



TRAFFORD

HERITAGE FRAMEWORK

2026-2035



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Cover Image:
The Dovecote, Grade II listed at Walkden Gardens

FOREWORD



CLLR EVE PARKER
Executive Member for
Leisure, Arts, Culture &
Heritage

Heritage is our legacy from the past, what we live with today, and what we pass on to future generations. Our cultural and natural heritage are both irreplaceable sources of life and inspiration. The benefit of celebrating our heritage opens enormous potential in terms of social, economic and environmental value, including growth, tourism, inclusivity and skills. The strength of Trafford's heritage, including sport, agriculture, industry, arts, transport, architecture, movements and war efforts, for example, deserves to be widely celebrated in situ or in shared narratives.

Alongside building local civic pride, celebrating Trafford's heritage encourages residents and visitors to explore the many related places and spaces across the borough. Trafford Council has made heritage a corporate priority, alongside culture and sport.

The heritage opportunities for residents and visitors have increased in recent years and continues to grow, including Imperial War Museum North, Manchester United, Lancashire Cricket Club and Dunham Massey. The Cosgrove Hall Film Archive, based at Sale Waterside, now has a permanent exhibition. Trafford is home to many local history groups and civic societies. Trafford is rich in tangible heritage, with its many buildings, structures and places, as well as intangible cultural heritage, such as knowledge, traditions, movements and notable associations. We want to celebrate all the kinds of heritage which are part of everyone's life in some way, and to bring their stories and achievements to life.

OUR VISION

Trafford will be a place where heritage shines, is celebrated in every corner, embraced by every community, and shared with pride. Its rich cultural landscape will inspire connection, belonging, and a deep sense of place for all who live, visit, and contribute to Trafford's story.



TRAFFORD'S HERITAGE IN NUMBERS

258

LISTED BUILDINGS



6

ANCIENT WOODLANDS

Watch Hill in Bowdon, Coroner's Wood in Partington, Hogswood Covert and Brookheys Covert in Carrington, Bentley and Tomfield Banks in Hale



THE ONLY SWING AQUEDUCT IN THE WORLD

OLDEST AND LARGEST PLANNED WATERWAYS
The Bridgewater Canal and the Ship Canal



35

BLUE PLAQUES



3

MUSEUMS

Imperial War Museum North
Dunham Massey
Manchester United



3

PARKS AND GARDENS OF SPECIAL HISTORIC INTEREST IN ENGLAND

(registered parks and gardens)
Brooklands Cemetery
Stamford Park
Dunham Park



YEARS OF HISTORY IN ARCHIVES AND LOCAL STUDIES COLLECTIONS. THE OLDEST ITEM IS FROM **1290**



2

ENVIRONMENTAL SITES OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST

Brookheys Covert in Carrington and Dunham Park



SOCIETIES

Civic, Local History, Altrincham Garrick and Film Societies

2

LOCAL NATURE RESERVES

Trafford Ecology Park and Broad Ees Dole (within Sale Water Park)



48

SITES OF BIOLOGICAL IMPORTANCE

Ranging from canals and rivers to ponds, swamp, reedbed, woodland and grassland

ONE

SCHEDULED MONUMENT

Watch Hill Motte and Bailey Castle in Bowdon

21

CONSERVATION AREAS

Covering huge areas of the borough

JOB IN HERITAGE

Including Imperial War Museum North, Dunham Massey, Cosgrove Hall Film Archive

INTRODUCTION

The people and places of Trafford are host to an incredible wealth and diversity of heritage. The Trafford Heritage Framework sets out a path for all the borough's residents, visitors and organisations to work together to create a place where everyone can see themselves, feel welcome and enjoy the heritage of the borough.

The framework has been developed in cooperation and collaboration with members of the community across the district, the local authority, and representatives of heritage and associated sectors. By building this framework alongside the community, the themes, priorities and objectives of the framework will closely align with the needs and desires of the local heritage sector and Trafford's communities.



