

WIGAN COUNCIL

WIGAN COUNCIL PLEDGES TO CONTINUE TO TACKLE SMOKING

Wigan Council has pledged to continue its efforts to reduce the number of smokers in the borough. Lord Peter Smith, leader of Wigan Council signed the Local Government Declaration on Tobacco Control which outlines the commitment Wigan Council has to tackle tobacco use. In addition, Wigan Council has also detailed and signed an additional commitment as part of The Deal for Health and Wellness to further tackle tobacco use locally. The signing comes as part of Wellfest, a festival aimed at encouraging people to look after their health and wellbeing by trying something that will benefit their physical or mental health.

GET YOUR TEETH INTO THE DAILY SMILE

Keeping the teeth of people of all ages well is the key of The Daily Smile, which launched as part of Wellfest.

The initiative links together the oral hygiene campaigns from Let's Get Brushing and the Healthy Living Dentistry programme to encourage people to take good care of their teeth and is backed by dentists across Wigan Borough. The simple message is aimed at encouraging people to look after their teeth every day. And the advice for good oral hygiene will also be reiterated in care homes across the borough with support for residents to continue to look after their teeth no matter what a person's age is.

The Daily Smile also encourages simple steps everyone can take to look after their oral health. It includes restricting sugar to meal time and only having sugar free snacks and drinks between meals.

Parents are also urged to start brushing their children's teeth as soon as they appear with a smear of adult fluoride toothpaste until they are old enough to spit out, which is usually around eight years of age. Then they can add a small strip of toothpaste on the brush and follow the three step rule of brush, spit, don't rinse.

Parents are also encouraged to take their children to the dentist as soon as possible and not to wait until they have teeth to get them used to the surroundings. It is recommended to book a child in at the same time as a parent's regular six monthly check up.

RESIDENTS ENCOURAGED TO 'RECYCLE MORE, RECYCLE RIGHT' AT THEIR LOCAL CENTRE

If you have been down to the Kirkless, Slag Lane and Chanters Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRC's) recently you might have wondered why the team there have been intercepting and splitting black bags. It's all part of Wigan Council's drive to recycle as much as possible in the area and since starting the bag splitting trials in January, Wigan Council and its partners FCC Environment have been able to recycle an additional 222,105.13kg of material that might have otherwise gone to waste.

This has helped to take the council's overall recycling rate at the household recycling sites to 63.28% , an improvement of 8 % on last year. The overall recycling rate for the borough is still under target at 43% and needs to reach 50% by 2020, which the new three weekly collections will contribute to, so it's important residents recycle more and do it right.

Materials the team is on the lookout for include:

- electric items such as hairdryers, electric food whisks
- textiles including clothes, bedding, towels
- missed metals including saucepans and bike parts

- brass including ornaments
- cardboard from delivery boxes and Amazon parcels
- wire and copper from household DIY
- steel and aluminium, not just from food cans which can be recycled at home
- paper including wrapping paper, printer paper, newsletter
- hard plastics from drainpipes to old toys
- wood from indoors and outdoors
- plugs and sockets from household DIY chores
- books, video, DVD and CD's
- old paint tin
- batteries

So next time you take a trip to the tip, take part in the Black Bag Bonanza and let us help you recycle as much as we can. Please check the wide range of items that can be recycled before attending site, log on to wigan.gov.uk/recycling for more information.

INCREDIBLE EDIBLE WIGAN

What is Incredible Edible?

What Can I Grow?

How to get involved

Is there Funding Available?

Keep up to Date with Events & Workshops

Go to <https://www.wigan.gov.uk/Council/The-Deal/Deal-Communities/Incredible-Edible/index.aspx>

For lots more information

ADVICE AT HAND EASIER THAN EVER

Starting Point Plus will now have longer opening hours and a new online service when Wigan Council begins offering the highly regarded support which has previously been provided by Age UK Wigan Borough.

To find out more go to www.wigan.gov.uk/startingpointplus.

The new phone lines will be available Monday to Friday 8.45 am to 5 pm and 8.45 am to 1 pm on Saturdays. To contact the service call 01942 489011

THINK YOU CAN FOSTER?

