

Lowton East Neighbourhood Development Forum (LENDF)

Contact Email Address: lendf99@gmail.com

Minutes of meeting held on
Monday 13 February 2023 at Lowton Social Club

Chair	(Currently vacant)
Secretary (Chaired the meeting)	Liz Brown (LB)
Treasurer	Irene Thomson (IT)
Minutes Secretary	Gill Turner (GT)
Councillors	Kath Houlton (KH) Maire Cooper (MC)
<u>Apologies</u>	
Deputy Secretary	Julie Shawcross (JS)
Councillor	Edward Houlton (EH)

No. of attendees = 23

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. Traffic Issues:

- **Speed Gun and collection of data for the area** – *Presentation by Professor Graham Wardle*. According to the data, a significant number of drivers drive at one speed of 35mph+ regardless of the road speed limit! This is causing serious speeding offences on the 20mph limited roads in residential areas. In addition the service road at Lane Head, when surveyed for an hour, clocked 19 cars illegally enter through the no entry point at speed, to avoid queuing to turn left at the lights!! This is dangerous driving. *Please see the attached presentation for details.*

Graham is looking for more volunteers to gather data using the speed gun so that the police will take note of problem roads. To volunteer, you must join the GMP CSW scheme online and go through a simple police vetting process. Any local resident may apply, however, please let Graham know, so he can coordinate volunteers effectively. The closing date is 19th March. The link to apply is: [here](#)

- **Air Quality information** from Gill Dickinson, LHSRG (Lane Head South Residents Group).

Air Quality/ bypass - the two are very much linked. A bypass would drastically improve the air quality at Lane Head. Air quality varies considerably within Lowton. 40 ug per cubic metre is the legal maximum. Most areas monitored are well under that figure- max. 25. Except Winwick Lane which recorded 44.6 in 2021 the last reported year (due to the canyon effect of the houses.) The East Lancs Service Road registered 26.1. The 2022 figures for Lowton will be released in May/ June.

NOx levels have reduced since the introduction of the southbound weight limit but many HGV's still flout this and Warrington will not allow a weight limit northbound until offending vehicles can turn back to the motorway via the new link road roundabout. This is due to be completed by the end of this year. Warrington are an air quality partner. We have requested that Wigan commences discussions asap with Warrington to sign post the weight limit from the Warrington end so that traffic using the site and other HGV traffic does not use Winwick Lane as a short cut. We await a response from Wigan. LHSRG have held two recent meetings with Wigan Officers.

In July 2022 Wigan produced an Air Quality Action Plan and agreed to update it quarterly. This stated that they would discuss the weight restriction with Warrington which we are pushing to happen and apply to the Government for **Moving Traffic Powers** (MTP) to monitor Winwick Lane. Wigan have applied for MTPs in four different areas of the Borough including Winwick Lane because of its toxic air. MTP is a new system whereby Councils rather than police can install ANPR traffic cameras and prosecute offending drivers. They will be funded to provide staffing to monitor the camera and issue weight limit fines. This will help reduce the number of HGVs who are blatantly ignoring the weight limit.

The issue of pollution is of course linked to the bypass, as it's not just HGV's that are causing pollution. It's the 100,000 commuter vehicles that pass through Lane Head weekly, causing delays, congestion, poor road surfaces, vibration, dirt, noise, and ill health. More than 12 children live within 100 metres of the high level of NOx. Andy Burnham has always been in favour of a bypass and is to request TfGM to seek a meeting with National Highways to explore its feasibility.

At every S106 meeting residents have rejected the two road widening schemes in favour of a bypass. It would take traffic from Manchester, Bolton, Leigh, that want to join the motorway network on the bypass route, instead of jamming up Lane Head. According to James Grundy, Government funding for Infrastructure will be available in 2024, (not that long away!)

It **is** possible to build a bypass without entering Warrington land - turning right onto the East Lancs from the Atherleigh Way, then left alongside the disused railway, right at Tunnel Tops to meet up with Winwick Lane near Dolly's Bridge.

