

# Altrincham & Bowdon Community Voice Magazine



In this issue:

Planning Update

Town Centre Report

News from:

Timperley

Broadheath

Oldfield Brow

Transport Update

Protecting Our Green Spaces

Neighbourhood Planning & design

Interesting news and stories about your Community

Join us and share your views

Website: [altrinchamandbowdoncs.com](http://altrinchamandbowdoncs.com)

Email: [altrinchamandbowdoncs@gmail.com](mailto:altrinchamandbowdoncs@gmail.com)

 @aandbcs @altyheritage

 @altrinchamandbowdoncs

 @altandbowdoncommunityvoice



## A Message from our President Patricia Kovach

Last year I was honoured and proud to accept the position of President of the Society.

I would like to thank the committee for their continual hard work during a difficult 2021 and send to them my very best wishes for continued success in 2022.

The committee's ability to establish good working relationships with the Council, Councillors, Businesses and other community groups is to be admired, as this is reason for their success in so many areas.

An early success this year was establishing Altrincham Town Hall as an Asset of Community Value (ACV). Their work will now continue to assist in establishing a plan for its community use moving forward.

Please support the Society by becoming a member, as this will ensure they continue to make Altrincham, Bowdon and Broadheath great places for living and recreation.

Finally, on behalf of the Society, I would like to pay tribute to all the public service workers, Doctors, Nurses, Supermarket & Public Transport employees who have kept us safe, healthy, mobile and fed. Many of these have received public honours and rightly so.

With best wishes,

Patricia Kovach

## Love where you live!

Altrincham and Bowdon Civic Society was founded more than 50 years ago and works across Altrincham, Bowdon and Broadheath.

We help residents with planning, greenspace and if we can't help, we can find someone who can. We also work with Altrincham Town Centre Partnership to help businesses in Altrincham town centre and Friends of Altrincham Interchange with transport issues. We have good working relationships with the council, developers and other community groups. Our parent body 'Civic Voice' supports us on government issues. The society is very involved in protecting heritage and currently working with Salford University on compiling a local list of interesting buildings.



We aim to work with developers 'pre planning' to make a difference and at the moment we are working with CAMRA to keep local pubs open. During lockdown we have met on Zoom with a speaker at each meeting and our next AGM will feature Sir Graham Brady! We are now back to face to face meetings at Altrincham Town Hall. We always welcome new members. For more information, visit our website: [www.altrinchamandbowdoncs.com](http://www.altrinchamandbowdoncs.com)

If you require help or are interested in becoming a member, please contact Judie on 0161 962 7108

5



The Civic Society recently featured in the Home Instead 'Live well Your Way' Magazine

### About Home Instead:

Alan Savage & Lucy Gill who live locally, started Home Instead in 2010. The business has grown steadily over the years to provide flexible, personalised home care. Clients get to stay in their own home, live by their own rules and surrounded by their own things. Home Instead services span home help, companionship, personal care and dementia care. Contact Home Instead for a copy of their

excellent magazine which contains useful contact listings for local services and organisations. Home Instead can be contacted on 0161 870 1136 Email: [info@hiscaltrincham.co.uk](mailto:info@hiscaltrincham.co.uk)



## *A message from our Chair Judie Collins*

Altrincham and Bowdon Civic Society are pleased to publish their Spring 2022 Newsletter.

Sometimes we campaign for improvements to the town and it takes a long time for anything to happen. We've just been notified that the Dunham bus will return to its original route after many months of diversion.

We continue to press for Altrincham Hospital Minor Injuries to re-open and for there to be better connection between the hospital and the Health and Wellbeing centre. Replacement of the dead hedge at the Centre is high on our agenda.

Trafford is part of a Greater Manchester initiative for the Local Listing of buildings not on the National Heritage List for England. We sit on the validation panel and are also part of the Neighbourhood Plan design Group which looks at new planning applications.

Something very much in our thoughts at the moment is the decision of Trafford Borough Council to dispose of Altrincham Town Hall. We have registered the building as an asset of community value (ACV) as the building is much used by community and businesses and would welcome any thoughts on a viable business plan. Altrincham is very short of places for the community to meet. We are also working with Camra (Campaign For Real Ale) to protect our heritage pubs. A welcome development is Trafford Borough Council bringing asset management back in house and we have met with the new lead officer.

Major re-developments in the town centre which are high on our agenda include the Stamford Quarter (a joint venture between Trafford Borough Council and Bruntwood), Altair (a joint venture between Nikal and McGoff Construction) and the future of The Graftons. The latest stage of the public realm redesign in Altrincham is imminent. Trafford Housing Trust's major re-set of their estate management is also a concern.

We have been very busy in Broadheath with major traffic problems around the retail park, and a planning inquiry concerning retailer Lidl where we are representing residents. We also sit on the Broadheath Partnership Group.

We welcome partnership working and would like to thank Trafford Council Officers and all our local MP's for their willingness to work with us. When approached by residents with a problem, we always ask "have you spoken to your ward councillor?"

I would like to thank our very hard working committee who would gladly welcome newcomers. We find what works well is for someone to concentrate on a particular issue like planning or greenspace or a specific area like Bowdon or Broadheath. Please consider joining the society, our excellent website is full of information:

[altrinchamandbowdoncs.com](http://altrinchamandbowdoncs.com)

Best wishes,

*Judie*



## A Report on Planning & Development from Paulina Lewis

Throughout 2021 planning applications have been submitted for a variety of sites in and around Altrincham town centre. Foremost is the conversion of upper storeys above shops to residential use. The main difficulty in some cases is the attempt by Developers to squeeze too many units into a building resulting in the minimum size allowed being approved. The need for maximum profit to be derived from a development results in applications to add not just one but up to three extra storeys. An example of this is the former Rackhams Building on which work has just started. In the past several new buildings have exceeded their permitted height. Unfortunately, no penalties have been issued.



