

Lowton East Neighbourhood Development Forum (LENDF)

Contact Email Address: lendf99@gmail.com

Minutes of meeting held on Monday 10 October 2022 at Lowton Social Club

Secretary (Chaired the meeting)	Liz Brown(LB)
Deputy Secretary	Julie Shawcross(JS)
Minutes Secretary	Gill Turner(GT)
Councillors	Kath Houlton(KH), Edward Houlton(EH)
<u>Apologies</u>	
Covering Chairperson/Treasurer	Irene Thomson (IR)
Councillor	Maire Cooper (MR)
Community Groups	Linda Graham, Gill Dickinson

No. of attendees = 20

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. Accessing funding for community Groups – Julie Shawcross spoke to this item

- Catherine Jones*, Community Capacity Officer for Wigan Council, is linked to the Lowton, Ashton and Golborne areas. She advises individuals and community groups of different funding opportunities open to them. Most of this information is also available through the 'Borough Wide Community Network' (BWCN) She met with LENDF last month and Julie has been to further meetings with her. (*Update: Catherine has now moved over to the new Tenant Voice and Engagement team. The Deal for Communities Team will still be available for enquires: thedealforcommunities@wigan.gov.uk)
- There is a weekly funding opportunity newsletter and anyone can sign up for this via <https://www.bwcn.org.uk/> and follow the orange subscribe link at the top of the home page. Be aware that many of the funds open and close quite quickly so it's important to note deadlines and the criteria for applications. A back catalogue of newsletters can be found from the subscribe link.
- The BWCN website also acts as a Wigan borough community noticeboard. Here you can search and advertise for events, volunteers and community jobs. The search magnifying glass is on the middle right of a page.
- An example of something from the notice board is Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh Patient Research Advisory Group are wanting people to fill in a 5 minute survey. They

want to understand what people want to do to improve health and wellbeing:
<https://www.bwcn.org.uk/big-conversation-have-your-say-on-what-matters-to-people-to-improve-health-and-wellbeing/> It would be great if you could fill it in!

- ‘Warm hubs’ are being set up, these will be places that people can use, within particular time frames, for company, warmth and activities, to help reduce heating costs at home. Compassion in Action, behind Lowton Social Club, is one such venue, more information: <https://www.compassioninaction.info/news/heat-retreat-cost-living-support-leigh/> There are other local venues in the pipeline and Wigan Council are currently compiling a list (update: the list is now here: <https://www.wigan.gov.uk/Council/The-Deal/Deal-Communities/Here-for-you/Warm-welcoming-spaces.aspx> including times)
- In addition, if any venue wants additional funding to support warm hubs then more information is here: <https://www.bwcn.org.uk/asda-foundation-cost-of-living-grant/>
- If you are struggling to pay heating bills, and fulfil certain criteria, then help is available here: <https://www.wigan.gov.uk/Resident/Housing/Warm-homes/Save-money.aspx>
- Julie finished by saying she has lots of experience of filling out bid applications on behalf of others and offered to help any community group to access funding by bids/tender applications.

3. National Nature Reserve – including Pennington Flash

- This National Nature Reserve (NNR) is the first one in Greater Manchester and includes Wigan and Leigh Flashes and Bickershaw Country Park. It’s really good news. All the areas in yellow on this 5 page PDF are included: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1107098/the-flashes-of-wigan-and-leigh-nnr-declaration-and-maps.pdf
- Most of the NNR is on rewilded pits and slag heaps indicating that not all ‘brown field’ sites should be built on!
- Not all of Pennington Flash as we know it is included in the NNR (see map). The section called Pennington Country Park is not included in the nature reserve. This section includes the new club/café/information centre, golf course, refurbished playground, carpark and new overflow carpark (old picnic area) for Leigh Sports Village. Leigh Sports Village seem to have a large say in the management of the Pennington Country Park section of the Flash.
- It was noted that events booked at Pennington Country Park, only millimetres away from the NNR, may impact on their wildlife ‘neighbours’ as there will be more noise, litter and light pollution. Licensing laws do not acknowledge wildlife as neighbours. Previously records of birds had been kept at the site, this needs to be monitored to ensure bird numbers do not drop. There is currently no way of knowing the counts of bats, moths and insects most affected by light pollution. Please alert LENDF if any potential unsuitable evening events are planned here.

