

# **Engineering News** July 2006

**Information Bulletin from Engineers in the Environmental Services Department**

## **The Standish Story**

**Children's tribute to local history**



**A stunning new landmark, set to rival the stocks at St Wilfrid's Church, was unveiled earlier this month in Standish thanks to a team effort from Wigan Council, local businesses and schools.**

The eye-catching new sculpture features three standing dishes. Each dish depicts a key part of Standish's history: the Owl of Standish is on one; the Mayflower ship is on another and the community's coal mining heritage is on the third.

The project is the latest from the Standish Environmental Group, which formed three years ago to improve the

quality of the local environment. The environmental group is made up of the village's three primary schools, Standish Community Forum, Wigan Council's Street Scene Team and Langtree Homes.

The group's achievements so far have included wildflower seed sowing and tree planting.

Now the group's efforts to paint a picture

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of Standish's past through the sculpture have been realised.

The initial idea came from St Marie's RC Primary School pupil Charlotte Bliss. Children at all three primary schools researched village history and brought the various themes together.

Standish Environmental Group spokesman and ward councillor George Davies (pictured above, back row centre) said: "This sculpture is part of our aim to improve the environmental quality of Standish. I'd like to especially thank the children from the three primary schools. We would like to ask the many organisations throughout the borough to come and look at this sculpture. We'll continue to work through our group to improve the quality of our environment in the future."



Wigan Council People and Places Manager Nick Burdekin added: "Working with this group over the past three years has helped Standish to maintain and improve the quality of its environment. The sculpture has been

sited in the conservation area of Standish and hopefully in years to come it will be as famous as the stocks and the magnificent St Wilfrid's Parish Church. It is important that we invest in Standish as well as other parts of the borough."

The sculpture has been funded through a variety of partners – the council's Street Scene Team, Lloyds TSB (Standish branch), Ainscough Crane Hire, Standish Print Company, the Brighter Borough fund and through special fund raising days at the schools.

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## Leigh's wheelie big bike day

**The 'Get Cycling' roadshow came to Leigh in time to get ready for National Bike Week. Its aim? To get the town cycling.**

Visitors to the Civic Square — young and old alike — had chance to find out more about cycling and were encouraged to try it out on a range of different bicycles.



Once again, Leigh led the way with the free, day long event.

Wigan Council's Travel Plan Co-ordinator, James Noakes, explains: "This is the second year running we have done this in Leigh. Everyone who took part last year really enjoyed it. We are fortunate to be able to get the Company of Cyclists to come to Leigh once again as they are extremely popular across the country.

"This is the only local event where visitors will find such a different array of cycles, ranging from ones you drive like a go-cart to a really strange 7-seater. Whether you want to know more about cycling, want to get advice and information or simply want to try out some strange and different bicycles, this is the place to be."

The 'Company', a group of enthusiasts who work with businesses and councils across the country, give demonstrations and allow people to try out weird and wonderful bikes for free.

Leigh Township Manager, Andrew Sharrock, added: "This is a great event for Leigh and the perfect opportunity for people to try out different cycles in a safe environment before heading out and discovering the beautiful countryside surrounding the town."

And the roadshow moved from Leigh centre to visit a number of schools during bike week.

School Travel Plan Co-ordinator, Andy Allen, said, "Children and teenagers love cycling so we have a number of schools lined up to take part in the roadshow. Pupils will be shown how much fun cycling can be but also given an important cycling safety message."

And in preparation for the event, outgoing Mayor, Cllr Brian Jarvis presented the money raised from last year's event to his chosen charity - Wigan & Leigh Hospice.

Every year, cyclists from Wigan Council, Wigan & Leigh College, Wrightington, Wigan & Leigh NHS Trust and Ashton, Wigan & Leigh Primary Care Trust take part in the fifteen mile 'Ride for Health' cycle event. 2005 saw them raise over £750 in sponsorship, with all proceeds going to the charity.

Cllr Jarvis said: "I sent the cyclists on their way in last year's Ride for Health and it's great that it has raised so much money for my chosen charity. Cycling is fun, healthy and as we see can play its part in bringing people together to raise funds for a worthy cause."

"The Ride for Health is an opportunity for people who work in our major public sector organisations to enjoy cycling, enjoy local views and raise some money for a great cause."



