2,000 homes and 1,000 jobs

More than £300 million will be invested in Oldham to build 2,000 new homes and create new jobs and apprenticeships.

The majority of homes will be built in the town centre over the next ten years and the increase in footfall is expected to help secure the future of the high street, market and shopping centre and grow the evening entertainment offer.

Oldham Council approved its ‘Creating a Better Place’ plan earlier in the year which also includes a number of regeneration schemes across Oldham including the new Saddleworth School, the refurbishment of Royton Town Hall and the redevelopment of Alexandra Park Eco Centre.

It will mean a much greater focus on building in urban areas to avoid – where possible – development on greenbelt land. The council has also committed to protecting the future of the historic Tommyfield Market and making the town centre a more family-friendly place.

The council has ambitions to be carbon neutral by 2025 and homes built in the town centre will be of a good quality and environmentally friendly.

Many of the estimated jobs will be in the construction industry while others will be created as the town centre economy improves.

Oldham Council Leader, Councillor Sean Fielding, said: “Since becoming Leader of the Council in 2018 I have listened to what residents are saying about the future of the borough and I have undertaken a detailed review of the evidence.

“I believe that this refocus of our plans will be revolutionary for Oldham, bringing jobs, homes and investment into our town centre and will help to create a better place to work, live and visit.

“Oldham town centre is at the heart of our borough and the potential to create lasting change is immense. Together, we can ‘Create a Better Place’ to secure the future of our town centre and ensure it thrives.”
Welcome to this special edition of Borough Life.

In this edition you can read all about our plans to bring more jobs, housing and investment into Oldham, which will ultimately improve the borough as a place to live and provide residents like you and I with greater opportunities and prospects.

I became Leader of Oldham Council in 2018, and one of the first things I did was take the time to listen to what was important to you. This led to the recent announcement of our plan to ‘Create a Better Place’, which will bring investment of more than £300m into the borough. This will help us achieve our goals of creating more jobs and apprenticeships, securing the future of our town centre high street and shopping centre and building additional homes while reducing the need to release our precious greenbelt land for development.

I want you to feel proud of living in Oldham. This means feeling safe, being able to have fun, good schooling and lots of great job and apprenticeship opportunities. I know we have a way to go to achieve all of this, and it won’t happen overnight, but we are striving to make this work.

Therefore, my priorities this year are:

**Homes:** We will focus on building in the town centre to protect our green spaces, address affordable housing across the borough and tackle homelessness.

**Economy:** Significantly increase the number of jobs and apprenticeships in the borough and ensure you have the right skills to make the most of them.

**Schools:** Continue to build on our recent improvements to school standards so that future generations have a great start in life.

**Green:** Deliver the Oldham Green New Deal which includes our commitment to becoming a carbon neutral council by 2025.

**Community Safety:** Tackle crime, particularly knife crime, and support our police force using the Public Health approach which has been successful in places such as Glasgow.

Councillor Sean Fielding
Oldham Council Leader

There are many exciting plans for the borough over the next few years. Have a look at the map to see some of the things happening...

**Mahdlo extension**
Construction work to extend the Youth Zone is well under way. The new building has been designed to accommodate the charity’s growing creative offer.

**Hotel at Prince’s Gate**
A new UK hotel chain will soon be coming to Mumps as part of the wider regeneration of Prince’s Gate.

**Town Centre**
New housing, shops, bars and businesses are planned for the heart of Oldham.
See pages 6 and 7 for more information on some of the new town centre offerings.

**OMA**
A new state-of-the-art museum and exhibition space in the Cultural Quarter of Oldham which will revitalise the grade two-listed former library and art gallery. Turn to page 6 for more information.
Saddleworth School
The council is working with the landowner, the school and the Department for Education (DfE) to deliver a new school for our children. It will have capacity for 1,500 pupils and will be built on land at the former WH Shaw pallet works in Diggle.