To find out more about fostering and how to become a foster carer in Wigan Borough go to www.wigan.gov.uk/fostering and for more details on 'You Can Foster' go to www.youcanfoster.org

WIGAN COUNCIL'S GOOD TRADER SCHEME

Wigan Council's "Good Trader Scheme" is a directory of over 200 local, reputable businesses. All the listings have star ratings of up to five gold stars that previous customers have awarded them.

Ratings are given based on workmanship and customer service; the more satisfied the customer the higher the rating.

The scheme has been set up to ensure that the residents of the Wigan Borough are getting a fair deal when it comes to work round the home.

Trading Standards check out the traders' trading history before allowing them to be part of the scheme.

Whether it's painting and decorating, joinery, or just tidying up your garden make sure you visit www.wigan.gov.uk/goodtrader. Or ring the Citizens Advice Consumer Helpline on 03454 040506.

If you are aged over 50 or have a disability Wigan Council Starting Point Plus can access the Scheme on your behalf, contact Starting Point on 01942 489011

HEART HEALTH HELPS WITH FIGHT AGAINST DEMENTIA

Wigan Council and its partners are urging people to think that 'what's good for you heart is good for your head'. The Heart of Wigan and Leigh, the borough's flagship programme for improving the public's health, has been encouraging people to take simple steps to look after their hearts since they launched in 2014 and is backed by health organisations including Wigan Clinical Commissioning Group, Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh NHS Foundation Trust and Inspiring Healthy Lifestyles among others.

And now those same actions could help in preventing dementia later in life for some people. It comes as a report in The Lancet outlined steps that could be taken to reduce the risk of developing dementia for some people. Among the steps that could make an impact on dementia include stopping smoking, reducing obesity, being more active and tackling pre-existing conditions like high blood pressure and diabetes.

To find out more about dementia support visit www.wigan.gov.uk/dementia

GULLY VANDALISM TRIGGERS WARNING

Wigan Council is encouraging residents to keep an eye out for missing or broken gullies after reports of vandalism.

A gully is the technical term for a drain at the edge of a carriageway kerb that drains water from the road and is typically covered by a metal grid. If the grid is removed or tampered with it can cause an accident to pedestrians, cyclists or motor vehicles.

After reports that a small number of metal grids appear to have been vandalised the council is urging people to report any broken grids to them so they can be repaired.

Mark Tilley, assistant director for infrastructure at the council, said: "It can be very easy to not see the gully has been damaged or removed and for it to cause an accident. "It can be particularly dangerous if children are playing so we're asking people to be vigilant and if they see anything to report it to us. We would encourage parents to remind children of the danger of playing in or with the lids of gullies to prevent accidents or them coming into contact with the sewer."

Residents can report broken or missing gullies at www.wigan.gov.uk/reportit or via the council's Report It app on your smartphone.

NEW BIN CALENDARS AVAILABLE AHEAD OF COLLECTION CHANGES

Bin calendars for the next two years are now being delivered to residents of Wigan Borough.

The new calendars will start from Monday 25th September when new collections are introduced and every household should receive a calendar before then. From this date households will get a green bin collection every two weeks and a blue, black and brown collection every three weeks. Some households may also have a change in collection day.

Residents are being reminded to follow their current calendar until that date and put their bin out for collection as normal.

Every household in the borough should receive a printed calendar through the post and it will also be available to view online at www.wigan.gov.uk/recycling There is also information on the council's website about what item goes in which bin and where residents can find their closest recycling centre.

To view your bin calendar online or to order additional recycling bins visit www.wigan.gov.uk/recycling

If you are vulnerable and require support you can visit your nearest library or Life Centre who will be able to assist you to access online services.

TOGETHER FOR ADOPTION IS HERE

One of the first regional adoption agencies in the country has opened its doors to adopters. Together for adoption brings together the adoption services of five local authorities – Cheshire West and Chester, Halton, St Helens, Warrington and Wigan.

And on Friday 1st September Together for adoption officially launched with a grand opening of its new base in Warrington by Councillor Jean Carter, lead member for children's services at Warrington Borough Council.

It will build on the outstanding adoption services in Wigan Borough as judged by Ofsted earlier this year. Current figures show there are around 30 children in the area covered by Together for adoption waiting to be adopted and the service will be looking to find families for around 140 children a year.

Speaking after opening with staff and partners from across the region, Bryan Glover, Head of Service for Together for adoption, said: "Together for adoption is bringing together outstanding expertise from across the region under one roof and we have talented and dedicated staff and partner organisations who will continue to offer the outstanding service people who have adopted have experienced.

