

## **Chairman's Report November 2018 ~ December 2019**

Firstly, please note; the dates above are to enable compatibility with reporting requirements of the Charity Commission.

Again, LCT have continued with the theme of protecting Littleborough's heritage and history by working with other groups/agencies in an attempt to conserve the village we currently have, in a state of equilibrium amenable to all concerned.

### **November 2018**

At the A.G.M. The following were duly elected into the following positions

- Chairman – Ian Jackson
- Secretary (incl. membership) – Michael Price
- Treasurer – John Kay
- Minute Secretary – Gillian Price

Concerns began to be raised following speculation that developers/land owners were exploring the possibility of building on greenbelt land around Littleborough.

It became apparent that it was likely that Littleborough Town Design Statement was being ignored as supplementary planning guidance.

LCT initially met with Homes England (HM Govt's Housing and Communities Agency) in May 2018 but they are still not engaging with LCT regarding the Akzo site despite being contacted on numerous occasions.

It was noted that in Rochdale Council's Draft Allocation Plan land off Durn St has been identified as suitable for the building of 53 houses. This land had previously been identified as a possible Marina.

LCT Flood Resilience Group were awarded a grant of £1500 by University of West England for use towards projects re flooding. Proposed workshops for the community of Littleborough in the new year. The group stated it will make visits to other flood groups in the area to gain information which could help Littleborough.

### **December 2018**

It was proposed that discussion should be held with various parties to explore the possibility of a memorial bench for the late Brian Holden; Founder member of Rochdale Canal Society.

It was noted that the Environment Agency had submitted a planning application to begin work on Phase 1 of a flood risk management scheme.

It was also noted that plans to place double yellow lines on Hollingworth Rd had been approved. This would alleviate traffic problems during busy periods at Hollingworth Lake.

## **January 2019**

Several planning applications were noted but nothing controversial/significant was identified.

The 'café boat' had been moved to an internal storage facility to allow refurbishment to progress.

LCT Flood Resilience Group were awarded further funding and a visit to the Environment Agency incident room was planned. Additionally, it was agreed by them that an agreement of mutual assistance would be offered to the other flood groups locally.

## **February 2019**

It was decided to introduce online banking for the LCT account; mainly due to monies being paid in by CUPPI funding (UWE) for flood resilience research.

LCT Flood Resilience Group visited the Environment Agency incident room as planned and it was found very beneficial for both parties.

## **March 2019**

At the Littleborough and Wardle Community Forum, the Chairman raised to local councillors, the inadequacy of the Greater Manchester Transport Strategy for 2020-2025 as no development in the Littleborough area was neither specified/planned.

Mr Robert Clegg was invited to speak at the meeting as one of the organisers of the Save Littleborough's Greenbelt Group.

This group was formed in response to the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework Strategy. Their aim is to make the public aware of what the strategy means for our area, assistance with completing the objection documents and investigation into brownfield sites which could be used instead of building on greenbelt land. They believe that the proposed developments are both irresponsible and immoral and to date have 1000 members who agree. There are planned events in response to the strategy.

LCT are in support of this group and it was agreed that representatives of this group should attend our meetings.

There were no other contentious planning applications raised.

## **April 2019**

It was reported, with regret and sadness, of the death of Iain Gerrard, a long standing and much appreciated member of Littleborough Civic Trust and other local groups.

LCT decided to pursue the possibility of a new/modern website as Iain was the only administrator of the one in use and no-one was able to gain access to administer it.

## **May 2019**

Donations were made in memory of both Iain Gerrard and John Street, another long standing (and founder) much appreciated member of Littleborough Civic Trust.

It was decided to oppose the proposed housing development at New St

A member of the Flood Resilience Group attended Olive Standing House along with the NFF representative and RBH to inform the residents as to what procedures are in place for them in the event of a flood affecting their premises.

It was noted that Hollingworth Lake is being drawn down for and repairs as required, following a survey in 2018.

Network rail were contacted as they had opened the new steps to Platform 2 without stone cladding them as agreed in their planning application in 2018. It was later confirmed that they would be dressed in stone cladding.

Homes England met with Rochdale Council regarding the Akzo site but as yet no decision has been made on the way forward. LCT are not in a position to comment on the agreed planning application unless an application for amendments is submitted for the site.

## **June 2019**

The meeting was reminded that all present should speak through the Chair and comments should be non-political.

There was concern raised regarding the utility boxes on the frontage of the houses on the new development at Wiggett Homes on Hare Hill Road. It was noted that these boxes may contravene the LTDS.

There was continued discussion around the LTDS suggesting that it might be out of date and would need revising. There may be a cost attached to this. In the first instance it was proposed that LCT contact Paul O'Hare at MMU who may be able to guide us as to the way forward with this item.

The café boat project had progressed with the boat now ready for painting.

LCT's new website became live this month.