Alexandra Park Eco Centre
In January we revealed our exciting proposals to build a multimillion pound environmental centre of excellence. This project would transform the depot at Alexandra Park, which is coming to the end of its life, into a state-of-the-art environmental centre of excellence and create a new community park.

Turn to page 10 to find out about our exciting Northern Roots project.

Royton Town Hall
Plans to refurbish and remodel this important local building are moving along and we look forward to work starting soon.

Greenfield School
A new £5.7m Greenfield Primary School opened last year. The brand new building has been built just yards away from the old building on Shaw Street, Greenfield, and includes 14 classrooms, science block, sports hall, dance studio and playground area.

Solar Farm
We’re going to submit proposals to build a 900kw solar farm in Failsworth.
The development would help boost our drive to become the greenest borough in Greater Manchester and help the council’s aim of becoming carbon neutral by 2025.

Turn to page 9 for more information.

Broadway Green
Work is progressing well at Broadway Green, which is a joint venture between Oldham Council and Foxdenton LLP.
It’s estimated 2,000 new jobs will be created and will give a further boost, worth £4.6m annually, to the local retail economy.

Royalton Town Hall

Saddleworth School

Alexandra Park Eco Centre

Greenfield School

Solar Farm

Broadway Green

Alexandra Park Eco Centre
Major town plan creates 1,000 jobs

Plans for the town centre are expected to create more job opportunities and apprenticeships for local people.

Once building work starts on new homes for the town centre, there will be hundreds of new jobs in the construction industry.

Other jobs are expected to come from businesses, leisure and retail companies who want to invest in the town centre given the increased footfall.

The council is also helping existing businesses to expand and grow.

Build your skills at new £9m construction centre

Oldham College's plan was agreed by the council in January and the new building will be completed in 2020/21 academic year.

Students will get the chance to study skilled technical trades and higher professional skills, including project and facilities management and surveying, through to degree level.

It will see the number of construction students at Oldham College increase by 70 per cent – with apprenticeships in construction also expanding by an extra 200 places per year.

The centre means the college can address the future needs for its construction provision to meet growing and substantial demand from both local employers and learners.

Alun Francis, Oldham College's Principal and Chief Executive, said: “The new Construction Centre is a vital step in addressing the changing national landscape and debate about the future of skills.

“The government is now recognising the growing need for more work-based and flexible ways to get high-skilled qualifications: rather than traditional academic routes of A Levels and three-year residential degrees.

“We’re making transformational changes to our curriculum and facilities to meet this opportunity – and this new construction centre is going to be a huge asset to Oldham as a place, to generations of learners, to local businesses and our economy.”

Considered being an apprentice?

Whilst studying at Oldham College Thomas Rogers couldn’t decide whether to go to university or to get an apprenticeship.

When it was time to make the decision, he decided an apprenticeship in software development could offer him the best of both worlds, giving him invaluable experience in an organisation he could progress in whilst studying.

He started off by shadowing developers and learning how they worked. Over time he was given ownership of his own projects and started helping other teams.

He said: “My college supported my release to the workplace, to gain experience and get my foot in the door. I was shown all my possible options so I could make the best decision for my future.

“I have gained communication skills, including presenting and interpersonal skills and developed my problem-solving skills and can now work efficiently in a team. My plans are to complete my current apprenticeship and move on to do a masters apprenticeship.”

For more information about what an apprenticeship could do for you visit: www.oldham.gov.uk/apprenticeships

“I found a new career at 66 thanks to Get Oldham Working”

Ian Helm first came across Get Oldham Working (GOW) when he was made redundant after 45 years in logistics.

Aged 66, he could have retired but decided he wanted to continue working and saw his redundancy as a chance to explore his options and do something more meaningful.

However, his confidence started to suffer because he didn’t know about the job market outside logistics and he decided to get help from GOW.

He met one of their National Careers Service advisors who helped him put together a Career and Skills Action Plan and create a new CV.

He also had access to their online Skills Health Check to explore his transferable skills and he built a LinkedIn profile, so he could network and look for work opportunities.

