

Engineering News 24th October 2005

Information Bulletin from the Department of Engineering Services

Unsung heroes: Crossing champions are borough's own super team



Holy road safety!

There's a new team in town and it's helping to keep the streets safe for children with some unique super-powers.

But Wigan's answer to the Fantastic Four is not merely a work of the imagination because the team is based on those real-life children's champions who work on the borough's school crossing patrols.

The superheroes have been drafted in to help encourage more people in the borough to become every day heroes and join the school crossing patrols.

Road Safety Manager Julie Dagnall told the press: "When it comes to safeguarding our children's lives, school crossing patrols have a vital role to play in the community. Unfortunately, the borough is running low on heroes who want to make a difference. So we're looking for new 'super humans' who will relish the chance to help protect children in their local community."

Peter Taylor, Department of Engineering Services, New Market Street, Wigan, WN1 1RP
www.wiganmbc.gov.uk/pub/beng

And so the council has enlisted the support of a brace of dashing superheroes to attract the next generation of patrols.

The fearless foursome are:

- Eileen with her Super Specs to enable her to see traffic for miles around.
- Diane with her glowing jacket and trousers.
- Josef with his memory cap to help him remember all the kids' names.
- Jaleh with her ice-lollipop to freeze dangerous traffic.

Lively and dramatic artwork shows the superheroes in comic-book scenarios, saving the day and being heroes in their 'friendly neighbourhoods'.

The team will soon be taking its multimedia message to schools and the wider community through a CD Rom, posters and other giveaways like car air fresheners and through activity events for children.

Julie added: "Although it is parents and not the council who are responsible for ensuring their children get to school safely we do provide a paid school crossing service. There are 139 sites in Wigan we'd like to see patrolled but we have only 113 people to cover them. Through the Unsung Heroes campaign we hope to reverse the downward trend in applications by broadening the appeal of the service to anyone aged from 18 to 70."

Residents who would like more information on joining the cross patrol team can call Wigan's Road Safety Team on 01942 488250.





Safety first!

And back in September, it was international 'In town without my car' and to mark the day when motorists worldwide are encouraged to get to work by other means, council road safety experts staged events in Wigan and Leigh.

In Wigan Market Place, cyclists from Wigan Wheelers entertained and informed residents, along with the travel plans team from the Engineering Department.

And in Leigh, there was a close encounter for the mayor as he met an invasion of little green men on the Civic Square. Cllr Brian Jarvis met 'a-Leigh-ns' carrying placards, as he lent his

support to the protest at needless pedestrian road casualties and to encourage those on foot to avoid risks and to cross safely.

Cllr Jarvis said: "As pedestrians, we all need to be aware of traffic and the danger it poses. The safest place to cross any road is a pedestrian crossing



and where possible we should be using them.

"Children often play on our streets and have to cross busy roads on their way to school. The risks tend to increase at this time of year when many of them are at new schools as the evenings get darker."

Also in Leigh, the Greater Manchester Passenger Transport Executive (GMPTEx) had its exhibition bus for people to drop in and get advice on all matters of local public transport.

Council road safety experts were at both events to bring the road safety message to the public. Neighbourhood Road Safety Initiative Officer Catherine Rothwell (pictured, previous page) was in Leigh with the aliens and Travel Plan Co-ordinators James Noakes and Andy Allen were in Wigan town centre.

James said: "There are many ways every one of us can make our roads safer. Cutting congestion and pollution can begin by choosing not to use the car for your next trip out. And if drivers and pedestrians respect each other and use crossings safely, we can bring down the numbers of unnecessary accidents that happen every day."

+ + +

Bulbs are a bright idea

Forget our sporting triumphs, the borough is rapidly achieving renown for its amazing shows of flowers by the roadsides each spring and summer.

Wigan Council's street scene team has been working with community groups

from all corners of the borough to plant millions of bulbs, offering stunning floral displays on otherwise drab spots and grass verges.

And this month, Mayor of Wigan Cllr Brian Jarvis ensured his patch got a piece of the action as he donned his wellies down Spinning Jenny Way to plant a crocus bulb, the first of 120,000 being set out in Leigh this year.

Cllr Jarvis was joined by Leigh township manager Andrew Sharrock, green fingered local police cadets and members of the council's youth offending team as the Spinning Jenny Way area got a colourful makeover.

