

# Step into Spring

with



# Link Line



*Happy  
Easter*



# What's on

## Museum of Wigan Life

Museum of Wigan Life always has a range of free exhibitions and activities. Currently, they have a fantastic Egyptian exhibition on display (I visited on the opening day!). They have some great artifacts on show and information about the Egyptian's daily lives and beliefs. And I heard, due to its success, that it'll be expanding soon.



As well as the Egyptian display, there's a permanent exhibition about Wigan and its rich history – with some items dating back to the Roman era. And then there are tons of information upstairs if you want to read in detail about the local area's history or find out about your family tree.

[Museum of Wigan Life, Library Street, Wigan, WN1 1NU, website: www.wigan.gov.uk](http://www.wigan.gov.uk)

Museum of Wigan Life have been consistently putting on great exhibitions for years. They have a permanent display on everything from sport and world war to music and festivals in Wigan, Leigh and across the borough. The Ancient Egypt exhibition is also permanent display. Get up close and personal with ancient coffins, grave goods, and a spectacular gold mask. Their special exhibitions explore aspects of local history from Northern Soul to the mysterious sport of clog fighting.

## Haigh Hall & Country Park

Haigh Hall Country Park will always be in the top list of things to do in Wigan. With extensive land and woods surrounding, as well as the Georgian stately home itself – you can spend a full day there wandering around this 200-acre park. There's a number of woodland and historical walks you can take.



While they are upgrading the amenities – to preserve the house and keep it from becoming too damaged, it will be still open to the public and always free to visit.

There's a great park area for kids, as well as a cafeteria, crazy golf, multiple gardens, and the miniature railway. There's also a great view of Wigan from the hall itself – see if you can spot your house!

[Haigh Hall and Country Park, School Lane, Haigh, Wigan, WN2 1PE](http://www.haighwoodlandpark.co.uk)  
visit: [www.haighwoodlandpark.co.uk](http://www.haighwoodlandpark.co.uk)

# Ideas for rejuvenation after the winter.

## Set you up for better weather



### Welcome to a National Treasure

Pennington Flash Nature Reserve is one of the jewels in the crown of Wigan Borough and one of eight local sites comprising The Flashes of Wigan and Leigh: the only National Nature Reserve (NNR) in the whole of Greater Manchester. Officially designated an NNR by Natural England in October 2022 in recognition of their remarkable natural beauty and immense ecological importance, these precious wetland habitats were originally and uniquely formed by the 'flash' flooding of former coal mining sites. Collectively they are now home to nationally significant wildlife populations including UK's most endangered small bird, the willow tit. A legacy of Wigan Borough's proud industrial heritage, the Flashes are now rightly recognised as a national treasure and are a stunning example of nature in recovery.

### Connecting people with nature

Connecting with nature brings huge benefits for our physical and mental wellbeing, which is why we're passionate about providing more opportunities for people to get closer to nature and to explore the beauty of their surroundings.

Pennington Flash's tranquil waters and surrounding marshland boast a diverse group of mammals, birds and insects, including no fewer than five RSPB red-listed birds as well as the water vole. More than 230 bird species have been recorded on site, including the black-faced bunting, nightingale, cattle egret, whiskered tern and Leach's petrel.  
What you'll find at the Flash

Wigan Council is investing £2.7m into improving the experience of visitors to Pennington Flash with a new visitor information point and café, new accessible toilet facilities, improved parking, and a new adventure play area all designed to help you enjoy the perfect day out.  
Visitor Information Point

For general information, car parking and golf admission/ enquiries please visit our Visitor Information Point located within The Hide Coffee House.



# Time the garden had a spruce-up.

Make your garden marvellous on a budget!

You will be amazed at how quick (and cheaply) you can transform your outdoor space by following some simple suggestions.

Flowers are a good, cheap way to improve your garden. Taking time to plant seeds, bulbs or ready-bought bedding plants into pots or flower beds, will certainly pay off. You can pick up Pansies, Violas, and Chrysanthemums for as little as a pound. They have the potential to flower again the following year too so keep them away from frost. Seeds and bulbs will require a little bit more patience and forward-planning. Petunias, Nigellas and Sunflowers can bloom in about 60 days. Daffodils and Tulips bloom in early spring and should be planted in Autumn. It's highly recommended you follow instructions on each plant label or seed packet, with each flower needing a different type of care.



Plant some produce; fruit, vegetables, and herbs are three other (tasty) things you can grow in your garden. Many edible plants are happy in old pots. Tomatoes, herbs, salad leaves, even courgettes and squash will thrive during the summer in large pots filled with compost given they don't dry out. Perfect for a balcony or a place without much planting space. This method is highly cost effective.