Ian has now been offered a role with the Growth Company in Salford supporting people who are in danger of going into distress and helping to remove barriers to employment.

He said: “It’s been incredibly valuable to be able to step away and be supported to find out what my strengths are and how I can use them. I do think I’d still be looking around and lack focus if I hadn’t gone to Get Oldham Working.”
Oldham... a place to live and put down roots

The council’s commitment to delivering 2,000 homes will be transformational for the borough and residents.

We know we have too many older terraced houses in central areas, many of which are in poor condition. This means too many residents live in homes that are in a bad state of repair or overcrowded.

There’s limited opportunities for first time buyers or young adults wanting to get their first home. At the same time, people who want to move up the property ladder are often forced to look outside the borough.

The government has set us a challenging target – we must supply and have plans to deliver 692 new homes each year in order to meet our housing needs – so it’s vital we work hard to bring forward new developments. This is an opportunity to increase the quality and choice available at different prices, and across tenures, including affordable housing and homes for social rent.

It will also ensure a diverse housing mix, so that everyone can find a home suitable for them, regardless of their personal needs or circumstances and this includes boosting the offer for older people. The number of people in Oldham over the age of 75 is projected to increase by more than 10,000 by 2035 so we cannot sit around and do nothing.

By focusing largely on town centre living we’ll not only support town centre regeneration, but we will also ensure urban sites are prioritised. This means, where possible, we can avoid building on greenbelt land in order to preserve our much-loved open spaces.

The council is already working hard to improve what we have in Oldham. From bringing empty homes back into use to safeguarding tenants in the private rental sector through our Selective Licensing Scheme.

New homes are also being developed across the borough and we are committed to bringing forward more choice in affordable homes and financial products. The council has used its land to deliver more than 300 high-quality affordable and aspirational homes over the last three years, and developers are on site building a further 388 properties. We also look forward to bringing more social housing options forward in the very near future.

Councillor Hannah Roberts, Cabinet Member for Housing said “Everybody has the right to a roof over their head, somewhere safe and warm that they can call home. But for many people, this isn’t their reality. “We want to make Oldham a place where every resident, as well as those looking to settle here, can find a home they want at a price they can afford.

‘Creating a Better Place’ will make that happen.”

Building the right type of houses

It’s important we have the right partners on board, ones which share our vision of creating flagship neighbourhoods in locations where people want to live.

We appointed Redrow Homes to develop the former Counthill School site and they are now well on with creating a development which, once finished, will be made up of 50 detached and 10 semi-detached homes: 38 four bed and 22 three bed.

The first residents have already moved in. It’s not just about building quality and sustainable houses either – Redrow Homes is committed to creating apprenticeship positions and using local suppliers and subcontractors, to help grow the local economy.

As part of the scheme the developers are also providing highway improvements to Haven Lane and Counthill Road as well as a new 38 space car park for users of the sports hall at nearby Waterhead Academy.

Lights are bright on Broadway

Work is progressing well at the £100 million regeneration scheme at Broadway Green – and some of you have already started to move in.

Redrow Homes are well on with building the first phase of 97 new homes.

Courtryside Properties are also carrying out ground works to deliver a second phase of 137 homes – 85 of which will be affordable homes.

We and our Joint Venture Partners, Foxdenton LLP, are going to submit a planning application so more homes can be built. This means more people will get the chance to get on the property ladder or possibly make the move to a home that suits their lifestyle.

If you have driven past the site recently you will also have noticed work taking place just off Broadway.

This is the final phase of construction of a major new link road, which will provide access to the site.

It’s a major construction project and we know it will cause disruption but please bear with us – we are trying to keep it to a minimum.

We estimate when the full Broadway Green project is finished it will have created up to 2,000 new jobs and give a boost worth £4.6m annually to the local economy.

For more information about what is going on visit: www.foxdentonllp.co.uk
There’s loads to do in Oldham town centre

From new shops to new places to eat and socialise, check out some of the highlights.