At the lower end of New Street, work progresses slowly on the development of apartments called 'The Address' (pictured left) and the multistorey Car Park behind. The completion date is as yet unknown.

However, Allingham Place, the Gecko town houses on the opposite corner, are nearing completion and are now being offered for sale. (pictured right)



Trafford Housing Trust is due to apply for Planning Permission to demolish 'Lloyds Court', the six blocks of maisonettes on New Street adjacent to 'The Address' site. Redevelopment proposals include a multi-storey building of residential 1 & 2 bedroom apartments. Beyond that, it is suggested that a double row of individual houses with drives, one row facing New Street and the other row facing the development behind the buildings on The Downs be built. As a result the terrace of houses on New Street would no longer be able to park on the road. When the plans are published it is vital that anyone with concerns should submit comments to Trafford Council or contact Altrincham & Bowdon Civic Society who will comment.



In contrast to this is the Altair site (pictured left) where there has been no progress. Attempts have been made to meet and discuss with the latest part-owner to gain information about their intentions. However, on 18<sup>th</sup> February 2022 a list was issued of several sites which Trafford Council are seeking to either dispose of or lease, among these is Altair in Altrincham! Another recent announcement by the Council's Housing & Regeneration Committee state that they are 'considering the way forward' for the Grafton Centre in Altrincham. While a number of retail shops have closed, other businesses, including cafes, clothes shops, Solicitors etc have opened.

Altrincham continues to attract out-of-town visitors and businesses have worked very hard to support the town.

Altrincham & Bowdon Civic Society continually monitor the weekly Planning Application list issued by Trafford Council. Where appropriate, comments and/or objections are lodged. A number of private individuals have contacted the Society for help when they have concerns about a planning application. The Society is happy to assist in these situations.

Best wishes, *Paulina*



## *BUSINESS NEWS IN ALTRINCHAM*

*from Angela Stone*

The winter of 2021 saw a return to something like normal for Altrincham businesses.

Hospitality was still subject to some regulations including the Covid Pass scheme for venues open after 1am. We were grateful for support from Greater Manchester Police on New Year's Eve.

Sharps bedrooms, Jaipur Palace, Ladbrokes, Daniel Christian Menswear, So Marrakech and the Orange Tree have closed in recent months.

Late 2021 we saw new openings Jardim Rodizio, The Edit (ladies clothes) and Muse jewellery. More recent openings include Asgard Groceries on Stamford New Road and Homefair Blinds on George Street.

We have new openings to look forward to in 2022. Kokoa, the eco beauty shop who had the Stamford Quarter pop up recently are opening a permanent unit in the Stamford Quarter. Just Plonk are opening an off licence in the former Helgason's Chemist Shop on Ashley Road and the old Sardus unit has a premises licence for a company called Glass Spider. The company behind One Central and The Conservative Club are taking the unit next to The Bricklayers Arms pub to turn it into a food venue, 'George St Kitchen'.

Street poppies were a huge success last year, sponsored by local businesses and residents we were able, with additional funding from McHale Solicitors, to donate £1000 to the Royal British Legion.

Manchester Marathon 2021 took place in October last year but has returned to its normal week for 2022 and will take place on Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> April.

We have our usual mix of entertainers, characters and children organised for the day. First runners will arrive in Altrincham about 10am and continue until about 1pm. This year the event is also a qualifying event for the Commonwealth Games so we should see more runners early on.

Best Bar None started up again in 2021 with a refreshed scheme. At the time of writing we have 13 accredited venues with more to follow, we hope. Accreditation means that a venue complies with Trafford Model Licensing Conditions. We have an awards ceremony planned with Mayor Cllr Laurence Walsh.

In addition to working on template policies for venues the Best Bar None Committee are also working on template training plans for venues to support them with staff training.

With support from Greater Manchester Police we re-launched "Ask for Angela" before Christmas. This is a national scheme which means anyone feeling threatened or vulnerable can "Ask for Angela" and staff are trained to respond with appropriate help.

Paint Altrincham Blue took place in November. This is organised by Tony Collier a committed community volunteer who has raised a huge amount for Prostate Cancer with his charity work.

Paint Altrincham Pink returns this year from 21<sup>st</sup> March to 3<sup>rd</sup> April. This raises awareness and money for Prevent Breast Cancer at the Nightingale Centre at Wythenshawe Hospital. For both events businesses are encouraged to come up with ideas to raise money, everything from donations from sales to coffee mornings and, hopefully a return to the successful pub evening with one of our sports teams.

We have been able to list Altrincham Town Hall as an Asset of Community Value. We are currently working on ideas to keep the town hall as a community asset, talking to local businesses and other successful community run venues such as Stretford Public Hall and the George H Carnall Leisure Centre in Urmston.

Plans to improve the public realm in Altrincham will start later this year and Trafford Council are looking to appoint an Asset Manager for The Grafton's to improve that area of the town centre.

Plans for the old Rackham's Store building area of the Stamford Quarter have been approved and preliminary work seems to be getting underway.

Best wishes, *Angela*

---



### *We Need Our Town Centre So Support It* *By Leslie Cupitt*

Our town centre has had a tough few years. In 2008 we had the unenviable distinction of having the highest rate of empty shops in the country. Working together we have turned it around. But the pressures are still there.

Altrincham is fortunate in having a Business Neighbourhood Plan (ANBP). The Plan was approved in 2017 and sets out how land within a tightly defined area of Altrincham town centre can be used. It sets land use policy. The Civic Society works closely with the ANBP to get the best for our town centre. We have a great town centre with excellent public transport covering buses, the Metrolink and heavy rail.