This document sets out a vision for heritage over the next 10 years as well as detailing the outcomes of the engagement process, defining several themes for heritage activity in the borough, and setting out governance and delivery actions.

The framework will be accompanied by an Action Plan which has been informed by stakeholders and sets out a pathway to achieve the vision, priorities and themes of the document.

This document serves as a dynamic, collaborative and flexible plan for everyone working and volunteering in Trafford's heritage sector to use, collectively fostering continued collaboration and co-creation built on this shared foundation.

CREATING TRAFFORD'S HERITAGE FRAMEWORK

The Heritage Framework has been developed alongside Trafford's communities through workshops, interviews, steering group sessions and a public survey throughout summer and autumn 2025.

Participants shared their ideas about heritage projects, themes and priorities as well as their vision for the next 10 years of heritage in the borough.

Hopes and aspirations were shared for how heritage can be used to transform people's lives and enhance their local communities and everyday experiences.



240+
CONTRIBUTIONS
OVERALL

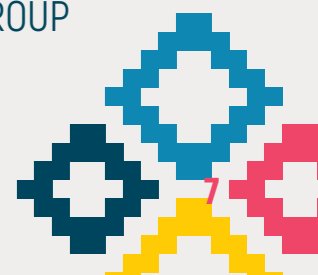
WE HAD AN ONLINE AND IN-PERSON SURVEY WHICH RECEIVED **32** RESPONSES AND ANOTHER **32** ENGAGEMENTS FROM SOCIAL MEDIA

17
LOCAL HERITAGE
STAKEHOLDERS TOOK
PART IN INDIVIDUAL AND
GROUP CONVERSATIONS

140+
ATTENDEES OF
WORKSHOPS AT
LANCASHIRE COUNTY
CRICKET CLUB, LONGFORD
PARK, TRAFFORD PARK'S
ST ANTONY'S CENTRE AND
WITH TRAFFORD YOUTH
CABINET

OVER
10,000
WORDS OF NOTES
COLLECTED FROM
EVERYONE'S
CONTRIBUTIONS

3
MEETINGS OF THE
TRAFFORD HERITAGE
FRAMEWORK STEERING
GROUP



VISION

Trafford will be a place where heritage shines, is celebrated in every corner, embraced by every community, and shared with pride. Its rich cultural landscape will inspire connection, belonging, and a deep sense of place for all who live, visit, and contribute to Trafford's story.

Participants in the development of the Heritage Framework were asked about their aspirations for Trafford. These contributions have been summarised here with a vision for the next 10 years of heritage in Trafford.

Trafford will be a place where heritage is celebrated, making Trafford a destination through its rich and diverse array of heritage and communities. The borough will be a safe, welcoming and enjoyable place to live and thrive. Trafford's rich and vibrant heritage will be revealed, supported, resourced, connected, collaborative, and accessible for all residents and visitors, reflecting the diverse cultures and heritage of all its communities.

We will cherish the built and natural environment, inspiring pride of place. We will celebrate the intangible culture and heritage of Trafford, strengthening communities and creating a welcoming and open borough. Trafford will be a place where the protection and enhancement of heritage is integrated with sustainable progress, balancing respect for the past with the creation of a resilient and forward-looking future. We will seek to tell the stories of the past within the regeneration of key development sites in the borough.

Trafford will strengthen its capacity to adapt to a changing climate while fostering active engagement opportunities for organisations and the public, a vibrant community spirit, and local pride.

PARTICIPANTS WERE ASKED WHAT HERITAGE MEANS TO THEM. HERITAGE IS...