The Old Town Hall
It’s just over three years since the Old Town Hall opened to the public. The building is home to Odeon which screens all the latest movies every day. With tonnes of original features, it really is one of the most unique cinemas in the country. There’s also a Nando’s and Molino Lounge if you’re looking for a bite to eat or drink.

Whittles at Tokyo
Popular live music venue Whittles has re-opened at Tokyo Oldham on Roscoe Street. With bands and live music every weekend, there’s plenty of gigs coming up.
Visit: www.whittlesoldham.com for more information.

Oldham Coliseum Theatre
From stand-up comedians, to plays and the ever-popular pantomime, Oldham Coliseum Theatre has a packed programme for 2020. To check out the latest shows visit: www.coliseum.org.uk

German Doner Kebab
This popular food chain has only been open for a few months and it’s already proving popular with residents and visitors. The retailer specialises in creating a healthy and nutritionally balanced approach to traditional kebabs.

Their first store opened in Berlin in 1989 and they have gone from strength to strength ever since. The owner, Baz, said: “Oldham is a great town with a lot of great people and we’re happy we chose the location. We have a stand out place on the high street and we’ve been busy non-stop since opening.”

Hays Travel arrive
Hays Travel, the UK’s largest independent travel agents, has just opened its second store in Oldham following its purchase of 555 former Thomas Cook stores.
This comes after Thomas Cook entered liquidation back in September of last year, when 9,000 staff across the country faced job losses.
The two stores are located next to McDonalds and Holland & Barrett respectively.
Be sure to pop in when you’re looking for your next holiday adventure.

Parliament Square
The public open space outside the Old Town Hall has also been radically improved with lots of new features. If you’ve not paid a visit to our statue of suffragette Annie Kenney yet, then do say hello. Lots of people like to leave flowers for her as a mark of respect.

Climbing Centre
A fantastic new rock climbing centre is set to be built. The Olympic-level facility is being built by the Stoller Charitable Trust and all the profits made by the centre will be reinvested back into the charity.

Gallery Oldham
With an unrivalled programme of entertainment and activities – including plenty of free, family-friendly things to do – Gallery Oldham is a must for people of all ages.
Visit: www.galleryoldham.org.uk to see what’s on.

JYSK to expand into Oldham
Euro furniture brand, JYSK has announced it will open in Oldham this spring. This came as part of recent expansion plans unveiled by the Scandinavian-owned business.
The new store will create around ten new jobs.

Despite only being two years old Comic Den is taking the comic world by storm.
The shop in Manchester Chambers opened in January 2018 and has recently been named the UK’s Best Comic Shop after 30,000 people voted for it.

Owners Dennis and Sarah Whittle are delighted – not only to see their business succeed but also to become an important part of the community.

They also organise Oldham Comic Con which takes place in May. The event has run for the past three years with approximately 6,000 visitors descending on Oldham from all over the world.

The business also employs a member of staff from Royton who came through the Get Oldham Working programme, which helps residents with employment opportunities.

OMA Gosh!
New computer drawings have been released which show what the new arts and heritage centre in the heart of the town centre will look like.

The venue, known as OMA, short for Oldham Museum and Archives will offer three new state-of-the-art galleries, a modern archive search and study space to discover local and family history, and a performance space offering a diverse programme of music, comedy, talks, local talent showcases and theatre.

Located in the old library building on Union Street, it will also feature a new shop, café and bar.

‘Interserve’, the international support services, construction and equipment group, has been chosen to deliver the project and restore the grade two-listed former library and art gallery.
Work is set to start in spring this year, with an expected open date of late 2021 – the venue is part of the council’s wider ‘Creating a Better Place’ plans.
New traders set out their stall at market

Michelle Riley: Cob and Coal

Local landlady Michelle Riley (pictured right) identified a gap in the market at Tommyfield Market and has opened the market’s first micro-brewery.