The Covid pandemic has turned retail shopping on its head. Major city centres like London's Oxford Street have been decimated. Manchester city centre is down by about one fifth. Smaller town centres have fared badly. Retail Parks are very much a mixed bag, with some doing better and some slowly being changed into warehouses for home delivery operations. Lurking in the background is on-line shopping which could divert up to 40% of shopping away from retail stores.

Town centre planning across England is regulated by the National Planning Policy Framework, or NPPF for short. A highlight of the NPPF says that if new retail outlets are to be built they should be in our town centres. It is up to all of us to ensure this happens by supporting all our town centre retailers as much as possible.

*Editors Note: Find out what happened when the above subject became a planning issue, by reading the article by Leslie on Broadheath.*



*Damian Utton (left) and Graham Fawcett (right) report on activities of the Design Panel and the Altrincham Neighbourhood Business Plan (ANBP)*



**On behalf of the Design Group Damian writes:**

With restrictions from the pandemic easing there has been an increase in new developments and planning applications coming forward for Altrincham Town Centre during the past few months.

The Design Panel has been encouraged by developers coming forward for consultation on significant design proposals prior to the submission of formal planning applications. These include the vision for the Stamford Quarter, further improvements to the town centre public realm, redevelopment of the Rackhams building, redevelopment of the New Street housing and the remodelling of Clarendon House and Grafton Mall; not all of these are without controversy!

On a smaller scale there have been further planning applications submitted for creating apartments above shops and conversion of retail units to restaurants. Town centre living and night-time economy reflect the changing nature of town centres across the UK.

The quarterly meeting between the Design Panel and Trafford Planners has been put on hold for the time being as Trafford Council have all been working from home until recently. Hopefully these will restart again before too long.

**Graham, Chair of the Neighbourhood Planning Working Group writes:**

During 2021, owing to the ongoing pandemic, the Altrincham Neighbourhood Plan working group only met in person once. However, via other electronic means the group tried to progress or challenge a number of topics of interest that we felt relevant to the ANBP, and therefore the Working Group. I will highlight three broad areas:-

1. At the start of 2021, following a period of frustration with the results of some planning proposals (specifically the continued massing of new buildings in Altrincham Town Centre), serious consideration was given to establishing a local Town Council for Altrincham - with the intention of assuming greater local responsibility and control of the Town Centre on behalf of the Altrincham Community. Following meetings with Jackie Weaver (Cheshire Association of Local Councils), Andrew Western (Trafford Council Leader) and other Town Councils (e.g. Wilmslow), it was decided that currently we did not have the resources to embark on what would be a significant undertaking. However, a better understanding of how such a future move might be achieved was gained, and it continues to be a live topic, dependent on finding a dedicated team of people to help drive this initiative forward.
2. During 2021 ANBP formally opposed the planning application Lidl had made for a new store on the Broadheath Retail Park as we felt that consideration of a town centre site had not been given due or proper deliberation, as required by law. Ultimately, our role in legal opposition to the Lidl application did not lead to a successful outcome, but it is hoped that the willingness of community representatives to actively challenge decisions the community feel to be counter to their interests, may help lead to greater sensitivity to community needs in the future.
3. The ANBP working party continued to lobby the council on a number of issues through 2021, for example the lack of Town Centre public toilets, the changing priorities for the next phase of the Altrincham Public Realm, the pedestrianisation of Barrington Road, and of course the lack of progress with the Altair development.



## *A report on Bus and Rail Transport by Ian Stuart*

Public transport took a big hit during the pandemic with passenger numbers at one point falling by well over 50%. Recovery was hesitant with casual travellers being more willing to return than commuters who fell into two categories – those attending school/college and those getting to/from work, both of whom at one stage were being encouraged to ‘work from home’. With the reduction of numbers, together with available staff being curtailed, services were cut so it was a bit of a downward spiral. Thankfully, by the time you read this, all these challenges will just about be behind us with a return to normality and a full timetable running on the Mid-Cheshire Line restored by May, the regular timetable adjustment month.

I say a ‘full timetable’ but it is still significantly less than we and Mid Cheshire Rail Users Association (MCRUA) would like to see; the latter is at the forefront of the campaign for the frequency of services to be increased from hourly to half-hourly (weekdays) and two-hourly to hourly on Sundays. This increased frequency was part of the awarding of the franchise to Northern more than five years ago but Network Rail are repeatedly frustrating plans by putting forward difficulties and being slow to resolve them. The campaign will persevere whatever the obstacles as passenger volumes more than justify it in normal times.

The challenges facing Metrolink were not dissimilar to those encountered by trains and buses and frequency was reduced accordingly. Regular users of the Metrolink services are accustomed to the opening up of platform 2 for Bury services (until 8pm) but, as was the case when I highlighted it two years ago, the absence of a full range of facilities there (we do now have litter ‘bins’ at the south end of platform 2) continues to cause frustration to many, not least ourselves, and it is raised at every opportunity. The unavailability of either an ATM or a scanner on the platform is likely, we feel, to result in some people risking ticketless travel or those with a pass not scanning in. The bigger the organisation the slower it can so often be to implement basic needs.

I’m glad to be able to report that not only are the lifts on Platform 1 and 4 operating with a good degree of reliability but finally the problems with the lift on Platform 2/3 have been resolved and it is running reliably.

### **Altrincham Interchange**

For the last eight years Friends of Altrincham Interchange have been campaigning for the necessary work to be carried out on the old waiting room on Platform 4, so that it can again provide the facility to passengers that they so rightly deserve. Northern Rail accepted the justification for the facility and allocated £10,000 from their Community Infrastructure Fund to cover the development. The token sheltered space currently on the platform is sufficient for 2/3 people which can be one family with children and no more. TfGM, who are responsible for the rooms, decided in their ‘wisdom’ to set aside their primary duty to provide a service of an acceptable standard to the travelling public and seek an application that would bring in a token amount of money by way of rent if it were leased out for commercial use. We put in our bid which was supported by the local Community Rail Partnership who agreed to put up a realistic financial package in support of this use. TfGM discounted this and decided to allow a local community group to take the lease which would provide token if any consideration to the needs of the passengers on the line. Nine months later little if anything has moved forward on the project (certainly nothing on the ground) emphasising just how slowly such organisations do actually move. At the time of writing word has come through that the staff facility on Platform 4 may be given up and, with internal adjustments, made into a public waiting room (complete with passenger toilet!). Maybe our quest has not been in vain.