"discovery, hope and community cohesion fed by its roots"

"local libraries, schools, community centres, markets, and green spaces - spaces where people have gathered, learned, and grown together for generations"

"industrial heritage, open space and parks, architecturally significant buildings, art and craft collections, exhibitions and workshops, performing arts, local history and archives"

"celebrating diversity and multiculturalism in Trafford"

"those who created the Trafford we have today and those creating our tomorrows"

"capturing, recording and recognising the human roots on which we're built"

"rootedness, sense of place and belonging"

"care and recognition"

"family, culture, identity, past, upbringing, history, nature, buildings, architecture"

"our sporting heritage. Communities come together in sport"

THEMES & VALUES

During the development of the Heritage Framework, several themes emerged from stakeholder and community feedback. These have been organised into six overlapping areas of focus which are centred around the history of Trafford, its communities, and places. Additionally, from participants in the creation of the framework, five values emerged which will set the tone for how people wish Trafford's heritage sector to work over the next 10 years.



THEMES

THE PEOPLE OF TRAFFORD & THEIR STORIES

- ♦ Innovators and notable people in fields including sport, industry, culture, health and agriculture, will be celebrated. So much of Trafford's success today has been built upon these developments, and their contributions to the wider region and the world.
- ♦ Social action, grassroots and workers' movements, integral to Trafford's history, will be recognised and remembered. For example, Benny Rothman who led the mass trespass in 1932 and who lived in Timperley, local actors in the Suffragette and Suffragist movements, trade unions that demanded progress in Trafford, the UK and the world, and workers in the first NHS hospital, Trafford General.
- ♦ Connections with the transatlantic slave trade will be explored with openness and sensitivity, and parallel stories shared.

TRAFFORD'S SPORTING HERITAGE

- ♦ Trafford's incredible connection to the development of pastime and professional sports teams and clubs, like Manchester United, Lancashire County Cricket Club, the Sale Sharks, Longford Park Old Gentleman's Bowling Club, athletics, tennis, golf and many more, will be recognised as an integral part of local heritage and as a way in which to engage more people with heritage.
- ♦ The contributions to sport of working-class people, women, minorities in cricket, football, rugby, and others will be included as vital and important parts of local sporting heritage.
- ♦ The continuing and living legacies of these sports and their vibrant communities will be invited to be a part of sharing the history of the borough and bringing our local communities together around heritage.

GREEN & GROWING IN TRAFFORD

- ♦ Agricultural heritage including horticulture, the growing of heritage varieties, seedsmen, orchards, allotments and market gardens will be explored, including the relationships between the urban and rural character of the borough through its blue corridors of canals and rivers, and the distribution of nightsoil to fertilise the fields.
- ♦ The borough's historic green spaces, such as parks, cemeteries and country estates, will be explored through engaging local people with their daily environments and these places' everyday heritage.
- ♦ The natural environment, landscape and biodiversity of Trafford will be brought into focus, especially through connections to the historic character of the borough. For example, the lost medieval deer parks in Old Trafford, Warburton and Sale, and the last surviving medieval deer park in Greater Manchester at Dunham Massey.



TRAFFORD'S CREATIVITY

- ♦ The rich creativity of Trafford's artists, musicians, and performers as a talent belt for Greater Manchester's creative scene will be recognised widely throughout the borough and further afield.
- ♦ Institutions which have carried the legacy of Trafford's strong creative heritage, such as the Altrincham Garrick Theatre, the Cosgrove Hall Film Archive and the related contemporary animation studios, will be known and appreciated more widely.
- ♦ Creative arts, heritage crafts and skills will be celebrated, strengthening the living heritage of the borough through its museum collections, for example the Local Studies Archive, Dunham Massey National Trust and the Imperial War Museum North, alongside traditional and modern crafts-people creating and caring for the culture and history of local communities and places.

TRAFFORD'S SETTLEMENTS: TOWNS & VILLAGES

- ♦ Greater prominence will be brought to the early history of Trafford, its places and its people, by examining medieval and early modern history, archaeology, and the development of the landscape.
- ♦ Understanding of the historic landscape will be encouraged through ways that respond to the needs of modern communities. For example, using archaeology to support wellbeing, cultivating pride of place through exploring how local materials shaped architectural styles, and revealing past ways of living throughout the borough and relating to life today.
- ♦ Communities will be supported to interpret and communicate the history and development of Trafford's towns and villages, from prehistoric remains in mosslands, through Roman roads such as Watling Street, medieval and early modern craft industries, and settlements, to the infrastructure which laid the foundations for later suburban expansion during and after the industrial revolution.



