**Dear Standish Voice member,**

I wanted to update you on what has been a very busy month for Standish Voice.

For those of you unable to attend last week’s Deal In Action meeting, there were a number of announcements there that we were involved with.

Firstly, our campaign for more public parking has been successful in securing a commitment from Wigan Council to work with us to solve this problem once and for all.

Our petition drew 1,300 names in a few weeks and our parking report and survey was delivered to the council. You may recall our last newsletter explained that this survey concluded that Standish centre ideally needs around 130 more public parking spaces.

We and the council have agreed a 12-point action plan (attached), including a council commitment to find and pay for new public parking and to pay for it.

We and the council will also launch a community parking initiative to negotiate with private car park owners and, hopefully, come to an agreement on freeing up more of their parking spaces for the general public. The cooperation of private car park owners in this initiative is crucial as they have around 600 spaces in the centre of Standish, as opposed to around 100 public ones.

We will be working on this in the coming months. Thanks to everyone who helped on this campaign and to you for supporting it by adding your name to the petition.

Secondly, there was an announcement on a transformation of The Line into a multi-purpose route for walkers, cyclists and horse riders.

In September, Wigan Council asked Standish Voice for a project that could be achieved quickly but would have an impact on the lives of people in Standish.

We believe The Line will be a crucial asset for Standish in the future as it will be able to be a direct, non-car route into Standish from the new housing estates being built in the Almond Brook and Robin Hill area. It can also be an important track for children going to and from Standish High School safely and healthily.

Wigan Council agreed to bring forward £150,000 from the contributions housing developers will make to improve infrastructure in Standish to pay for this work to be done now.

It will be a hard surfaced, 3m-wide route with an entrance into Aldi car park where there are existing cycle parking facilities. Work will begin in April with the bulk of it being done in the school summer holidays.

The initial route will take it as far as Standish High, and this will be extended to the Britannia Hotel when more money comes in. Eventually, the route will also be lit.

We have been working on this with Martin Holden, who is on our working group and who also runs Standish Community Cycling Club. This is part of a plan to have a network of cycle paths and upgraded footpaths around Standish.

These routes can play a small part in reducing congestion in Standish centre, improving health and making a journey into, or around, Standish, more pleasant.

For more information on The Line project, see this link:

<https://www.wigan.gov.uk/Resident/Parking-Roads-Travel/Travel/Standish-Cycling.aspx>

Also, we were officially told that our applications for five places in Standish to be listed as Assets of Community Value (ACV) have been successful.

This will allow limited protection for Standish Library, The Line, Standish Community Centre, The Rec, on Southlands Avenue and Ashfield Park.

We are now arranging for more sites and buildings to be listed as ACVs.

For more information on ACVs, see this link:

<http://www.civicvoice.org.uk/campaigns/assets-of-community-value/>

We wanted to ask important questions of the council at the Deal In Action meeting. However, there was not enough time.

So they have replied to our questions in written form and they are attached to this email. The questions include money forthcoming from the new homes; education provision in years to come; air quality with the expected increase in cars; a commitment to look at the possibility of reopening Standish railway station; and asking for the detail on the highways measures to be put in place across Standish which will be needed because of the housing schemes.

Our Neighbourhood Plan is also progressing and is still on schedule to be completed by the end of the year when a referendum on it will be held in Standish.

We have employed the skills of consultants to write reports on two important issues to help us draft our policies for the plan.

One is a housing needs survey specific for Standish. Our plan, which will run until 2030, needs to select areas for future housing. Wigan Council has ‘safeguarded’ land which is earmarked for future development by private developers, but we want to stipulate what type of housing goes there if, and only if, more homes are agreed.

We believe any new homes have to be only ones shown to be needed in Standish in the future - for example, housing for the elderly - and this survey will show what that need will be.

The other work is to look at Standish centre and how it can be a more vibrant, prosperous and pleasant area to be in, whether that be shopping, eating or drinking or just enjoying the historic surroundings.

There has been news this month on the housing developments already planned.

1. Bloor had its detailed plan for 300 homes behind Pepper Lane and Robin Hill approved. Work on cutting down trees and hedges has already started on that site.
2. Persimmon had its detailed plans for the first phase of its golf course plan, on the left and right of Rectory Lane, approved. Work on a roundabout for this 250-home development begins on Monday and is expected to last three months.
3. HIMOR property company is actively marketing its site on Bradley Lane trading estate which has been cleared to make way for an estate of 150 homes. They are expecting a sale to a housing developer which will have to put in a detailed application for this site.
4. The applications for 128 homes near the railway bridge on Rectory Lane and 80 homes of Langham Road are still with the planning department. Around 70 objections have been lodged about the Langham development.
5. Countryside are expected to start selling their homes on the site on Rectory Lane in early spring when a sales cabin will open.

Our next monthly Standish Voice meeting is on Tuesday, February 23, at 7.45pm in the Unity Club, on Cross Street. All are welcome.

I also enclose two press cuttings about the parking campaign and The Line.

Thanks for your continued support.

**Paul Ogden**

**Vice chair**

**Standish Voice**