

Gates of Eden **OPEN** as usual!

Members of the board of Leigh Neighbours are delighted to announce that the charity has taken over the Community Interest Company, As in Eden.

The popular community venue already hosts a range of leisure, learning and lifestyle activities including t'ai chi, singing for older people, writing and sewing classes.

Chair of Leigh Neighbours, Susan Gredecki, says: "We'd like to offer our thanks to the founders of As in Eden, Jan Harney and Chris Fitzsimmons, who have achieved so much over the past four years in creating a vibrant community hub much loved by local people.

"As well as providing much needed office accommodation for us, having a town centre base right in the heart of the community will help to further establish the charity, raise our profile and make us feel more integrated with local people."

Leigh Neighbours hopes to build on the existing programme of activities, and will soon be inviting the community to submit ideas for consideration. The venue will also continue to be available for hire by community groups.



Project officer Stephen Ruffley, board members Christine Farnworth, John Gredecki, Dawn Hurst, Deborah Catchatoor, Helen Ahmed, Sue Shaw (Finance Officer), Sandra Traynor, Susan Gredecki (chair), Bill Burton, Pam Smith, Christine Fullelove and Jan Eckersley (vice chair)



"P" is NOT for Plants!

We're cultivating a veritable feast of goodies this Spring. So far, we've planted garlic and onions in the allotment on Railway Road (can't wait for the herbs, strawberries and tomatoes... nom nom!) and caulies, potatoes and onions in our community garden. It's all part of our ambitious plans in support of the Incredible Edible movement.

But we do have an appeal to make. Our crops won't be 'edible' if they are contaminated by dog waste! So we're asking dog owners to please show consideration and encourage their dogs to poop and pee elsewhere! Sadly, dog fouling remains a persistent problem in our area. If you have information which could help enforcement officers to identify perpetrators and their owners, please report it to Wigan Council at www.wigan.gov.uk / 'Report it'.

From eyesore... to *I Love It!*

The beleaguered residents of a street whose back alley was subjected to years of environmental crime have expressed their delight at recent improvements spearheaded by Leigh Neighbours.

When we heard how persistent fly-tipping, dog fouling and littering had adversely affected the quality of life for the residents of Selwyn Street, we called upon a group of young volunteers for help.



And the students, whose training under the auspices of the Prince's Trust Team Programme required them to take part in a community improvement project, immediately got stuck in! Altogether, 15 young people worked for more than 10 days clearing the alley, sometimes in the most challenging wintry weather conditions.

Meanwhile, as well as arranging for officers from Wigan Council to install signage warning perpetrators of the consequences of committing environmental crime, Leigh Neighbours also invested in a variety of planters, a seated area, hanging baskets, plants and compost.

Long term residents Carol and Arthur Bate, together with their neighbours Mandy Mulcrowe and Jean Rigby, have battled for years to stay on top of the issues that made their back alley a 'no go' area. So they are absolutely thrilled with the results! "It was difficult to know where to start, given the scale of the problem. We felt totally overwhelmed at times," explains Carol. "But, now that the alleyway is cleared, the litter has been removed and the planters installed, it's going to be so much easier to stay on top of. The planters look great and come summer, when the flowers are in full bloom, the alleyway will be transformed. We can't thank Leigh Neighbours, Wigan Council and of course the wonderful students of the Prince's Trust Team Programme enough."

John Gredecki of Leigh Neighbours, adds: "This project goes to show how working in partnership can achieve great results, especially when a passion to make a difference is added to the mix.

"Leigh Neighbours brings people with 'know how' together, and invests in projects which make the area a more attractive place to live. I hope all the residents of Selwyn Street see the value of what's been achieved and pull together by showing respect for their neighbours and pride in their community. And of course we hope they enjoy it, too!"

Pictured: John Gredecki, Jean Rigby, and Carol and Arthur Bate.



It's time for our Spring hanging baskets workshops!

Our FREE hanging basket workshops are back. There's no need to book, just turn up. But don't forget to cut out your vouchers and bring them to claim your FREE plants and compost!

10am-12pm Saturday 12th May, next to the car park on Railway Rd opposite the college

10am-12pm Thursday 17th May, St John's Community Garden, Gordon Street

10am-12pm Friday 18th May, Sacred Heart Parish Centre, Walmesley Road

This voucher entitles you to claim

FREE

plants and compost at the
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Top: Craft enthusiast Ava Karreci (7) looks delighted with her handmade windcharm. She's pictured at our Spring crafts event with her nan, Jean Cull.