INDUSTRIAL TRAFFORD

- ♦ The ways in which industry has shaped lives and communities in Trafford will be focused on. This includes the expansion of the workforce in places like Broadheath and Trafford Park, and the development of infrastructure and the built environment and its wider national and international impact through crucial manufacturing, invention and ingenuity, such as significant support of the World War Two engineering and munitions effort.
- ♦ The buildings and places which show the legacies of industries which have come and gone will be prioritised for repurpose, to secure futures and bring life to the architectural monuments of Trafford's past.
- ♦ Focus will be given to the transformation of Trafford's infrastructure, transport and connections alongside its industrial expansion. Including the Bridgewater Canal, Manchester Ship Canal, the River Mersey and the former Manchester, South Junction and Altrincham Railway, the Metrolink line and the huge expansions of residential suburban development and communities during the 19th and 20th centuries.



VALUES

Similarly to the themes outlined above, the values for heritage in Trafford over the next 10 years have been shaped by the contributions of participants throughout the development of this framework. They are based on the issues, concerns and needs of the local heritage community, and are intended to support ways of working throughout the delivery of the Heritage Framework.

ACCESSIBILITY AND INCLUSION

Addressing inequalities through the Heritage Framework.

- ◆ People from all backgrounds, all ages and abilities will be considered and fully supported to engage with their local heritage in various ways.
- ◆ People will feel ownership over local heritage, have a sense of local pride, and feel supported, welcomed and included in heritage spaces.
- ◆ Heritage organisations will feel supported to improve their own accessibility and inclusion efforts to meaningfully include the breadth of the local community in their work.

ORGANISATIONAL RESILIENCE & CONNECTIVITY

Supporting Trafford's heritage sector to develop skills and improve organisational sustainability.

- ◆ Organisations will be better able to connect and communicate with each other and the public.
- ◆ Support and access to resources and expertise will enable smaller organisations to become more resilient and build capacity.
- ◆ Opportunities for organisations and individuals to develop their skills and build capacity, for example through training and peer support, will be shared and well publicised.

HERITAGE AT RISK AND REGENERATION

Protecting heritage places for the benefit of the whole community.

- ◆ Heritage in the built environment will be protected, understood and recorded, including through Trafford's List of Local Heritage Assets, Heritage at Risk surveys, designations, conservation area appraisals and management plans.
- ◆ Solutions for heritage at risk will be explored and developed to find long-lasting and sustainable solutions which protect and restore heritage assets and seek to serve the needs of local communities.
- ◆ Places throughout the borough, including towns and villages, will be supported through heritage-led regeneration in high streets, meeting community need, and bringing people together.
- ◆ Stakeholders and communities will work together to conserve and enhance heritage assets, promoting public understanding and enjoyment while reinforcing Trafford's local distinctiveness and sense of place.



ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY & CARBON REDUCTION

Driving Trafford's heritage sector towards a more environmentally sustainable future.

- ◆ Heritage organisations will be equipped to understand their carbon emissions and how to enact carbon reduction initiatives within their operations.
- ◆ All kinds of heritage will be better protected and prepared to withstand a changing climate and extreme weather events while preserving significance.
- ◆ The stored carbon of old buildings and the natural environment will be used to its full extent through the reuse and restoration of heritage assets, the protection of biodiversity, and green and blue infrastructure.

LOCAL ENGAGEMENT & HERITAGE TOURISM

Encouraging local people and visitors to get involved in heritage and boost the local economy.

- ◆ Local people will be enabled to learn about and engage with their own and their local heritage through inclusive heritage initiatives and information sharing about the borough's heritage, including through the Council's Local Studies and Archives service. For example, green and blue spaces, innovators, sport, culture and the arts.
- ◆ Destinations with national and international appeal in Trafford (for example, in Old Trafford) will be connected to and part of the borough's wider tourism and heritage tourism offer.
- ◆ Venues, both typical heritage venues and other tourist destinations, will be supported to improve their appeal and welcome to new audiences both locally and from further afield.



