

# BoroughLife

ISSUE 75. SPRING 2025

## 14 THE HERDS are coming...



10 | A classic route  
reborn  
Get your walking boots  
on this summer

24 | Town centre project  
in fine fettle  
A major development now  
has its unique identity

30 | An appetite  
for Atherton  
Fun, food, drink, entertainment  
and... rollerskating



**Wigan**  
Council



# The Leader's column



**Welcome to the Spring 2025 edition of Borough Life.**

This year is already shaping up to be characterised by significant milestones with plenty of reasons for positivity across the borough.

Many of our long-term development projects are progressing at speed and grassroots schemes are continuing to make a difference, all in line with our Progress With Unity approach.

In this edition of Borough Life there's a focus on the visit of a

major cultural phenomenon to Pennington Flash. We highlight its wider impact through the important message that underpins it, plus there's a recap on where it sits in our impressive timeline of similar cultural visits.

Elsewhere, we have exciting updates on a town centre development project and how its new identity showcases the best of our borough and is keeping us in fine fettle.

We visit a pair of educational schemes that have captured the imagination of young students and are helping to shape their future.

And we highlight the return to prominence of a well-known walking route and how it could help unlock a new outdoor lifestyle for families across the borough.

Plus, there's an update on how one of our flagship policies – the paying of the Real Living Wage to adult social care staff – is making a real impact, two years on since it was first introduced.

To wrap-up for Spring 2025, there's our popular What's On guide that will help you get out and about this season and enjoy the many activities available across our community venues.

I hope you enjoy reading this edition – our next one will be for Winter 2025 - and I'm sure you'll join me in hoping for plenty of blue sky and for the sun to shine over the next few months.

*David Molyneux*

**Councillor David Molyneux MBE  
Leader, Wigan Council**

Borough Life is published by Wigan Council and distributed to all households in the borough. This edition was published on 6 May 2025.

The magazine is printed on paper from renewable resources. It is written, edited and designed by Wigan Council's Public Relations Team.

View Borough Life online at [www.wigan.gov.uk/boroughlife](http://www.wigan.gov.uk/boroughlife)

If you are a Wigan Borough community venue and would like to help distribute Borough Life please email us at: [PR@wigan.gov.uk](mailto:PR@wigan.gov.uk)

For all the latest updates straight to your phone, sign up to the weekly My Borough Life email update. Visit: [www.wigan.gov.uk/boroughlife](http://www.wigan.gov.uk/boroughlife)

For general comments email: [PR@wigan.gov.uk](mailto:PR@wigan.gov.uk)



## On the cover

We were dazzled by the Floating Earth and inspired by the visit of Little Amal. So we can't wait for the THE HERDS to pop by.

Once the date was confirmed for their visit to Pennington Flash, there was only one option for our front page.

Having THE HERDS artwork side to side with scenic views of the Flash's wildlife sounded like a perfect preview of what's to come.

## Check out the BoroughLife podcast

Don't miss the monthly episodes with hosts Rosie and James, available on all major podcast platforms. [Linktr.ee/wigancouncil](https://linktr.ee/wigancouncil)

An accessible version of our magazine is available to view online on our Borough Life Plus page. [www.wigan.gov.uk/BoroughLifePlus](http://www.wigan.gov.uk/BoroughLifePlus)





**4-7 | NEWS IN BRIEF**  
Your latest news round-up.

**8-9 | SHINING A LIGHT ON COMMUNITY SAFETY**  
A new school project is helping youngsters learn about the emergency services and how they can play their part in promoting safe communities.

**10-12 | A NEW WAY IS AN OLD WAY**  
A popular walking route that takes in some of the borough’s iconic scenery has been given a new lease of life.

**14-18 | WELCOME TO THE HERDS**  
Wild animals are on the loose and heading to Pennington Flash. It’s a weekend not to be missed alongside the Flashes Festival of Nature.

**20 | CLIMATE ACTION AT THE FOREFRONT**  
Talented students from a borough high school are leading the way with a musical message based around climate change.

**22-23 | BORN IN LONDON, MAKING AN IMPACT UP NORTH**  
A unique educational programme first rolled out in our nation’s capital is now making a difference to the lives of hundreds of young people.

**24-27 | IN FINE FETTLE**  
A major town centre development project has a new identity. We meet the people who inspired the brand and discover why they were chosen.

**28-29 | FAIR WAGES MAKING A DIFFERENCE**  
A flagship pledge by the council to pay the Real Living Wage in the local care sector is having a widespread effect two years on from its launch.

**30-31 | AN APPETITE FOR ATHERTON**  
We’re rolling into another district centre to sample what’s on offer and this time we’re getting our rollerskates on!

**32-33 | KEEPING YOU IN THE LOOP**  
Please give us your feedback on all things communications to help us keep you in the loop about what’s going on across the borough.

**34-35 | BETTER LIVES**  
This new health transformation project sees organisations working more closely than ever before.

**36-39 | WHAT’S ON**  
Your handy guide to what’s going on in your area during the summer months.

### Follow Wigan Council



WiganCouncilOnline



WiganCouncil



WiganCouncil



boroughlife



Wigan Council



wigan-council



WiganCouncil



# Budget plans include free parking and pothole repairs

Residents of Wigan Borough will again be paying the lowest council tax rates in the region.

The 2025/26 budget, approved in March, included no-cuts to frontline services and the extension of the flagship Future Apprentices for Business (FAB) scheme.

Funding for pothole repairs, affordable housing schemes, leisure services and community projects were also confirmed.



The Leader of Wigan Council, Councillor David Molyneux MBE told the council chamber he was ‘proud to be delivering another balanced budget that will support our communities.’

He said: “Despite the challenging circumstances we have had to face over the last 14 years, we continue to be one of the top performing councils.

“I’m confident that 2025/26 will be another successful year for the borough and this balanced, no-cuts budget will be a blueprint for continued growth for our communities in line with our Progress With Unity approach.”

The free weekend parking offer in Wigan and Leigh town centres was also extended for another 12 months.

For full information, visit [www.wigan.gov.uk/carparking](http://www.wigan.gov.uk/carparking)

# Peer review highlights ‘high-quality’ services

A review of Wigan Council conducted by the Local Government Association (LGA) concluded it is a ‘well managed and well-led authority that consistently delivers high-quality services to residents while ensuring value for money.’



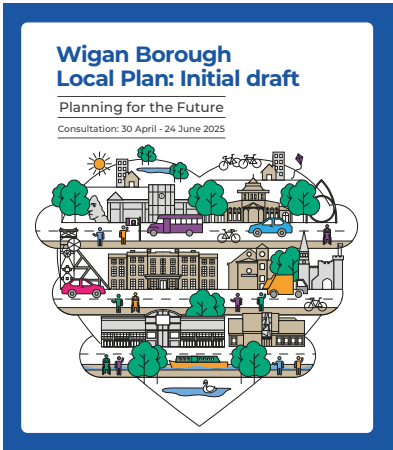
The peer review team (pictured) from the LGA visited the borough in January with the feedback report published in April.

Made up of local government leaders from across the country, they scrutinised council documents, interviewed officers, focus groups, elected members and partner organisations.

Their report also concluded that the council’s Progress With Unity missions ‘create a clear and consistent narrative regarding the vision and outcomes...for the borough.’

To read the full report, visit: [www.wigan.gov.uk](http://www.wigan.gov.uk)

# Have your say on borough blueprint



A consultation is underway on proposals for Wigan Borough’s Local Plan, which maps out opportunities for development and growth for the next decade and beyond. It will help to outline sites for homes, jobs, transport and green spaces, and help protect the borough from inappropriate development.

The Planning for the Future consultation is open until Tuesday, June 24 and everyone is encouraged to fill the survey regarding the proposals.

To see the initial draft of the Local Plan in full and take part in the consultation, visit: [www.wigan.gov.uk/FutureWigan2040](http://www.wigan.gov.uk/FutureWigan2040)

Sign up to our weekly newsletter

BoroughLife

[www.wigan.gov.uk/boroughlifenewsletter](http://www.wigan.gov.uk/boroughlifenewsletter)



## Calls for rugby league honours recognition

Wigan Council will support efforts to 'overturn the injustice' in the honours system for rugby league legends.