Perk it up with pots. Attention should be given to what you plant your flowers and veg in. An easy way to change the overall style of your garden is outdoor pots. These can often be an afterthought to the plants and flowers that will live inside them but can make a huge difference to lift a space very quickly. Plant pots are relatively cheap investments and is another way you can introduce colour.



Look after your lawn. A little extra attention and TLC can really make the grass in your garden sing. A lush green lawn is often the result of regular mowing, watering, and specially scattered seeds. Mow and water the lawn frequently, and frequently weed the garden.

Here are some recommended remedies for weed killing:

**Vinegar** - Banish weeds and dandelions by pouring pure white or apple cider vinegar on them. Perfect for getting rid of weeds sprouting in awkward crevices.

**Vodka** - mix 30ml of vodka with 2 drops of washing up liquid or hand soap. Add water. Mix together and spray on stubborn weeds in direct sunlight. The alcohol in this mix will break down the weed's waxy cuticles causing them to dehydrate and die.

**Mulch** - organic-made mulch from things like grass or bark clippings, leaves or straw can be generously applied on top of weeds. They stop the weed's source of sunlight preventing them from sprouting.

**ROUNDUP NL Weed Control** - This tried and tested weedkiller is natural and Glyphosate-Free, with visible results in three hours.

Light up your garden after dark with one of our bright, budget garden lights.

Candles, lanterns, fairy lights and solar-powered lamps can be cheaply found online.

# Add sparkle to your garden



Light up your garden after dark with quality garden lights, from solar-powered lamps, candles, lanterns, and fairy lights. Check out for cheap deals online.

Ornaments - Garden ornaments are another way to add definition. The classic garden gnome is a fun and popular choice.

Garden furniture can even be erected from pallets, with many tutorials on YouTube showing you how to make a pallet sofa structure. Just add cushions and covers for comfort.

**Top suggestion:** Build a *bug hotel* from a small wooden box open at one side.

Kids will love getting their hands dirty and seeing their work pay off when the habitat is buzzing with wildlife. Most bugs prefer a dry home so locate it somewhere sheltered, or you could create a 'living roof' by digging up a patch of turf and laying it on top of the hotel.

Hanging baskets - these are a great way to add flowers if you're short on space. They're incredibly budget-friendly with the basket, liner and wall bracket costing about £10 in total. Balance your basket, add your liner, fill with soil. Decoratively arrange your flowers in the baskets, equally distribute around the whole basket. Prepare baskets around mid-spring so bedding plants bloom nicely in summer. Be sure to water regularly and place in a sunny spot.

Consider climbing plants. Reach new heights in your garden renovation with climbing plants, one of our favourite budget garden ideas. They'll add some lovely foliage to your outdoor space and will helpfully hide any tired-looking fences.

Attach a few runs of galvanised wire horizontally along the boundary you want to add height to. Plant a Jasmine to create a green screen all year round or for a quick fix sow runner or French beans.

Beans will climb the wires within weeks during the summer, before producing a massive bloom of beautiful flowers followed by a tasty crop.

Sweet peas and Clematis are two other budget friendly blooms that will smell great and climb well.



# Groups and activities At Pensioners Link, Leigh

**I/T Drop-in Group**  
10:00—12:00



**Coffee Club**



10:00—12:00

**Art and Crafts**



**Exercise Class**

11:00—12:00  
1:00—2:00pm



Monday

**Poetry Group**

*Poetry*

1:00—3:00



Tuesday

**Knit and  
crochet**



1:30— 3:30

**Coffee Mornings**  
at Elmridge Court,  
Lowton  
meet fortnightly.  
Ring 01942  
261753 for details

Wednesday

**Art Gang**



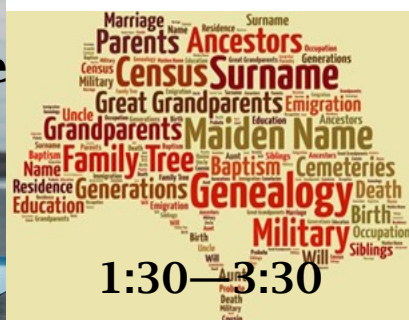
10:00 to 12:00

**Movement & Balance**



1:00— 1:45

**Genealogy**



1:30—3:30

Thursday

**Coffee morning here — Fridays 10:00—12:00.**

Dates arranged monthly for our  
Walk and Talk Group.

For further details, contact  
Pensioners Link on 01942 261753

[www.pensionerslink.org.uk](http://www.pensionerslink.org.uk)



Friday

# The Volunteers' belated Christmas Meal at the Bowling Green

The opportunity for volunteers to come together and rejoice at a meal subsidised by Pensioner Link in recognition of all their hard work and dedication to their cause over the year.



There was an excellent turn out and a good opportunity to meet and befriend other volunteers, learn facts about Pensioners Link and to inspire the prospect of joining our team of volunteers.