Councillor Jarvis, who jointly chairs the Leigh Township Forum, said: "We've had such a positive response to brightening our communities with flowers this year, and we want to ensure those who live, work and shop in Leigh town centre now get their own floral displays to enjoy."

Street Scene manager Paul Dandy added: "After the success of daffodils, we're planning to plant mainly crocus this year. We've also started to plant herbaceous perennials to get some summer colour too."

Funding for the displays comes from the Leigh Township Forum, Leigh East councillors and the council's planning and engineering departments. Similar schemes in Whelley and Winstanley are also underway to compliment recently planted sites across the borough.

Once again, Dutch bulb specialist Peter Lubbe has been giving expert advice to the street scene team on planting issues, and feedback from residents has encouraged them to continue to work with local groups to enhance more

roadside verges and open spaces with appropriate flowers and trees.

And in Aspull this month, Wigan Athletic star Arjan de Zeeuw was only too happy to muck in and help with a plan that will fill the town with his team's colours thanks to 120,000 blue and white crocuses. Aspull, Whelley and New Springs ward councillors Chris Ready and John Hilton joined forces with the People and Places team to plant the bulbs along the length of Wigan Road from Aspull into the town centre.

+ + +

Down the drain - grid thieves risk lives



Thieves are putting the lives of pedestrians at risk as well as costing the borough thousands of pounds, warn highway chiefs.

In recent weeks council engineers have noticed an alarming increase in the number of metal grids that are being stolen from the borough's roads.

The spate of thefts is concentrated in the Atherton and Tyldesley areas, where so far 36 metal grids have disappeared.

Highways bosses believe the thefts, which have cost the borough £7,000 in replacement grids, could be the work of unscrupulous metal dealers.

Grids, found by the kerbs on most of the borough's roads, allow rainwater into the drains, but protect them from leaves, litter or even people falling in.

Highways bosses say there was a similar spate of grid thefts in Tyldesley last year.

Assistant Director of Engineering Services (Highways) Mark Tilley, interviewed on local radio, said: "This is a serious matter. These thieves could cause serious injury. As well as possible obstruction and flooding problems, wheels - or even pedestrians - could get trapped in the holes."

Mr Tilley warned that money that had been earmarked for road improvements would have to be spent replacing the grids.

Engineers are working closely with the police in a bid to flush out the grid thieves and are now asking for the help of residents. If residents see suspicious activity near grids - workers without official vehicles or not dressed in appropriate clothing - they should ring the police.

The police are currently reviewing images from the borough's network of CCTV cameras to identify any suspicious activity.

+ + +

'Scoopy Do' - where are you?

They're kicking up a bit of stink in Atherton...over dog mess. In fact the community's fed up with fouling and they're going to do something about it.

But it's not our four-legged friends that are in the dog-house, it's their owners, and now plans are underway for a campaign to raise awareness about fouling on Atherton's streets and in the parks.

The Atherton Green Partnership and pupils at St Michael's CE Primary are working on a sign design to tell dog owners to use that scoop and clean up after their pets.

The best sign will be chosen by members of the partnership and the council's People and Places manager Nick Burdekin.

Nick says: "It's an offence to let your dog foul the streets and we will remind people of this with eye-catching designs that will be placed at key points around the community. It's all about asking people to change their behaviour a little and become a lot more responsible."

In order to monitor the success of the scheme, an initial survey of the area found dog-fouling present at 53 per cent of all sites. Central Park off Hamilton Street was by far the worst offender with no fewer than 22 samples found.

Atherton Green Partnership member and joint chair of the Township Forum, Cllr Sue Loudon said: "I am very pleased that Atherton is piloting a scheme that will try to combat a real borough-wide problem. We are concentrating our efforts on an area that includes a number of playing fields and areas where children play, to emphasise that dog mess is a danger. If this pilot scheme is a success, we want to see it working across the whole township and beyond."

Dog fouling may cause disease in humans. Small children are particularly

vulnerable to the disease Toxocariasis, which can result in blindness. A parasitic worm causes the disease and infection occurs when the worms' larvae, found in dog faeces, is ingested.

More than 110 people living in the borough have been fined £50 for allowing their dogs to foul the streets. So the message to dog owners is - *don't leave home without your poop scoop* - or at least a spare plastic bag (preferably the kind without holes).

+ + +

Just what the doctor ordered

Medical receptionist Clare Hall was so surprised to find out she'd become the latest winner of the department's recycling competition she thought it was a wind up!