As was the case when I last wrote, I've saved the best news till last: The Group has, for many years, focussed its attention on campaigning with the Service Providers for improvements in their services. Going back eighteen months we 'recruited' some new members to our group one of whom is keen on The Interchange being able to hold its head up amongst all the stations in Cheshire with regards to being visually appealing, i.e. she's a horticultural enthusiast. We now have not just the one, well tended planter in memory of Martyn Hett, but also several others on Platform 4 to add colour and brighten the platform aspect. After a visit, by invitation, to Heaton Chapel, we have now established a Platform Library in our miniscule waiting area (since having the room for which we had hopes is now a forlorn aspiration) and invite passengers to donate and borrow books. The bookcase also provides a more organised space on which to display booklets and other material for passengers.

Another popular innovation is the 'Interchange Poetry Board' – we are lucky enough to have been able to enlist an accomplished local poet who writes about Hare and Rabbit who together have adventures whilst on their travels to various corners of the Mid-Cheshire Line. We hope that these writings will keep coming to entertain many a passenger and bring a smile to their face as they read on whilst waiting for their train.

We have further plans for 2022, the realisation of which I hope to be telling you in twelve months' time.



The platform 4 Poetry Board - early February

Friends of Altrincham Interchange will continue to work to achieve their objectives and can now be easily contacted via our Facebook page - @foaigroup – all comments will be taken on board.

Best wishes, *Ian Stuart* – *Chairman: Friends of Altrincham Interchange*



*Michael Armstrong – A Tribute*

Michael talked about himself in our newsletter shortly before leaving for Exmoor to be closer to his family.

His death in his sleep was totally unexpected as he was already starting to mentor young people into work, had applied to be a parish councillor and was refurbishing the roof of his house.

I suppose Michael was a man of many talents. In Trafford he helped set up the Health and Social Care Collective and was an avid attendee at Health and Social care meetings. He tried unsuccessfully to interest the Clinical Commission Group in successful community projects like art sessions for patients with depression and local churches using health professionals to do health checks.

He worked with the Intergen charity to mentor primary school children who were struggling with literacy and he took great interest in his Malawi friends establishing themselves in the UK. He was a governor at a local Acute Trust until he was ousted for supporting other governors and patients.

He was a great supporter of Civic Voice our parent body driving all over the country to events and he was very important to our committee as a continually dissenting voice.

He will be sadly missed.



## *We all need Friends – From Leslie Cupitt our Green Spaces Lead*

Friends make everything look and feel better. We have lots of areas around Altrincham, Broadheath, Bowdon and Timperley which are in need to have some TLC. There are odd pieces of ground everywhere which are looking neglected and unloved.

This is where a 'Friends' group can make a real difference. What is a 'Friends' group? Well it can almost be anything you want it to be, but in essence it is just a group of people wanting to make something better. It does not need to be a very large group, but it is the commitment to improvement which matters.

Most common around our area are the Friends of our various Parks and Green Spaces. They tend to be people who live or work around a park or green space. Some have been established for many decades, and some are relatively new.

How do you go about creating a friends group? The most important aspect is to get a large enough group of people together initially to get the idea off the ground. It needs enough people so the pressures of home/work life do not drain the numbers and stop action being taken. There is no right number. Commitment is far more important to head count. A group of just three committed individuals may be enough to make a difference.

Remember it will be slow to get the group going so have patience. There will be no over-night success or change. Things will take time. Having a realistic idea of that time scale is so important.

There is no need to worry about whether you have to have a committee and be formally recognised. Those will come with time. There are a few ground rules to bear in mind. If it is a green space you want to improve it will belong to someone. Get the owner's agreement beforehand if you possibly can. If it is owned by the council they have a process to go through and the Civic Society will help you to make contact and prepare your approach.

You do not need to have shareholders or charity status, but we will return to that later. What you should have, however, is a constitution. This is a document which sets out your objectives and how you will be run. It will also cover how you are to be funded, and wound-up if your objectives are one day achieved. There are 'model' constitutions available as a starting point for your discussions. It may sound like a lot of bureaucracy but it does help all involved to know what you want to do and how you hope to achieve it. As a group you will find the discussions on the constitution does get the minds focused on the what, how, who, and why better than anything else. It may also help you to decide if your objective can be achieved in a much simpler way.

Funding is often seen as a huge problem. It need not be. There is plenty of funding available to support the right kind of causes. Local people may want to make a contribution if they feel the cause is worthy enough and will benefit them. To get rid of a grot spot and make it bloom many locals will dig deep into their pockets. Local generosity will often surprise you. Trafford MBC has funds which it uses to support worthwhile projects via its Partnership programme. There are also national bodies with support funds.

In every case you have to make your case as to why you need financial support. This is when having a good Constitution will be a big plus. The supporters of these good causes want to know their money is safe and is going to be well spent. The Constitution will tell how money will be controlled and then accounted for over time. Writing up your case on why you should get support funding is time consuming but once you have completed a few it does

become relatively routine. Currently there is a surprising amount of money on offer from generous benefactors, particularly for biodiversity, involving older or excluded people, net zero, or making streets safer.

If you are applying for third party money to fund your project you will need a bank account. It is not wise to mix up the friends' money inside a personal bank account. Your funding benefactor may want to see all the flows of money in and out and having non-project related spending can become time consuming to explain. Some banks offer free bank accounts for friends groups which does need careful research to identify and then create.