No rugby league player has been awarded a knighthood or damehood for services to the sport, as the game marks its 130th anniversary this year.

Leader of Wigan Council, Councillor David Molyneux MBE, said the local authority will back calls for recognition, a cause voiced recently in the House of Commons.

Speaking at the March meeting of the full council, he said: "It is a real shame that none of the greats of the game have been given the recognition they deserve through the honours system, in comparison with other sports.

"For many of us in recent years, Kevin Sinfield's unbelievable charity feats will have brought

this to the forefront of our minds. But I also believe we have had some excellent local candidates in Billy Boston (statue, pictured below) and Alex Murphy.

"We will throw our support behind any efforts for the contribution of rugby league within our communities to be rightfully recognised in this way."



## Around the borough

In **Norley Hall**, the much-loved adventure playground on Lamberhead Road is set to open soon after a full refurbishment including a new range of play equipment.

The Be Well team at **Ashton-in-Makerfield** leisure centre and pool have secured Water Wellbeing accreditation from Swim England, recognising that recent improvements have been made to make it accessible and inclusive for people with long-term health conditions.

In **Leigh**, the iconic Spinners Mill is celebrating its centenary on Saturday, June 7 with a day of fun, surprises and a fantastic party atmosphere.

A new and improved play area has opened on Leigh Street in **Golborne**, funded by housing developer contributions, with inclusive and accessible play equipment for all ages.

In **Abram**, following a referendum earlier this year, a neighbourhood plan has been adopted. This means that all future planning applications in the area must agree with the plan, subject to other considerations.

In **Shevington**, a new extra care housing scheme is welcoming its first occupants. With 32 apartments, the Meadow View complex includes a range of communal facilities including its own gardens.

In **Standish**, fund-raising continues to support St Wilfrid's Church in its campaign for spire renovation works. For more information, search for Save Standish Spire on **www.justgiving.com**

For more information on all of the above, visit either **www.wigan.gov.uk** or **www.bewellwigan.org.uk** and search for the relevant key words.

## Shaping the future of Leigh Market

A consultation that will help to inform plans to develop Leigh Market closed in April.

It was the latest step in an exciting project to revitalise the site and make it ready for the future.

Thank you to everyone that contributed to the survey, the results of which will help to shape the next stages of the plan.

Leigh Market is open and trading at its current location for the rest of this year, with works not planned to start until 2026.

Once works start, the market will need to be moved from the current hall for a number of months while the works are completed. Wigan Council is working closely with market traders on options for alternative locations during the works.

The market remains open now so please visit the market and continue to support local traders in Leigh.

The Leigh Regeneration Project is funded by government, following a successful bid by Wigan Council.

**www.wigan.gov.uk/Council/Our-Future-Borough/Leigh-Regeneration.aspx**



# Wigan Pride is back in milestone year

Dress yourself in rainbows, find your flags, and get ready to celebrate a fabulous, feel-good, summer party in style: Wigan Pride is back for 2025 and it's the 10th anniversary!

The Wigan Council backed event, that celebrates diversity and promotes inclusion, will return to Wigan town centre on Saturday, August 16.



And this year, Wigan Pride is proud to announce their headline sponsor as Calisen, owner and installer of smart energy infrastructures that help power a more sustainable world.

The programme for Wigan Pride 2025 is still being finalised but the free event promises to include an opening parade, music and entertainment across two stages, and family friendly activities.

Cabinet member, Councillor Dane Anderton said: "Pride has a serious message at its heart, as it promotes core values of kindness and acceptance, but Wigan Pride also offers a fantastic day of free excitement and entertainment in the town centre for all the family, so we hope lots of people will



come along on 16 August and enjoy the day.

"This event is a moment to celebrate who you are and the place we call home. Embrace our differences, take pride in our shared journey, and recognise that we are united by more than what sets us apart."

Turn to our What's On section for details about Pride in Leigh.

# Taking steps to be flood aware

Although we're now in the spring and summer season, it's a good time to consider household flood preparations and prevention.

The turn of the year saw several areas of the borough impacted by flooding with sometimes devastating consequences for homes and businesses.

The causes of flooding can be complex, and Wigan Council shares the responsibility for flood response with partners such as

the Environment Agency, United Utilities, and central government.

There are some things you can do to be ready, especially if your property lies in a flood risk area or has been affected in the past.

Sign up for free government flood alerts and warnings, and Met Office weather warnings, so you know when you might be at risk, and put together a flood kit including important documents, medication, spare keys, and first aid supplies.

Many areas across the borough now have local flood resilience groups, if you are interested in being involved, please contact: **NetworkManagement@wigan.gov.uk**

The Wigan Council website has useful advice on how to prepare before a flooding incident, what to do to stay safe during and also steps for after a flood has subsided.

Likewise, The Flood Hub has a wealth of resources; from creating a flood plan and making your property more resilient, to dealing with insurance companies.

If you have older, unwell, or vulnerable people in your home, you may also be able to sign up for the United Utilities Priority Service register and the Electricity North West Extra Care register, to ensure you get assistance during a power cut or disruption to water supplies.

For more information, visit **www.wigan.gov.uk/flooding** and **www.thefloodhub.co.uk**





## Haigh plans bloom and blossom

May was an exciting month as it saw the official opening of Haigh’s first formal garden for a generation, Amphitheatre for a Tree.

The garden, perched in a perfectly prime spot between the hall and Stables, is the first of many fantastic projects to be completed at Haigh Hall against a backdrop of a multi-million-pound transformation at the estate.

The new outdoor space - inspired by an 18th century painting of Sir Roger and Lady Bradshaigh depicting formal gardens and beautiful stepped lawns with amazing views over the town of Wigan - will host weddings, performances and events.

At the centre of the garden is a glorious handkerchief tree which was kindly funded by Wigan Rotary Club as part of their Centenary celebrations.

The tree is surrounded by a brass crown which depicts Wigan Borough’s Coat of Arms and is a nod to the hall’s history with

symbols harking back to the estate’s former residents, the Crawford family.

Local people flocked to the opening of the garden, listening to speeches, poetry readings and performances from Wigan Community Choir and others, celebrating what is set to be a bright future for Haigh.

**Mowpin Lodge Gates**

Another exciting step ahead is that the new Mowpin Lodge Gates, which mark the hall’s 900 years of mining heritage, have been installed at the Mowpin Lodge entrance to the estate (pictured). Local people voted on the design and chose a miner’s shovel and pickaxe, which were designed by artists Al and Al and fabricated by Wigan-based metal specialists Lost Art. The gates were cast at Haigh Foundry by J&E Castings in 2024 and installed in April 2025.

**Plantation Gates**

Work has begun to transform the Grade II\* listed Plantation Gates and Lodges (pictured) into

beautiful and useable spaces for everyone to enjoy. If you drive by you may notice that the Plantation Gates have been removed for now as they are carefully restored, but don’t worry, they’ll be back on site later this summer. Watch this space!

[www.wigan.gov.uk/HaighHall](http://www.wigan.gov.uk/HaighHall)



Thank you to our funding partners:



Funded by  
UK Government



Supported using public funding by  
**ARTS COUNCIL  
ENGLAND**



## ‘Ey up cockers! Hacker has a new home

A familiar furry face can now be found in Wigan Museum.

Thanks to puppeteer Phil Fletcher (pictured), a version of CBBC favourite Hacker T Dog is now on permanent display. Phil, who is from Hindley, donated him to the museum earlier this year.

Hacker is part of the What’s In Store exhibition, which showcases hundreds of artefacts and aims to give a snapshot of the borough’s historic collections.

Councillor Chris Ready, the council’s portfolio holder for

communities and neighbourhoods, said: “Hacker and Phil are two very proud Wiganers who love our town, so it’s only fitting that this national TV icon has found a home at Wigan Museum.

“As we expected, the kids have loved seeing him on display, but the biggest surprise has been how big a hit he’s been with the grown-ups!

“Hacker is currently keeping an eye on the reception desk, ready to welcome visitors as they walk into the museum.”

[www.wigan.gov.uk/museum](http://www.wigan.gov.uk/museum)



The Mini Blue Light Project at St Gabriel's Primary School, Leigh

## Shining lights lead the way to boost community safety

A new education programme in Wigan Borough is providing a unique insight into the heroes that work for our emergency services.

