

Lowton East Neighbourhood Development Forum (LENDF)
Minutes to the Meeting held on Monday 14th January 2013, at Lowton Social Club.
<http://www.lendf.co.uk>

- Chairman – Ed Thwaite (ET), Secretary – Irene Thomson (IT)
- Peter Sargeant (PS), Chairman of Lane Head South Residents Group
- Welcome to members, visitors and guests

Apologies – Cllr Grundy, Carol Leigh

No. of Attendees = 51

1. **Minutes from last meeting** – not read at meeting but copies had been sent out by email and paper copies were available.

Some members do not have computers and paper copies are delivered to those individuals. In the case of a meeting date change, or police alerts, it would be useful to have mobile numbers so that 'text messaging' can be used. Please contact Ed or Irene.

2. **AGM**

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and announced that the meeting would start with the AGM.

- Bank Balance:
LENDF current balance was read out and Ed stated that an application has also been made to the Small Grants Scheme for £500 – this is to help with LENDF's administration costs.
- Election of Officers:
Chairperson: Ed Thwaite (re-elected by those present)
Vice Chair: Vacant position – *Anyone interested please contact Chairman*
Treasurer: Graham Maskery (re-elected by those present)
Secretary: Irene Thomson (re-elected by those present)
- Sub-Committees:
Used for specific projects:
Malcolm Jones
Ed Houlton
Gill Turner
Dennis Eubank
More members are welcome to join – please contact Irene.
- Constitution:
To be reviewed and amended due to incorrect reference to timing of AGMs, the change of name of the venue for all meetings, and more reference to non-political status.

3. Correspondence received since last meeting

Communication received from Braithwaite Residents Group (via Lowton Golborne LOCAL on Face book)

"Urgent - if you have used the cash point machine at the Co-op on Church Lane, Lowton in the last 48-72 hours I have been reliably informed that the police have found and removed a card reader from the machine. You need to inform your bank I believe and keep an eye on your outgoings from your account. PLEASE SHARE."

"The police crime ref is 1948 12/01 which you may need to quote to your bank. Police advice for anyone concerned is to contact your bank to check the personal security and AS A PRECAUTION change your card and / or pin number. Plus ask your bank to monitor for unusual activity on your account."

POST MEETING NOTE: Email received from PCSO Jane Tymon

Just to put the rumours right, the cash machine at Lowton Co-Op was not subject to the scam. The Co-op at Rainford was the one targeted at this time. The engineers have checked the cash machine and it is fine and not been tampered with. Please all stay vigilant and check your accounts regularly.

Thank you all for spreading the word.

Jane Tymon, Police Community Support Officer
L4 Leigh, Greater Manchester Police
Leigh Police Station

LENDF had contacted the Manchester Raptor Group in relation to the land proposed for development by Wainhomes and the reports of the land being used by bats and owls. Judith Smith responded by visiting the site and sending a report to Council on her findings of barn owl activity and usage of the land. Her comments are reproduced here.

"My attention was drawn to this farm's containing Barn Owl(s), a Schedule 1 species under the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981, by the Lowton East Neighbourhood Development Forum, who sent me the surveys carried out by ERAP and by Martin Prescott, amongst others. This farm falls within an area to be developed for housing by Wain Homes and presumably will be demolished.

ERAP do not mention the presence of Barn Owls in their Birds section and appeared to have relied on data supplied to them by GMEU plus incidental observations. I am surprised that the possibility of Barn Owl did not occur to them, given the derelict buildings. Martin Prescott's bat survey mentions the presence of a Barn Owl on 26th May 2012 either emerging from, or hunting around, the various farm buildings, which include a cottage and a barn no longer used - ideal for Barn Owls. His observers did not see the Barn Owl on a subsequent June visit but due to the juxtaposition of the buildings with the observers its presence cannot be ruled out. However, his observers were not there to look for Barn Owls, only bats. In his report, he suggests the provision of nest boxes in trees for Barn Owls. This is not suitable in this part of the country, because of the wet climate (Barn Owls are not particularly waterproof) and competition from Kestrels, Jackdaws and Stock Doves, as well as other owl species.

26th May is a very suggestive date for breeding by Barn Owls and I would expect any Barn Owl present at a suitable nest site - which this is - to be breeding. It appears that no dedicated survey for Barn Owls has been carried out. Therefore, I visited the

farm today and the tenant confirmed that at least one Barn Owl is present and roosting in a hay barn. There were splashes and a new pellet which I identified as Barn Owl.