IJ met with C&RT and Rochdale Council regarding the Brian Holden Memorial Bench. This will be sited on Canal Street in the vicinity of the Pennine in Bloom Gardens. A plaque inscription has been agreed by all parties to be set within the bench. An unveiling ceremony is planned for mid-July.

## **July 2019**

As above, the memorial bench was supplied (donated) and installed on 16<sup>th</sup> July in the agreed area with the final decision being that of Rochdale MBC.

Rochdale MBC inspected the steps at Littleborough Railway Station and decided that despite complaints from LCT and attempts by local councillors to highlight the fact that they were not in keeping with the area, the enforcement officer decided on 'no further action'.

Wiggett Homes were contacted regarding the installation of meter boxes on the frontage of the houses being constructed on Hare Hill Rd. Again, a fine example of the Town Design Statement being totally ignored by Rochdale's planning officers and ultimately, developers.

A successful 'table-top' exercise was held/hosted by the Flood Resilience Group sub-committee, with various public bodies participating.

Smithybridge and Littleborough Save our Greenbelt Group continue to sit at our committee meetings and work in collaboration with us.

### **August 2019**

Following an announcement that a new school had been approved for Littleborough it was proposed that an invitation be sent out to the CEO of the company/agent involved. The invitation was sent but to date no reply has been received.

IJ and BC met with a Hydrogeologist on behalf of Homes England, to review the documentation regarding mine workings on the Akzo site He will report back to the Board at Homes England and will contact LCT with the result of that meeting.

The Flood Resilience Group attended a field site where the Environment Agency and Rochdale MBC; assisted by Liverpool University have installed digital monitoring stations for water run-off from moorland at Blackstone Edge. Plans are for the group to eventually take over the monitoring and feed back into the Environment Agency.

### **September 2019**

The restoration of the Café Boat is coming along nicely and recent photographs will be uploaded to the website.

Thanks are due to Frank Carter for providing photographs of the recent dedication service of the bench in memoriam of Brian Holden. Any members who would like electronic copies of the photographs please contact the Trust secretary.

JK expressed ongoing concern regarding lack of parking facilities in Littleborough and will again contact local councillors.

LCT are involved in the planning of Remembrance Sunday.

The 50th Anniversary of LCT is 2021 and a request for ideas on how to mark it was tabled.

The Committee/Councillors discussed the various plans for development that are being submitted for Littleborough and the surrounding area. There are concerns that

plans are being submitted independently of the GMSF and that the area is going to be inundated with housing without any discussion regarding the infrastructure required to sustain the developments. Concern was raised that independently these developments could be passed without taking into account the bigger picture.

LCT felt that there should be more public awareness of the degree of planned development and a press release should be made of the totality of the developments in the pipeline.

There are major concerns that some of the developments have not been identified as flood risk areas and also previous mining areas. There would also be major traffic problem if plans were passed for the various potential development at Smithy Bridge Rd. and Hollingworth Rd.

These concerns would be raised by our Councillors at the Pennines Planning Committee.

The Flood Resilience Group took part in a research project being carried out to evaluate the CUPF funding program.

### **October 2019**

LCT was eventually contacted this month with a request from Homes England (Housing and Communities Agency) to meet for an update regarding the former AKZO site.

The hydrologist who attended a meeting with us in July had carried out further investigations and highlighted relevant issues to H.E.

The conclusion of this month's meeting was that all issues would be put to any prospective developer for them to investigate further; thus, it is quite unlikely that any renewed full planning application will take place until approximately early 2021.

A 'banner' was purchased to enable LCT to advertise its existence and encourage more membership. It will be affixed at several locations around the village.

All planning/housing development issues are being closely monitored.

### **November 2019**

A meeting has now taken place between LCT and Homes England the outcome of which is that Homes England have accepted the points raised and will now undertake new surveys of traffic, flood and coal mining risk before allowing any new developer to submit planning permission for the Akzo site.

Enquiries have been made about erecting flags in Littleborough Centre. This item is ongoing and members will be updated on a regular basis.

A current member of LCT has sent a booklet to the secretary that was printed to celebrate the 40th anniversary. This could be used and updated to celebrate the 50th Anniversary.

The AGM, Charity Commission, Financial Year dates. All the above occur on different dates in the year. It was proposed and passed that these events should all occur together therefore the AGM will now take place in January. The Chair will send the necessary paper work to the Charity Commission and the Treasurer will run the accounts from 1st Jan to 31st December each year

Unlike previous years, no adverse comments have appeared on social media regarding the Remembrance Day Service.

### **December 2019**

High Peak – weather data logging equipment is now installed and further training is to take place with members of the FRG and other interested parties in the New Year. This training will enable LFRG to upload data for use by professionals to follow water patterns etc in adverse weather conditions.

**Ian Jackson**  
**Chairman**