To find out more about Together for adoption visit www.togetherforadoption.co.uk

HEART OF WIGAN'S COLOURFUL PARK TRANSFORMATION

The Greenheart of Wigan Borough has been transformed into a multi-coloured celebration of health thanks to new artwork. Seven giant heart structures featuring bright designs talking about physical and mental health have taken up residence in parks across the borough.

The artwork is in place as part of The Heart of Wigan, Wigan Council's flagship public health programme, and is there to encourage people to get more active in the borough's beautiful greenspaces to improve both physical and mental health. The designs have been created by pupils at schools across the borough with more than a thousand entries submitted before being whittled down to the winning seven designs.

The winners were invited along to see their heart designs being printed and put in place in the parks across the borough. Daniel, one of the winners, said: "It's cool seeing my picture printed out big and looking forward to seeing it with my friends in the park." Gracie, aged 11, who also designed one of the hearts, added: "I feel very proud to have been chosen. I chose the design to represent sport to encourage people to be more active. Being active helps your heart and keeps you fit."

Each heart has a one-mile route taking in the stunning structure as an easy way to take those first steps towards healthier living. Those completing the mile walks around each one can also enter a competition running up until the end of the October half term by revealing the word which is made up of a hidden letter on each heart. Competition winners will get the chance to win a range of fun activities including adventure golf and High Rope adventures at Haigh Hall as well as swimming passes from Inspiring healthy lifestyles.

The new heart structures are in pride of place at the following parks:

Mesnes Park
Pennington Flashes
Golborne Park
Haigh Woodland Park
Amberswood
Three Sisters
Lilford Park

AFFORDABLE HOMES GIVEN GREEN LIGHT

A plan to bring 60 much-needed affordable homes to Wigan Borough has been given the go ahead. Wigan Council's planning committee yesterday approved the authority's application for the new development on the former Oakfield High School site, on Close Lane, Hindley Green.

The site has been empty since it was cleared in 2013 and the vacant land will now be transformed into new affordable homes for rent, giving a regeneration boost to the area and providing properties for families who might struggle to save for a deposit to get on to the property ladder.

The development will be a mixture of homes with eight bungalows, 32 two-bedroom properties, 16 three-bedroom properties and four four-bedroom properties. It has been designed to be in keeping with the local area and is close to many local amenities. A full highways inspection has been carried out and it will not impact local roads or infrastructure. The entire site will be affordable housing and the properties will be rented accommodation. Work is expected to start on site in November 2017

LEIGH TOWN CENTRE PUBLIC REALM WORKS ON TRACK

Improvement works which are part of a massive £5m investment in Leigh are half-way through and on track.

Wigan Council is investing £1m in the improvements to Bradshawgate and Albion Street. A further £4m is to be invested in Leigh in activities for young people, further town centre regeneration and improvements to Pennington Flash Country Park as part of the 'Believe in Leigh' fund.

The on-going town centre improvements will see high quality block paving, new modern seating, LED lighting and tree planters create a more attractive space for shoppers, visitors and businesses.

The 20-week programme is more than half-way through and on track. The block paving is now being laid by the council's construction partner idverde UK. The programme is being carried out in phases to make sure that disruption is kept to a minimum and access for local businesses is being maintained during normal business hours

As part of the development the outdoor market stalls will relocate to a central location on Bradshawgate with increased visibility and improved access to the stalls. This will give an improved profile to the outdoor market and create a better approach to the indoor market along Albion Street. There will be new lighting in the trees which can change colour remotely to reflect events or seasons.

The programme is being completed in phases and is currently in its second phase of paving work and installation of benches and trees on Bradshawgate between Bold Street and Silk Street. The final phase of paving is between Albion Street and Gas Street.

NEW PARKING FACILITIES TO GET YOU ON YOUR BIKE

Cycling to Wigan town centre just got easier thanks to new parking facilities that residents will love. Eight custom heart-shaped cycle hoops are being installed which will allow cyclists to park safely in key town centre locations, making it easier to travel by bike.

Wigan has been awarded £2.1m from the Department for Transport Cycle City Ambition Grant to create five new routes which will connect neighbouring communities to the town centre. Local residents and businesses were given the chance to comment on the routes before any work begins in 2018.

