutes not read out at meeting, but copies have been sent out by email and posted on the Facebook page and put on the LENDF website. New visitors and guests were welcomed to the meeting.

2. Committee Members

LENDF would like to increase the numbers of committee members and invite residents to contact us on lendf99@gmail.com if they wish to be involved either in a sub-committee for specific projects/activities or join the main committee as the role of Chair has been available for some time now.

Without more people volunteering to be part of the LENDF committee then there is a risk that this voluntary organisation would have to cease being active.

3. Congratulations

On Saturday the Leigh Leopards rugby team won the Challenge Cup at Wembley. 😊

A magnificent performance and many congratulations to the team and their supporters.



4. Graffiti

Cllr Garry Lloyd reported that one of the graffiti 'artists' has been caught and was spoken to by both the police and the Headmaster of Lowton High School as it was one of their pupils. The amount of new graffiti has noticeably reduced.

5. Church Lane – St Luke's School Crossing

Unfortunately a Pedestrian Crossing with control lights is not possible outside St Luke's School. A temporary lollipop person will operate from September until the original person returns. The temporary person will be made permanent if the original person doesn't return.

6. Wooded Area near St Catherine's School

Himalayan balsam is taking over a large area of the wooded area and attempts to eradicate this invasive plant species is ongoing. One portion is inaccessible due to the stream – therefore LENDF are asking if anyone has waders that can be borrowed in the future.

7. Foilco – Lowton Business Park

This company is a B Corporation and encourages its staff to volunteer for community projects e.g. litterpicks, and support of good causes. In addition, there are some funds that could be accessed by local charities. Staff borrowed LENDF litter picking equipment in July to litter pick locally. They have also said, given enough notice, that they would also do some seasonal balsam bashing! *LENDF litter picking equipment is available for group use.*

8. Pocket Nook Housing Development

236 houses are proposed for an area close to the Atherleigh Way – application submitted by Morris Homes. The tenant farmer has been expelled from this land as his landlord has sold this land to Morris Homes.



The Council's 'Internal Target Date' for a decision is September 6th.

Lowton East Councillors, local community groups and MP James Grundy have all objected to this development.

Online objections by local residents can be written and viewed on the council's website <https://planning.wigan.gov.uk/online-applications> (search for the phrase Pocket Nook) A separate planning application, submitted by the Council themselves, is for access to the Atherleigh Way from the new estate.

The proposed access to the development can not be via the A580 as the Highways Agency does not want to interrupt the flow of traffic - preferring to interrupt the flow on the Atherleigh bypass instead.

The site has a public right of way, bridle path and cycle path that may all be affected detrimentally by this development. Discussion took place about the other constraints such as there is a main gas pipe and water main pipes which are only 18 inches from Atherleigh Way. As there will be an increase to the allowed tonnage of lorries travelling on main roads to 60 tons – this could cause damage to those pipes.

United Utilities has a parcel of land nearby which has become a 'fly-tipping' hotspot.

Local farmers are receiving regular letters from house builders offering to buy their land.

8. Places for Everyone (was called Greater Manchester Spatial Framework)



Greater Manchester Combined Authority

<https://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk> › what-we-do

Places For Everyone - Greater Manchester ...

Places for Everyone is a long-term plan of nine Greater Manchester districts (Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Tameside, Trafford and Wigan) ...

LENDF have submitted a comment during the consultation process of this long-term plan. The comment included objecting to land owned by Mr Adamson **still** being included in Wigan's housing plans despite him not wanting to sell his productive farm land. We were concerned new and existing house locations had poor public travel options. We were also asked to comment on Wigan's Local Plan and Transport Plans. In addition, Wigan Council have commissioned a survey on local streets, roads, buses and cycling, copies have been posted to a selection of residents within the borough, if you get one please fill in and return.

MP James Grundy attended the Inquiry into the validity of 'Places for Everyone' and there was no mention of Travel Plans. A question arose during the Inquiry about Compulsory Purchase Powers by Wigan Council regarding land in Lowton. Thank you to MP James Grundy for opposing the HS2 maintenance unit that was previously proposed for Mr Adamson's land which the Council would then have purchased. Credit to the Adamson's family for continuing to refuse to sell their land.