Having seen the concept work well in neighbouring Ashton Market, Michelle’s cosy tap and bottle shop, ‘Cob and Coal’, has shared similar success selling a variety of real ales, imported lager, wines and spirits.

Since opening late last year, Cob and Coal has become a firm favourite with Oldham’s shoppers and Michelle is loving every minute of it. “It’s been fantastic,” Michelle said. “The customers are really funny too; we have a good laugh.”

“There’s also a real community here at the market and all the traders look after one another.”

When asked what she would say to other businesses thinking of investing in Oldham, Michelle replied: “Just do it.”

“I think Oldham gets a lot of bad press, but for change to happen people need to start doing things like setting up these little businesses. “The help is there from the council, so you’ve just got to go for it.”

Olivia Jackson: Flowers by Olivia

Just a few months into her first ever business adventure, ‘Flowers by Olivia’, the teenager’s decision is paying off. “It’s been really good so far and we have customers coming back, that’s always a good sign,” she said.

“I’ve been working here a long time, so I knew what all of the people were like and what would sell best so it was a good opportunity. I had to take it.”

Former Greaves Arms pub set for transformation

The historic former Greaves Arms pub, located in the heart of Oldham town centre, is undergoing an extensive transformation and refurbishment to bring the much-loved building back to life.

Work has started on site and the developers plan to transform the disused building into a high-quality Indian cuisine restaurant, called Café East by EastzEast.

Developers KKI Investments are carrying out extensive work to the interior, roof and the historic wooden windows to help conserve the building’s 19th century features.

Kamran Ghafoor Director of KKI Investments, said “We’re delighted to agree terms or the Greaves Arms as it’s such a focal point in the town centre. The surrounding area has undergone tremendous investment and improvement from the council in recent years and we know Café East will complement the nearby Odeon Cinema, Nando’s, Café 22 and Molino Lounge.

“This restaurant will bring a unique dining experience to Oldham. It won’t be a like a traditional restaurant as we’ll be changing menu themes frequently.

“We’ll be open all day – providing a full breakfast, lunchtime and evening à la carte menu.

“We’d like to thank the council for their support during the process and we look forward to our future in Oldham town centre.”

The refurbished Greaves Arms is scheduled to open in early summer 2020.

It was built in 1925 and served Oldham’s residents until it closed in 2015.
Top marks for Primary schools

The standard of education in Oldham schools is getting better after nine primary schools received ‘Good’ or ‘Outstanding’ Ofsted results in the autumn.

This means 82 per cent of primary schools in the borough are now ‘Good’ or ‘Outstanding’ – showing that the work of Oldham Council, supported by the finances and staff of Oldham Opportunity Area (OA), has contributed to the improvements.

In 2017, Oldham OA was launched as one of 12 OAs by the government to raise education standards. It brings together national and local government, education leaders, teachers, voluntary organisations and employers. Together the goal is to ensure children and young people in the borough get the opportunities and support they need and deserve.

There have also been improvements in a number of other important areas of learning:

- Early years (children aged 1–5): the good level of development in our young people improved by 4% compared to national average of 0.4%
- Key stage 1 (ages 5–7): in 2017, 58% of pupils reached the expected standard, this increased by 2.8% to 60.8% in 2019 (the national average has only increased by 0.9%)
- Key stage 2 (ages 7–11): in 2017, 57% of pupils reached the expected standard, this increased by 6% to 63% in 2019 (the national average has only increased by 3%)

However, the council recognises that standards at secondary schools also need to improve and there will be a greater focus on this in the coming months.

Angela Knowles, Headteacher at St Thomas CofE Primary School in Werneth, said “We at St Thomas are immensely proud of our whole school community, the work continually done, and the outcomes achieved.

“Our school priority has been to develop a bespoke curriculum tailored to the needs of our pupils. Ofsted acknowledged that our curriculum goes beyond academic learning, was well planned and contributed to the pupils’ excellent behaviour and positive approach to learning.”