*Cheque this out: Cllr Brian Jarvis with Wigan Hospice's Sandra Crook and Charlotte Billington, and council travel plan co-ordinator James Noakes.*

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## **Kirkless is back**

### **Normal service has resumed at the borough's household waste recycling centre at Kirkless, Higher Ince.**

The Makerfield Way facility, shut after a serious fire last month, is once again open to residents following major work and a safety inspection on site.

Kirkless is operated by Waste Recycling Group (WRG) on behalf of Wigan Council. The company also manages the borough's other sites at Orrell, Leigh, Atherton and Wigan.

Wigan Council's waste disposal manager, Dr Gary Taylor told the local media:

"Kirkless is an important part of the local waste management process, allowing residents to easily recycle a whole variety of materials, saving precious resources and keeping down costs for everyone. Thanks to the hard work of my team and our partners in WRG who run it, the public side of the site is back in business."

The rest of the damaged building, where materials were sorted and stored, is likely to be replaced later in the year. Following the fire, the council's collection services continued uninterrupted with residents' rubbish taken to other locations.

Dr Taylor added:

"We may have to briefly close Kirkless for a couple of weeks in winter as the site is renovated. I'd like to thank all residents for the tremendous patience and support they have shown as we have overcome the loss of the site, and

hope they will soon get back into the recycling routine here at Higher Ince."

Kirkless is open daily from 8am – 8pm, accepting materials including plastic bottles, asbestos and garden waste. Some of the other sites operate slightly shorter hours and may close early if they get full. There is also a huge network of local recycling centres, mainly alongside pubs and supermarkets, for items such as glass and cans. Residents can go online for full details.

And there's a lot going on at Leigh's Slag Lane site as well.

The waste management team have arranged for a plastics collection skip to be added to the recently refurbished site following public demand and after ensuring there's an appropriate local market for the plastics.

Karen Sutcliffe of the green team says: "Plastic is a complicated material to recycle – there are many different kinds, even in something as basic as a drink bottle."

Type one and type two plastics are the easiest to reclaim. Most bottles have a number inside a triangle on their base, and so items like milk cartons and cola bottles (but not their tops) can now be added. Karen asks people to have a quick check.

"You'll soon become familiar with the types of container we want," says Karen. "But basically if it's bottle-shaped and plastic, it can be recycled!"

Karen says: "Because plastic is such a light material, please don't make special journeys and waste petrol – collect as much as you can in one go and bring it

in all at once. Please remember to squash it all down.”

The materials are treated by a firm called Winstanleys from Bickershaw.

They transform the plastic into pellets, which are then mixed with fibres to produce polyester for clothing.

Harder forms of plastic, such as milk cartons, are recycled into plastic bottles, garden furniture or packaging.

Karen adds: “There have been concerns that some firms are shipping their waste to the far east for processing. But as you can see in Wigan we like to do things locally.”

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## Don't Bottle It During The World Cup

**Football fans in Wigan were asked not to lose their bottle at home, whatever the fate of Sven's team in Germany.**

The four-yearly football festival may be one of the world's greatest sporting occasions but it has the potential to be a big headache for the local environment. Before each game thousands of armchair supporters stock up on bottles and cans of their favourite tipple. Add to this all the newspaper coverage, magazine previews, posters and wall charts and it's clear there's the potential for a whole lot of waste when it's all over.

So, green gurus with Wigan Council asked fans to make recycling part of their post-match routine.

Dr Gary Taylor told the press: “Millions of extra cans and bottles will be bought during the World Cup, so we're making it easy for residents to do their bit.

“We want people to be as proud of what they're doing to help the future through recycling as they are of our football team.”

There is a recycling point within a mile of most residents' homes which accept bottles, cans and other materials. They are usually located alongside pubs and shops. So the message from the recycling team is simply: *Take Your Empties Back Next Time You Go Shopping.*

“We must recycle more because we are running out of landfill sites,” he added. “The more we recycle, the better it is for the environment, the local economy and for everyone.”

The initiative is part of the Big Recycle, a national campaign encouraging residents to do their bit.

Supported by a host of celebrities including football pundit Gabby Logan the theme of the campaign is: Make Recycling Your Goal This Summer.



Gabby says: “We generate more waste than usual during a major sporting tournament, so I think the World Cup is

a great time to remind people to do their bit – I hope everyone will make recycling their goal this summer.”

