It is the 4th Standish Christmas Market on Saturday and we are sure our Market committee, the volunteers on the day and our partner organisations will again put on a festive event that the village can be proud of.

Over the four years that the Market has been running, it has firmly become part of Wigan’s calendar and is now the biggest annual event held in Standish.

Our committee has been hard at work arranging everything since February so we’d like to thank them for that and we’d also like to thank the Friends of Standish Library who arrange the activities there, including Santa’s Grotto.

We have had some tremendous sponsorship from local companies with our headline Gold sponsors this year being The Olive Garden, Breakey & Co and Joseph Holt & The Lychgate and this year is the first time all three Standish councillors have given Brighter Borough money towards the event.

If you would like to volunteer to help on the day it is not too late. All help will be appreciated. Please come to our Safety Meeting tomorrow (Monday) at 7.30pm in the room above The Globe pub to register.

The Market will as usual run from 11am to 8pm and features:

* 60 stalls, inside and out, on closed of streets around St Wilfrid’s Church and in three halls in the village, including a host of food and drink and gifts traders
* A drinks marquee with bars from The Albion (beers and ales), Touch Lucky Gin (gin, punch and cocktails) and Standish Voice (mulled wine and prosecco).
* An entertainment marquee with bands, school choirs, singers – opening as usual by Wigan Ukulele Band
* An Animal Farm creating a living nativity in Market Place
* A reindeer rodeo – think a bucking bronco crossed with Rudolph
* Santa in his grotto with children’s activities in Standish Library
* Christmas karaoke in The Unity Club from 2.30pm to 5.30pm
* Cross Street Arts holding an open day and unveiling their Market artwork Standish Voice has commissioned
* A community carol concert at St Wilfrid’s church at 3.30pm
* The switch-on of the lights on the living Christmas Tree at 4.30pm

Our printed Standish Christmas Market brochure will go out to Standish shops this week and be given out on the day, but you can take a look at the digital version here…

Don’t forget to pick up your tickets for our fantastic Christmas Raffle – which raises money for Standish Christmas Market.

The Market costs many thousands of pounds to stage so every little helps.

Tickets are £1 each or £5 per book and are on sale from Mrs Lyon’s Tea Room, The Changing Room Standish, Bumbles, Vincent & Co solicitors, The Lychgate and The Globe.

Prizes include:

* A 12-month membership for the new Standish leisure centre when it opens in January
* A meal for two with wine at Albert's Standish
* A Joseph Holt beer and spirit hamper
* A beauty voucher from Simply Beautiful, Standish
* An Uncle Joe’s Mint Balls sweet hamper
* An afternoon tea at Macdonald Kilhey Court
* A voucher for The Changing Room Standish
* A voucher for La Mama Bar and Restaurant
* A Time For Me Salon voucher
* Breakfast for four at The White Lion In Wrightington
* A bottle of spirits donated by The Globe
* A framed picture signed by Luminers
* Other smaller prizes

The draw will take place in Standish Library at 11am on Saturday, 7th December.

Good luck!

Standish Leisure Centre is due to open at the beginning of January.

Standish Voice has kept tabs on the development and is pleased that the trust operating it on behalf of the council, Inspiring Healthy Lifestyles, has said parents at St Wilfrid’s Academy will be able to park there to drop off and pick up their children.

There are 105 parking spaces so, hopefully, congestion around the school will be eased. A new path will be constructed early next year, a little later than the New Year opening of the leisure centre, so children do not have to walk on the road.

There is a special opening offer on now for people wanting to sign up to the centre and you can see a video of what the inside will look like here: https://bit.ly/2Oz0U5N

Wigan Council has undertaken land inspections on two redundant plots in Standish which could be turned into homes for older people for affordable rent.

Money has become available from the new build estates, which is given to the council to provide affordable homes, and the council has been investigating the ground conditions of two small sites - one on Almond Brook Road and one off Longridge Avenue.

Nearby residents were informed by letter about the investigations, one on the site of a former house near St Stephen's Road which could accommodate four flats and the other which could have 12 apartments.

Should the surveys identify that the ground conditions are unsuitable for development then no further progress will be made regarding the development proposals. Full planning applications will be submitted for the sites if they are taken forward.

Affordable homes for older people were identified in Standish Neighbourhood Plan as needed in the village, after the vast majority of new-build housing approved for the village was for families.

Standish Voice has commissioned an environmental study of various sites across the village to inform our decision-making on their future.

Standish Neighbourhood Plan was successful in declaring a number of green areas as Open Green Space and Green Corridors and the study – undertaken by an expert from the Lancashire Wildlife Trust – will identify what biodiversity exists and give suggestions on how the sites can be protected and enhanced. We shall publish the findings when we receive them.

Standish Voice now has more than 8,000 followers on our Facebook page.

Thanks to everyone who uses it for making the social media page such a respectful and kind space to air views and pass on information about Standish.

We have rules about how people behave on social media but we rarely have to enforce them. Only six people out of 8,100 have been banned from commentating on our posts due to flagrant infringement of the guidelines.

Standish Voice itself now has more than 1,200 members across the village. If you know of anyone who wants to join, please direct them to the sign-up page on our website - [www.standishvoice.co.uk](http://www.standishvoice.co.uk) - where you can also find our social media rules.

This year, Standish Voice has contributed to the cost of the installation and lighting of the Christmas Tree and the street lamp decorations.

Around half the cost of this paid for by the council with the rest coming from the village. We have joined our three councillors, Ray Whittingham, Adam Marsh and Debbie Parkinson in funding this.

Standish and Standish Voice are featured in the latest edition of Borough Life, the council’s information magazine. It features a profile of Standish and the work of our organisation. The magazine is delivered door-to-door but you can read it by clicking here: https://www.wigan.gov.uk/Docs/PDF/Council/Borough-Life/Borough-Life-Winter-2019.pdf

The proposed planning application for land at Robin Hill has been put on indefinite hold.

Developers announced plans for the 85 homes for green fields with access from Robin Hill Drive earlier this year and sought comments from nearby residents.

In May, Standish Voice met with the developers and their planning agent to tell them that the development did not comply with Standish Neighbourhood Plan for a number of reasons, including that the land was earmarked as a ‘green corridor’ in the plan. We told them any planning application would breach the Neighbourhood Plan and would be strenuously opposed.

The developers later told us that the submission date for the planning application had been put back until after the Neighbourhood Plan referendum. That referendum was passed with a 95% Yes vote.

After inquiries by Standish Voice, the planning agent has now told us that this development is on indefinite hold. We will monitor the situation.

Wigan Council's new campaign to foster pride in the many different 'townships' across the borough has created symbols of each community, which will be used by the council over the coming months.

This is Standish’s and you can read more about the campaign here: https://www.wigan.gov.uk/Council/The-Deal/Deal-Communities/Our-Town/Index.aspx

Standish Voice now has a Gambling Licence after successfully applying to Wigan Council. We will use it to hold activities to raise funds for the organisation.

Standish Voice asked McCarthy and Stone, the developers planning to turn the Chadwick’s site into older people’s accommodation, to open the car park to the public until work begins on the site.

The company said it was not able to allow this as it still did not own the land but when it did, work would start straight away on the development.

Standish Voice has formally thanked the Friends of Standish Library for bringing the community together to plant a border at the library to celebrate the 400th anniversary of the sailing of the Mayflower next year and the village’s links with military captain Myles Standish.

Standish Voice was one of around 40 local groups to plant flowers and a number of civic dignitaries also attended the successful event. Well done!

We are now working with other groups across the village to try to organise a series of initiatives to celebrate the Mayflower anniversary next year.