- **Update on bypass and left hand turn at Lane Head** – no real progress since the meeting of all 5 Lowton Community groups with the council on the 31st October 2022. The council said they would progress a number of items but we have had little response from them. A question was asked about what help/support we could give residents most affected as talking repeatedly to the council has appeared to have little effect. Media attention and questioning their consultation methods maybe the

only avenues left open to us. Andy Burnham and James Grundy have both said they are in favour of the bypass, the only real solution to through traffic turning left. Until then, illegal entry onto a narrow service road will remain a significant issue, as highlighted by Graham's presentation above.

- **More dangerous driving** has been highlighted at Lane Head, heading towards the A580 to turn right towards Liverpool from Lowton St Marys, near the petrol station. Vehicles wait on the white line to get into the right lane before the petrol station when vehicles from behind cross over onto the opposite side of the road facing oncoming traffic, often at high speeds. This could be a site to use the speed guns for reading. It was reported years ago the council were going to use the grass verge to widen the road in this area.

3. Golborne Train Station Plans - Feedback from meeting 8 February 2023 by Linda Graham, Lowton West Residents Group

Panel : Andy Burnham, Mayor, with James Grundy MP, representatives from TFGM and Wigan Council, plus Golborne and Lowton West councillors

Andy introduced the meeting as a public information event, emphasising that a critical phase of the process is approaching. He is determined to get this delivered. He stressed this was a cross party initiative working with James Grundy's support together with Wigan Council. Key meetings are imminent with network rail about the location of the station, overhead power lines etc. It is important to hear views / concerns from local people prior to these meetings – feedback is very important. He is confident (but could not promise) that approvals and tender process will happen this year, with a potential start on site in 2024 and opening in 2025. He said it is about more than just building a train station – the bBee Network Integrated P Transport System comes in on 24th September 2023 – Andy talked about the transformational effect on the area and how important it is to get everything right.

Simon from TFGM gave an update with a presentation and images:

- Timetable modelling – maybe 1 train per hour? Unsure yet if on the slow line (the goods line) or the fast line (London Euston route)
- Location of the station, on the site of the old Golborne South station, behind the library – the emphasis would be on active travel as not much parking available.
- Golborne and Newton are on different rail lines.
- Outline business case and strategy to secure government funding
- Development of a Golborne Masterplan and how station fits into that plan
- They hope for a 6 car platform with CCTV, footbridges, lifts etc.
- Unmanned with shelters, ticket vending machines etc.
- Welfare facilities, possibly within the old station building.

Stephen Riley from Wigan Council

- Make Golborne a better place – master plan - regeneration of centre
- New and improved active travel (reducing dependency on cars)

- Electric vehicles, taxis available and bike racks, bee network
<https://beeactive.tfgm.com/bee-network-vision/>
- Will maximise the capacity of the car park (*not sure what this means as the new station plan seems to reduce the foot print of the current carpark – multi-storey?*)

Back to Simon from TFGM: Next steps for the delivery strategy for station completion:

- Meetings with rail industry Feb 2023
- Conclude business case and masterplan development work (April 2023)
- Submission to dept for transport for approval
- Work through technical rail industry approval process
- Further local stakeholder engagement – autumn/winter 2023

James Grundy confirmed that all on the same team – Civil servants had assessed the plan as a strong case. Current estimate to build is £30m.

Questions / comments from the floor about:

- Public transport – needs to be integrated - connectivity
- Car parking – impact on people working/using the town centre, where will they park?
- Safe routes for cycling and walking, S106 funding was not forthcoming – Alan Percival from the local Voice group will be put in touch with Dame Sarah Storey
- Golborne has been selected for the active neighbourhood scheme – wigan council – trial area being identified
- Walkways on the station plan – looked open, can they be covered?
- Future of units currently on the site – no plans to relocate these
- Request for one way traffic system – concerns will be passed on
- Route from Leigh via congested Slag Lane – no public transport provision to Golborne – could be addressed when buses come under direct control?
- Why not a station at Kenyon junction? - Andy pointed out evaluation concluded Golborne rather than Kenyon. That Kenyon was not supported by Warrington Council. That Kenyon would be a station for the car whereas Golborne will be a **future facing** station for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport (bus) – there is a large population now within a mile radius due to new housing.
- Possibility of extending the busway along the east lincs – no detail / rationale given

James felt it was important to get Golborne over the finishing line, but that Kenyon should also be considered in conjunction with the **extension of the Atherleigh Way Bypass** – hopefully to be considered in the next funding round – 2024? Both Andy and James supported the extension of the bypass.