Even without home interest in the event, there will be plenty of material to recycle. Find out more about the national campaign by logging onto [www.recyclenow.com](http://www.recyclenow.com)

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## **Holy Family – Top of the Class for Recycling**

**They’re making a lot of noise about recycling down at Holy Family Primary School.**

But to the teachers and pupils it’s the sound of sweet music because managing their waste better has led to

the school winning some top prizes.

The New Springs school has signed up to the Wigan Council-backed Pledge scheme which aims to get all children thinking about recycling.

As part of the scheme schools have been encouraging others to use bottle banks, putting out paper sacks and taking their ‘empties’ to the bottle banks.

Actions such as these earn the schools ‘pledge points’ under the DEFRA (Department of the Environment) project.

Holy Family has received a commendation from DEFRA for being the top performing school in Wigan after children brought in twice as many ‘pledges’ as their nearest rival.

This was enough to take them to the regional awards at Ewood Park in



Blackburn recently where recycling experts, teachers and pupils from Carlisle to Knowsley gathered to celebrate successful schools.

The school has used its eco-friendly ethos to build up enough pledge points to get some great new musical instruments including a silver-plated flute, a PA system and a digital camera.

Holy Family deputy head Bernadette Fagan said: "This is a great reward for all the children's hard work in getting pledges and doing something positive about their future.

"The PA system will prove very useful in assemblies and we will be loaning out the instruments to children who would like the opportunity to learn to play them."

The best performing pupil also won an MP3 player. At the ceremony Megan Power accepted the prize on behalf of her sister Katie.

The council's waste management team recently visited the school to see their environmental projects.

Dr Gail Robinson said: "It's great to see all the work the school has been doing around green issues. We all hope everyone can keep pledging to recycle and do their bit to help the local environment."

And also doing their bit as part of the pledge drive was St Mary and St John Primary on Standishgate. Their recycling reward from DEFRA was a brand new violin.

Deputy Head John Hanley says: "Our pupils are very interested in recycling. This scheme has helped us to think

more about our waste. I'd like to thank DEFRA for the really welcome gift of the new violin."

Recycling officer Karen Sutcliffe was on hand to present the children with their prize.

She says: "I'm always amazed at how much the children know about waste and recycling. They are very positive about the subject and I hope they'll take the message home and remind their parents to keep putting their paper sacks out and using the local bottle and can banks."



*The Scrapheap Stradivarius: Pupils Joshua and Ciara and deputy head John Hanley from St Mary and St John, Standishgate, receiving their gift from council recycling expert Karen Sutcliffe.*

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## Careful Talk Saves Lives

### Road safety is all our responsibility.

That's the message from Wigan Council transport experts who have launched a new forum for tackling accidents and injuries on our roads.

Last year there were 917 traffic accidents in Wigan which resulted in injury. There were 1263 casualties with 130 people killed or seriously injured.

Transport planners in the borough are also worried about the numbers of children and elderly people who are seriously injured or killed on the roads, both of which have shown small but significant increases in recent years.

The council is responding to these figures and to tough new accident reduction targets that have been set by the government, by launching the borough's Road Safety Forum next week.

The meeting are taking place at Wigan and Leigh Town Halls, working to a strict agenda aimed at making the borough safer place.

Forum members include councillors, traffic engineers, bus operators, cyclists, members of the Wigan Access Committee, police and representatives from the townships groups.

Assistant Director of Engineering Mark Tilley says: "Road safety, and especially the needs of our most vulnerable road users, can only be served by a strong partnership.

"That's why experts in health, traffic, driving, cycling and a number of other crucial areas need to work together to

ensure a clear message and a clear strategy emerges."

The forum's remit will be to reduce road accidents and casualties and to work to the government targets which are managed by the council's local transport plan and road safety strategy.

The meetings will be held regularly in both Wigan and Leigh and will allow the views of residents to be heard through community representatives and senior councillors.

"This is not a talking shop," adds Mr Tilley. "We have to make our roads safer, so our aim must be fewer injuries and accidents on our roads."

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## Walk on

### The borough's streets have never been safer for pedestrians - that's the verdict of highways bosses at Wigan Council.

New technology, a tougher inspection regime and a unique approach to dealing with problems mean there are fewer hazards than ever on the borough's 6 000 streets.

