

Lowton East Neighbourhood Development Forum (LENDF)

Contact Email Address: lendf99@gmail.com

Minutes of meeting held on
Monday 12 December 2022 at Lowton Social Club

Chair
Secretary (Chaired the meeting)
Covering Chairperson/Treasurer
Minutes Secretary

(Currently vacant)
Liz Brown (LB)
Irene Thomson (IT)
Gill Turner (GT)

Councillors

Edward Houlton (EH)
Maire Cooper (MC)

Apologies

Deputy Secretary
Councillor

Julie Shawcross (JS)
Kath Houlton (KH)

No. of attendees = 9

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. Update

- Bulb Planting – Newbank Garden Centre were giving away free daffodil bulbs. These have now been planted by LB and Liz Parsons on the Meadows. Please email LENDF if you want to help with future planting activities.
- A meeting is being organised with Michael Fishwick, Wigan Parks Department, regarding possible sites to plant more bulbs. This will probably be organised for after Christmas now. If you have suggestions for planting sites then please email LENDF. The top of Silsden Ave is already on the list.
- Winton Rd and Pond St Parks will be resurfaced within the next two years, as thanks to EH, they are now back on the Community Infrastructure Levy list!
- Roundels with 20mph have now been painted at the top of Hesketh Meadow Lane (these are circles painted on the road with the speed in them) Thanks to KH for sorting this out. (*Update: they are not called lozenges after all!*)

- Update on **East Leigh Junior Football Club** from the last meeting:
There is potentially a problem with horses leaving the bridleway and going across the Meadows onto Hesketh Meadow Lane. Currently there is only a footpath on maps (not a right of way or a bridleway) The Meadows has been an open access playing field since the 1950s so there has been no need of a documented bridleway or right of way, as it has regularly been used as both under open access. This poses a conflict of interest as the football fields need some protection from horse hooves. Terrin Gaskell, County Access and Bridleway Officer (British Horse Society), has been put in touch with James Ridyard from the football club, to discuss options.
At the previous LENDF meeting it was suggested that the football club use Lowton Social Club for some of their meetings to help show that they are part of the wider Lowton community. The first meeting of the football club at Lowton Social Club has now gone ahead. This may help to create better interactions between local people and the football club.

3. A580 extra left turn onto Newton Road (for through traffic onto the motorway)

- The Lane Head South Residents Group had this as a main agenda item at their last meeting and a significant number of local residents affected by the alteration attended. These residents think this alteration is a very bad idea. No-one from Wigan Council has yet spoken/written to them about this alteration and Wigan have said they are unlikely to do so until the middle of next year. Resident parking, the service road being one way in the design, final road widths and safety issues, will only be considered at this point. Lets hope these safety issues give Wigan time to revisit their decision.
- Wigan are implying that this use of S106 monies is now set in stone because the cabinet have already approved it. It doesn't need planning permission so there isn't an obvious way for the 20 houses that are seriously affected to raise objections. This is causing a significant number of well-being issues on the road and has pushed some residents to put their houses up for sale.
- There was finally a meeting with Wigan Council, Councillors and local groups a few weeks ago but nothing was resolved. Wigan heard all the objections the groups put forward, but didn't appear to really listen. They are taking the opportunity to try to increase the flow of traffic, passing through the area from Leigh and Astley, by providing a 290m waiting lane for traffic turning left onto the motorway via Winwick Lane. Groups said the waiting lane will be very, very close to the 20 houses, reduce the service road and path width to a minimum, and make the A580 cycle path and service road/path dangerous. Already cars ignore the no entry sign on the service road and speed through it to turn left more quickly, a narrower road will make this more dangerous and won't stop illegal road use. The use of Lowton S106 monies here is detrimental to Lowton people, of limited use to through traffic and a questionable use of our S106 monies. It is only a matter of time before it is realised that 290m is not long enough for the volume of traffic wanting to turn left at peak times. The local groups stated the bypass was the only way to solve the expanding issue of traffic volume. Wigan agreed to look at the possibility despite previously rejecting the idea. The groups asked if there would be any compensation given to residents due to their houses

being blighted by this change. Wigan said they would not be compensated by Wigan and advised residents hire a solicitor and refer to the Highways Act. When told it was unlikely that residents could afford this, Wigan officers had no response.

- As reported at the last meeting there was a non-political meeting with Andy Burnham and Andy said the bypass could be funded in part by S106 monies as it is not a major infrastructure change. Please refer to the October 2022 minutes for other details.
- There are 2 bypass options: the preferred option would extend the Atherleigh bypass into the borough of Warrington; the easier and cheaper option would be to keep it within the Wigan borough by joining the A580 directly up with Winwick Lane before the Warrington boundary. Wigan council know these options.
- There was a meeting last Friday (9 December 2022) with James Grundy MP. Colin Disley, one of the residents affected, submitted a document containing many reasons why the Lane Head alteration was not a good idea and signed by 36 residents of the service road. James said he would write to Richard Holden at the Department of Transport regarding the issue and attach Colin's document.

4. Black mould in council properties

- Two years ago, a two-year-old died in Rochdale because the rented property he lived in had black mould and the spores got onto his lungs.
- EH has been working hard to help tenants deal with black mould in the Wigan borough including 3 in Lowton. Any council tenant with these conditions should look at this council link <https://www.wigan.gov.uk/Resident/Housing/Council-homes/Repairs/Mould-condensation.aspx> , read the "How can I help to prevent condensation and mould" and click the '**report mould or damp in the home**' button if applicable. You could also email local councillors and attach pictures of the mould.
- It was noted some privately rented properties have the same issue. A report is due to be presented in the next few days to the Government.
- It was reported that some of the issues are contractors blocking air-bricks when modernising/repairing council properties.

5. Overview of some things we can do as individuals to reduce pollution.

- Presentation by Liz Brown (see attached presentation)
- It was an informative discussion on ways local residents can be kinder to the planet. Big business and governments can make a substantial difference, but we, as a large body of consumers, can too. If we **all** do one or more extra thing on this list then together we will make a substantial difference. For instance if we all buy our cows/oat milk/pop in reusable glass bottles from the milkman then supermarkets will have to rethink how they package these products as few people will buy them. Little of the plastic we put into our recycle bins actually gets recycled into new plastic products. Much gets shipped to places like Turkey to be dumped on a beach somewhere or burnt. It was shocking to discover that

there are 5 very large garbage patches in the oceans, the largest being 3 times the size of France! It is much, much better to reduce single use plastic packaging by not buying it in the first place. See suggestion lists on the presentation. There are 8 lists including: plastic, transport, energy, food, fast fashion, gardens, buying presents and subscribing to an environmental charity. So what extra thing will you do?

Next meeting: Monday 13 February 2023 at Lowton Social Club

Future meetings will be held every other month at Lowton Social Club and in between the Lane Head South Residents Group will hold their meetings at the Travel Lodge at Lane Head. LENDF members are welcome to attend these meetings.

LENDF future meetings at Lowton Social Club:

- Monday 10 April 2023
- Monday 12 June 2023
- Monday 14 August 2023
- Monday 9 October 2023
- Monday 11 December 2023