4. PROGRESS

3rd Redrow meeting – Bainbridge Avenue off Hesketh Meadow Lane (114 houses)

- Report any speeding wagons to Redrow. They will contact the contractor.
- A second Banksman is too expensive to prevent traffic on Oaklands Road before 08:30am, however wagons on site before 08:30 are reported by Redrow to their employer.

- Road cleaning, this has been stopped before Hardcastle due to a neighbour who works nights and has complained about the noise.
- The first houses have been bought and are now occupied.
- Japanese knotweed – is on site at Redrow where it is being professionally sprayed and this will continue for another 3 years. Japanese knotweed roots are worse than bamboo roots and can destroy foundation of houses. It is more common than you think. Please take a minute to read this link to identify the plant as it can spread easily:
<https://inspectaslr.co.uk/identification/>

Wiggett's building site on Hesketh Meadow Lane (28 flats/houses)

- We are not sure when Japanese knotweed spraying began here.
- It was reported that a neighbour near the Wiggett's site sprayed area has not been well and the question was asked if it was anything to do with the spraying?
- According to the site manager, Wiggetts are not a member of 'considerate builders' because of the amount of paperwork they would have to complete and is too much for a small company.
- It was reported there are no visible 20 speed signs on Hesketh Meadow Lane. Wiggett's have agreed to cut back the bush that is blocking its view. (Update: this has now been done and KH has requested 20 signs to be painted on the road once it is re-surfaced.) There is still no reply from the Speed Watch Community Group regarding help with speeding motorists. Professor Graham Wardle has been trying to contact them and Leigh Police. (Update: GW has finally had a response and is hopeful equipment will follow soon)

Bulb planting

- A map showing bulbs planted in Lowton is proving to be elusive, EH will chase up
- LB and Liz Parsons have been foxglove seed spreading and bulb planting around the edge of Hesketh Meadow Lane back field. If you are interested in helping out, please contact LENDF.
- Please email LENDF with suggestions for other areas for planting bulbs and seeds. Each side of Silsden Avenue on the small, grassed area was suggested.

Last Night of the Proms – 15 October 2022

- There are still a couple of tickets left for this. Golborne brass band and the Three Town Choir will provide the music with half time pasties! This will also be in memory of LENDF Chair Ed Thwaite.

Final update of 590 bus

- Warrington had provided an intermittent 590 service due to inappropriate vehicles and drivers not knowing the route. They have now lost this contract to St Helens, Hatton's Travel. The bus will be the same sized vehicle as the one Jim Stone used and will commence on 31 October 2022. Thanks to KH for sorting this out.
- KH has also requested at least one No 10 bus per hour come south of Lane. She will know more next month.

LENDF Chairperson - Plan B

- The responsibility is being shared at the moment but everyone has other commitments. The Group still wants a Chairperson and anyone interested please contact LENDF but asks them to be non-political so there is no conflict of interest.
- Plan B is for the group to hold meetings every 2 months starting next year if no Chairperson is found. November and December meetings will go ahead as planned. The two monthly meetings of LENDF (Feb, April, June – even numbered months) would alternate with the Lane Head South Residents Group who also meet every two months (Jan, March, May – odd numbered months)