"Is this genuine?" asked Clare of Norfolk Avenue, Springfield, as she returned home from her job at the local surgery to be given her prize. The Sack Race scheme's Ruth Halpin was on hand to present Clare with her £500 prize.

Each month the Mayor of Wigan makes a random selection from households who put out their recycling sacks. The winner is presented with shopping vouchers courtesy of the government's Waste and Recycling Action Programme (WRAP).

Ruth said: "It is a genuine thank you to residents for helping to conserve resources and improve our recycling rates. For a chance to win, just put your sack out on your regular day."

And that's exactly what winner Clare has been doing with her old papers, catalogues and leaflets.

"Especially junk mail," she laughed. "The sack's a great way to get rid of all the unwanted paper rubbish that comes through your door and out of the magazines."



Collections are made every second week on the day as the regular bin collection. The Sack Race has helped to save the equivalent of 100,000 trees in the last year or so. The paper collected is sent to UPM Shotton Paper Mill near Chester, which recycles 700,000 tonnes a year - the equivalent of 95,000 double-decker buses.

The quick turnaround means that residents' recycling can be back on sale as newspapers in less than a fortnight.

Bigger better bus lanes

Plans to increase the hours of the southbound bus lanes on Wigan Road and Wigan Lane have been given the green light.

Currently the bus lane regulations only apply at peak times on weekdays. But from Friday October 7 the bus lanes have been operating from 7am until 7pm, Monday to Saturday.

Transport Engineer Peter Wickett said: "We are committed to improving public transport in the borough. Simplifying and extending the times buses can move freely into Wigan will help boost their use and make it easier for motorists to know how to drive safely on Wigan Road and Wigan Lane."

Since the bus lanes were introduced two years ago, there has been a 29 per cent reduction in the number of recorded injury accidents on the route.

The plan to extend the hours of operation was advertised at a meeting of Wigan's Traffic Management Unit - a group of transport planners, the emergency services, and the transport executive - and received no objections.

+ + +

Making a Difference - Improvements pay off for Hag Fold

A series of major environmental improvements are making a real difference to the quality of life on an Atherton estate.



Looking Good: Some of the improvements on the Hag Fold estate at St George's Primary School.

As a result there's been a drop in crime and anti-social behaviour on Hag Fold and residents report that they feel safer, more secure and happier with the environment. Thanks to the £750,000 programme of improvements, the crime statistics show a 20 per cent decline in juvenile nuisance and a 12 per cent drop in criminal damage since work began in 2003.

The programme has seen the council's Street Scene team join forces with the Hag Fold Community Committee to erect 360 new lighting columns, 600 dropped kerbs for disabled access and 20 new litter bins across the estate.

There has also been a series of landscaping projects to enhance the local environment and a programme of litter clean-up campaigns. Funding came from the government's Single Regeneration Budget (SRB5 Atherton Building Communities) and the council's Engineering Services Department.

Nick Burdekin, People and Places co-ordinator, has been studying the results

of consultation with the residents about the programme.

He says: "I'm delighted that residents agree that this project has made a difference. 82 per cent who responded think we've improved the appearance of the estate and 88 per cent are happy with the quality of the new street lighting."

Better lighting has been shown to improve feelings of security, and on the estate 83 per cent feel their night time safety is better. The partnership between the council officers, ward members and the Hag Fold Community Committee has welcomed the results of the consultation, which suggest 89 per cent of residents believe the scheme was a worthwhile use of funds.

Susan Wilson, who is chair of the SRB5 board, is especially pleased with the results. She says: "This shows what can be achieved when services work together with local people and respond to their concerns. People feel safer, environments are improved and

residents feel that the SRB5 money is making a positive and measurable improvement to their quality of life."

"There's still a lot to do," says Nick. "Our survey shows residents remain concerned about litter and other issues such as children out late at night. Our education programmes like *Kick Litter Into Touch* can help, but we want all residents to join us in developing a sense of community and respect.

"We're planning further community events and litter picks to help give residents a chance to keep Hag Fold the way we all want it to be."

Wigan Council's Cabinet Member for the Environment Cllr Dave Molyneux said: "This is a real success story and it just goes to show what can be achieved when the community and the council work together. The results of this improvement programme are plain to see and they are a testament to the dedication and enthusiasm of the residents who have been more than willing to get involved and make the changes happen.

"It is vitally important for us that people feel safe in their communities and happy within the environments in which they live, so we are delighted with what is happening in Hag Fold and know there's much more to come."