Andy summarised – we are at a very important stage of the process. We may need to mobilise public support – campaigning, petition, lobbying etc. at very short notice.

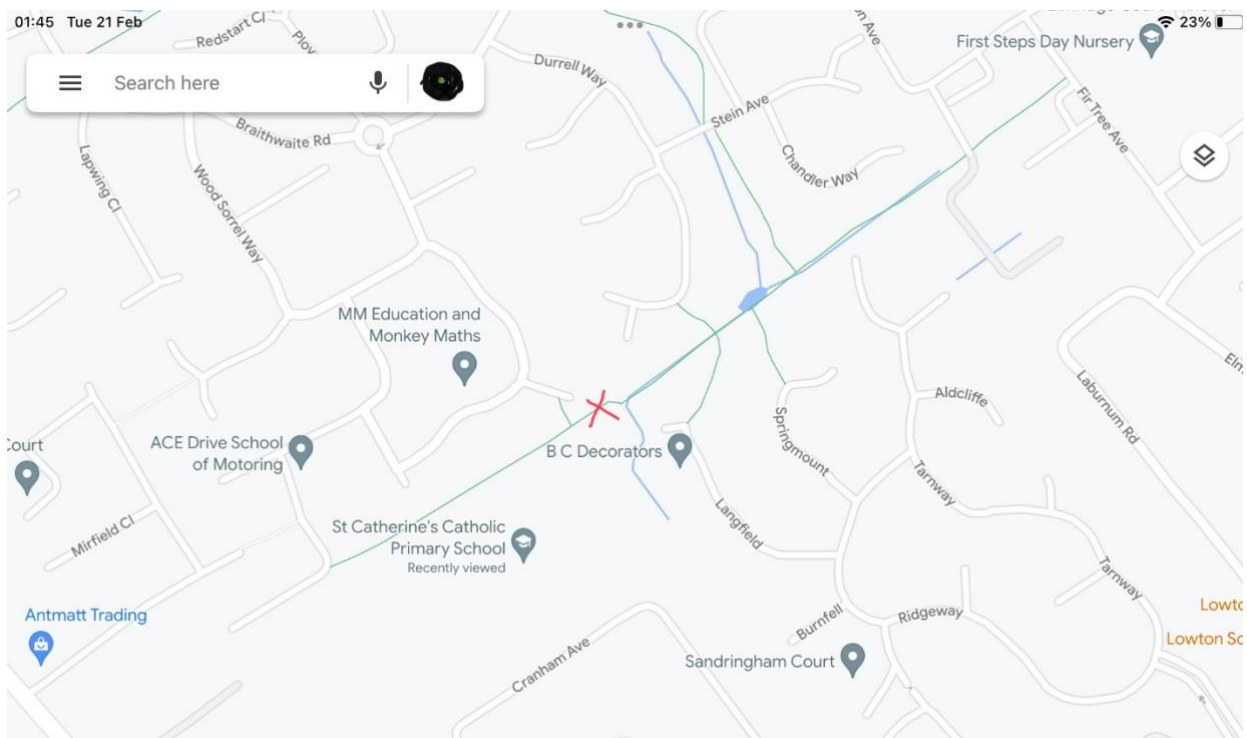
Asked for a show of hands in support - unanimous

4. The permissive bridleway from Byrom Lane to Hesketh Meadow

It has been reported that 4x4 vehicles have been accessing the bridleway by illegally removing fencing. It has been reported to the Council but they have run out of funding until April 2023 until they can repair the fencing at the Byrom Lane end. James Ridyard from East Leigh Junior Football Club is looking at repairing the fencing nearer the playing fields. There are still issues regarding horses damaging the field in addition to the bikes.