This opportunity is plentiful. Everyone is welcome, and we would be delighted to have you on board.

Please see back page for details.



# Friends of Pensioners Link

Become a friend of Pensioners Link with a chance to win our monthly prize draw.

£1.00 per week

£4.00 per month

£45.00 per year



There's much to be gained!

The prize draw is held at the end of each month. The winners will be notified by letter and also displayed in our centre.

**CALL 01942 261753**





Shop roast lamb at Tesco. [www.tesco.com/roastlamb](http://www.tesco.com/roastlamb)

**Ingredients** 2kg/4lb 8oz leg of lamb, bone in. 8 garlic cloves, thickly sliced.  
2 rosemary sprigs, leaves picked. 1 lemon, zest only. 2 tbsp olive oil.  
1 onion, cut into wedges. 350ml/12fl oz Madeira. 40g/1½oz unsalted butter.  
2 tsp cornflour. Sea salt and freshly ground black pepper.

Note: Green highlight indicates key ingredients. Black ingredients are optional.

Method: Preheat the oven to 200C/180C Fan/Gas 6.

Make deep incisions all over the lamb and stuff the garlic slices and half of the rosemary leaves into the incisions. Rub the lemon zest and olive oil all over the surface of the lamb. Season with salt and pepper.

Put the onion wedges into a roasting tin, sit the lamb on top and roast for 1 hour. Pour 200ml/7fl oz of the Madeira and 300ml/½ pint water into the tin and return to the oven for 30 minutes.

Remove from the oven, transfer the lamb to a warmed serving dish, cover with kitchen foil and leave to rest for at least 30 minutes.

Tip the contents of the roasting tin into a saucepan, together with the remaining rosemary, Madeira and another 300ml/½ pint water. Bring to the boil, then reduce the heat and simmer for 10 minutes until slightly reduced. Strain everything through a sieve into a jug, pressing through as much liquid as possible.

Melt the butter in a frying pan over a low heat. Stir in the cornflour until you have a smooth paste and cook, stirring all the time, for a minute. Slowly whisk in the strained liquid, a little at a time, until smooth. Simmer for 10 minutes over a low heat, stirring frequently, until thickened. Add any juices that have come out of the lamb while resting and stir well. Carve the lamb and serve with the gravy.

Method and ingredients taken from the BBC Good Food Guide

# Walk and Chat



**Monthly walks  
with  
Pensioners Link  
Contact us  
direct for our  
next date  
01942 261753**

Meet at  
Pensioners Link, 27 Charles Street,  
Leigh, WN7 1DB.  
Booking not required

**Followed by a brew and biscuits  
at Pensioners Link**

Come along and join our  
monthly Walk-and-Chat.

Reap its benefits.

Explore the outdoors and  
observe nature.

Meet and befriend new  
people. Health and fitness  
boost.

Walks start at 11am, con-  
tact us to find out the next  
walking date.

We fully appreciate the hard work of our knitting group member, Lin, on her Easter projects to raise money for Pensioners Link. Here are her wonderful work-pieces to be sold to people who wish to make a donation to Pensioners Link



# BOOKS & MORE VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!



Giving a small amount of your time can make  
a BIG difference

## Can you spare just 1 hour?

- ✓ Want to meet new people
- ✓ Have recently retired and now's the time to try something different?
- ✓ Are looking to gain experience of working with Older People within a Health and Social Care setting for a new career, or qualification
- ✓ Looking for something to do to pass a few hours a week and make a difference in your local community?
- ✓ Want to feel included in your community yourself

PLEASE GET IN TOUCH FOR MORE  
INFORMATION

## WIGAN & LEIGH

## PENSIONERS LINK

# 01942 261753

[www.pensionerslink.org.uk](http://www.pensionerslink.org.uk)





## Volunteers Needed!

As a Pensioners Link volunteer, you can help support a very wide range of roles and services.



**Books & More:** this service can be a vital lifeline for lonely and isolated people. Our volunteers collect library books, deliver them to their reader in their home and provide company and chat for up to one hour.

**Time Limited Contact (TLC) scheme:** this is our home shopping service. Volunteers assist people who are experiencing a time of change in their lives by doing their shopping for up to six visits. This can help them get back on their feet following a hospital stay, a bereavement or a difficult period of time.

**Telephone Contact:** we offer this contact service to help reduce loneliness and isolation. Our volunteers call our clients on an agreed basis for a friendly chat or to help them connect with services and activities that may be of interest.

If any of these volunteer roles are of interest, please email or call us on:

[contact@pensionerslink.org.uk](mailto:contact@pensionerslink.org.uk)

01942 261 753



Inclusion of information and views in this publication does not necessarily indicate endorsement by Pensioners Link.

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