It's also helping youngsters think about how everyone can work together when it comes to promoting community safety.

The Mini-Blue Light project – the first of its kind in Greater Manchester – is being piloted at St Gabriel's Primary School in Leigh.

It sees their year six pupils welcome regular visitors from the region's police, fire, ambulance and council services – but these are no ordinary visits.



Those of us who may have left school many years ago may remember the assemblies when uniformed officers would talk about their jobs and maybe issue some safety warnings.

The Mini-Blue Light project is a bit different.

For a start, it's much more of a partnership, with the children having their own special uniform and playing a more active role in the sessions.

"It's not just a presentation, the team genuinely connect with our young people on each topic and teach vital life skills, such as first-aid," explains Cathie Williams, the headteacher at St Gabriel's.

A recent session was hosted at Howe Bridge Leisure Centre, focussed on water safety.

"Different learning zones focussed on various scenarios," Ms Williams explains.

"An icy-water based area demonstrated how to use throwlines or nearby objects to help someone who requires assistance in the water, while helping those attempting a rescue to stay safe.

"And there was a hazard zone to help the children identify what may pose hidden dangers beneath the water's surface.

"The interactive approach really engaged the students in a way I've not seen before, helping them to take the safety advice on board."

Other sessions have focused on issues such as anti-social behaviour and how seemingly small actions – such as littering and graffiti – can contribute to larger issues within a community.

With the police, fire, ambulance and local authority services all working together as part of the programme, there's a wide range of safety topics to be covered; including road safety and knife

crime, and visits from the various services' specialist dog units are also scheduled.

The project – funded by the Wigan Borough Community Safety Partnership - is scheduled to run throughout the current academic year but there are hopes it may have a wider roll-out in the future.

In addition to the safety advice and the interactive nature of the sessions, the children are given a first-hand experience of the people who serve such important roles in our community.

One such role model is Dominique Grimes (pictured below), who is the interventions lead officer at Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service.

"In the space of six months during this year, we've seen some great progress," she explains.

"Each month, these visits enable us as a partnership of services to really interact and educate our students on a different

fundamental safety topic," Dominique, who is also one of the scheme's co-developers, explains.

"But it's the sense of community that sets them apart. Each child has their own uniform that makes them feel part of a team; it's a dynamic approach to teaching and it's breaking down barriers to build some really healthy relationships with the next generation.

"The programme transforms safety advice into engaging, hands-on experiences, making learning both enjoyable and impactful.

"And the children's awareness of safety prevention has improved significantly, but, most importantly, their confidence in themselves and their future aspirations has grown."

To watch a video about the Mini-Blue Light project, visit: [www.youtube.com/WiganCouncil](https://www.youtube.com/WiganCouncil)





Walkers admire the view from a bridge at Haigh Woodland Park, one of the many sights you'll see on the Wigan Way

# Back to the future, one step at a time

It's the story of Wigan's past, present and future rolled into one.

Now, just like some of the local landmarks it was designed to celebrate, new life is being breathed into the old 'Wigan Way'.

Born out of a mid-90s project to get people walking, this nine-mile circular trail through the town's industrial and semi-rural landscapes has since earned something approaching mythical status among seasoned ramblers.

And it's little wonder why; tying together, as it does, the iconic Pier Quarter, the rich heritage of the Leeds-Liverpool Canal, and the storied splendour of Haigh Hall and its woodland plantations.

"It's not just a walk, it's also about the history of our borough – what was there before and what's there now," explains volunteer walk leader Heather Bradley, for whom the route's revival has become a personal passion project.



“There’s a lot of industry, a lot of heritage. But it also shows Wigan isn’t just the industrial north. We’ve got beauty too.”

Like a lot of local ramblers, Heather has known about the Wigan Way for many years.

But when a friend unearthed a copy of the original 1997 route map, complete with short histories of a series of 38 points of interest, she was suddenly inspired.

“My immediate thought was ‘can we bring this back?’ So that’s what I set out to do.”

Taking a photocopy of the rare find, Heather began to recce the ‘official’ route with her pet dogs Mara and Karma, one mile at a time.

From there, she helped arrange an organised group walk – and it was at this event, in the autumn of 2019, that fate introduced her to another rambling enthusiast.

“It was my first ever big walk in Wigan, before I even worked for the council,” remembers walking activator Bev Baldwin, the driving force behind Be Well’s ‘Big Wigan Walk Week’.



The Wigan Way proved popular at last year’s Big Wigan Walk Week

Bev and Heather soon became friends, and together they set about updating the Wigan Way for the 2020s.

“We’ve tried to stay as faithful to the original route as we could,” says Bev.

“But after walking it a few times it became clear that some parts of the walk weren’t always passable.

“There’s also the dam near Central Park Way, which wasn’t there back in 1997.

“So, we’ve just adapted and updated it a little – although we’ve left the original route in there too so people can see it.”

The guide text has also been ‘fettled’ as Wigan’s landscape continues to evolve around the well-trodden path.

Wigan Warriors’ old Central Park stadium, for instance, has long since been demolished, while new developments include the multi-million pound William Foster football hub in Ince and the Bee Network path improvements around the Pier and the Whelley Loop.

Future walkers along the Wigan Way will also pass a rejuvenated Haigh Hall as well as the new town centre destination, Fettleers.



Bev Baldwin



Waymarker on the Wigan Way



Walkers in the Plantations

The pair have been meticulous in their research, aided by local historian Jim Meehan, Cameron Fleming from Wigan Museum, former Canal & River Trust volunteer Peter Baxter, volunteer walk leaders Bill and Cyril Maxwell, the Archives: Wigan and Leigh, and both the Wigan Ramblers and Lancashire Rail Ramblers groups with whom Heather regularly walks.

“We’ve re-checked all the facts and we’re pretty happy - although I’m sure someone will point something out!” jokes Bev, who admits the project hasn’t always been plain sailing.

“Heather’s a traditionalist, whereas I’m a progressive – so we did butt heads a few times! But I think we’ve struck a happy medium, and I think it’s actually made us better friends.

“We’ve sweated blood over this, we’ve worked hard on it, and I’m glad we’re at a point where we can share it with others.”

Bev hopes to officially launch the new guide on Sunday, 1 June, when the Wigan Way walk once again brings down the curtain on the third annual Big Wigan

Walk Week. The map will also be made available at libraries and online.

“Hopefully, if we can get this out into Greater Manchester and beyond, then people will come to Wigan to try it out,” Bev says.

For Heather, the motivation is far more personal.

“It’s been my baby for a long time!” she says. “I’ve had various health issues, mental health issues, and I needed something to get involved in, to distract me from the other stuff that was going on in my life.

“It was a reason to get out walking, a reason to keep going.

“I’m also local, I’ve lived in Wigan Borough all my life. My grandad used to take me to Haigh when I was a little girl, playing on the swings.

“I’ve lived on Wigan Lane, right next to the Plantations. Now I live in Aspull and I love walking through Haigh when all the different shades of green are coming through, all that new life.

“So, to me it’s very, very personal.”

“  
It shows Wigan  
isn’t just the  
industrial north.  
We’ve got  
beauty too.  
”



## Big Wigan Walk Week 2025

The Big Wigan Walk Week 2025 (Saturday 24 May – Sunday 1 June) has more than 55 organised group walks taking place across Wigan Borough.

Other highlights include:

**The Mint Ball Trail • The Wigan Flashes Walk • Nature and History at Borsdane • The Top Lock Canal History Walk.**

All walks are FREE.

Book via the Be Well Wigan app or website. Find out more at [bewellwigan.org/bigwiganwalkweek](https://bewellwigan.org/bigwiganwalkweek)



# Get active this summer...

## Free parks activities

Fancy fresh air and exercise? Watch out for free activities at your local park – from bowls, pétanque and pickleball to park gym, foot golf and dancing! Fantastic fun for all fitness levels.

## Running

Warm up for this September’s Wigan 10k or just run for fun with Be Well’s regular 5k+ running groups at venues all across the borough.

## Walking

The Big Wigan Walk Week is just the tip of the iceberg, with organised group walks each and every week – from ‘Walk and Talk’ and ‘Bump n’ Buggy’ to nature walks and Nordic walking with poles.