Hilary Henderson, Headteacher, St Paul’s CofE Primary in Royton, said: “The governors, staff, parents, pupils and I are extremely proud of our latest Ofsted inspection recognising St Paul’s as a ‘Good’ school.

“Our inspection which took place within the first four days of the autumn term enabled us to show the inspection team all the hard work and commitment that has supported our children’s learning journey.”

Building schools to be proud of

More than £40 million is being invested in schools to ensure Oldham’s children are given the best possible start in life and every child gets educated in a modern environment.

The new £5.7m Greenfield Primary School (pictured) officially opened in September last year and a small changing block and the school’s playing field are scheduled to completed very soon.

Major expansion works have also taken place at two of our secondary schools, Crompton House and Oldham Academy North. This has created 112 extra school places per year at Crompton House and 60 extra school places per year at Oldham Academy North.

A significant rebuild of Saddleworth School is scheduled and anticipated to open during the 2022/23 academic year.

Other schemes planned include:

- New expansion of North Chadderton Academy by 30 school places per year from academic year 2021/22.
- New Hydro Pool and classroom expansion of Kingfisher Primary School due for completion in summer 2020.

Rise in number of school ready kids

More Oldham children under-five are ready to start school after improvements to their reading and writing skills.

The number of school children reaching a Good Level of Development at the Early Years Foundation Stage in Oldham has increased from 2,115 pupils (60.5%) in 2016 to 2,338 pupils (69.1%) in 2019, an increase of 7.6%.

This makes Oldham the most improved local authority in the north west and one of the most improved in the country.

When children develop good communication and language, reading and writing skills early in life, they are more likely to do well at school and their future prospects of getting a good job increase.

Starting in 2017, the Oldham Opportunity Area has committed £700,000 to programmes in Oldham, including the award-winning Raising Early Achievement in Literacy (Making it REAL) programme, to support families with children under five to make reading and writing with their children part of everyday life.

Watch out for updates on our website www.oldham.gov.uk in the next few weeks.
Oldham Council aims to be carbon neutral by 2025

We are the first council in the UK to announce the intention to be a ‘Green New Deal Council’ and last year we declared a climate emergency.

The Oldham New Deal is set to be adopted this month and a paper will be published that sets out how the council will meet its carbon neutral targets. Being more environmentally friendly is expected to bring real economic benefits to local people and businesses over the next ten years including lower fuel bills, more jobs and training opportunities.

Councillor Abdul Jabbar MBE, Deputy Leader of Oldham Council and Cabinet Member for Finance and Corporate Services, said “We know tackling climate change is important to many of you and rather than just talking about it we have made the decision to act. The growing climate change crisis is too important to ignore and we all have to do our bit to safeguard the future of our children.”

What else are we doing that’s green?

By the time you read this article we expect to have submitted our proposals to build a 900kw solar farm in Failsworth.

The development would help boost our drive to become the greenest borough in Greater Manchester and help the council’s aim of becoming carbon neutral by 2025.

The farm would be built on the former Ferranti football field at Wrigley Head in Failsworth, with the electricity generated from the site being used to supply the council.

The solar farm would add to the 120kw rooftop panels already operating on the rooftop of Tommyfield Market.

Councillor Abdul Jabbar MBE, said “Over the last 10 years the council has been forced to make millions of pounds in savings, so we need to come up with imaginative and economically sound ideas which benefit the borough and its people but don’t rely on traditional energy sources.

“This solar farm would help us become more energy efficient in a time when fuel bills are continually rising.”

If planning permission is granted for the application then building work could begin next year.

We want you to work with us to help make the changes needed to lower carbon emissions across the borough.

Making a real difference

Over the last four years Oldham Council’s Green Dividend Fund has helped support 76 community projects across the borough.

Dozens of you have got in touch to find out how you could get involved in community gardening and growing projects – basically looking to do your bit to improve your own neighbourhood.

We’ve seen some real successes and improvements to areas across our town.

These include...