+ + +

Park life

Braithwaite Park, Lowton, was the venue for a big community environment party in September, with the People and Places team and township manager on hand: There was something for all the family and the whole community as local

residents, schoolchildren and environment experts joined forces to give the area a late spring clean. There was also face painting for the kids, live music, willow-weaving, and even fence painting and repairs.

Local resident Nicola Newton said:

"I've been working with the council's street scene team for a while now to improve the park and encourage more people to use it. The main aim is to get some funding to enhance the play area, but for now we are going to work on the open space site. I would like to thank Lowton Meats and R&A Convenience for providing all the food."

The Lowton/Golborne Township Forum will be arranging a litter pick to keep the area spick and span, with pupils from local schools learning ways to improve their local area from the council's street scene team



Well done! Nick Burdekin (second row, left) and township manager Andrew Sharrock (back row, third from right) thank residents for tidying their park.

+ + +

The Roadworks Bulletin

Prepared 18th October - Issue 330

The roadworks bulletin aims to give the public advance notice of road works in the Wigan Council area. The council recognises that roadworks can cause inconvenience and it is hoped that this information helps to minimise delays and other problems associated with the works. Every effort has been made to provide accurate and the most up to date information available but it is not intended to be a definitive list and cannot cater for works carried out at short notice. The council also reserves the right to make changes to the programme if emergencies arise.

1. GRAND ARCADE, WIGAN

Major works commenced on Tuesday 4th January 2005 in relation to the construction of the Grand Arcade Shopping Centre. Station Road and Watkin Street are stopped up. To assist in the closures the road layout has changed on Millgate and signs are in place making motorists aware of the alterations.

Building work involving construction of the main structure adjacent to the carriageway on Riverside commenced on Monday 10th October 2005. The carriageway may be reduced to 1 lane during off peak periods whilst work is undertaken, this is likely to take place until further notice.

2. WESTWOOD LINK and INTERNAL ACCESS ROAD, WIGAN

Major Highway reconstruction work has started on Poolstock, Chapel Lane and Caroline Street in relation to the development of the Westwood Park

area. New roads have been built adjacent to the existing highway to form part of the new junction. To minimise the disruption for traffic travelling along the B5238 the new roads will be used shortly to take traffic off the existing highway to allow work to go-ahead on these lanes.

With effect from Tuesday 11th October 2005, Westwood Park Drive was closed and access into the Business Park is via Westwood Road. Temporary traffic signals are in place at the junction and a prohibition for a right hand turn is in place. This set up will be in position until the closure below:

3. POOLSTOCK / CHAPEL LANE, WIGAN

To connect the new roads to the existing highway it will be necessary to close Poolstock and Chapel Lane between Corporation Street and Caroline Street. The closure begins at 22.00hrs on Friday 21st October 2005 until 05.00hrs on Monday 24th October 2005.

The diversion route will be signed via Poolstock Lane, Warrington Road, Wallgate, Queen Street (or vice versa using Caroline Street and Pottery Road).

BT is carrying out works in connection with the new road above. This requires Chapel Lane to be reduced to one lane from its junction with Queen Street, affecting vehicles travelling towards Poolstock Lane (coming away from the Town Centre). The work started on Monday 17th October 2005 for 3 weeks.

4. LANDGATE ROUNDABOUT, WIGAN

Carriageway resurfacing has been rescheduled to start at the above

location on Monday 24th October 2005. The work is programmed for 2 weeks between the hours of 22.00hrs and 06.00hrs. To carry out the work safely the exit and entry onto the M6 (Junction 25) will be closed along with the following stretches of the A49:

- Wigan Road Ashton in Makerfield from the junction of the M6 (junction 25) slip road to a point 300 metres in a southerly direction.
- Warrington Road Wigan from the junction of the M6 (junction 25) slip road to a point 300 metres in a northerly direction.

The alternative route: Poolstock Lane (B5238), Poolstock, Chapel Lane, Darlington Street (A577), Warrington Road (A573), Lily Lane (A58), Bolton Road. (HM/EC)

The M6 diversion is Warrington Road and Ormskirk Road onto M6 Junction 26.

Access to businesses will be maintained.

5. HALL LANE, ASPULL

Work involving the replacement of highway barriers and a retaining wall began on Monday 5th September 2005 near to the Golf Course entrance. The work is expected to last for approximately 8 weeks and temporary traffic signals will be in operation at all times until the work is complete.