## Cycling

Explore your local area on two wheels with our ‘Easy Going’, ‘Steady’ and ‘Steady Plus’ social group rides, or boost your confidence with Sofa to Saddle. There’s also

Bikeability Balance and Learn to Ride sessions for kids.

Browse activities via the Be Well Wigan app at [get.myfitapp.de/a/H3LK](https://get.myfitapp.de/a/H3LK) or find out more at [bewellwigan.org](https://bewellwigan.org)







# Learn to Swim

Spaces available within our Learn to Swim programme.

Enquire today!

**2 months half price!**  
limited time offer

Enquire now by scanning the QR code or at any Be Well Leisure Centre reception





 **SCAN ME**

# THE HERDS Let the WILDNESS in.





An eye-catching public art display with an important message is stampeding its way to Pennington Flash this summer.

THE HERDS, which incorporates an array of beautifully crafted animal puppets, has already set out on its journey through Africa on the way up to the Arctic Circle. Their stop-off in Wigan Borough – as part of the Manchester International Festival - is the latest in an impressive timeline of public art exhibitions to have visited us in recent years, each one asking vital questions about our everyday life. Throughout its epic journey, the creative team behind THE HERDS will be highlighting the impact of climate

change. The animals represent species that are having to flee their natural habitats. Looking after our planet is something we know many of our residents feel passionate about; a passion we wholeheartedly share. Around the world and here at home, climate change is impacting communities in lots of different ways. The small actions we all do to play our part at home, like recycling and using less water, add up to create big changes.





## A once-in-a-lifetime event

THE HERDS will visit Pennington Flash on Saturday, 5 July, the same weekend as the Flashes Festival of Nature.

The 70+ life-sized, wild animal puppets will take part in exhibitions and performances throughout the day, on a scale never seen before.

Created by The Walk Productions, THE HERDS brings together leading artists and arts and educational institutions from across Africa and Europe, led by artistic director Amir Nizar Zuabi.

The epic journey will take in countries across Africa and continental Europe, on the 20,000km route up to the Arctic Circle.

The animals – which have been forced to flee their

natural habitats – will combine to show a visual demonstration of the climate crisis.

So don't be alarmed if you spot an escaped giraffe, a hungry baboon or a rampaging hyena in Leigh that weekend!

Councillor Chris Ready, cabinet member for communities and culture, said: "We're delighted that Pennington Flash will be a stop-off point for this amazing display of public art, and we can't wait to give THE HERDS a warm Wigan Borough welcome.

"We know the value of arts and culture in our borough and we're proud to have hosted other internationally renowned exhibitions such as the visit of Little Amal to Wigan

town centre and the Floating Earth at Pennington Flash, in recent years.

"The Flash is fast becoming one of the best venues in the region and this visit of THE HERDS – which is free to the public – is set up to be a once-in-a-lifetime event for our communities."

THE HERDS is being brought to Wigan Borough as part of the Manchester International Festival 2025.

Everyone is invited to get involved either by coming along on the day to support the free performance, as part of the team making the puppet animals, or as puppeteers for the public performances.

**[factoryinternational.org](https://factoryinternational.org)**





## From the Floating Earth to Little Amal...

THE HERDS won't be the first spectacular piece of public art to visit the borough and ask us important questions about the way we live our lives.

Little Amal, a 12-foot (3.5 metre) puppet of a 10-year-old Syrian refugee, created by the same production team behind THE HERDS, walked into Wigan on her 5,000 mile journey from Turkey to the UK, in 2021.

Little Amal walked to raise awareness of the difficulties faced by child refugees, who often travel alone without their parents, and crossed the borders of eight different countries on her way to Manchester, her final destination.



And Pennington Flash is not new to hosting crowd pulling pieces of statement public art.

In November 2021, the nature reserve hosted artist Luke Jerram's Floating Earth installation, a 10-metre diameter replica of planet Earth, projected with high resolution imagery taken by NASA.



The artwork was designed to allow visitors the experience of viewing the Earth as a whole, as astronauts might, in order to evoke a feeling of awe for the planet and to renew a sense of responsibility and desire to take care of the Earth's future.





# A weekend to remember

The first weekend in July will be an exciting one at Pennington Flash as the Flashes Festival of Nature on Sunday, 6 July will follow THE HERDS production on the Saturday.

The Flashes Festival of Nature began as part of a national celebration to mark the creation of the first nature reserve in England.

It is now an opportunity for local people to come together and appreciate the beauty of The Flashes of Wigan and Leigh, which were officially recognised as a national nature reserve in 2022.

Families will be able to enjoy a whole day of nature themed activities including the chance to learn more about some of the birds and animals who reside at Pennington Flash, along with guided walks, stalls and arts and crafts.

For more information visit:  
[www.visitwigan.com](http://www.visitwigan.com)







**Wigan**<sup>♥</sup>  
**Council**

**Our People**

# Here for You



## **Struggling with the rising cost of living?**

It can be tough to ask for help but we're  
here to point you in the right direction

We can help you to access financial  
support, manage debts, keep warm and  
make savings day to day

**[www.wigan.gov.uk/hereforyou](http://www.wigan.gov.uk/hereforyou)**

**Talk to us - 01942 705221**





Bedford High School students performing at the Wigan Youth Climate Summit

# A powerful climate action message

A catchy song with a thought-provoking message is set to inspire young people across Wigan Borough.

Performed by students at Bedford High School, the tune – titled Arctic Home and written by singing teacher Anna Corcoran – captured everyone’s imagination at the 2024 Youth Climate Summit.

The talented students are now producing a music video to accompany the song, which will be shared across other schools in the borough.

Arctic Home tells the story of a polar bear struggling to find food for its family amid gradually melting ice caps.

“Climate change is something that a lot of the young people feel passionate about and it’s important to us to support them to have their say and take appropriate action to change things for the better,” explains Amy Duffy, assistant

headteacher at Bedford High. “Students have been involved in each element of the production, from an initial focus group, to recording the soundtrack and starring in the final film.”

Every year Wigan Council hosts the Youth Climate Summit (pictured above), inviting hundreds of school children to learn about environmental issues.

It is hoped the music video will help inspire young people to take the small but impactful steps to tackle climate change.

Students highlighted in the focus group that although the responsibility to address climate change should not just fall on them, many of the promoted actions are often things that young people can’t get involved in (such as driving electric cars, insulating homes or choosing

responsible energy suppliers).

The video will instead encourage them to become leaders; to avoid fast fashion and to switch off electrical items, such as their games consoles, at night.

The video will be shown in schools across the borough as part of workshops led by the council’s climate education team and presented at the 2025 Youth Climate Summit in October.



Bedford High School student Lilly at the focus group



# We all win if it goes in the bin!

Think about how littering harms the environment and wildlife, and its impact on our community.

Take responsibility and throw away your rubbish properly.

Change your ways today to make our town a better place.



[www.wigan.gov.uk/KeepItClean](http://www.wigan.gov.uk/KeepItClean)





The AllChild project is helping hundreds of children

# AllChild’s success story arrives in the borough

When it comes to success stories from London that transferred to make an impact in Wigan Borough, sports fans might point to Martin Offiah and Ben Watson.

In recent months in Leigh though, it’s a new community-driven educational support scheme for young people that’s setting its own ambitious goals.

AllChild has been underway in several schools for six months and is already having a positive impact for hundreds of young lives.

Based around an innovative way of providing tailored support for children, it started in 2016 helping thousands in neighbourhoods with high levels of inequality.

Its arrival in our borough represents a significant milestone, because it’s the first time it has been set-up outside of London.

And its launch event at Leigh Sports Village, in November last year, was attended by Mayor of Greater Manchester Andy Burnham, Secretary of State for culture, media and sport, and Wigan MP, Lisa Nandy, and featured a video message from Dame Rachel de Souza, Children’s Commissioner for England.

You may be thinking at this stage: ‘So, how does it all work?’

At the heart of the project is dedicated, early intervention, one-to-one support for young people provided by trusted AllChild link-workers.

These professionals are based full-time in schools and work with children, their families, teachers, and local organisations to create tailored programmes of support and opportunities rooted within the community.

