

Lowton East Neighbourhood Development Forum (LENDF)

Contact Email Address: lendf99@gmail.com

Minutes of Meeting and AGM held on Monday 13th April 2026 at Lowton Social Club

PRESENT:

Chair	Prof. Graham Wardle
Secretary	Liz Brown
Treasurer	Irene Thomson
Minutes Secretary	Margaret Mitchell
Councillors:	Cllr Jenny Gregory
	Cllr Mike Smith
	Cllr Garry Lloyd

Total no. of attendees including residents = 16

1. Welcome and previous minutes

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

2. AGM – Kath Houlton and Julie Shawcross stood down from their LENDF roles as they are candidates in the local Lowton East Ward elections.

Graham Wardle was re-elected to Chair (seconded by Liz Brown)

Irene Thomson was re-elected to Treasurer (seconded by Kathy Johnson)

Liz Brown was re-elected to Secretary (seconded by Jenny Gregory)

Margaret Mitchell was re-elected to Minutes Secretary (seconded by Kath Houlton)

Deputy Secretary and Social Secretary posts remain open and the constitution states we can co-opt volunteers in during the year.

Irene gave her **treasurers report** – this included buying a new laptop for £399 for Liz Brown as her last one was old and VERY temperamental, including during presentations. She will need a printer shortly to replace her 20 year old model. LENDF also gave £200 towards the cost of the darts room at the Social Club. Kompan gave us £1150 for the Sunday Funday taking place on the 17th May – event costs and a tree(!) have yet to come out of the account. The balance sheet was available for residents to view at the meeting.

3. Traffic Issues – Graham talked about 6 topics. His presentation can be found on this link:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1IWWzqM9EiFFpn0NqCyyGNd9NIU0DICdG/view?usp=drive_link

However; below is a brief summary:

1) **Local speed measurements on roads** – the data collected showed that Community Speed Watch (CSW) activity does reduce speeding in places where it is carried out.

2) **Speeding on Sandy Lane** – only two residents responded to a request to attend a possible meeting with GMP's Neighbourhood & Road Policing Unit and Local Council officers. If residents are not concerned enough to put their points of view across there is little chance of a solution being sought. Graham is having a last ditch attempt to 'rally the troops'. Please contact Graham or Kath on lagtac.data@gmail.com if you are willing to deliver leaflets to the houses on Sandy Lane to advertise this meeting. Jenny has offered to help deliver leaflets too.

3) **Bi-monthly LaGTAC-GMP meetings** – GMP (Greater Manchester Police) will attend our volunteer CSW activities regularly in addition to their own monitoring.

4) **Call for more GMP CSW Volunteers** – UPDATE: There are 4 applicants for the whole of Wigan, with just one from Lowton. To continue to make a difference on more roads, more volunteers are needed for the Lowton area. Email Graham on lagtac.data@gmail.com.

5) **Weekly LaGTAC/GMP traffic (including local policing issues) surgeries** – these are at St Mary's Community Hall each Thursday morning 10:30-12 noon during 'Coffee and Chat'. Graham and Kath are often joined by local police officers when shift patterns allow. **PC Ryan Little** is our new community police officer, replacing PC Dan Reid. Council neighbourhood officer Angela Addis and her colleague Stephen Gerrard will also attend on an ad hoc basis. Come along and meet them.

6) **Local road-overcapacity studies** – In the light of Rowland Homes comment about 'another few cars wont make any difference' and the looming spectre of the huge Tritax development, Graham was asked to use available traffic data to look into the future of local road congestion. Although it is obvious to all that gridlock is coming, we need some cold hard facts to wave in the face of TfGM and Wigan Council. A more detailed document is found here https://drive.google.com/file/d/1wRev47z7JwJWK1C6mqoytjBxZalHvY4g/view?usp=drive_link ; if interested, please study it and give your comments to Graham. He would be grateful for any insights. **It is a first evaluation covering available data and intended to stimulate discussion.** we will get more data when Tritax finally release their traffic analysis (UPDATE: It is likely from June 1st for 6 weeks during final TRITAX 'consultation')

4. **Update on Lowton Community Hub** – Liz gave a brief update

The hub is next to the J&I Primary School on Newton Road. The hub website is worth a look to see it's history and progress so far <https://lowtoncommunityhub.co.uk/> It has a cafe, Martial Arts and fitness centre, and Physio and Rehab facility. Luke Brown gave some of the LENDF committee a tour behind the scenes when we had a recent meeting there to discuss the Lowton Sunday Funday on the 17th May (more on this in item 6!) Luke will be opening 2 new sections of the hub on the Funday; Wigan Borough Family 6th Family Hub, and Pizza with Purpose!