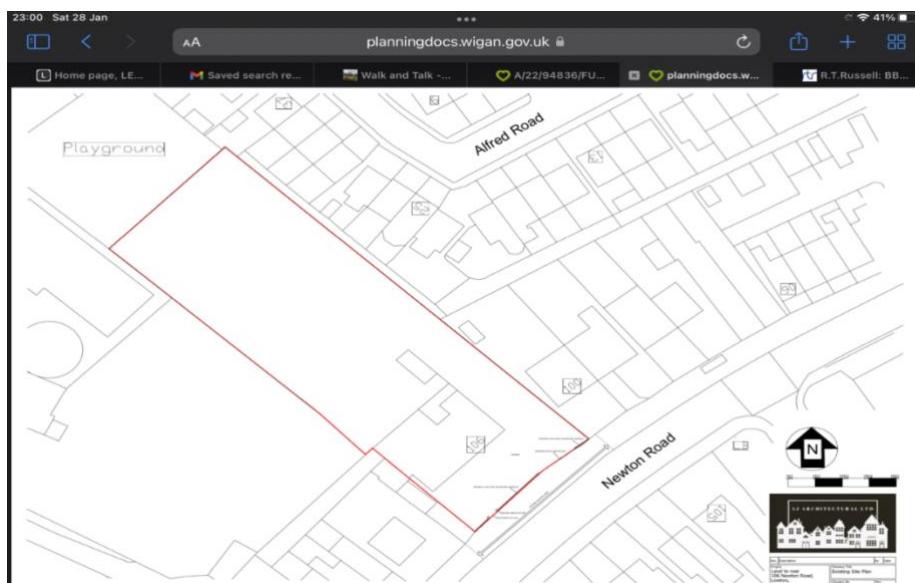
5. Cutting back brambles and litter pick.

Emma Fox, a Governor at St Catherine's School has asked for community help to litter pick a wooded area. It is on a well used public pathway behind the school. There was a discussion and **Saturday 4 March between 2 – 5 pm** was agreed for people to meet to help clear the area of rubbish and to cut back some brambles. Please bring gloves and litter picking sticks if you have them but there will be spares if not. Emma will also request help from school parents. Once cleared, and on another day, school children could help to plant woodland flowers on this site. There are various access points to the site (Map, X marks the meeting spot!) You don't need to commit to the full 3 hours, any amount of time would help.



6. AOB

- **Darts and Dominoes** evening organised by LHSRG on 28 February 2023 at Golborne Sports Centre – Tickets £3 and can be acquired by contacting Committee members – lhsrg00@gmail.com
- **The Hide Café** at Pennington Flash Country Park opens on Friday 3 March 2023.
- **Byrom Hall Wood** : Friday 10th March 10am – 3pm. The Lowton West Residents Group have liaised with Forestry England to organise some volunteer activities in the wood. You can stay the whole day or just for an hour or two. More details will appear on our Facebook page nearer the time or email LENDF and we will keep you posted.
- Plans for **CPS small carpark** in Culcheth to be turned into 3 flats and shops: If you park in Culcheth to shop, use the big post office, use the cafes, or play area and wish to object follow the link below:
<https://online.warrington.gov.uk/planning/index.html?fa=getApplication&id=21022>
Points to mention: there are already vacant shops over the CPS so why are more needed? Although Culcheth is only 3 miles away there is no direct public transport and cycling is dangerous. Creating less parking will deter Lowton people using Culcheth village centre. A regular direct bus service from Lowton should be instated before any loss of parking occurs.
- There is a planning application to build 4 houses on Newton Road, behind the Old Jolly Carter pub. This will be on the old bowling green. Anyone wishing to object please comment on the website at Wigan Council, Reference: **A/22/94836/FULL**
<https://planning.wigan.gov.uk/online-applications/centralDistribution.do?caseType=Application&keyVal=RMW1H1RRH0000>



- It was reported a hole in the road on St Nicholas Road had been filled/repared last week and it took about 3 minutes to do. It was feared that it wasn't a very good repair. Councillor Kath Houlton said she would visit the site and report back to the Council.
- There was a video of two youths setting fire to a bin on Brathwaite Road Park on 'Golborne and Lowton, a local group for local people' facebook group. If anyone recognises any of the youths, please report to Councillors/Community Police.

**Next meeting: Monday 3rd April 2023
at Lowton Social Club. *Please note this date has been
changed from the original date to avoid the Bank Holiday.***

Future meetings will be held every other month and in between Lane Head South Residents Group will hold their meetings.

LENDF future meetings:

- Monday 12 June 2023
- Monday 14 August 2023
- Monday 9 October 2023
- Monday 11 December 2023