Each child and their link-worker creates their own two-year personalised support plan that enables them to build the social, emotional and academic skills they need to flourish, which may include academic tutoring, mentoring, counselling, music and sports.

The broader impact includes positive community outcomes such as increased school attendance rates, funding for grassroots organisations, and alleviating pressure on wider services, such as mental health and social care provision.



“Since the start of the programme I have observed a positive shift in the children’s development,” says Catherine Marlow, one of Wigan Borough’s link-workers.

“Children who once found it difficult to engage with their peers and adults are now building confidence and children who were once anxious about coming to school are now attending independently.

“It has been incredible to witness the transformation in these children, and I am so proud of the progress they’ve made.”

Speaking of the partnership approach here in Wigan Borough, AllChild’s chief executive Louisa Mitchell MBE (pictured right), explains: “We were struck by the enthusiasm of local community organisations, schools and wider systems here.

“The borough’s Progress With Unity vision for children and young people is truly inspiring and AllChild’s community-led model of support and opportunity aligns perfectly with it.

“We share a commitment to the principles of ‘people, prevention and place’ and are dedicated to effecting deep and lasting change.”

With the first six months now complete, project leaders are now looking ahead to the next 18 months.

The rollout will extend to schools in the Atherton and Tyldesley area later this year.

And AllChild has commissioned children’s charity Coram to act as a partner, capturing the impact of the programme on children, families, schools and the local community with an ambition to reach more children and more schools.



## In numbers

AllChild, the charitable organisation overseeing the initiative, launched in Wigan Borough in September 2024 to support more than **400 children.**

**250 children** in seven schools are already part of the programme, with six more schools set to come onboard in 2025.

Under its previous name, ‘West London Zone,’ AllChild supported more than **5,000 children across 60 schools.**

An independent analysis of the programme’s impact revealed that it generated average total savings and wider economic benefits of **£81k per child.**



Council staff, partner organisations and volunteers at the launch event in Leigh



Councillor Jenny Bullen (pictured), the now Mayor of Wigan Borough, formerly cabinet member for children and young people, said:

“Understanding what is happening in the lives of our young people – in their families, schools and communities – is central to our early help and prevention work.

“We are delighted to be working with AllChild, knowing that this

initiative will make a tangible difference. We are grateful they recognised the potential of our vision for children as part of our Progress With Unity approach.

“This work will add to our strategic drive to support our children, families and schools to improve their education, social and emotional experience and well-being.”



Computer generated images of the new market hall at Fettle's, situated in the heart of Wigan town centre

# TRANSFORMATIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN FINE FETTLE

**I**nspired by the past and set to shape our future, these are exciting times for Wigan town centre.

The new brand and vision for the former Galleries site has been unveiled and has fast become the talk of the town.

Fettle's gives a nod back to our unique heritage, evoking our borough's history and celebrating our proud identity.

In Wiganese, a Fettle is someone who worked with metal and pottery, industries with a strong history here, and in Wiganese, our local dialect, 'fettlin' means to make, fix and mend or you can be 'in fine fettle.'

As is the case with any transformational development project though, the origin story is important. And that's where People Make Wigan comes in.

You may have spotted the artwork when you've been out and about. If you have, you'll have certainly recognised some of the faces and perhaps learned something new.

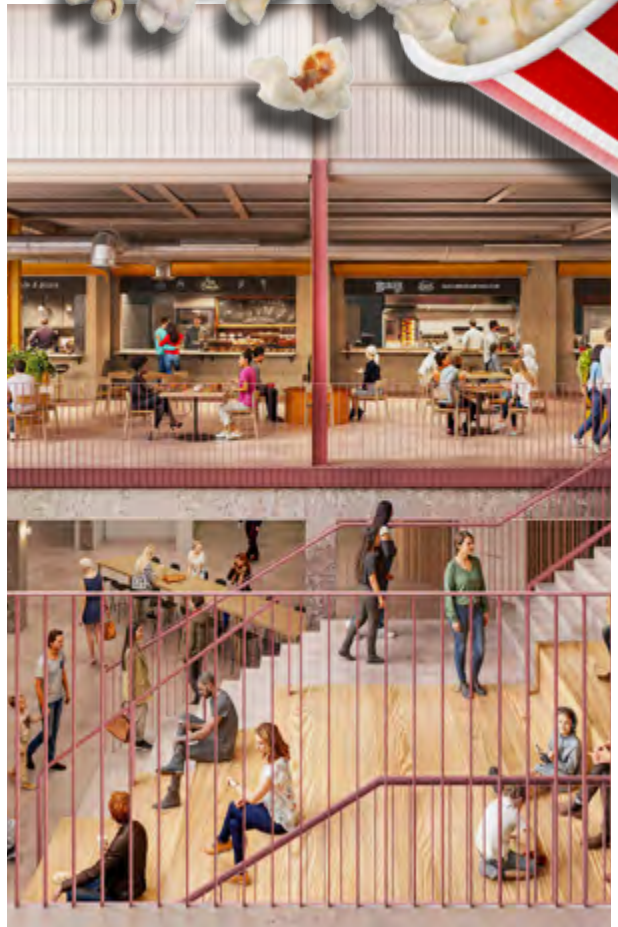
The People Make Wigan campaign was designed to showcase the magic of people from this borough and their stories inspired Fettle's.

Here's what you need to know.





# FETTLERS



Computer generated images of the new development



# PEOPLE MAKE WIGAN

Let me tell you a story that'll warm your  
cockles and ignite your souls.  
This is the story of Wigan.

Going right back to the Romans through the  
Industrial Revolution, we have a proud history  
of making, building, and crafting.

And our story isn't over yet. We're still at it.

The magic of Wigan is in its people. The dreamers,  
believers, crafters, grafters, fixers and fettlers.  
Wigan has it all. Incredible music, sporting  
legends, historians telling our story, making  
something new from something old, artists  
creating masterpieces and sparking joy, brewing,  
crafting, and a family-run business that is sure to  
make you all aglow.

People Make Wigan.



Scan the QR code to see the  
amazing makers in action.  
[www.youtube.com/  
watch?v=WNePCleTGag](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WNePCleTGag)



JT&E Castings, Haigh Foundry- We Are Grafters



Joan, Northern Soul DJ- We Made Northern Soul



Stephanie, Morpheus Glass- I Make Each Piece Unique



Tom Walsh MBE, Local Historian- We Are Storytellers



# A COLLABORATION THAT SPEAKS TO OUR VALUES

The redevelopment of Wigan town centre on the site of the former Galleries is now well underway.

It will feature a 90,000sq ft market hall, 144-bed Hampton by Hilton Hotel in addition to leisure, retail and housing elements.

Now it has its identity: Fettlers. It's something that has been produced alongside our makers and the local community.

"It is very fitting that the name is recognition of our local people," said the owners of iconic Wigan brand Uncle Joe's Mint Balls.

"Since 1898 local fettlers have helped us to continue to grow Uncle Joe's into something that is globally renowned. Made in Wigan, sold to the world!"

Through the process of producing an identity for the new development, a name that speaks to our local values, of authenticity and pride in our communities was top of the list.

"We've worked really closely with our community to find a name that meant something," explains Councillor David Molyneux MBE, Leader of Wigan Council.

"It celebrates our history, our values and looks towards our bright future of crafting, grafting, dreaming, fettlin' and making things happen."



Adele, Tallula Vintage- We Are Unique



Philip, Wily Fox Brewery- We Are Crafters





A vast majority of care workers receive the real living wage

# Living wage pledge is making a real difference

Two years on since Wigan Council made a landmark pledge - committing funds so that the Real Living Wage (RLW) would be available throughout the adult social care sector - the impact has been far and wide.

This commitment has been recently reaffirmed, and the vast majority of the borough's social care workforce now come under this fair pay umbrella.

The council's decision to lead the way in maintaining a high-quality and sustainable local care market has made an even larger impact.

Here are the numbers that underpin how much of an influence it has had.

As a result of the pledge, **100 per cent** of community providers contracted by the council pay the (RLW) as a minimum.

But that's not all. Wigan Council also committed to helping private care home providers and now **91 per cent** of local care homes are also signed up.

And the pledge also includes people who arrange their own care through a Direct Payment.

