



# Revitalising Altrincham Town Centre





# Introduction

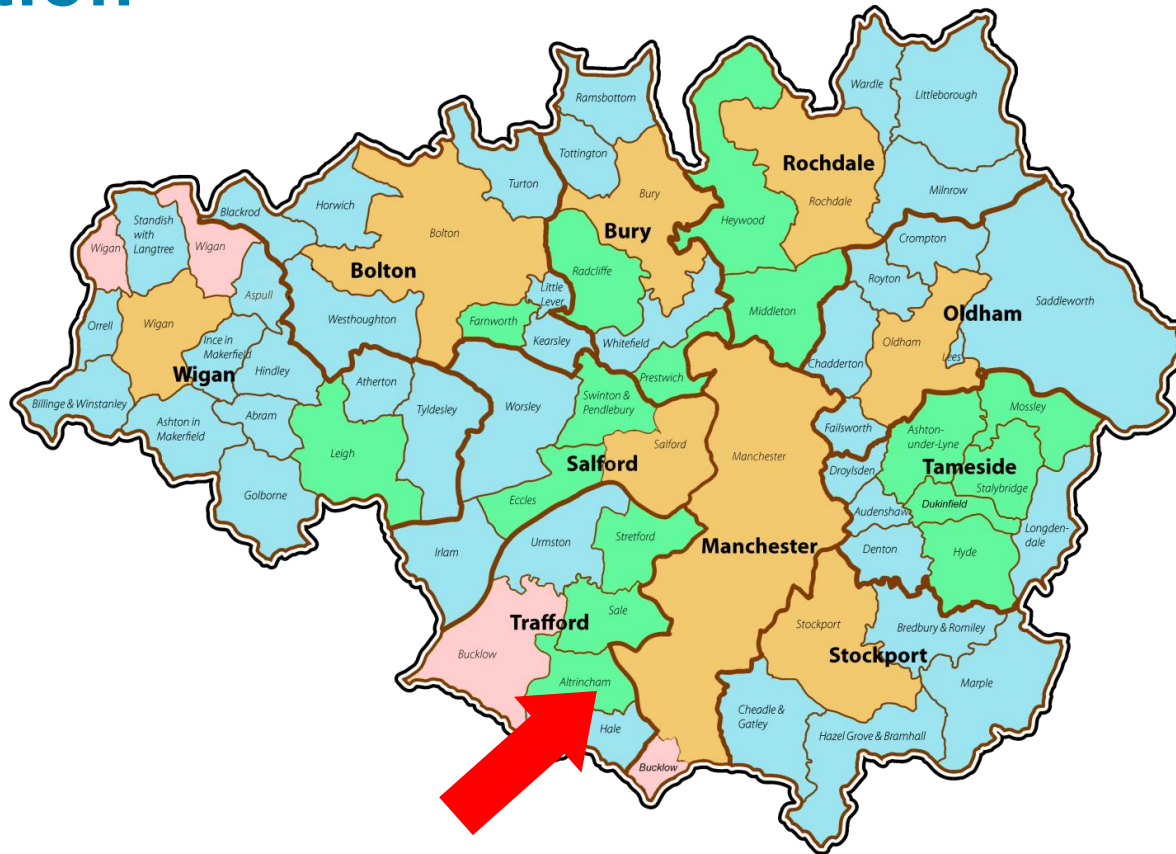
- Trafford's largest town centre and historic market town.
- Home to over 400 retail / food and drink businesses and a thriving commercial sector.
- Regeneration has led to national interest and media focus.
- Presentation will cover :
  - Where Altrincham was in 2010
  - How change was achieved
  - Successes
  - Lessons learned and next steps



# Location



TRAFFORD  
COUNCIL





# Location

- Population of around 52,000.
- South Trafford is generally fairly affluent.
- Good quality schools.
- In 2019, Sunday Times named it second best place to live in NW - “a cool slice of suburbia with big family houses and a new-found buzz”.





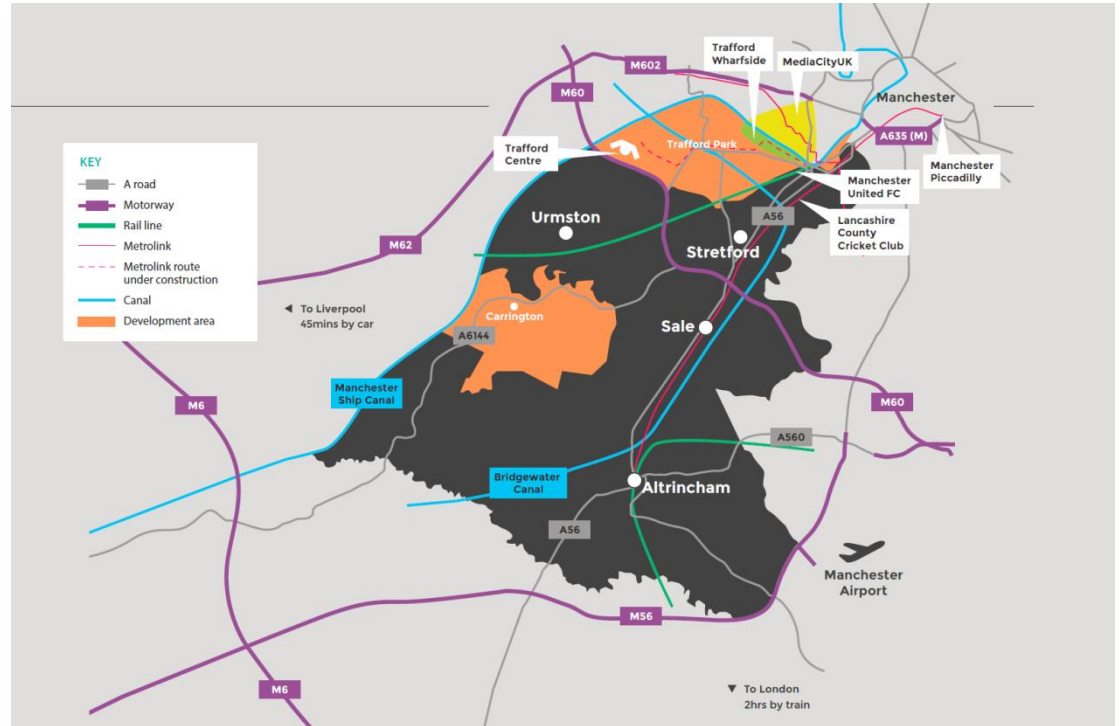
# Location



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Well connected:

