Dear Standish Voice member,

Welcome to our January, 2020 newsletter.

Standish Voice and its Standish Christmas Market committee have already set a date for their first meeting to discuss a possible 2020 event, even though we are still recovering from our last one!

The Market, on November 30, was a huge success, raising thousands of pounds for good causes and attracting around 5,000 people throughout the day.

Feedback from the public, businesses and local organisations has been universally positive – it is great to know the hard work of the organising committee is appreciated.

We would like to thank everyone who helped to organise the event, the volunteers on the day, St Wilfrid’s Church for the venue and their help with arrangements, the Friends of Standish Library and Cross Street Arts for organising their activities, Wigan Council and the police for their help and all the businesses and pubs who joined in to make the day so special.

Thanks to Wood Fold School for the use of its car park, the Unity Club for staging the charity karaoke and our afterparty, the Methodist Church for the hire of their halls and car park and also the residents and businesses of Cross Street and Market Street for their co-operation.

We had some fantastic stalls – 60 across all our venues – and we had new attractions, including our Christmas Market owl, which we commissioned from Cross Street Arts.

We would like to thank our business sponsors, especially our Gold sponsors The Olive Garden, Breakey & Co and Holts Brewery/The Lychgate. Overall, sponsorship was up 10% on last year and our Christmas Raffle also raised £1,000. Our councillors, Ray Whittingham, Debbie Parkinson and Adam Marsh also gave Brighter Borough money to the Market and helped out on the day.

All the money we raise goes towards the considerable cost of staging the Market, to a contingency fund so that further Markets can be organised, and to other Standish Voice initiatives.

We have not taken a decision yet on whether to hold another Market in 2020, but we shall decide that and any date, very soon.

**Thanks to everyone who turned out on a miserable night to attend Standish Voice’s AGM last week.**

**The meeting heard reports of our activities over the past year from Chair Gill Foster (read it by clicking here) and Vice Chair Paul Ogden (read it by clicking here). The AGM also accepted with thanks the 2019 Accounts from Treasurer Karen Bliss. See the accounts by clicking here.**

**The AGM also agreed to some minor changes to our constitution, which allows Standish Voice to apply again for designation as a Neighbourhood Forum.**

**Standish Voice was named as the Neighbourhood Forum for the village in 2015 but this only runs for five years. We have submitted documentation to Wigan Council to ensure we can carry on as a Forum for another five years.**

**There is a statutory process which the council must follow in deciding on this, including a consultation period for the public to give its views. We will keep you informed of the process.**

**You can read our amended consultation here.**

**The 15 members of Standish Voice’s committee have a three-year term of office and usually five positions come up at the AGM. Current committee members Ron Wade, Paul Ogden, Janet Monks, Nic Macmillan and Dave King were re-elected unopposed. Gill Foster was then re-elected as Chair, Paul Ogden was re-elected as Vice Chair and Karen Bliss was re-elected as Treasurer.**

**All the AGM documents are now on our website, click here to go there**

**We are glad to see that Standish Leisure Centre will finally open on Rectory Lane on Saturday, February 1, after more than seven years in the planning. PHOTO IN HERE**
**The design and spec of the centre was decided and the planning approved before Standish Voice was established in 2014, but we have lobbied for the centre to be built and also for parents at St Wilfrid’s CE Primary to be allowed to drop off and pick up children from its car park.**
**Not only has this been achieved but a new pathway will be constructed from the car park, round the back of the outdoor football pitch to link up with the boundary of the school so that parents and children need not walk down the road.**
**For more information on joining the leisure centre, click here**

**Wigan Council is consulting on two schemes totalling 12 homes for older people which would be available for social rent in Standish.**

**The sites are being taken to the next stage after ground investigations did not reveal problems.**

**A public consultation and drop-in event will give more details of the 'cottage'-style homes that are being designed for disused land on Almond Brook Road (four homes) and Longridge Avenue (eight homes).**

**Standish Voice posted about the proposals last year saying that ground investigations were being carried out to see if building could take place.**

**If the consultation is successful, planning applications could be submitted in March.**

**A tenants and residents consultation event will be held by Wigan Council - which is developing the homes - on Wednesday, February 12, from 3.30pm to 6.30pm at Standish Community Centre, off Cross Street.**

**Standish Voice has been lobbying the council for a number of years to spend the housing part of its 106 funding (money from the development of the new housing estates) on affordable housing for elderly people in the village.**

**We know many older people have difficulty finding suitable accommodation in Standish but if they did, they could move and free up a larger home for a family, reducing the need to build further on our greenfield land.**

**The designs below show the four-home site and the eight-home one.**

Standish Voice Vice Chair Paul Ogden has joined the Mosaic Multi-Academy Trust as a member, representing the community in the governance of the Trust.

The Trust includes Standish High School, Southlands High School and Golborne Primary School. Paul is a former Standish High pupil and his children recently attended. Please email him standishneighbourhoodforum@gmail.com about anything to do with the Trust or Standish High.

**Standish Voice continues to meet the local policing team on a regular basis and met them earlier this month after a recent upsurge in crime-related incidents across the village.**

**It is pleasing to see a number of arrests in Standish this month during incidents but it is important to be vigilant. If there is a crime in progress, ring 999, but if the crime has taken place and the criminals have gone, report it on 101 or by emailing wiganwest@gmp.police.uk**

Standish Voice is constantly asked questions about the planning process and this is usually in relation to housing sites.

Social media can be a source of misinformation and many residents are still concerned about rumours of housebuilding on the site of the old tip on Chorley Road.

Last year, the landowner cleared trees at the site at the bottom of Chorley Road and a sign was put up saying the land was for sale as a “development opportunity”.

Standish Voice posted last summer, when this issue first arose, that this site is in Green Belt – the areas where housing in Standish is currently being built were not in Green Belt – which means the Chorley Road site is totally protected against development as long as it remains as Green Belt.

If you read the prospectus about the site, opposite Worthington Lakes, it says this site is a “long term” development opportunity. That is very long term. There are currently no plans to change any of the Green Belt areas around Standish.

The only way this could be done is by altering the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework and its draft proposals include keeping Standish’s Green Belt the same. If the GMSF is passed, this Green Belt designation will remain until at least 2037.

The GMSF draft plan can be altered, but we do not expect this to happen as Wigan Council is also against any changes to Standish’s Green Belt. No proposals to alter the Green Belt status of this site have been made at any stage of the GMSF.

There is another round of public consultation in summer 2020, so we will be continuing to lobby against any change to Standish’s Green Belt through the forthcoming stages of its implementation.

The Chorley Road site may be sold to a developer as developers do land bank sites for generations but this does not guarantee it will ever be built on.

The chopping down of the trees on the site by the landowner has been the subject of investigation by the Forestry Commission after it was told of the incident by Wigan Council.

**Standish Voice has a new storage facility – given to us free of charge by Standish Self Storage.**

**We now have a large amount of items, most of them for Standish Christmas Market, so we are very grateful to Standish Self Storage, at Douglas Mill on Bradley Lane, for giving us a unit free of charge.**

**We had been using a facility provided free of charge for Standish Community Forum and the Standish branch of the Royal British Legion at Ainscough Industrial. We would like to thank Ainscough Industrial and the Forum’s Councillor Ray Whittingham for allowing us to use this until now.**