It's worth noting that Wigan Borough has the highest proportion (**95 per cent**) of care provision rated **outstanding or good** by the Care Quality Commission (CQC) in Greater Manchester.

So, this means the vast majority of those in care are receiving high standard services, and the vast majority of those providing these services are being paid the RLW, regardless of their age.

With more than **9,000** people currently working in adult social care in the borough,





the sector also has a significant anchor role in supporting the local economy.

And remember, the RLW – which increased **five per cent** to **£12.60** per hour – is the only UK wage rate based on the actual cost of living, as set by the Living Wage Foundation.

An example of this knock-on effect is on the borough retention rates of people working in the sector.

Latest figures show that staff turnover rates in our borough are significantly lower than national averages.

This shows that our amazing workforce feels valued and enjoy their job.

To further cement its commitment to the sector, Wigan Council announced **£7.9m** of investment in the local care market in its 2025/26 budget.

Councillor Keith Cunliffe, deputy leader and cabinet portfolio holder for adult social care, said: “A quality and sustainable local care market is crucial, and this investment ensures we can maintain and improve on these levels.

“We’re proud of the approach we have taken as we look through Progress With Unity to build a prosperous and fair borough for our residents.”

Andreea Sfrejea, a care home manager at Norfolk House, said: “The real living wage commitment has been very much welcomed by the staff.

“We are not a big chain, we are only a small provider with two little care homes and this commitment has been a massive help both for the carers and for us in being able to retain staff.

“A lot of staff are struggling and caring is a job that you do with your heart but you need to be able to afford to pay your bills and I think the initiative the council has taken has been great.”

## Family Hub network continues to grow

From a music star frontman to a Warriors hero and even the Easter Bunny, the opening of a new Family Hub has attracted all the big names.

These support hubs have been the place to be this spring for families seeking fun activities, a helping hand with their finances, support with mental wellbeing and much more.

This latest addition to the hub network – at Clifton Street, Worsley Mesnes - which opened its doors in April, is the fourth to open of seven sites designed to provide comprehensive support to residents of all ages.

The Easter-themed opening welcomed families from across the borough and saw Lathums lead singer Alex Moore cutting the ribbon alongside Tyler Dupree from the Wigan Warriors.

There were also special appearances from the Easter Bunny and even Peppa Pig, who helped little ones take part in an exciting Easter hunt and face painting.

“Our grand opening events have become unmissable highlights in

the calendar,” says Karen Nock, service manager for Family Hubs. “We’ve had some amazing guests drop by and it is always great to see so many happy faces visiting to find out what we’re all about.

“We want everyone to know these hubs are here for you. From new parents navigating the early stages of parenting to male carers wellbeing services to support for older residents there is an offer here for everyone! If you haven’t done so already, please drop by and find out what we have to offer.”

Over the past 18 months, more than 18,000 residents have visited the Family Hubs since they opened. In late 2024, the team at The Meadows site celebrated being awarded a 5-star rating following a visit by Wigan & Leigh Youth Inspectors.

By the end of 2025, the goal is for all seven hubs to be open offering a convenient place for residents to take part in activities, get support or simply catch up with friends.

For more information about the Family Hubs network: [www.wigan.gov.uk/familyhubs](http://www.wigan.gov.uk/familyhubs)



Opening day at Clifton Street Family Hub



Food at The Cabinet

# Absolutely Atherton; it's a vibe

With its vibrant mix of food and entertainment venues, we couldn't wait to get our skates on and pay a visit to Atherton.

Like many of its counterpart town centres across the borough, it boasts a rich history of making – from cotton and coal to nail manufacturing – but in recent times its sporting heroes have set it above the rest.

Murals of Olympic champion Keely Hodgkinson and UFC star Tom Aspinall greet you from either side of the town centre and inspired us to first try something that would fit in with a sports-star's diet.

Some might say that 'healthy' and 'delicious' don't belong in the same

sentence, but **Acai Hut** would silence those naysayers.

It's the place to go for a healthy sweet treat with Acai, a type of berry and recognised superfood, a prominent part of the menu; blended into smoothies and sorbet-style bowls.

As soon as you step into this neat café, tucked on the corner of Market Street, it feels like you've been



Acai Hut

transported to a sun-drenched, beach-side snack spot.

With limewash painted walls, woven basket lampshades hanging overhead, and the gentle whirring of fruit blending in the background, it's like a breath of fresh air.

We opted for a large berry bowl, which starts with a cool blended and frozen acai base topped with banana, strawberries, blueberries, raspberries, and granola: 10/10 would recommend!

You can even add a scoop of protein. It's a shame you can't bottle the sunshine we enjoyed with this treat!

The fabric of this bustling town centre is woven with a unique and diverse mix of bars, restaurants, music, and



Northwest Roller Sports CIC



activity venues – whatever your vibe, there’s something for everyone to enjoy.

And next up for us was something completely different; it was time to get a bit funky at **Northwest Roller Sports CIC’s** roller disco.

This place is perfect for families, trips with friends or even a date night as you’re guaranteed to have a beaming smile as you whiz round enjoying the disco-style tunes.

From those who cling to the side to those who glide with ease to join together in the middle of the rink and get low doing the limbo; it’s a lot of laughs! There’s even a DJ, and yes, they do take requests.

The Cabinet



Having worked up an appetite, we called over to **The Cabinet**, a family-run venue in a 1900s style converted bank.

It hosts a bar and restaurant, entertainment and social darts venue but stepping inside isn’t all as it first seems.

You’re initially greeted with a cocktail bar but as you venture further in, you discover an impressive labyrinth of wacky wallpapered walkways, romantic rooms, and pink-lit alcoves – a maximalist’s dream.

The Cabinet serves a range of classic, house, and premium cocktails, alongside stone-baked pizzas, sliders, and hanging

Mural in Atherton



kebabs, all accompanied by live entertainment.

Another must-visit spot is **The Snug Coffee House**. Cosy coffee shop by day but by night, it transforms into an intimate small music venue, inviting grassroots and independent bands, musicians, comedians, and poets to take the stage.

This venue truly feels unique, warm, and welcoming – dare we say it, snug. We caught a gig during our visit, and there are few words to describe the magic of live music in such an intimate space, feeling the sound, energy, facial expressions, and audience reactions filling the room – it’s unmatched.



The Snug

The Snug is one of four local venues part of ‘The Early Doors Club’, read about it in a previous edition of Borough Life. [www.wigan.gov.uk/BoroughLife](http://www.wigan.gov.uk/BoroughLife)



The Borough Life team out and about

# Let's hear your voice

Sharing the right messages at the right time and reaching the right people is important to us as a local authority.

Back in 2023, we hosted our first In the Loop survey, asking how you prefer for us to communicate with you.

And we were really grateful that hundreds of you took the time to give us your feedback!

From e-mails and social media to the magazine you're reading now, we were able to put in place lots of positive changes to make sure you feel informed about the work the council does.

We now share more updates about Full Council and local democracy in our newsletters and website and have created a digital version of

Borough Life - a newsletter which goes out, direct to your inbox, every Friday.

The world of communications is everchanging and the next version of the In the Loop survey is open now.

We'd really love to hear your views once again and ask you to consider completing the survey on our Participate platform or in one of our local libraries.

As a thank you and to recognise your time, for every survey that is completed, we will donate 50p to the Mayor of Wigan Borough's charity fund.

**The survey will close on Monday, June 9.**

Visit: [www.wigan.gov.uk/InTheLoop2025](http://www.wigan.gov.uk/InTheLoop2025)





Wigan<sup>♥</sup>  
Council

# In the loop

Complete our survey and  
tell us how you prefer to hear  
from Wigan Council

[wigan.gov.uk/InTheLoop2025](https://wigan.gov.uk/InTheLoop2025)





There are a range of community care services available across the borough

# Transforming care and promoting independence

A fresh approach to providing health and care services across Wigan Borough is already producing promising results. The BetterLives programme is a joint endeavour between local organisations who are working more closely than ever before to help improve the lives of everyone across our communities.

Here's what you need to know.

## What is BetterLives and what has prompted a new way of working?

It's Wigan Borough's masterplan to create a person-centred health and care system that will enable better, more independent health

and care outcomes for our residents, service users and carers.