Barn Owls are breeding at two sites within 1km and one is present (having lost its mate to a road collision on the A580 in November) at a farm within 500m. This bird may well attract a new mate before the 2013 breeding season.

I do not know the timescale envisaged for the development of this area, but it will be necessary to carry out a further dedicated Barn Owl survey at the farm to establish the breeding status of the species, if demolition is planned for any period outside of mid-November to February. Barn Owls have a very long breeding season, often producing 2 broods, beginning in March and I have found small young still in the nest at the end of October at nests in this area in both 2011 and 2012. I will be checking the farm in May or June 2012 anyway as part of the Manchester RG's work, as we specialise in Barn Owls and Peregrines. It is not our intention to encourage the birds by the provision of a nest box, given the farm's uncertain future."

4. Wainhomes / Core Strategy

ET has spoken with David Rawsthorne at Wigan Council with regard to the short notice given for consultation on the Wainhomes application. Mr Rawsthorne confirmed that he will accept comments up to one week before the application goes before the Planning Committee which may be in 3 to 6 months time.

A question put to the meeting was "Is this delay due to the Core Strategy not yet finalised?" ET responded no, and that Wainhomes have been premature with their submission of an application and the Inspector will not know about it until the Examination reconvenes on March 5th.

The Site Notices and Press Release are to be repeated due to the inaccurate description by Wigan Council of the application site. Press Release should be in this week's Journal. They will also put up 2 extra Site Notices – making a total of six. Residents living on the boundary of the application site will receive another notification letter.

LENDF have set up a sub-committee to review all the documents Wainhomes have submitted with their application and have already found a number of inconsistencies, inaccurate information, etc. Various points were then discussed in relation to data of school places, population, existing congestion areas, inadequate public transport, etc. All these points are being considered by the sub-committee by way of looking for evidence to show that this application for housing can not be supported by Lowton at this moment in time.

Any development that would occur must result in S.106 monies being used for the benefit of Lowton residents. Wainhomes application, if granted, could result in £2.4M, though the Council have previously stated that it would need to use S.106 money for various infrastructure improvements especially in Hindley.

With relation to schools the Council could insist that Wainhomes make a financial contribution towards Lowton schools to enable them to cope with the increase in pupils.

A number of those present had written to Wainhomes with their comments and had not yet received a reply. LENDF and LHSRG had also not yet received replies to their letters.

One document that Wainhomes has submitted to Council was in relation to the public consultation that took place at Golborne Sports and Social Club, Stone Cross Lane, on

November 20th. They used a private leaflet distribution company to deliver 1,200 pamphlets about the consultation and have reported that 228 people attended. The statistics they quote as being comments either on the day or via email, equate to 11.5% objections received in relation to the 1,200 pamphlets delivered. This document is available on Wigan website as part of the 'Associated Documents'

The Government Inspector is to reconvene the Examination on March 5th and has allocated 4 days to meet with the Council on each of the Options in the Core Strategy. We do not know as yet which day will be allocated to Lowton. The meeting will take place at Leigh Sports Village and there will be space for a public audience. Those in the audience may not make comment or speak to the Inspector but as LENDF and LHSRG will be 'at the table' then it is acceptable for notes to be passed forward on any issues you may wish LENDF or LHSRG to present. Andy Burnham and Cllr Gilligan have also requested Council to allow them to be 'at the table' and have the ability to speak directly to the Inspector.

POST MEETING NOTE: Timetable announced and circulated to members via email. Lowton and Golborne to be discussed on Wednesday 6th March at 1.30pm.

The Council's housing build targets (1,000 pa) needs to be investigated as since the last visit by the Inspector there could have been a number of permissions granted. LENDF to approach the Council for this figure.

LENDF and LHSRG are attending a meeting on January 18th with Andy Burnham and the residents group from Atherton to review the current situation.

