

Standish Voice newsletter April 2024

Standish's Green Belt - where no development can take place unless in exceptional circumstances - has been further protected by the adoption of a Greater Manchester superplan.

The Places For Everyone plan is now in place after years of preparation, wrangling and objections.

Standish Voice and our Standish councillors have lobbied for several years to protect our Green Belt, the ring of green fields that circles the village, in this new plan, saying that Standish has had too much development too quickly over the past decade and should not see its Green Belt reduced.

The Greater Manchester plan is in place until 2039 and Green Belt has been cut back in other parts of Wigan, but not Standish. Wigan Council is preparing its own Local Plan but we fully expect it to abide by the Green Belt boundaries set down in Places For Everyone, and will be lobbying the council on this.

This plan adoption represents a major win for Standish after mass housebuilding was allowed in 2014, as we know landowners and developers who own green field sites across Standish have consulted Greater Manchester's planning authority to argue more housing should be placed on our Green Belt.

You can see Standish's Green Belt boundaries in this map, with other land classed as 'safeguarded for future development', where the vast majority of housing being built out now was passed in 2014, without adequate infrastructure in place. Green Belt is in green, safeguarded land for development in brown.

To see this map in more detail, see: <https://www.standishvoice.co.uk/.../Standish-Voice-area...>

We set up Standish Voice after these planning permissions were passed in 2014 to ensure our community had some control over development and created Standish Neighbourhood Plan, which was adopted at referendum in 2019 with a 'Yes' vote of 93%.

Since then, no new housing schemes have been passed for the remaining safeguarded land in Standish, though one plan has now been submitted for Pepper Lane. We are trying to have this refused due to it breaching a number of policies in Standish Neighbourhood Plan.

You can find out more about the Greater Manchester plan here:

www.wigan.gov.uk/placesforeveryone

It looks like asylum seekers will not be housed in Standish's Britannia Hotel after the end of June. Serco - responsible for housing asylum seekers assigned by the Home Office - is ending its contact with the Britannia at the start of July.

Standish's councillors Terry Mugan, Debbie Parkinson and Ray Whittingham have welcomed the decision and released a statement saying that the Home Office will be responsible for the hotel until then.

There are currently no plans made available by owners Britannia about the future of the hotel. The Standish councillors state: "We have continued to work with all stakeholders including Wigan council for months in meetings, sending emails and letters and following our work to close Kilhey Court before Christmas we are pleased to announce that Serco's contract with the Britannia Hotel will end at the beginning of July this year.

"Between now and then even if the hotel is empty, the Home Office will be responsible for the facility until the end of the contract. To date we have no idea on the future use of this site.

“This is welcome news for Standish, the Borough and for those vulnerable people seeking accommodation and refuge.”

You can read a news story on this here: https://www.wigantoday.net/news/politics/wigan-communitys-second-hotel-to-close-to-asylum-seekers-4577483?utm_medium=Social&utm_source=Facebook&fbclid=IwAR0a7d7wqhG6UsuaF_cyF9f7VVNEOwTXNJ09aDIFvQ_BGti1HojcVIEpB8_aem_AbwEUM5b7kqC0kwLic5n5FCLdd4PED_qHllbOYQs0avIdGKw4oWvHT_v2B4rqAgwBUHB0yTSvJelgflqn1IEWK3D#mom4mn5u8ye

Meanwhile, Kilhey Court Hotel, which houses asylum seekers until Christmas, is reopening its hotel facilities.

MacDonald Hotels is again taking bookings for meetings, events and weddings.

Standish Voice gave the following quotes to a local press article on this: “We welcome Kilhey Court getting back to what it did best - being an excellent facility for the community that it can support. But we would like to see a long term plan and vision for the hotel which can once again make it one of the best venues in the surrounding area.”

You can read the story here: https://www.wigantoday.net/business/controversial-wigan-hotel-that-became-asylum-seeker-hostel-to-re-open-for-business-4546590?fbclid=IwAR3jsPWf8kwhalfcrO3v31zrFCRz4wGQO3d67H6xmOLRZ-z9fRkvX1TqPil_aem_AbxOntBxDaFk8f_havVJaxkBhc_D4TUmmrpPY8vyrXhwvNAfnVjnURQBHTzx17rZlqwvetBCp1ZefyZVr5ugBXw

Local elections for councillors in Standish take place on Thursday, May 2nd - please use your vote and remember you will need to show photo ID.

Below are a list of candidates in Standish with Langtree ward and also in Shevington ward, which a number of Standish homes are in in the north of the village after recent boundary changes.

At the elections, people in Standish can also vote for the Mayor of Greater Manchester.

People will be voting for the mayor of the combined authority alongside local councillors for Wigan Council.

We hope all candidates refrain from personal attacks - let's keep our local politics respectful!

You will need a photo ID. If you do not have any of the accepted forms of ID, you can apply for a free Voter Authority Certificate online until 5pm on April 24. The deadline to register to vote is 11:59pm on April 16.

Polling stations will be open from 7am to 10pm.

Have you spotted dangerous driving in Standish?

Standish Voice has had reports of dangerous driving offences in Standish and we are urging you to report them when you see them.

The more reports of illegal driving are reported, the better our chances of having something done about them.

So, if it is people running red lights, ignoring pelican or zebra crossings, or making illegal turns at the crossroads, please report them, even if you don't get a registration number.

Please use this online form for Greater Manchester Police:

https://www.gmp.police.uk/ro/report/rti/rti-beta-2.1/report-a-road-traffic-incident/?fbclid=IwAR17f3rzSXH9ec-TPvPDMou-CLg05yF2HUcTVIS1ZwxQJv0FkcdHmCKRcSY_aem_AbwBcWDMjQv62A3AsOZsRwN-tAdUoDv4bkZOILrmF5-rEDrwe6OsCg9oUe1JnutGfPRzpbw3VJ-7C5sVpxoY8-OA

New measures to protect pedestrians at the tunnel on Bradley Lane is to be installed this month.

New traffic lights have been installed at the railway bridge ahead of a new housing estate being built out on Bradley Lane and Standish Voice and Standish councillors have lobbied Wigan Council for improved safety for pedestrians.

A new flashing warning signal will be installed at each end of the tunnel which will alert driver when pedestrians are walking through it.

Until the new system is fully in place please take extra care when walking under the bridge and drivers should be vigilant and watch for pedestrians as there has been a delay in the new pedestrian warning system to be installed.

As with any new signal operations the Council will work with TfGM to monitor the effectiveness of the signal timings and make any adjustments should they be necessary.

There are major roadworks planned in Standish after a urgent gas mains replacement was identified. Cadent Gas will start the works this weekend (April 13th) on Pepper Lane after faults on the existing gas main risks over 1,000 properties losing gas supply.

The works will include the use of temporary multi-way traffic signals at the junction with Preston Road and are due to be completed by the beginning of June.

Two fun-filled tea parties for families will take place at Standish Library later this month.

The Friends of Standish Library has organised the free events, sponsored by Standish Voice, and the first is on Saturday, April 20th for the under 12s.

It will be a Mad Hatter's Tea Party from 11am to 1pm with games, face painting and a hat competition. You should make your own hat and bring it along – the best one will win a prize.

There will also be a family Tea Party at the library on Saturday, April 27th from 11am to 1pm where there will be activities, raffles, refreshments and a performance from a local singer, Jensen.

The events are free of charge but please book in by letting the library staff know or email the Friends at standishlibraryfriends@btinternet.com