Middle: Children attending the Easter themed family craft workshop at Kinglseigh Methodist Community Centre were thrilled to show off their designs!

Bottom: Dave Graham of Wigan-based up-cyclers Gearing Up, is pictured fixing up a bike at our recent workshop held on the playground of Leigh Central/ Sacred Heart Primary Schools. We'll be holding more workshops offering cyclists the opportunity to get their bikes serviced free of charge over the summer. We'll post details on Facebook so keep your eye out!

Dates for the Diary

- Wednesday 6th June, 10am - 2pm
- Turnpike Gallery

Citizens Advice Wigan Borough is hosting a drop-in to raise awareness of their Domestic Abuse Prevention Project (DAPP). They're hoping to recruit new volunteers who can provide support to vulnerable people in the community struggling with issues relating to domestic abuse, substance abuse, dysfunctional relationships and troubled lifestyles. Join the team for coffee and cake, and claim your free entry into a prize drawer for a food hamper! For more information, call Joyce John, Domestic Abuse Engagement Project Officer on 0161 856 7179 or email dappvolunteers@cawb.org.uk

- Woman Zone
- Saturday 23rd June, 11am - 3pm
- Leigh Civic Square

Members of Leigh Soroptimists are hosting a free public event to showcase the wide variety of agencies and organisations in the community that offer support and services to women, girls and families. Come along and find out what's happening in Leigh, from learning to leisure. You can even get a free health check! For more information, email soropleigh@yahoo.co.uk

- Hand Crafted Mini-Market & Vintage Tea Party

- Saturday 30th June, 10.30am - 3.30pm
- Atherton Parish Church

A small group of community-spirited local mums established Hand Crafted Mini-Markets 3 years ago to raise funds for local good causes. The markets are usually accompanied by a vintage tea party with a selection of home baked treats. Their next event is in aid of Atherton Parish Church. For more information, email handcraftedminimarkets@googlemail.com or visit [Facebook/handcraftedminimarkets](https://www.facebook.com/handcraftedminimarkets)

Family Craft Workshop

10am - 12pm Saturday 5th May
Kingsleigh Methodist Community Centre

Learn how to create your own unique door name plaque... paper flowers... and stick raft!

All materials provided.
Free refreshments and entry into a prize drawer.
Children must be accompanied by an adult or guardian.



Stick Raft Building
STEM Project





Community Plan 2018 - 2021

Mapping the next phase - have your say!

It's five years since Leigh Neighbours community project was launched, and in that period we have been working hard to deliver on our original Community Plan. Drafted back in 2012/3, the plan documented all the issues that local residents told us were most important to them, issues such as anti-social behaviour and lack of leisure opportunities for young people.

In the Community Plan, we set out clear ways in which we would go about tackling these challenges. For instance, in delivering environmental improvements such as hanging basket workshops and investing in community resources.

Members of the Leigh Neighbours board now feel it's an appropriate time for us to revisit our Community Plan, to ensure that it continues to reflect local priorities and to provide a road map on our journey going forward.

In order to achieve this, we need your help. Over the next couple of months, we're going to be asking local residents, businesses, charities, community groups and agencies to tell us what they think.

- *What are the issues here in Leigh West?*
- *What priorities should Leigh Neighbours focus on over the next three years?*
- *What assets exist in our local community, and how can we ensure we can capitalise on these strengths?*
- *How do you think Leigh Neighbours should target its resources in tackling these challenges?*

There are a number of ways you can tell us what you think.

- We're planning to host some drop-in sessions at As in Eden on Walmesley Road where people can tell us their views over a cup of tea and a slice of cake. These drop-ins are scheduled to take place on:

Wednesday 9th May, 5pm – 8pm

Friday 11th May, 2pm – 5pm

- We'll be asking people who attend our regular events to complete a questionnaire.
- An online survey will be made available shortly, accessed via our social media and website.
- And we're going to hand deliver a questionnaire to every home, business and community group in our project area, to ensure that the next phase of the project meets your expectations and delivers on the priorities you set us. So, please look out for this landing on your doorstep in the next few weeks.

In the meantime, if you've got any feedback or questions for us, please email us at info@lnpb.org.uk

Competition Time!

Does this cheeky carrot look familiar?! This little chap has recently popped up somewhere in our project area. But do you know where he lives? If you do, tell us and we'll enter you into a prize drawer to win a voucher for £50 for Cineworld in Leigh! All you need to do is email us the name of the road he lives on, together with your name and address to info@lnpb.co.uk The winner will be notified by email or phone before Friday 18th May. Happy hunting and good luck!