You will be a non-profit group and most likely not a charity. The Charity Commission regulates charities and they do not want to get involved with small local projects. Provided you are properly constituted and have a good record of your money then you can manage without charity status. Accounts prepared on a spreadsheet can be satisfactory and are easy to prepare.

There are lots of indirect benefits of a Friends group. The biggest of these is the social interaction. Meeting other people, talking, hearing new ideas, feeling involved, and seeing visible improvements. Loneliness is a modern day problem but a good Friends group can overcome that very quickly. Try gardening on a friends' project and you will discover how many people will come over for a chat, and to find out what is happening in their neighbourhood. It is surprising how much you have in common with those you chat with. If you feel you want to get involved with an existing Friends group in your locality, or related to a cause you personally support, the Civic Society can help in making contact with a group.

If you think a Friends group might be right for your project idea then the Civic Society will be pleased to provide advice, help, or put you in touch with those who can help.

### **A note about Tree Preservation Orders**



A Tree Preservation Order, or TPO, is usually made by a local planning authority to protect a specific tree or woodland from deliberate damage and destruction. This could include felling, lopping, topping, uprooting or otherwise wilful damage. TPOs are usually placed on a tree or wood which are deemed to be a local amenity.

If a tree is protected by a TPO, or is in a conservation area, anyone wanting to carry out management work or remove the tree will need to get permission from the local planning authority. If permission was not given by the council then they can prosecute which could result in a fine of between £2,500 and £20,000! Requests to carry out work on trees in areas of Trafford can be found here

<https://pa.trafford.gov.uk/online-applications/search.do?action=weeklyList> or do a Google search for Trafford Weekly Lists.

If you are interested in placing a protection order on a tree you need to contact the council and speak to the tree officer. Be sure to make them aware why you feel the tree needs to be protected. Be aware though making a TPO is a discretionary power - the council does not have to place a TPO on any tree. However, where one is made, the council does have a duty to enforce it. If you need help or advice on either of the above topics, the Civic Society will be pleased help. Drop us an email to [altrinchamandbowdoncs@gmail.com](mailto:altrinchamandbowdoncs@gmail.com).

Best Wishes,

*Leslie*



## News from Oldfield Brow – from Friends of Cow Field –Spring 2022

A report from resident Mike O'Neill

2021 has seen a lot of good community work on Oldfield Brow. Our local councillors have been a great help in keeping Trafford Housing Trust up to the mark on maintaining the ginnels (alleyways) that are an important feature of the housing development on the Brow. These had not been maintained well in recent years and had become weed infested, creating a health hazard and a litter problem. Meanwhile community members, led by G-Force, have been busy planting bulbs pictured *right* on the small green opposite the shops on Seamons Road and also on The Crescent. Hopefully by the time you read this



they shall be blooming for the first time. Oldfield Lane is now permanently closed to motor vehicles providing a great



active travel route for cyclists and walkers. However, we are concerned about ongoing maintenance: water running across the lane due to blocked drains froze last winter and caused two pedestrian falls that resulted in hospital visits. Also, we need to be sure hedges will be trimmed back and dangerous overhanging branches removed.

### Improving the shopping parade and environs

Within Oldfield Brow Partnership, a working group led by Cllr Michael Welton is discussing with Trafford Council and with the shop owners what might be done to improve the area around the shops. Leslie Cupitt, Green Spaces Lead for Altrincham & Bowdon Civic Society, is on the working group and has been very helpful in steering us towards ideas we might take forward with support from Trafford Council. The shops on Seamons Road have always been valuable to passing traffic and the nearby Atlantic Street business community as well as to residents, and both they and their customers deserve some support in trying to improve the shopping parade.

### Active Travel and Wellbeing

Oldfield Brow already has an excellent active travel link into Manchester with the creation of the Bridgewater Way by upgrading the canal towpath. Recent events have greatly increased interest in walking and cycling on the Trans Pennine Way and The Bridgewater Way. Now that Oldfield Lane is restricted for use by cyclists and walkers, there is a very attractive circular route taking in Dunham Massey and Oldfield Brow can expect an increasing number of visitors wanting to enjoy the abundance of active travel leisure facilities in the area. It would be good therefore to see investment aimed at improving the area



around the shops. Consideration also needs to be given to where visitors might park at the route embarkation points, both at the Oldfield Lane end and the Trans Pennine Way end of the route. For Oldfield Lane, we wonder if the adjacent golf club might consider offering a pay and display parking area for visitors. For the Trans Pennine Way, it is harder to identify a suitable car parking facility. We understand that before they went into administration, Cartwrights had received approval for a car parking area on Green Belt land. We wonder if Trafford Council might be able to instead create a car parking area for active travel route users.

There is certainly a lot of support for active travel routes from Transport for Greater Manchester (details at <https://activetravel.tfgm.com/> ) so perhaps there might be a funding opportunity there. We are working with our local councillors to see what might be done.

### Rose Cottage



The National Trust property and land at Rose Cottage is now in an advanced state of dereliction (*pictured left*) and we are frustrated at the unsightly waste of this potentially valuable local asset. The National Trust have advised that the site is scheduled for disposal, but we are wondering what planning or covenant restrictions might apply on what can be done on the site, given the stipulations made by Lord Stamford when he donated his Dunham Massey estate to the National Trust. We wonder if the site could usefully be redeveloped as a walkers and cyclists café/restaurant/shop, helping to increase the attraction of the extensive active travel network centred on Oldfield

Brow. A development such as this would provide some compensation for the loss of The Bay Malton as a community asset after Thwaites failed to get the planning permission they needed to refurbish and revive it.