Highways maintenance manager Elwyn Holt explains:

"We've pioneered a new 3G computer system to ensure we cut the time and paperwork involved in finding and reporting defects, and placed more emphasis on safety in the town centres, with dedicated repair teams providing a rapid response to residents' concerns. It's what the public expect and deserve."

The new system also means fewer opportunities for insurance claims against the council for trips and slips. And, with strict checks on fraudulent claiming, the highways team stress their priorities are safety and good value for residents' money.

Andrew Ellis, a senior partner at Forbes Solicitors who works with the council on highways insurance matters, adds:

"Over a third of a million people use the borough's roads and paths every day. The tiny number of incidents is testament to the efforts of the highways team in keeping the streets free of defects."

The new 'Well Maintained Highways' official code of practice recommends councils regularly inspect all their adopted streets, with particular attention to those in the busiest areas, and around schools and other places of heavy pedestrian traffic. Wigan Council already had a robust inspection system in place well before the deadline.

Local people can help to ensure the streets remain safe by reporting any defects or incidents to the Streetcare Helpline on 01942 404364, or online at [www.wigan.gov.uk](http://www.wigan.gov.uk) via 'P' for pavements on the A-Z of services.

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## Mind That Child!

**The complexities of traffic engineering are hardly child's play, but council bosses want to involve children in looking after themselves on the roads.**

So, just before he retired, Director of Engineering Peter Taylor invited a group

of pupils from Haigh St David's to visit his road safety teams and see first hand how they work to put safety into action on the borough's roads.



Jack, Katie, Hayley, Jordan and Amber together with their teachers, met experts from the Local Transport Plan Delivery Group and road safety officers.

The Year 3 pupils saw how schemes such as zebra crossings and cycle training are implemented. And because their school is in a conservation area, the pupils took time to speak to the Street Scene team about the local environment as well.

One of the pupils, Jack, was particularly interested in his school's travel plan. He said: "There are problems like parking around school and I wanted to learn how everyone works together to make the school safer."

Peter Taylor added: "It's a pleasure to welcome the children to learn how different teams come together to improve safety for all. Pedestrians and vulnerable road users are our top priority on the streets and the more we work together, the safer we can make our local environment."

All schools are required to have a travel plan in place by 2010. As well as making the journey to school safer and healthier, a travel plan aims to reduce car use and promote a whole range of other educational and environmental issues around the school.

Schools and members of the public can find out more by calling Andy Allen on the Road Safety Team on 01942 488260.

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## **We do like to be beside the canalside!**

**Some of the borough's most scenic locations are now set to look even better thanks to support from local businesses.**

Pubs along the Leeds – Liverpool Canal have signed up to a care scheme run by a Wigan Council's Street Scene Team, British Waterways and community group Action Douglas and Yarrow.

The Navigation Inn at Gathurst was the first to pilot a course as part of the scheme but now it has been joined by other hostleries along the route.

The Crawford Arms, Crooke Hall Inn, The Commercial Inn and the Dover Lock are now on board with staff agreeing to clear rubbish from the canal towpath area around their properties.

Thanks to a grant from the Lottery's *Awards for All* scheme, these pubs will receive special signs and litter-picking equipment. The council's Street Scene Team is providing flowers for the adopted stretches to make the towpaths

a more attractive place for people to visit.

Wigan Council People and Places Manager Nick Burdekin says: "We want to improve the quality of the local environment across the whole of the borough, not just in the urban environment. We have been working closely with our friends in the Mersey Basin Campaign and at British Waterways and we have been able to get funding to improve these areas for everyone to enjoy."

The long-term objective behind the care scheme is to improve water quality so that all rivers, streams and canals are clean enough to support a healthy fish population by 2010 and to encourage the development of attractive waterside environments.

Steve Highman, British Waterways' Economic and Social Development Officer, says: "The canals are now the heart of the community and it's important that we all play a part in looking after them. The canalside care scheme is a fantastic programme that gets local businesses and community groups working together to help canals become clean and tranquil places."

Mr Burdekin adds: "This scheme is now open to community groups and schools as well as canalside businesses, so to 'adopt' a stretch of the Leeds to Liverpool canal within the borough, so more people can enjoy their recreational experience along the Leeds – Liverpool canal, please ring me on 01942 404390."