Redrub Gardens, Burder Street, Hollinwood. A group of green-fingered residents transformed their alleyway into a communal space thanks to a grant of £2,370. This has now become a pleasant, green area for the local residents to enjoy together and it has a real spirit of community pride and ownership.

A group of residents on Sickle Street, Glodwick, applied for funding to develop an existing greenspace area allocated at the back of their houses. With support from Mahdlo ‘Get A Job’ students, raised beds were put in place and fruit trees, wildflowers and bulbs were planted to make it an attractive area as well as supporting the local wildlife.

Around 20 families have been involved in transforming alleyways at Burlington and Gainsborough Avenue in Coppice. In total more than 100 people have engaged and participated in workshops and celebration days. This won an award at the 2019 North West in Bloom competition.

We’ve built on that success with the Green Dividend Innovate.

Pupils, partners and teachers at Oasis Academy Oldham expanded their urban farm project – creating an urban natural environment for the community, connecting people with nature. The school now has a range of raised beds along with a greenhouse to grow fresh produce, with parents helping during the school holidays.

Councillor Ateeque Ur-Rehman, Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood Services, said “One of Oldham’s strengths is its people, the pride they take in their neighbourhoods and their willingness to pitch in and ‘do their bit’. Residents are proud of where they live, and the work carried out thanks to Green Dividend funding is a great example of that.”
Northern Roots is a new and pioneering project that will create the UK’s largest urban farm and Eco-park on Snipe Clough.

Located right next to Oldham’s flagship park, Alexandra Park, Snipe Clough is 160 acres of stunning green space in the heart of Oldham.

Through its award-winning parks and Growing Hubs, Oldham Community Power and projects like Get Oldham Growing, Oldham has become a beacon for community growing, local food production, horticulture training, renewable energy and urban biodiversity. With initial support from Oldham Council, Northern Roots is a unique opportunity to build on this expertise at an unprecedented scale.

Northern Roots will be developed for and with local communities, creating a wide range of activities and business opportunities on Snipe Clough. This will include growing edible and ornamental crops at scale, animal husbandry and bee-keeping, forestry, mountain biking, and outdoor events and performances.

We are at the beginning of this exciting journey and need as many people as possible to join us to help bring Northern Roots to life. Would you like to get involved? Do you have skills in growing, farming, eco-tourism or sports that you’d like to develop into a business?

Are there events or activities that you would like to see happening on the Northern Roots’ site?

Please share your thoughts with us by filling in a quick online questionnaire here: www.oldham.gov.uk/northernroots or start a conversation with us at northern.roots@oldham.gov.uk

Find out more about Northern Roots at: www.northern-roots.uk and follow Northern Roots on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram.

Sign up for updates on Northern Roots and information about events and news in your area.

From bulletins about what’s on, news and family life, to the latest jobs, sports and health information, you pick what you’re interested in and we’ll email updates to you.

Visit: www.oldham.gov.uk/email
Local projects granted nearly £400k funding

14 local projects throughout Oldham have been granted funding to improve quality of life in the area.

Oldham Council is investing money into innovative projects across the borough through its Local Improvement Fund (LIF). These 14 projects will provide fantastic regeneration opportunities and improve facilities for residents.

The successful applicants have projects in every district in Oldham and will consist of:

- Improving the Foxdenton Pavilion in Chadderton
- Creating an Albany Alva ‘pocket park’ in Waterhead
- Creating East Oldham’s first outdoor gym at Beckett Meadows in St Mary’s
- Developing two community hubs in St James’ Ward
- Funding deployable CCTV in Limeside to help tackle anti-social behaviour
- Enhancing the Hollinwood War Memorial
- Adding a playable feature to Westminster Gardens in Failsworth that blends into the landscape
- Improving the exteriors of existing businesses and start-ups on Royton High Street
- Developing a Trim Trail in High Crompton Park
- Improving the Turf Lane footbridge in Royton by improving the width to make it safer and more accessible
- Refurbishing the Satellite Centre in Greenfield
- Improving road safety on Denshaw Road, particularly for parents and children crossing the road when travelling to and from Christchurch school
- Regenerating Lees Village Centre, creating a catalyst for increasing community/ business activity and involvement
- Improving the area that bounds Featherstall Road North to create pleasant green space where local families can relax and play.