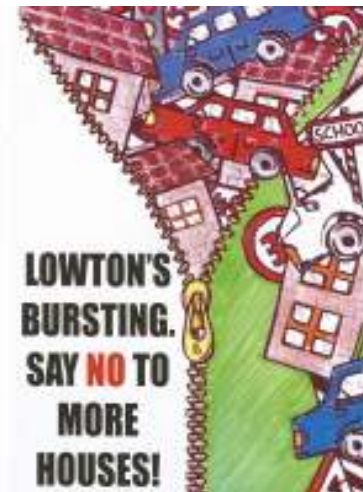
LENDF to raise the awareness of Wainhomes application by organising door to door sessions, together with pro forma letters and asking people to make their comments on the letter and sign them. It is important that one letter per person is done. Due to the dark evenings these will be done at weekends and the first was agreed to be Scott Road estate – **Saturday 19th meet at 1pm at the top of Scott Road. Volunteers needed.** The following weeks will see other areas being covered in a systematic way to ensure all streets have been visited.

Local media to be used to also increase awareness i.e. Lowton Golborne LOCAL. LENDF have already had a number of articles in the local press over the preceding months.

Signs for Windows:

A resident has taken the initiative of producing posters for people to place into their windows, especially those residents most affected. She had brought A4 sized posters to the meeting and distributed them to those who required one.

(see website for jpg of this image)



Signs for Gardens:

Also another resident has offered to organise 'stop congestion' placards, similar to For Sale signs, which are available to purchase at £10 each. These are suitable for the front gardens of properties and are available from **Bev Ellison, 21 Rosedale Ave, Tel: 07887 888912** (*Design and wording not yet completed but 3 orders placed already*)

Discussion then began about Bickershaw South and the pending appointment of a developer for 500 houses on the site. Andy Burnham had confirmed this was imminent with the chosen developer required to contribute to the cost of upgrading the kamikaze island. A question was asked about Crankwood Road 'why was it rejected by the council?' The response was 'cost'.

The meeting also discussed the now demolished 'Sportsman' pub and that on some Wigan plans a proposed road is shown from the point where the pub was and linking to the Atherleigh Bypass!

5. Any Other Business

○ **Car break-ins**

Reports of car break-ins have been reported. Please do not leave items visible in your car. Any suspicious activity please report to the police using 101.

○ **Report from Cllr P Gilligan:**

Dear Ted, Further to our telephone conversation.

Issues addressed:

Oaklands Rd – Kings Ave areas – Braithwaite Rd

Dog fouling increased engaged officer and appropriate fine issued –

Litter pick organised Braithwaite and Oaklands

Reported increase on graffiti Oaklands area – 3 areas cleaned by Council

Bus shelter confirmation received going ahead in the next 3 months

Requested information from officers given the extremely large pot holes in Lowton East, we all know the amount of rain we have had and how much traffic the roads are coping with – the volume of traffic is an area I am investigating with officers and condition of our roads. Will report back to you when I have received the information from officers.

I am still addressing the core strategy for Lowton East and have requested a meeting with the Leader – I will keep you informed.

The costings have still not been received for the painting of the street columns in Fir Tree Avenue have e mailed the officer to update me a s a p.

Some of the street signage (street names) have been renewed but there are still some to be done. Officer has assured me yesterday they will be done within the next two weeks.

I am informed that Cllr Cowley is still pursuing the BT broadband issue on Braithwaite Rd

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you require any further information.

Thank you

Pam

○ **Patients Participation Group – Braithwaite Road Surgery.**

Members of the Group present at tonight's meeting have asked any residents registered at the surgery to make comment on its management, facilities, etc, or to express any thoughts or concerns. Please contact malc78@blueyonder.co.uk or edwardhoulton@gmail.com

○ **Blue Badges for Disabled**

Please be aware that the car park at Spinning Gate Shopping Centre, Leigh, will now be charging Blue Badge holders for the use of the car park.

The Wigan Council website does not though indicate this

<http://www.wigan.gov.uk/Services/GettingAbout/Parking/DisabledParking.htm>

○ **St Cath's Church**

Families have had letters asking if they wish graves to be moved or left alone. Graves are being interned at the church in Golborne. The area of the St Cath's may be left to deteriorate for a number of years and then possibly the land sold for housing. We presume that a 'Remembrance Garden' will be created for those graves which families have requested remain untouched.

6. Next LENDF Monthly Meeting

Monday 11th February 2013 @ 7.30pm (Lowton Social Club)

Should you find any omissions or discrepancies in these minutes please contact me on lendf99@gmail.com and let me know as soon as possible and the errors will be rectified.

Irene Thomson,
Secretary – LENDF