It will also help support residents to remain independent in their own communities for as long as they can.

Many of you will be aware that we have an aging local population and NHS services nationally are stretched due to high demand.

Add these to the fact that we're a borough that spans a large geographical area and has a range of health inequalities, a new approach is needed.

Through no fault of their own, too many people are spending more time in hospital beds than they need to, and with more effective early intervention work, some could avoid hospital altogether.



Using more effective links between services, BetterLives is designed to help reduce these avoidable hospital admissions, help to reduce pressures on urgent and emergency care and support people at home and within their own communities.

"It's an exciting opportunity. If you can help to keep people



at home where they feel more comfortable and reduce avoidable admissions, it will have a big impact,” explains Councillor Keith Cunliffe (pictured left), Wigan Council’s deputy leader and cabinet member for social care.

“For the size of our borough, we have a relatively low number of hospital beds. Funding more in hospital settings isn’t the answer when we have highly effective community-based services and early intervention schemes, such as our amazing reablement team.”

#### **Who is involved and what has happened so far?**

Wigan Council, Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (WWL) and NHS Greater Manchester Integrated Care Board are working together on BetterLives.

Beginning in September last year, the first phase centred on ‘admission avoidance’ at hospital.

WWL placed members of their community team in A&E to help explore whether the care attendees required could be provided elsewhere in the system. This had an immediate impact, with an average of 3.81 admissions avoided per day.

“It’s a really exciting programme,” says Mary Fleming (pictured right), WWL chief executive.

“We have the highest percentage of older people in Greater Manchester, we know people attending A&E have more complex cases, we know more people from deprived areas come to A&E and we needed to do something different as a borough.

“The BetterLives programme offers a different solution and is really working with

communities to understand what they need, creating an offer that helps them to help themselves and live better and longer in their own homes.”

While a lot of positive progress has already been made, there is still plenty of work remaining to ensure that the impacts are sustainable.

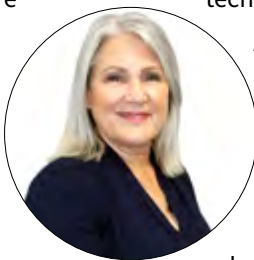
The next phase of BetterLives will look at intermediate care, reducing the reliance on in-demand hospital beds and providing care elsewhere. It will also look at reducing discharge delays and helping people who leave hospital find the most independent outcomes, to help reduce repeat admissions.

#### **What do early intervention schemes look like?**

The new partnership will see renewed focus on helping people make more informed choices when it comes to their health and wellbeing.

Early intervention work is an innovative part of the scheme and makes use of cutting-edge technology, across many of the services.

A range of tech products, for example, can help to support people in their homes, such as bed sensors and fall sensors, while carers could use AI to help with administrative work, allowing them to spend more time with people who need care. WWL also has its pioneering virtual wards, which provides an extra 60 beds by patients being closely monitored at home, using technology.



Wigan Infirmary

## Service options

As BetterLives progresses, you may see more changes to the way your services are delivered across the borough.

But there is an important point that underpins all this work. All our services are performed by amazing staff who remain dedicated to improving lives.

Emergency care and the A&E department are there for those who require urgent medical support – none of the above changes that.

But if your circumstances or condition do not require urgent care, there are a range of services available.

To find out the best services for your needs, visit:

**[gmintegratedcare.org.uk](http://gmintegratedcare.org.uk)**

# What's on in Wigan Borough?

## Haigh Woodland Park

[www.facebook.com/haighwoodlandpark](http://www.facebook.com/haighwoodlandpark)



### Artisan Markets

**Sundays 15th June, 20th July, 17th August, 14th September and 10th October**

The Artisan Traders are again bringing their amazing products and produce to Haigh. From Cakes to Candles, Soaps to Sandals, Jewellery Delights, to Doggy Treats and Bites

🎟️ **Tickets:** None required



### Picnic Brass

**Sundays 15th June, 20th July, 17th August, 7th September**  
**1pm and 2.30pm each day**

A family-friendly afternoon at the popular brass concerts. In association with the Friends of Haigh Woodland Park.

🎟️ **Tickets:** None required

### Foodie Friday

**Fridays 30th May, 27th June, 25th July, 29th August, 26th September, 24th October**  
**6pm-10pm**

A fantastic family event with live music, DJ's and different street food traders each month.

🎟️ **Tickets:** None required



### Park Run

**Every Saturday**  
**9am start**

🎟️ **Tickets:** [www.parkrun.org.uk/haighwoodland](http://www.parkrun.org.uk/haighwoodland)



### Bump and Buggy Walk

**Every Friday**  
**10.30am**

A leisurely stroll around pram friendly paths through Haigh. Everyone is made to feel welcome. Stop off for a brew and a chat after your walk.

🎟️ **Tickets:** None required

### Volkswagon Vehicle Show

**Sunday 15th June**  
**11am-3.30pm**

Local VW club Dubz Outlaws will be displaying a range of their own build vehicles including a mix of campervans and daily drives.

🎟️ **Tickets:** None required

## Sporting fixtures



**Leigh Leopards**  
[leighsportsvillage.co.uk](http://leighsportsvillage.co.uk)



**Wigan Athletic**  
[wiganathletic.com/matches](http://wiganathletic.com/matches)



**Wigan Warriors**  
[wiganwarriors.com/fixtures](http://wiganwarriors.com/fixtures)





## Community



### Afternoon Classic Film Club

**30th May: Harvey (1950)**  
**27th June: The Full Monty**  
**25th July: Moulin Rouge**  
**29th August: The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel.**  
**1pm**

Bring your lunch, relax and enjoy an afternoon of great film, company and conversation. Screening a variety of old and new films, welcoming of everyone. We are also dementia friendly.

✦ **Turnpike Gallery**  
 🎟️ **Tickets: Free entry, donations welcome**

### Sunday Jazz Club

**Last Sunday of the month,**  
**12.30pm-3.30pm**

Bringing local, national and international jazz to the North-West of England for over 30 years.

✦ **Whelley ex-Serviceman's Club**  
 🎟️ **Tickets: <https://wiganjazzclub.co.uk>**

### Wigan Little Theatre

**Maggie May; 4th-14th June**  
**The Addams Family- A Musical;**  
**9th-19th July**

**Alice in Wonderland; 12th-14th September**

✦ **44 Crompton Street, Wigan**  
 🎟️ **Tickets: [www.ticketsource.co.uk/wigan-little-theatre-box-office](http://www.ticketsource.co.uk/wigan-little-theatre-box-office)**

### Festival of Everyday Creativity

**Saturday 17th - 24th May**

Get ready to be inspired! Come along and celebrate the amazing creativity that's part of everyday life in our community.

✦ **Mesnes Park, Wigan and Market Street, Leigh**  
 🎟️ **Tickets: [www.everdaywigan.org.uk](http://www.everdaywigan.org.uk)**

### Salena Jones & Her Trio

**Friday 6th June, 7.30pm**

After a career spanning over seven decades, world-renowned Jazz singer Salena Jones, will be performing in Wigan!

✦ **St Michaels Church, Swinley, Wigan**  
 🎟️ **Tickets: [www.wiganjazzclub.co.uk/concerts/salena-jones-and-her-trio/](http://www.wiganjazzclub.co.uk/concerts/salena-jones-and-her-trio/)**

### Leigh Pride

**Saturday 26th July, 12pm-9pm**

Pride in Leigh will be back in Pennington Hall Park on Saturday 26 July 2025. You can expect a fabulous day filled with artisan stalls, live music, a bar, and delicious food.

✦ **Pennington Hall Park**  
 🎟️ **Tickets: None required**

### Wigan Pride

**Saturday 16th August,**  
**From 12pm**

Wigan Pride will celebrate their 10th anniversary on 16 August in Wigan town centre. With music, entertainment, special guests and a community parade!

✦ **Wigan Town Centre**  
 🎟️ **Tickets: None required**

### Firs Park Family Fun Day

**Saturday 23rd August, 11am-4pm**

Annual festival, bringing local communities together. Include live music, artisan markets, craft stalls, fun fair, children's activities & much more.

✦ **Firs Park**  
 🎟️ **Tickets: None required**

### Wigan 10K

**Sunday 7th September**  
**From 9am**

Register now for the 13th annual Wigan 10K.