### Cow Field

Cow Field continued to provide essential respite from lockdown for local residents through 2021. Friends of Cow Field met with One Trafford to discuss what can be done about the poor provision / condition of play equipment for older children (*empty swings pictured right*) as well as the lack of a path to improve all season access, especially for the less able and for wheelchair users. We've been advised that we should be included in a review for 2022/23 but this will only consider replacement of existing items (of which there are few enough!) that have deteriorated. For any other improvements, we must seek funding from other sources. The Conservation Volunteers group ([www.tcv.org.uk](http://www.tcv.org.uk)) recently gave a presentation at a Friends of Trafford Parks



meeting. They subsequently visited Cow Field to see what might be done about getting funding and 'boots on the ground' for improvements, as well as getting the support of Trafford Council for any proposed works. The situation is complicated by the proposed Trafford Council development plans for The Allotment Gardens, which will include alterations to the entrance area of Cow Field and could negate any improvement work we undertake in that area. On the other hand, Trafford Council promise that the community levy paid by the developer for any development will be used to fund improvements in Cow Field. The situation with the development has dragged on for many years and whilst it does, Cow Field continues to languish. This isn't a good state of affairs especially when the value of local green spaces for informal recreation in improving health and wellbeing is now being understood more than it has been for many years: at a full Trafford Council meeting in January there was very strong support for a motion recognising the essential value of our parks and green spaces, with Cllr Dan Jerrome proposing that Trafford seeks Fields in Trust permanent protection for all its parks and green spaces, as Liverpool City Council had done.

### Oldfield Brow and proposed local ward boundary changes

We've been made aware of a proposal to move Oldfield Brow out of Altrincham ward and into Bowdon and Dunham ward. We have voiced our concern that Oldfield Brow community see themselves as linked (by history, demography, access etc) to Altrincham and Broadheath and not to Bowdon and Dunham. We will expect that the local community be fully consulted before any final decision is made.

As ever, we send best wishes to the wider community in Altrincham and Bowdon and our thanks to the Civic Society for the unstinting support they have given us over the years. From where we are standing, the importance today of a good local civic society in watching over and protecting the welfare of the local community cannot be overstated.

Best Wishes, *Mike*



## *A report on Broadheath – By Leslie Cupitt*

Food retailing generates a lot of money and visitors. It is vital any new food retailing is directed towards the town centre. The National Planning Policy Framework says that any new retailing should be in town centres by a method known as the ‘sequential test’. It is a sequence of stages to test how close to the primary retail space in a town centre a new retail store is planned to be built. If it is actually in the town centre all is okay. Next, an edge of town location has to be looked at. Finally, and only if a centre or edge of town location are not available, can an out of town location be accepted as the destination for new retail by the local planning authority. It is the duty of the proposers of the new store to prove why they are not able to find a suitable town centre location and to document it as part of their planning application.

The Civic Society has just been involved with such a wrangle on a planning application for a new Lidl store in Broadheath. Being a food dominated store it should have been a key store in the town centre. Altrincham Retail Park already has severe traffic problems and additional retail would cause many extra car journeys every day and with no corresponding improvements in public transport. Trafford MBC rejected the first planning application because it failed the sequential test and its impact on the traffic on George Richards Way. The applicant tweaked the egress road design and resubmitted it. In a twist of logic this time Trafford MBC accepted the plan.

Clearly stated in the application was that Lidl had an agreement to build a new store on Altair, the derelict space behind Altrincham station. No contract for the agreement was produced. We all know how many promises of new buildings there have been about this edge of town site over many decades.

Eventually there was a Planning Inquiry at which the Altrincham & Bowdon Civic Society and Business Neighbourhood Plan fought to have the new store in the town centre. The Inquiry lasted over four days.

The Planning Inspector decided that as the applicant had said they had a contract to build a store on the Altair site that was good enough to have fulfilled the sequential test criteria.

As for the traffic impact of an additional high volume retail store on George Richards Way only time will tell if Transport for Greater Manchester’s traffic modelling of the design will prove to be workable in a real world situation – what might be consider a crash test.

Construction of the new store will involve considerable dust and noise for local residents. The Civic Society will be working with local Broadheath residents to ensure the contractors are considerate and do not block local roads.

If you would like to know about planning policy or how the Civic Society supports your town centre then please get in touch via our email [altrinchamandbowdoncs@gmail.com](mailto:altrinchamandbowdoncs@gmail.com)



### **Woodstock Park**

Tucked away in Broadheath is Woodstock Park. The Park is what is known as an integrated park. The park does not have fences around like traditional parks and it has through pathways linking the various areas of the community together. This makes it well integrated into the community it is intended to serve.



On the 28<sup>th</sup> November 2021 the Civic Society and Broadheath Partnership organised the planting of some 4,000 Spring flowering bulbs (poster pictured right). What we did not plan for was the snow and sleet of the day. Despite the wet and cold we did get a good turnout of local people and Broadheath Councillors who wanted their local park to have lots of colour this Spring. (see pictures below)



Woodstock Park is one of the few parks in Trafford without a Friends group. The Civic Society is trying to establish a Friends of Woodstock Park group.



If you would like to support your local area we would like to hear from you. Drop us an email to [altrinchamandbowdoncs@gmail.com](mailto:altrinchamandbowdoncs@gmail.com) or leave a comment on our Twitter page @aandbcs.



*Vivian Labaton – A Tribute*

It is with great sadness that we have to report the recent sudden loss of our Vice President, Committee Member and friend Vivian Labaton. He was a long standing member of the society, a wise man with a sense of humour who made a great contribution to our committee. Vivian worked tirelessly on our behalf to improve the communication between the society and different faiths within our community. Our sincere thoughts and condolences are with Ruth his wife and their family members at this sad time.



*Out and about in Timperley with Hazel Pryor*

**Planning Applications**

We have had a number of planning applications for sites in Timperley, above the normal house extensions.