9. Service road alteration at Lane Head

Graham Wardle (GW), Chair of LaGTAC, reported that over 30 complaints had been put in regarding the proposed service road alteration at Lane Head. The alteration will reduce the width of the service road to incorporate a fourth lane for a left turn from the A580. Local Councillors have submitted objections on behalf of residents. Kath Houlton has also put in a personal complaint.

Wigan Council have rejected all complaints as not being complaints!

LaGTAC will approach the Ethics and Standards Committee for guidance on how to report the council to the Ombudsman. Judicial Review is another method but is expensive.

10. Lowton Potholes

Information from a meeting between Paul Barton (Wigan's Highways Assessor) and GW/KH: Do not wait for potholes to get large or dangerous before reporting please. Potholes are a major culprit in damage to vehicles and in cycle accidents. The Council has an 'advisory' note that holes must be 40mm deep before action is taken. The Council perform a risk-based assessment on reported potholes and if deemed urgent can deal with it in a few hours, but if not it can take 14-28 working days. Report quickly via <https://www.wigan.gov.uk/Resident/Parking-Roads-Travel/Report-it/index.aspx>

Guidelines on potholes vary widely between councils. LaGTAC/KH wrote to James Grundy who passed the letter to the Roads Minister and the response was that 'maintenance was not mandatory'. James Grundy has now pushed for new legislation for a BSI Standard for Identifying/Repairing of Surface Defects and Pot Holes. A trial of the new standard is due in 2024/25.

11. Measurements of Traffic Speeds (volunteers please)

Graham Wardle, Chair of LaGTAC, gave an update on the purchase of Speed Guns and that more volunteers are required to take the speed measurements done by vehicles on our local roads. Volunteers will be trained and will need to go through a vetting procedure with the Police. Volunteers will be part of the 'Community Speed Watch Scheme' (CSWS) which can provide evidence to the council and police and hence gain their assistance in speeding issues. If interested please contact Graham via lagtac.data@gmail.com, we really need more people to help. If you are concerned about dangerous speeding then please consider contacting Graham for more information on volunteering.

Graham asked for suggestions of which roads should be checked by the CSWS.

12. Extension to Atherleigh Bypass

MP James Grundy reported that he had raised the proposal in Parliament and the Roads Minister (Richard Holden) had contacted Andy Burnham's office. Lane Head South Residents Group (LHSRG) had also contacted Andy Burnham. A meeting was then chaired by Andy and included Wigan/Warrington/St Helens councils and other key stakeholders. Most people at the meeting are keen for the proposal to move ahead.

A follow-up meeting on the 24th July will be a 'Working Group' of the 3 councils and Peter Boulton from TfGM. This will be followed by a roundtable discussion in October where a representative from LHSRG will be present. A business case **must** be submitted to DfT by Oct 2024. The split of funding would be 85% from Government. We will let you know more as these meetings progress. If the bypass does go ahead then the Lane Head service road alteration would be redundant.

13. Golborne and Lowton West. Murphy's planning application

A group of residents from the adjacent ward to Lowton East were present at the meeting to discuss the implications of Murphy's planning application next to Rothwells Farm existing housing development.

Address	Agricultural Land South Of Wigan Road Farm Wigan Road Golborne
Proposal	The development of a new employment site in a mix of Use Classes B2, B8 and E(g), comprising office building, workshops, yard and open storage and new vehicular accesses and car parking, including demolition of all existing structures and redevelopment of the existing depot for the erection of 26 dwellings, together with associated engineering and landscaping works and the creation of public open space including new footpaths

The residents wanted to inform LENDF's members of the proposed scale of this employment site development as Murphy's intends to merge all 3 of their local businesses into this one location. This includes HGVs from their Astley location. Therefore traffic volumes will increase and the traffic survey submitted with the application was done by the company themselves rather than an outside organisation. The new site will operate 24hrs and contain 300 car parking spaces for operational staff but also visitors to their new training centre. Routes onto the A580 include going through Golborne or via Lowton Road into Lowton. There will be a short 'rail track' built as part of the development to assist with training engineers. A portion of the development will be on green belt. This also means the Stone Cross Lane site will be left vacant. Plans at <https://murphyingolborne.co.uk/> and on the council website.

The Planning Committee are due to make a decision on this application next month.

Next LENDF Meeting: Monday 9 October 2023

Save the date: 'Last Night of the Proms' is Saturday, 7th October