GOVERNANCE & ENABLING PROJECTS

Governance and the first few enabling projects are key to the effective and timely delivery of the Heritage Framework. These establish the structures needed and initial capacity to support all the other actions and priorities to be delivered over the next 10 years.

1. HERITAGE FRAMEWORK OFFICER AT TRAFFORD COUNCIL

- ♦ Exploration of external funding options to provide support and expertise to make projects happen both within Trafford Council, and supporting local organisations and communities to do the same.

2. SEEKING TO DEVELOP AND STRENGTHEN PARTNERSHIPS BETWEEN THE LOCAL AUTHORITY AND LOCAL HERITAGE ORGANISATIONS TO ENABLE PROJECTS

- ♦ Especially needed for Heritage at Risk projects or projects where flexibility in development/delivery is key.
- ♦ Building capacity in local heritage organisations.
- ♦ Enabling skills sharing through partnership working.

3. A HERITAGE NETWORK/FORUM

- ♦ An open and inclusive group with regular meetings and opportunities to network.
- ♦ Share Sessions.
- ♦ Providing peer support and access to lessons learnt by others, especially to support smaller organisations.
- ♦ Expertise sharing and building opportunities for collaboration and resource pooling.

4. HERITAGE FRAMEWORK OVERSIGHT

- ♦ Expanding the Cultural Transformation Hub's expertise in heritage, which will oversee the delivery of the Heritage Framework over the next 10 years, alongside the Trafford Cultural Strategy, and provide periodic reviews of the framework's achievements so far.
- ♦ These governance and enabling projects will ensure continued collaboration, allow conversations that have begun through the creation of the Trafford Heritage Framework to continue, and will provide transparency and accountability in delivery of the work.
- ♦ The governance approach will work hand in hand with many of the project ideas detailed in the ongoing action plan.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



- ♦ Altrincham and Bowdon Civic Society ♦ Ashton and Sale History Society ♦ Friends of Longford Park
- ♦ Gorse Hill Studios ♦ Granville Park Allotments ♦ Greater Manchester Archaeological Advisory Service
- ♦ Groundwork Greater Manchester ♦ Grove Lane Allotment Association ♦ Hale Civic Society ♦ Henshaws
- ♦ Historic England ♦ IAP:MCR (Initiative Arts Projects Ltd.) ♦ Imperial War Museum North ♦ L & Q
- ♦ Lancashire & Cheshire Antiquarian Society ♦ Lancashire County Cricket Club ♦ LDA Design
- ♦ Longford Ladies (Bowling) ♦ Longford Park Community Allotment ♦ Longford Retired Gentlemen's Club (Bowling) ♦ Manchester Libraries and Archives ♦ Manchester United Foundation
- ♦ National Archives ♦ National Lottery Heritage Fund, North team ♦ National Trust Dunham Massey
- ♦ Our Sale West ♦ Sale Civic Society ♦ Sale Moor ♦ South Trafford Archaeology Group
- ♦ Stretford Public Hall ♦ Stretford History Society ♦ St Antony's Centre ♦ The Altrincham Garrick Theatre
- ♦ The Victorian Society ♦ Three Meem Foundation ♦ Timperley Civic Society ♦ The Hub Partington
- ♦ Trafford Community Collective ♦ Trafford Council officers and councillors ♦ Trafford Veterans CIC
- ♦ Trafford Youth Cabinet ♦ University Academy 92 ♦ Urban Fitness Collective ♦ Veritas Arts
- ♦ WETA ♦ Young Identity

And the many other individual participants who shared their priorities and ideas for heritage in Trafford.



Trafford Council thanks the team at Heritage Lincolnshire for bringing their expertise to the framework's engagement and development.