Section 106 monies – update from Prof Graham Wardle

- This S106 money is given to Wigan Council by building companies to mitigate the impact of building new houses specifically in the Golborne/Lowton area. The money should be used for various local infrastructure including roads used by the new builds. There is usually a 5 year time limit on spending this money.
- Professor Graham Wardle (LaGTAC) [Lowton and Golborne Traffic Advisory Committee] with other community groups (LHSRG & LWRA), had a meeting at short notice, with Andy Burnham. No Councillors were invited to this meeting but some Wigan Council and TfGM Officers were there. The meeting included discussions around issues that have been minuted in previous LENDF minutes.
- Air pollution around Lane Head was discussed, especially the readings on Winwick Lane that are over the legal limit.
- There are no weight restrictions on Winwick Lane from Warrington Council side but Warrington Council will reconsider this once the Parkside Link Road roundabout is completed (12 to 24 months). This is because currently there is nowhere for HGVs to turn around once they have seen the sign.
- Although there is a weight restriction sign at the Wigan end of the lane a number of HGVs are ignoring it and it is proving difficult to police. Moving Traffic Enforcement has been applied for and there will be a public consultation period (open for 6 weeks) for anyone to comment so it's important residents do comment as they will be most affected. This means the council can install an ANPR camera, identify and fine HGVs that break the weight restriction. The Moving Traffic Enforcement could be in place by Summer 2023 north bound if the consultation has a positive outcome. (Update: the consultation has opened, we will be sending out a separate email with more information, asking residents to respond to the consultation)
- Andy Burnham said these issues are urgent and offered to help via GMCA in discussions with Warrington Council.
- As a concerned resident, Andy Burnham discussed infrastructures and noted that HGV's should not generally be allowed on village routes unless they are exempt. He recommended a review of the roads and mentioned a master plan was being discussed for Golborne Station by the end of 2022 (Stakeholder Plan)
- An acceptable plan of action to alleviate many traffic issues within Lowton and Golborne would be to extend the Atherleigh Way bypass and said he would liaise with Warrington Council via GMCA. Transport for Greater Manchester and National Highways would need to take part in these discussions.

- He did not consider the extension of the bypass as a major road building scheme so potentially Wigan Council could be able to get funding and he would ask Wigan Council (via GMCA) to support it.
- Wigan Council have proposed 2 infrastructure improvement schemes, Stone Cross Lane and Lane Head Service Road reduction. There was discussion around the viability of these schemes and the consultation process.
- Detailed minutes have been taken from this meeting and will be released at a later date. [Update: Minutes have been circulated (14th Oct) to all attendees for comment and sent to AB (as meeting Chair) to approve them. All Ward Councillors have been sent a confidential (at present) copy, as have the Chairs of LENDF and Golborne and Lowton West 'Voice'.]

5. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- Church Lane/St Luke's Lollipop person – update from ED Houlton
EH has been making good progress in resolving the safety issues of crossing Church Lane without a lollipop person near St Luke's school. The current person is not well but there is no one to temporarily replace them. EH asked the school if a member of their staff could do it but they don't have liability insurance. EH has asked Wigan Council to provide a temporary person and they have agreed to advertise a new mobile school crossing patrol job specifically to cover the Ashton, Golborne and Lowton areas. Any successful candidate will be temporarily appointed at the Church Lane crossing point until the member of staff returns to work. The council will train and insure the person. The role is for a few hours each day and will be a paid role. This person will be helping the community, enabling the children and families to have a safe crossing. (Update: A new marked crossing was suggested at the end of the meeting and EH will look into this; this would take time as there are a lot of stages to this process)
- East Leigh Football Club. – update by James Ridyard (Chair of Club)
The club has made a video of drone footage of the matches played on the football fields to use in their publicity. It has been put on the LENDF Facebook page for reference. All the pitches were in use in the footage so there were more cars about last week than normally the case. It was reported there are still some issues with parking in Oakland Road on match days, specifically double parking on the Oaklands Road / Hesketh Meadow Lane junction, while the car park at Lowton Social Club was nearly empty. This will be addressed again by the club.
** Important: The club now have outline plans to build a permanent clubhouse and extend the car park. They would like some community engagement to discuss the layout and potential community usage of the building. The current plans would include a kitchen, showers, toilets and a community space for 60 to 80 people facing the pitches. James will send LENDF the potential plans as a starting point for feedback and attend another LENDF meeting in the near future to discuss these plans. Please come along and have your say.
- Oaklands Road Community Garden – are adding borders to the garden, volunteers are always welcome.

Next Meeting: Monday 14 November 2022 – 19:30 at Lowton Social Club