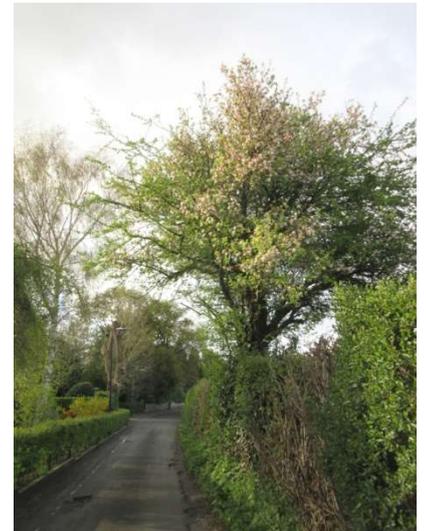
Of major concern to me are the plans for Paddock Farm on Wellfield Lane and Holly Tree Cottage on Clay Lane. Both of these come under the current Hale Barns Ward, but according to my definition of the boundaries they are part of Timperley, and are in the Green Belt. The HUT Group plans for these are for ‘serviced accommodation’ in connection with the Hale Spa on Clay Lane, Timperley. (A swimming pool is included for each site).

Clay Lane is very busy with vehicles, and there is a very narrow pavement on only one side. Wellfield Lane at Paddock Farm is narrow and has no pedestrian pavements, and two cars passing have to take care and give way. The plan for Paddock Farm has been approved recently. This is in the last remaining bit of farm land in the green area on the border of Timperley and Hale, with relic hedges and fruit trees.

***Apple tree in old hedgerow, Wellfield Lane (pictured right)***

The main Hale Spa site also has major changes and extensions proposed.

**Pubs** - Plans for The Pelican site include the old ‘motel’ (by the way, an early local example of ‘motor court’ style accommodation). The motel block would be no great loss, but The Pelican pub is a landmark, and surely could be converted to apartments with character. The present pub building replaced an earlier farmhouse turned pub. One of Timperley’s two early licences.



The other of the early pubs The Hare & Hounds has suffered from rumours about its closure, but it is still open. The proposed plans for 62 retirement apartments and nine retirement ‘cottages’ are surely over-development of the site. A four storey high block fronting to Shaftesbury Avenue right next to the shops will be very obtrusive. There are plans for a new ‘manager’s office and reception’, but why can that not be converted from the main pub building. The Hare & Hounds is another landmark. It started life as a farmhouse, and was known as Goulden’s of the Moss End in the 1760s. The old Timperley Township meetings were held there, and the

Timperley Prize Band practised in the farm buildings. ***Hare & Hounds Pub (pictured Left)***

Timperley Taverners (Liberal Democrats Club) site on Park Road near Timperley Station has plans for development for housing. Handy for the station, but how much extra vehicle traffic will it add to the situation on Park Road?

The Delaheys Farm site (opposite Dobbies Garden Centre) dates back to at least the early 1600s. (George Delahey of Timperley was present at the Siege of Wythenshawe Hall in the Civil War in 1643.) Plans for a new dwelling on the site of a timber farm building, could un-earth archaeological remains of previous buildings.

The World of Pets site is a major one with plans for 116 dwellings. This again is in the Green Belt, and backs on to Timperley Brook green corridor. What would this do to the current traffic problems around the Thorley Lane, Wood Lane and Clay Lane roundabout junction?

**World of Water/Pets (pictured right)**

**Meadow South of Timperley Brook towards world of Water/Pets (far right)**



Concern about the Park Medical Practice house on Park Road has been allayed as the existing house is to be retained, and two pairs of semi-detached to be built in the rear garden. However, now work has started sadly all the plants have been removed from the front garden boundaries including hedging and mature trees.

I can't remember when there have been so many planning proposals for Timperley at the same time, for quite a few years.



At least the new Library complex is now open, together with Park Medical Practice and the new Pelican Pharmacy. There are a couple of bat boxes on the rear wall, but I've not spotted any boxes for swifts, that I had thought were to be included.

**Stockport Road Library building (pictured left)**

I've been keeping an eye on the NatWest Bank and corner Pharmacy development in Timperley Village. Demolition of the single storey outbuilding revealed traces of the old slaughterhouse, when the corner shop was a butchers in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. This has been paused while the pharmacy staff have been busy doing Covid vaccinations at the Larkhill Centre.

#### Boundaries Commission proposed changes

The proposed changes include basically combining the present (Timperley) Village Ward with Hale Barns Ward to make 'Timperley South and Hale Barns'. This combination of several communities with differing demographic backgrounds, would I imagine, provide quite a challenge for any councillor to represent the whole of the population of the enlarged ward.

Best wishes, Hazel



## *Spotlight on Ken Garrity – Local businessman and Charity Volunteer*

In 1981 I opened my travel agency Carlton Travel in Sale and have lived in the Altrincham area since 1989.

As a member of Altrincham Rotary since 1995 I particularly enjoyed the community work putting something back into society. This meant helping schools do various projects, including speech & drama, cooking and other educational projects. Other events included our SANTA DAYS in Altrincham and tins 'n' treats boxes where we collect new toys tins of food and chocolates and have these distributed to local families who may not get these at Christmas.

More recently as President of Altrincham Rotary during the covid lockdowns, I helped with the collecting and distributing of food to five food banks in the area. As well as this we helped with teapots for The Hub - a local community centre so they could hold afternoon teas for those alone, lonely or just wanting some company. We also built a shed for a local community allotment.

During this time we managed to distribute and plant purple crocus corms to reflect Rotaries help worldwide in the eradication of polio, a killer disease. We also get to illuminate the Town Hall in purple for Polio Day each year on the 24th October.

From Rotary I was pleased to receive two 'Paul Harris fellow awards' in recognition of my community work.

### **COURT LEET**

I was invited by Altrincham Court Leet to become a Freeman of England and Wales for the services I had undertaken in the community. Later on I was nominated and accepted as Provost (Mayor).