Pavilion to open as a Community Café

For many years, Foxdenton Pavilion has been identified as an area lacking in community space. Now, the Chadderton Together charity, with funding, will renovate it to create a community space for residents.

The café and surrounding park will be available for different activities such as conferences, yoga and aerobics. The café will be known as Lydia’s Teashop after the suffragist, Lydia Becker who lived in Foxdenton Hall and will serve the new housing development of 500 homes.

Local resident Joanne Bradburn, said “As a regular user of this park, I am really excited for the Pavilion to open and feel it will be a real asset not only to the park but to the wider community.”

This is only the first part of a wider project to completely renovate the iconic Foxdenton Hall.

Big changes in Westminster Gardens

Westminster Gardens in Failsworth is undergoing big changes.

Residents within the surrounding streets wanted the park to be accessible to all families and children to let them relax and play.

Councillor Sean Fielding, said “Having successfully applied for funding, work will now be done to refresh and enhance the existing features, creating play areas with stepping stones and boulders to play on and explore.”

A local resident said: “The park is a nice feature within the community and (the funding) would give everyone the opportunity to use it in a positive way.”

This exciting project is expected to be completed in summer 2020.
Better public transport for Oldham

For millions of people public transport is a vital method of travel – but for too long public transport in the north west has not been good enough.

That is why Oldham Council is launching a campaign on behalf of its residents to improve transport links. We are asking central Government to:

Build a new line of the Metrolink which links Oldham to Bury and Ashton-under-Lyne. This orbital route will mean people won’t always have to travel into Manchester and it will provide a faster tram link to Manchester Piccadilly station and therefore other parts of the country.

We are also backing plans for improved walking and cycling routes and a more integrated bus system across the whole of Manchester – creating a public transport system to rival London by the end of this decade.

Oldham Council Leader, Councillor Sean Fielding, said “For years, the north west has been overlooked in favour of London and it is time now to provide us with the transport systems that will allow us to thrive.

“We are asking the Government to put its money where its mouth is and seriously invest in the north.”

MP for Oldham West and Royton, Jim McMahon raised the issue in Parliament in January when he asked Transport Secretary, Grant Shapps to commit to a meeting to discuss a tram link from Oldham to Ashton.

The orbital link will connect the whole of the North East of Manchester ensuring passengers can travel to towns across Greater Manchester more directly than at present – which sees many journeys having to be made via the city centre. As a result, we will all be better connected, have shorter journeys and travel will be more sustainable.

A series of improvements to public transport across Greater Manchester are already in progress as part of a ten year integrated transport strategy launched by Mayor of Greater Manchester, Andy Burnham. They include:

- Our Pass to give free bus travel to 16 to 18 year olds
- Contactless payments launched on the Metrolink
- A new bike hire scheme launching in 2020
- Ambition to take control of the local rail network, GM Rail

There are also plans for a cycle and walking network. Covering 1,800 miles of protected space across the city region, the Bee Network will be the UK’s largest walking and cycling network. If approved, it would lead to a 350 per cent increase in cycling alone, alongside huge health and financial benefits.

A public consultation on bringing Greater Manchester’s bus network into public control has also been carried out. The consultation asked for people’s views on a proposed franchising system so the public-sector can set the routes, timetables, tickets and standards instead of private bus companies. The results of the consultation are due to be announced soon.

It comes as Northern Rail was stripped of its franchise and is set to be brought back under government control following years of major disruption. The government says it is committed providing the north with a greater say in the running of its railway, with local leaders having more power over local services, timetables, fares and stations. This decision represents a step towards that and delivering a railway focused on the needs of its passengers.

We – the people who live and work here, who face these daily delays, high fares and disconnected services – could not agree more.

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