**Dear Standish Voice member**

**Here is the December newsletter from Standish Voice, the village’s Neighbourhood Forum**

**YOUR VILLAGE NEEDS YOU**

We recently highlighted the plans across Greater Manchester to develop on some of its green belt open space.

Due to the lobbying of Wigan Council by Standish Voice over many months, Standish's green belt has been left untouched in the proposals, but we know landowners and developers still want to build on this precious space which surrounds our village – which would be over and above the housing which already has planning permission for green fields within Standish.

So we need everyone who wants to protect the green areas that circle Standish to stand up and be counted by emailing Greater Manchester’s planning authority telling them that our green belt should be untouched.

Standish is also one of only three places in the whole of Greater Manchester where there are plans to INCREASE green belt - on a site at the bottom of Rectory Lane. So we need everyone to support this proposal too.

The plans will be discussed after public consultation is over and could be changed to include building on Standish's green belt - so we need to loudly say 'no' to that.

Please send an email to: GMSF@agma.gov.uk and include your full name and address.

In your own words, please say that you want to retain all Standish's green belt and want it to increase it by including the proposed site on Rectory Lane.

You can say that green belt is precious as a place to enjoy for health and recreation, to mitigate carbon emissions and to give a distinct boundary around the village to prevent urban sprawl.

You can also say that 1,550 houses are to be built in Standish over the coming years - increasing its size by a quarter – which breaches the local plan and the village currently cannot cope with any more development. You can also mention the over-capacity of roads and schools too.

You need to send in your email by Friday, December 23. Please spend a minute or two to help to protect Standish's green space - we don't want to lose it!

**STANDISH CHRISTMAS MARKET**

The first Standish Christmas Market, organised by Standish Voice, was a huge success on many measures.

We believe 5,000-6,000 people attended the day, three times the number we predicted. Shops, pubs and businesses we have spoken to broke their records for profits, residents have emailed us over and over again saying what a great event it was, and traders and Wigan council have praised us for the professional organisation of the day. We were worried parking would be a problem but that did not materialise.

Standish Voice would like to thank the Christmas Market committee, St Wilfrid’s Church, the Friends of Standish Library, the Women’s Institute, Coun Ray Whittingham, Wigan Council, the residents of Cross Street, Market Place and Church Street and all our volunteers for their help in staging such a wonderful day in the heart of Standish.

We are now conducting a feedback exercise and I would please ask you to send us your views of the day – good or bad – to standishvoiceevents@gmail.com There will be an automatic reply directing you to a short survey which we would like you to complete.

We will be looking at all the feedback and talking to the authorities involved before we decide to hold another one next year.

Our Standish Voice stall in the Parish Hall was well attended with people giving their views on the Neighbourhood Plan Vision and Objectives and we signed up 70 new members on the day bringing our membership up to around 600.

**WAINHOMES PLAN FOR LANGHAM**

You may know that a plan to build 80 homes on a patch of land of Langham Road has gone to appeal due to the time Wigan Council has taken to decide it.

Developers Wainhomes have now put in a revised plan which will go to Wigan Council’s planning committee on January 17.

These 80 homes are over and above the 1,550 allowed for Standish over the past few years and breach Wigan’s Local Plan.

Therefore, Standish Voice is strongly objecting to this planning application and we would like all our members to object too.

Please email planningapplications@wigan.gov.uk saying that you object to the plan – A/16/83078/OUTMES land at Langham Road, Standish – because it breaches the local plan and Standish’s infrastructure cannot cope with any more housing.

This needs to be done by January 1.

**NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN**

Our consultation on the plan will begin in earnest in the New Year and we now have a dedicated email address for the public’s views: standishplanconsultation@gmail.com

**CHRISTMAS DECORATIONS**

There has been considerable public debate about the Christmas Trees replacing the Union Flags on the shop fronts in Standish and the state of our community Christmas Tree in front of St Wilfrid’s Church.

We have decided to bring together a village-wide committee to discuss all this early in the New Year ready for next year. We plan to approach the ward councillors for Standish, shop owners and organisations in the village to organise the decorations for 2017.

As a short term measure for this year, we decided to launch an appeal to raise money for cancer treatment for a Standish businessman and to brighten the tree at the same time.

The Ribbon For Gordon appeal is raising money throughout December for private treatment for Gordon Thorpe, a dad-of-six who is not responding to the usual treatment for his pancreatic cancer.

For each pound placed in special boxes, in pubs and shops across Standish, we will place a ribbon on the unsightly fencing around the Christmas Tree. Please contribute if you can.

You can read the story here: <http://www.wigantoday.net/news/community/ribbon-appeal-for-wigan-dad-with-cancer-1-8293616>

**AGM**

Thanks to those who came to our AGM in November. The committee was re-elected in the same roles apart from the Events Lead. This position has been taken up by Jaime Jones, who was an integral part of the planning for the Christmas Market.

Attached are the reports of the year from our chair, Gill Foster, and myself.

**WHISKY**

We arranged a Whisky Tasting Night last month, which was well attended and raised £84 for Standish Voice events. Hopefully, another will be organised early in the new year.

**Our next meeting will be at the Unity Club on Tuesday, January 17. We wish you and your families a very merry Christmas and a happy New Year.**

**Paul Ogden**

**Vice chair, Standish Voice**