It was all part of the school's travel plan, a nationwide initiative to cut traffic congestion and pollution around schools. And Newfold governors,

parents and children have been giving their "Walking Bus" a test run around town.

Newfold Head teacher Mr McArdle says: "This is a fun and healthy way to transform our hectic school run. The children and their parents walked to school, from two designated meeting points, with the children as passengers and the adults as the driver and conductor, just like a real bus. The walking bus week has been a great success."

Along for the journey were parent governors Deb Newberry and Pat Bayman, "Cal", the council's mascot and also some of his officer colleagues.

School Travel Officer Andy Allen adds: "The children have learned a lot about road safety and fitness today, and we're

now hoping to mount a regular Walking Bus service for Newfold in the spring."

All schools must have a Travel Plan in place by 2010, so to find out more you can call Andy Allen on 01942 488260.

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## Cycle-wise means streetwise

**Schoolchildren from Leigh are more streetwise after completing the final session of intensive bike training.**

Year 6 children from Twelve Apostles RC school (pictured below) were put through their paces by officers from Wigan Council's road safety team, who taught them all aspects of cycle safety



and road sense in a three part course last month.

Road safety officer Claire Harmer begins each training programme in the secure environment of the school playground. The children will only venture out onto the highway when they are ready, where they are closely supervised by several of Claire's colleagues.

Claire said: "We run sessions at schools around the borough – all we need is a commitment from pupils and schools and we can arrange a course."

Twelve Apostles' Hazel Evans added: "Roads are getting busier and busier, and it's important that the children know how to be safe and sensible. They have all learned a lot from this course."

During the summer holidays, the road safety team will be staging six free three day sessions for anyone aged ten and over to learn more about cycle safety. Anyone wanting venue details and to book a place can phone 01942 488250.

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## Happy in my nappy

**For 'Real Nappy Week', celebrating its 10th anniversary, Wigan got in on what's now an international event**

Events took place across the country and around the world to show parents how they can save money and save the planet by ditching the disposables.

Eight million disposable nappies are thrown away every day in the UK, but for one family in Beech Hill enough is

enough. Mum Becky Bagot is giving children Callum and Neala a green start to life, kitting them out in trendy reusable nappies.

She told local radio: "There's a lot happening when you become a new parent, but I'm giving real nappies a go. The cost savings obviously count, but the symbolism counts more. The days of pins, boil washes and buckets of smellies are long gone. These soft nappies don't have pins, they are safe and fit snugly inside a fashionable waterproof outer wrap."

A typical toddler will go through more than 5 000 disposable nappies before becoming potty trained, compared to just 20 real nappies in the same time. Becky paid about £50 for all the nappies and waterproof covers for each child - just seven weeks' worth of disposables.

Becky added:

"Finding them is easy. As well as high street shops, there's a thriving online market place for modern nappies. Just type 'real nappies' into an internet search engine and order what's best for you. Parents can choose from an amazing range of shapes, styles and fabrics which are easy to use and simple to wash. You can even sell them on afterwards and make back what you've paid.

"The modern baby in a modern nappy fits into the everyday lifestyle of most families - how difficult is it to switch on the washing machine?"

Visiting Becky, waste management expert, Dr Gail Robinson said:

"Disposable nappies are made of petroleum derived synthetic materials,

gels, chemicals, paper pulp and plastics. And with three billion of them thrown away each year in this country alone, the costs to councils and residents of disposal is immense.

"We want to remind people that there is an alternative to the throwaway society - great value, sustainable choices which save time, money and valuable resources. Real nappies make a positive statement of the eco-credentials of you and your baby."

The Real Nappy Helpline – 0845 850 0606 - gives callers details of their local cloth nappy contacts whether they want to buy them to wash at home or use a laundry service.

The Nappy Finder service – [www.realnappycampaign.com/nappyfinder](http://www.realnappycampaign.com/nappyfinder) - also allows parents to find all their local services simply by entering their postcode.



*Wigan mum Rebecca Bagot, with her 'real nappy' kids Neala (1), Callum (2) and Ewan (4), and Dr Gail Schofield from the council's waste management team.*

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**Peter Taylor** has retired as Director of Engineering Services. At his farewell gathering at the Orwell, Wigan Pier, Peter paid tribute to his team and wished all the best to the director designate of the new Environmental Services Department, Martin Kimber, and friends in Planning & Regeneration and Community Protection.

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