After my year as Provost I was made an Alderman of Altrincham.

### **RADIO ALTY**

Radio Alty has now been on air for over a year. I was invited to "help out" by Stephen Carlton Woods who runs his show twice a week based on the newspaper headlines of the day. Stephen has been a radio presenter for over twenty years.

Having started with a mic, headset and zoom link up from my own home we managed to produce a bit of banter on his show as I do not always agree with what he says. We developed this to include guests, competitions and local outside broadcasts. We also have drop in shows using local retail venues.

We moved into our new studio at the Garrick Theatre on Barrington Road late last year, which we now call home, still doing our shows each Tuesday and Thursday afternoons 2pm to 4pm. The show still has the same format but has developed with more local Altrincham news, entertainment and travel updates. Our new presenter Susan Leigh gives out valuable tips on life. I now "drive the desk" with all its knobs and levers having been taught by Stephen. We celebrated my first year on air in January and hopefully this year we will cover more outside broadcasts and events. I look forward to many more years at Radio Alty!

Best wishes, Ken



## *A letter from Sir Graham Brady MP*

It really feels like most things are back to normal now. My constituency surgeries are face to face again, having been at least partly over the phone, and with more people out and about people stop me around Altrincham to ask questions or give me views. In recent days, events in Ukraine have been a hot topic with lots of people wanting to express admiration for the brave defence that is being mounted against the Russian invasion. Speaking at the Altrincham & Sale Chamber of Commerce New Year lunch recently was similarly, a chance to range from local issues to big global questions like the future of Taiwan.

At the local level, having campaigned successfully for a pause in the Mayor's ill-conceived 'Clean Air Zone' for Greater Manchester, it will now be important to ensure that any redesigned proposal that comes back is a sensible, tailored response to local air quality problems and not another 493 sq. mile sledgehammer to crack a nut.

Another point where local and national issues coincide is in relation to HS2. A massive piece of national infrastructure, which crosses Altrincham in two places (neither of which makes sense!). For years I have been pointing out the folly of building an 'airport' station that is a quarter of a mile away from the airport at Davenport Green. I still live in hope that there will be an outbreak of common sense on this (which would also save a strip of ancient woodland that will otherwise fall to the bulldozers). In the meantime, I am assured that my long-running campaign to scrap the so-called Golborne Link has now succeeded. This is a £4 billion section of railway that was intended to cut through the village of Warburton before soaring over the Manchester Ship Canal on a giant concrete viaduct. £4 billion of your money and very little return, so ministers have agreed to axe it when the bill comes before parliament in the Summer. If you are walking in the Warburton area and see notices from HS2 telling you the bridleway will be closed, I don't think that you now have to worry!

One of the frustrations of politics is that you never actually win, it's a constant battle, it must be over fifteen years since local campaigners, including the Civic Society saw off plans to knock down our Edwardian Town Hall. It was retained for civic use and has been an asset to the town. Now, in spite of its listing as an asset of community value, questions are again being raised. The trouble with facilities like this is that once they are gone, they are lost for ever. The same can be said of course for the vital green belt land that provides a break on urban sprawl, forcing planners to do the more imaginative thing and revive areas that were previously developed rather than building on green spaces. If the so-called 'Timperley Wedge' that separates Timperley from Hale and Hale Barns is developed as the council wants, the character of the area will change irretrievably. Further away on the edge of the constituency, plans to build thousands of houses on Carrington Moss could only increase congestion and pressure on services such as health and education (while destroying a precious habitat).

One of the striking changes in the local population in recent months is the number of British Nationals from Hong Kong who have chosen to make Altrincham and Sale their home. Many have been attracted by the best state schools in the country - and we should be proud of that - but it might make more sense to develop a plan to expand capacity in local schools rather than rushing headlong into building more and more houses. I have been in discussion with the Regional Schools Commissioner and with education ministers in Westminster about how we can best meet this challenge. I look forward to continuing to work with community groups like the civic societies and with councillors on all these challenges.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Graham Brady".

February 2022

*Disclaimer – the views expressed in the above letter are not necessarily the views of the Altrincham & Bowdon Civic Society or its members.*

## **Altrincham & Bowdon Civic Society Membership**

Why not help to make Altrincham and Bowdon a better place by joining the Civic Society. Your subscription will help the Society achieve its many goals. We can also keep you up to date by email on our events and important changes in the town that affect you.

### **ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP FEES BECOME DUE ON THE 1st JANUARY**

**To APPLY for or RENEW your membership you will need to do the following:**

#### **FROM THE WEBSITE MEMBERSHIP PAGE**

Download or read our **Data Protection Privacy Notice**

Download and print off a **Membership Form**

Download and print off a **Gift Aid Form** (optional)

**Complete and sign the Membership form, together with a Gift Aid Form (if applicable) and return them to the address shown below together with your payment (if paying by cheque).**

If you do not have access to the Internet, please write to the membership secretary  
Altrincham & Bowdon Civic Society 14 Greenwood Street, Altrincham, Cheshire, WA14 1RZ  
or Phone 0161 927 7508.

---

*Altrincham & Bowdon Community Voice*

*Newsletter of the Altrincham & Bowdon Civic Society Registered Charity No: 246145*

*Compiled and Edited by Richard Hagon © Altrincham & Bowdon Civic Society 2022*

*Chair: Judie Collins 0161 962 7108 Vice Chair: Paulina Lewis 0161 928 6789*

*Treasurer: Trevor Stone 0161 927 7508 Clerk: Richard Hagon 07960 102684*

*Vice President: David Eastwood B.A.*

*Photographs are from the Altrincham Area Image Archive or supplied by the individual writers.*

*All information is correct at the time of going to press.*

*All copyright on pictures and logos from other organisations is acknowledged.*