Wigan Council and Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM) have taken the comments into consideration and are now revising the designs. One of the suggestions that came out of the feedback was to ensure there was sufficient cycle parking in the town centre. The council has been awarded a further £15,000 funding from TfGM to install the parking hoops.

The facilities are part of Wigan Council's plan to invest in cycling infrastructure across the borough to connect local people with opportunities and improve their health and wellbeing.

The new dedicated cycle facilities will allow residents to leave the car at home and safely travel by bike into the town centre. Along with the health benefits of cycling it is hoped the schemes will reduce congestion on busy town centre routes and reduce carbon emissions. It will also mean residents who don't have a car or access to public transport can access job opportunities in the town centre and footfall is increased helping grow the local economy.

The routes will be delivered in two phases to minimise travel disruption to residents and motorists. The first phase of work will begin in early 2018 with all work expected to be completed by summer 2018.

Phase one includes:

Robin Park Road (connecting the retail, leisure park and local communities with Saddle junction)

Warrington Road (connecting Alexandra Park to Saddle junction)

Wallgate / Queen Street junction (providing new crossing facilities for pedestrians and cyclists and a better connection into the town centre)

Phase two includes:

Saddle junction (improving routes around the junction, including a new crossing facility for pedestrians and cyclists)

Pemberton cycleway (extension of Ormskirk Road cycle facility into surrounding residential areas)

To view the plans and to read suggestions from residents visit www.wigan.gov.uk/cycling For more information please contact majorprojects@wigan.gov.uk

COUNCIL STEPS UP SAFEGUARDING AWARENESS

Wigan Council has written to all its school transport contractors in order to outline their responsibility to ensure they are fully aware of council safeguarding protocols. Wigan Council proactively works to safeguard all children and prevent child sexual exploitation as a top priority.

The council has recently become aware that 10 drivers working for contractors on its school transport service had enhanced DBS checks - but did not have the children's workforce check as part of that. This is a failure to comply with the conditions of the council contract and the drivers have been immediately taken off the council's transport service until they pass the full check with the council.

The drivers did have a council passenger assistant in attendance who has an appropriate enhanced DBS. The council has also improved its own internal procedures to make sure that all enhanced DBS checks for drivers operating on school transport in the borough are processed by the council and not by another authority.

If anyone has any concerns about a safeguarding issue or suspect child sexual exploitation they should contact Greater Manchester Police on 999 in an emergency, 101 or Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111. Wigan Council's social care duty team can be contacted on 01942 828300 or out of hours 01942 828777.

SHOWCASE BUSINESS EVENT HIGHLIGHTS BOOMING WIGAN BOROUGH

A showcase event for business in Wigan Borough is once again set for success.

The Wigan Business Expo is one of the most popular annual business to business events in the North West. It is now in its eighth year and will take place on Friday 6th October at Robin Park Sports and Tennis Centre in Wigan. More than 1,000 delegates are expected to attend and exhibition stands have sold out with more than 100 businesses exhibiting on the day.

Wigan Borough's economy is continuing to grow with employment rates increasing year-on-year. The borough's current employment rate is 75.4% beating the regional (71.8%) and national rates (74%).

There are more than 9,000 businesses in Wigan Borough – which includes the towns of Wigan, Leigh and Ashton-in-Makerfield – supporting nearly 120,000 jobs. Key sectors include food production - 75% of the world's top 25 food companies are based in Wigan – as well as manufacturing, business admin and logistics.

Major employers include Heinz, Wincantons, AB World Foods, Hovis, Tesco and ASDA and the digital economy is a key growth sector with 475 digital businesses now operating in the borough. Wigan will also become the North West's gateway to HS2 with the high speed route beginning just a mile south of Wigan North Western train station, reducing journey time to Birmingham to 35 minutes and London to 1 hour 23 minutes.

Keynote speaker at the opening of the Expo will be Greater Manchester Mayor Andy Burnham. The event will feature an International Zone with experts offering advice on doing business and tapping into new markets in China, the Middle East and across the world following Brexit.

There will also be business speed networking, a business advice centre and interactive exhibitions. Event sponsors are Inspiring Healthy Lifestyles, Nice Pak International, VW Corkills, Shearings Leisure Group, Fleet Dynamic, and the Wigan Observer.

To attend the Wigan Business Expo on Friday 6th October visit Eventbrite and search for 'Wigan Business Expo.