5. **Councillors' Business**

Garry spoke about his 3 years as a Lowton East Councillor. He has found attending the local community groups regularly to be very helpful as there is a good cross pollination of information and ideas. *The groups have also found the local Councillor attendance to be very helpful.* Garry said pot holes have been a regular issue when dealing with residents and Graham joined in by saying he wants to get a National Standard for the definition and fixing of pot holes agreed.¹

Update: the national government have recently allocated 27 billion pounds to improve the state of our roads, including potholes. Many roads were not designed for the sheer volume and the weight of SUVs and HGVs that now use them.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/major-renewal-of-ageing-english-roads-delivered-with-27-billion-investment>

Garry also talked about the replacement of David Molyneux, who is stepping down as Leader of the Council. The next leader will be elected by the full council after the elections, he is hoping that the next leader will challenge the council officers robustly in decision making to ensure the most effective decisions are made with the information available.

The LENDF committee then wished **all** the Lowton East Ward candidates good luck in the local elections on Thursday 7th May. Residents, please go out and use your vote wisely!

¹ Graham and Kath received a commitment from the last government's Roads Minister and are hopeful that the current Roads Minister will continue to follow this up.

6. **Sunday Funday co-ordinated by LENDF on the 17th May**

We have spoken about this for over a year but the day is now nearly here! Liz gave a presentation. Read on:

The event is just after the Y6 school exams. St Lukes Junior School are having a Circus event at their school on the Saturday and we are having the LENDF free event the day afterwards, on the Sunday **across 3 venues!** No need to use up your petrol, stay in Lowton for a whole weekend of fun. *Here is the itinerary:*

1) Venue **1** – The Lowton Community Hub next to J&I Primary School

8am – cafe opens for hot drinks and food until 2:30 ish – *live music* during the day.

9am – opening of the 6th Wigan Council Family Hub – staff are on hand to answer questions until at least 12 noon – or contact phone 01942 828377. Go along to see them face to face.

10am – judo demos and taster sessions

11am – jujitsu demos and taster sessions

12 noon – Dojo Pizza soft opening, free slice with voucher, start to move on to venue 2 and 3
Kids activities until about 2pm ish

2) Venue **2** – The Lowton Social Club

12 noon – opening – bar, food vans, kids craft tent and face painting, artisan craft stalls/tombola, **BUMBLEBEE** transformer, ambulance, bouncy castle in progress until 4pm.

12:15 – Charlie and line dancing demo and taster sessions.

1:00 – Boxercize and games – demo and taster sessions.

1:30 – 3:00 – Darts games and taster sessions

2:00 – Fire engines*2 & fire car – have your photos taken!

2:30 - Boxercize and games – demo and taster sessions.

3:10 - Charlie and line dancing demo and taster sessions.

4:00 – Close

Also promoting flyers for activities in Lowton throughout the year, inc Tenants Together

3) Venue **3** – Oaklands Park behind the Social Club

East Leigh Football Club will be having football games and beat the goalie during the afternoon on the park. They usually play on Hesketh Meadow field and have lots of different community teams that you can get involved with. Just ask on the day.

The playground was refurbished by the council and Kompan last year with new pathway and play area. Fill in a survey to give feedback. The council have also added trees and a bund around the perimeter. Funding for the Sunday Funday event was part of this.

We need more volunteers for the day on the 17th May – here are the roles:

To help set up gazebos and tables from 9:30 – 12 noon

To help with the craft table

To help marshal the bouncy castle

To act as marshalls to guide people between venues

To help with the information table

To help clear down the event after 4pm.



Please pass on your email address/contact phone no if you can help. It will be much appreciated!!! Email lendf99@gmail.com It doesn't need to be for the full time.

7. Building Updates

1) The oversized SRFI planned by TRITAX: The LHSRG made a fabulous presentation last month at their meeting – it can be accessed here: <https://www.lhsrg.co.uk/ilpn-object>
The above link will take you to their website. It summaries the history of the site and the next steps. Please read. They were doing the same presentation at Culcheth & Glazebury Residents Association in parallel with this LENDF meeting. The webpage looks like this, click each of the links on their page. **UPDATE:** It's *likely* the final consultation by TRITAX starts on 1st June.

Tritax Info Here

Tritax Big Box want to build a Strategic Rail Freight Interchange (SRFI) on 500+ acres of green belt opposite Kenyon Hall Farm. Confusingly, it is known by all the names above, but they are one and the same thing

We are expecting the next round of Residents' Consultations to take place in early Summer (possibly June). More information will be uploaded here as soon as it is available.

In the meantime, you can download our [FULL PRESENTATION](#) and [10 POINTS HIGHLIGHTS DOCUMENT](#) to make sure that you are aware of all the facts relating to this proposed development.