6. RAILWAY STREET, ATHERTON

Railway Road will be closed from the north side of its junction with Birchfield Avenue to its northerly junction with North Road. The closure is necessary for the safety of motorists and operatives carrying out work to new

housing development. The closure commenced on Tuesday 5th July 2005 for 21 weeks.

There is no alternative route for traffic, however access will be available for the emergency services and pedestrians.

7. A580 EAST LANCASHIRE ROAD, ASTLEY & GOLBORNE

Wigan Council's Street Lighting section started various works on the 1st August 2005. The works include the repair to structurally defective lighting columns, general maintenance and new lighting in unlit stretches along various stretches of the A580. Work is currently taking place on the Manchester and Liverpool bound carriageways from Atherleigh Way to the Greyhound Island.

To minimise disruption works on the Manchester bound carriageway will be carried out after 9.30am and continue through the evening peak time. The work on the Liverpool bound carriageway will be carried out during the morning peak time and removed before 4.00pm.

8. NORTH ROAD/BAG LANE, ATHERTON

Core Utilities commenced water mains work on Monday 1st August 2005 for 12 weeks in connection with a new housing development on Atherleigh Way called Gadbury Fold.

The route for the new water main will be North Road into Bag Lane, Gloucester Road and Wigan Road.

For the safety of motorists and operatives carrying out the work, temporary traffic signals will operate for the duration of the works.

9. LORD STREET, LEIGH

Carriageway resurfacing work is taking place over 3 consecutive Sundays and commenced on the 16th October 2005.

10. TYLDESLEY ROAD, ATHERTON

Footway resurfacing between Bracken Road and Hamilton Street is taking place over 2 consecutive Sundays from 16th October 2005. Temporary traffic signals may be in place to carry out the work safely.

11. WIGAN ROAD, BILLINGE

Carriageway resurfacing is substantially complete here and no further closures are required.

12. GATHURST ROAD, ORRELL

Footway resurfacing works started on Monday 10th October 2005 for three weeks between Derwent Road and Rydal Avenue. The work will take place off peak and temporary traffic signals may be required.

13. BRYN ROAD (B5207), ASHTON

Carriageway resurfacing work, which began on Sunday 9th October 2005, is substantially complete with just minor lining works to be completed. No further road closures are required.

14. WARRINGTON ROAD, GOOSE GREEN

Footway resurfacing works commenced on Tuesday 18th October 2005 for three weeks between Tyrer Avenue and house no 320. The work will take place off peak and temporary traffic signals may be required.

15. CORNER LANE, LEIGH

A private contractor is undertaking remedial works on Corner Lane Leigh near to Bexhill Drive. This work started on Monday 17th October 2005 for approximately 5 days. Temporary traffic signals will be in operation for the duration of the works during off peak periods.

16. LEIGH ROAD, LEIGH

National Grid Gas are scheduled to carry out gas mains works at the junction with Church Street from Saturday 22nd October 2005 to Monday 24th October 2005.

In order to carry out the work safely it will require vehicles to be prohibited from turning left from Leigh Road onto Church Street for the duration of the works.

The alternative route is via Leigh Road, Lord Street, Lord Street South, Spinning Jenny Way, King Street and Market Street.

17. WESTLEIGH LANE, LEIGH

A private contractor is scheduled to carry out a sewer connection near to house No 402. This work is scheduled to commence on Monday 24th October 2005 for 4 days. Temporary traffic signals will be in operation for the duration of the works during off peak times.

18. SCHOOL LANE, STANDISH

Carriageway resurfacing works are scheduled to be carried out between the Beeches Hotel and Hawthorne Lodge on two consecutive Sundays from 23rd October 2005.

Temporary traffic signals will be in operation for the duration of the works.

Further details regarding any of the matters contained in this bulletin can be obtained from Mr A. Hemingway, Street Works Co-ordinator, Wigan Council on 01942 404690.

Street Works Co-ordinator.....01942 404690
British Telecom.....0800 591083
Telewest0500 500 151
Cable and Wireless0800 136786
Transco - (Gas) (Escapes).....0800 111999
United Utilities..... 0345 462200
Council Drainage.....01942 244991 x 5142
GM Police.....0161 872 5050

Engineering News is compiled by John Rowbotham, Department of Engineering Services

**Civic Buildings, New Market Street,
Wigan, WN1 1RP**

www.wiganmbc.gov.uk/pub/beng