✦ **Mesnes Park**  
 🎟️ **Tickets: [www.wigan10k.co.uk](http://www.wigan10k.co.uk)**

### Wigan Diggers Festival

**Saturday 13th September**  
**11am - 11pm**

Celebrate the life and influence of Gerrard Winstanley and the 17th century Diggers' (True Levellers) movement he inspired.

✦ **Believe Square, Wigan**  
 🎟️ **Tickets: None required**

### Wigan & Leigh Short Film Festival

**Saturday 27th & Sunday 28th September, 11am - 11pm**

We celebrate and showcase up-and-coming talent from across the world, screening everything from comedies and dramas to documentaries and animation.

✦ **Leigh Spinners Mill**  
 🎟️ **Tickets: [www.ticketsource.co.uk/leigh-film-factory](http://www.ticketsource.co.uk/leigh-film-factory)**



### Carnivals and festivals

**Golborne Carnival**  
**Sunday 1st June, 12pm - 6pm**

✦ **Leigh Street Park**  
 🎟️ **Tickets: None required**

**Atherton Carnival**  
**Sunday 22nd June, 12pm - 6pm**

✦ **Meadowbank Field**  
 🎟️ **Tickets: None required**

**Tyldesley Carnival**

**Sunday 6th July**  
 ✦ **Tyldesley Rugby Club**  
 🎟️ **Tickets: None required**

**Wigan Rotary Community Day**

**Saturday 12th July, 10am-4pm**  
 ✦ **Standishgate, Wigan**  
 🎟️ **Tickets: None required**

# Museums, Archives & Libraries

**The Drumcroon Collection:**  
Selected works on paper  
from the 1960s – 1990s

**From Saturday 10th May**  
**Tue – Fri 10am – 4pm**  
**Sat 10am – 2pm**

Presenting the new Schools Loan Scheme and a major exhibition of over 50 artworks. The exhibition revives the innovative spirit of Wigan’s beloved Drumcroon Education Art Centre which gained national acclaim for its work in visual arts education.

📍 **Turnpike Gallery**  
🎟️ **Tickets: None required**

**‘Seeing The Invisible’ Fish and Chip Supper**

**Thursday 22nd May**  
**6pm-8pm**

Join Daresbury Laboratory to learn more about the James Webb Space Telescope and how it’s helping us see the universe in new ways whilst enjoying a fish and chip supper.

📍 **Leigh Library**  
🎟️ **Tickets: £7.21 (inc Eventbrite booking fee), booking essential**

**Sketchbook Social**

**Wednesdays 4th June, 2nd July, 6th August**  
**1-3pm**

Join us for a relaxed and social sketching session at The Turnpike Gallery. Enjoy a brew, mingle with other sketchers, and soak up inspiration from the Drumcroon print exhibition.

📍 **Turnpike Gallery**  
🎟️ **Tickets: None required**

**‘Book Fest’ Book Fair**

**Thursday 5th June**  
**6pm-8pm**

Join us at Leigh Library and chat to a range of adult fiction and non-fiction authors with the opportunity to purchase signed books.

📍 **Leigh Library**  
🎟️ **Tickets: Free, booking essential**

**World War Day**

**Saturday 7th June**  
**10.30am - 1.30pm**

This family friendly event will give you the chance to get hands-on with original World War artillery and uniform. Learn how to research your military ancestors with our family history experts.

📍 **Wigan Museum**  
🎟️ **Tickets: Free, drop in**

**Creative Making at the Archives**

**Saturday 7th June**  
**10.30am-2pm**

Explore the magic world of Powertex fabric sculpting in this introductory workshop by artist Jackie Rogerson. All materials are provided. Age 10 plus.

📍 **Archives: Wigan & Leigh**  
🎟️ **Tickets: £7 (inc. Eventbrite booking fee), booking essential**

**Saturday Family Workshops**

**14th Jun, 12th Jul, 9th Aug**  
**10.30am – 12.30pm**

Start the weekend with an inspiring creative workshop at The Turnpike Gallery. Suitable for families with children aged 5+.

📍 **The Turnpike Gallery**  
🎟️ **Tickets: Free, drop in**

**Summer of Print**

**Saturday 19th July – 30th August**  
**Tuesday – Friday 10am – 4pm**  
**Saturday 10am – 2pm**

Drop in to the gallery and have a go at making your own print artwork! Free self-led activities for all the family to enjoy, gallery staff will be on hand to assist.

📍 **Turnpike Gallery**  
🎟️ **Tickets: None required**

**Leigh Town Hall Tours**

**Last Wednesday of the month, 11am**

Discover the history of Leigh Town Hall and explore the Archives’ collections on this free guided tour.

📍 **Archives: Wigan & Leigh**  
🎟️ **Tickets: Free, booking essential**



**Puppet Workshop with Goofus Theatre**

**Saturday 9th Aug**  
**11am and 12.30pm**

A fun, interactive introduction to puppetry workshop. Explore puppetry skills, using your imagination to create your own stories! Then make a life size puppet to take home!

📍 **Wigan Museum**  
🎟️ **Tickets: £5 (inc Eventbrite booking fee), booking essential**

**What’s In Store? Showcasing the extraordinary to the everyday**

**Tuesday – Friday 10am-4pm**  
**Saturday 10am-2pm**

Our interactive exhibition has been revamped for 2025 and has been packed with even more fascinating objects.

📍 **Wigan Museum**  
🎟️ **Tickets: Free, drop-in**

**Nomad Rangers Summer Camps**

**Various dates & times**

Join Nomad Rangers for a fun filled afternoon of outdoor activities including soft archery, soft axe throwing, fire lighting with smores, bug hunting, paint pouring and more. Suitable for ages 6-12.

📍 **Standish, Hindley and Golborne Libraries**  
🎟️ **Tickets: £6.13 (including Eventbrite fee), booking essential**

**Relaxed Mornings**

**Last Saturday of the month**  
**10am - 12pm**

This time is specially dedicated to visitors with special needs. A SEND-friendly environment with limited visitor numbers and staff will be available to help with anything you need.

📍 **Archives: Wigan & Leigh**  
🎟️ **Tickets: Free, drop in**



## Events spotlight



### Armed Forces Day: Wigan & Leigh

#### Saturday 28th June

Show your support for the men and women who make up the Armed Forces community, past and present at our annual event.

📍 **Wigan Town Centre**

🎟️ **Tickets: None required**

### Proms in the Park

Join the Tyldesley Brass Band for two fantastic evenings of fanfare, flag waving and fireworks. Bring your own blankets, chairs and picnic or treat yourself to one of our VIP packages for a memorable musical evening that is sure to be a highlight of the summer season.

**Wigan - Saturday 30th August  
6pm – 10pm**

📍 **Mesnes Park**

**Leigh - Saturday 6th September  
6pm – 10pm**

📍 **Pennington Hall Park**

🎟️ **Tickets: <https://qrco.de/betEPH>**

### Cycle Three Sisters

**Wednesday 21 May & Thursday 7 August**

The popular family-friendly celebration of cycling returns to the Three Sisters Circuit! Ride your bikes together on the main track and enjoy a range of other activities for the whole family.

📍 **Three Sisters**

🎟️ **Tickets: [bewellwigan.org](http://bewellwigan.org)**

### Be Well Memory Walks

**Sunday 22 June (11am),  
Haigh Woodland Park  
Sunday 3 August (11am),  
Pennington Flash**

Our Memory Walks bring people together to raise awareness and funds for the Alzheimer's Society.

📍 **Pennington Flash and Haigh  
Woodland Park**

🎟️ **Tickets: Eventbrite**

## Find out what's going on in Wigan Borough

at [eventbrite.co.uk](http://eventbrite.co.uk)



Wigan Council



Wigan Libraries

## Discover adventure with Be Well Outdoors!

**BE WELL  
OUTDOORS**  
WHERE ADVENTURE AWAITS

 **HAIGH HIGH ROPES & ADVENTURE**

 **SCOTMAN'S FLASH**

 **LOW BANK GROUND**

Book your next adventure today ➡ [www.bewelloutdoors.co.uk](http://www.bewelloutdoors.co.uk) or call **01942 487812**