2) The Rowan Avenue Plans:

Over 50 online objections were made by the 23rd March deadline. There were more made via email that were also taken into account. Well done to all who objected and to those residents who went the extra mile to make others aware of what was happening. **Teamwork works!**
Highlights: There were 3 official objections about flooding, 1 official objection about number and layout of houses, Town Planning says land is safe guarded for HS2! Council say traffic assessment could be better.

Downside: Council still want access via the stub into the field but want them to increase the road from 5.2m to 5.5m by reducing the footpath.

Some of the detailed official objections are listed below:

Flooding – the environmental agency, the local flood authority, and United Utilities said plans weren't good enough to prevent local flooding. Resident comment: Pumping station needs to be serviced at least one per year, how will this be done? How noisy is the pumping station?

Town Planning said 'it is evident that the site is located within HS2 safeguarded land' So why is it being built on?? https://drive.google.com/file/d/1zKS3XoFajLTfQxuF81fTYErAsGifBUs/view?usp=drive_link Mike Smith thought it may have come out of save guarding recently but the town planning email was only sent on 12th March? *Needs following up.*

Wigan Council Transport Policy Department said – the site layout is very poor for vehicle assess so builders need to redo plans. But still say stub access possible!!!! They are also not happy with various bits of the travel assessment. https://drive.google.com/file/d/1h_lp4MyeS--UT1UbKbugxleL7TfuFTcY/view?usp=sharing

Housing enabling team said they would like some bungalows and more 2 bedroomed houses. The 11 social house allocation is next to the A580 in the worst place(of course it is)
https://drive.google.com/file/d/106vu4K5J-ekG_ZMbnHN_isMFPQpVD0XV/view?usp=sharing

If the application goes to the planning committee in this state then it will be rejected. It is likely the plans will either be withdrawn or rejected. Watch this space! We think residents have won this battle BUT it is also likely that Rowland Homes will go away and regroup – we need to be vigilant and watch for the next planning application for this land. The best we can do

is to draw out this process as long as possible so that *by the time* the plans are acceptable, the Enterprise Way access is available. We can but dream!

LENDF have since emailed the planning department with suggestions to make submitting residents comments easier. **We emailed the following:**

I write on behalf of a number of Lowton residents, who for several reasons, have found it very difficult to register their comments about recent planning applications, in particular, A/25/100245/MAJOR, doubling the size of Rowan Ave. I list **two** difficulties and their solutions:

1. PROBLEM: The comments page times out after about 30 minutes - several people were caught out by this as **the warning is not in an appropriate place**. Currently you only come across it near the bottom of an A4 page of text on only **one** of the many paths to the on-line comment section. *SOLUTION: Put this text on the 'make a comment' page itself 'Please be aware that the comment page will "time out" after approximately 30 minutes of inactivity. To ensure your comment isn't lost, it is advisable to create an electronic draft beforehand then paste your comments into the appropriate field.' This placement is needed immediately before the editing task, to ensure everyone reads it.*

2. PROBLEM: Both the residents letter and the letter that appeared on the lamp post **only gave one method of making a comment**. This was written as a very long and difficult to copy on-line link. You made no mention of a postal address or email address, which is a shame as these last two options would have been preferred options for many elderly residents affected by the Rowan Ave development. In fact there was no planning email address or postal address anywhere on the documents. As you know, **it is illegal for councils to restrict representations** to only one submission method. Omitting email and postal addresses from your documents to residents is restricting submission choice as many residents do not know they legally have other choices. Your documents seem designed to let the resident think they have only one submission choice and then to make it as difficult as possible for them to submit it in this way. *SOLUTION: State your preferred submission option with a link **and** QR code, but **also** state you will accept emails and post as necessary, stating your contact addresses.*

It is likely that these difficulties will apply to commenting on **most** planning applications, especially amongst people who have little or no access to a smart phone AND laptop or personal computer or are not used to filling in official council forms on-line. I attach the two documents (very few) residents received, showing the issue. I look forward to your response.

UPDATE: After prompting with a second email, we got a reply from David Proctor: *Thank you for your email, we do appreciate the effort to propose some constructive solutions as well as highlighting concerns. Please be assured that the team are looking at the points you raised – some of these involve liaising with our external software supplier and so are taking a bit longer to scope out, but I have also asked whether there are any quick wins, including the question of QR codes on letters and site notices. I hope this is of assistance for the time being, and that we will have the opportunity to discuss these issues again moving forward.*

8. AOB -

Brown bin – soft/flexible plastic now allowed because of new contractor H.W Martin Waste Ltd. *Liz asked if the contractor or the council could arrange a Q&A so residents could better understand how the plastic is recycled and in what quantities?*

Winwick Lane new traffic lights – still being tested by TfGM – is it working now?

Local Elections – Thu 7th May, take your ID and vote for local issues.

Next Meeting - Monday 8th June 2026 at 7:30pm at Lowton Social Club