- Metrolink
- Rail
- 5 mins to M56
- 15 mins to Airport





# Where we came from

- Altrincham branded a 'ghost town' in the national press in 2010.
- Vacancy rate of 30% - highest in UK.
- Town's decline could not just be blamed on the Trafford Centre or online shopping.
- Poor public realm, underachieving retail offer, developer inactivity.
- Urgent action was required.

GHOST TOWN VACANCY RATE	
<b>1. Altrincham</b> 30.04% - up 8.67%	<b>6. Morecombe</b> 25.01% - up 8.15%
<b>2. Blackpool</b> 28.93% - down 0.20%	<b>7. Bradford</b> 24.64% - up 3.94%
<b>3. Margate</b> 27.55% - up 0.48%	<b>8. Wolverhampton</b> 23.78% - up 4.44%
<b>4. Dewsbury</b> 27.44% - up 10.51%	<b>9. Doncaster</b> 23.70% - up 5.31%
<b>5. Stockton-on-Tees</b> 27.27% - up 6.86%	<b>10. Leith</b> 23.44% - flat

\*Source: LDC



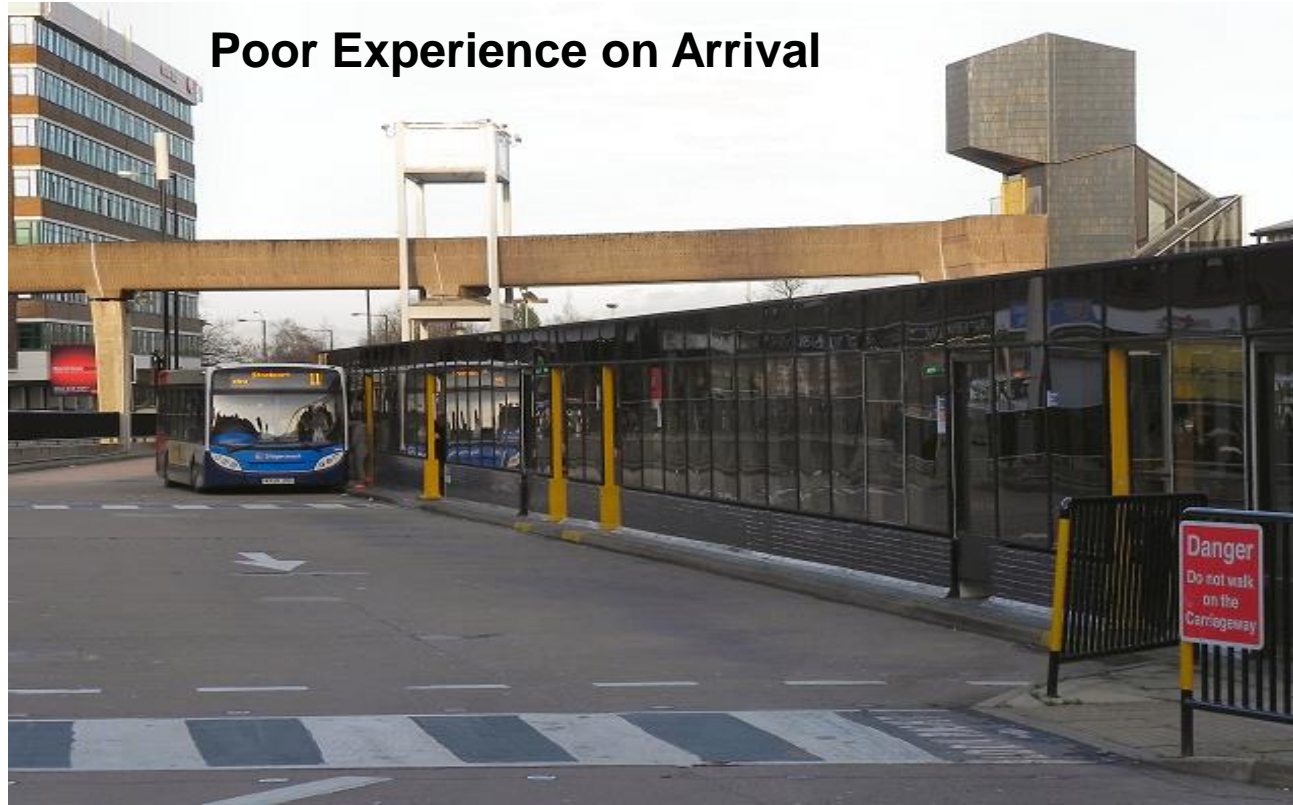
# Where we came from

## Vacant Units



# Where we came from

## Poor Experience on Arrival





# Where we came from

## Poor Public Realm





## What we did

- Council made Altrincham a priority.
- Altrincham Forward was established in 2011
- Vision and Action Plan - “Modern market town”.
- Objectives: increase footfall, dwell time & spend.
- Public Realm Strategy completed in 2012.
- Landlords Forum - share intelligence, market the town, and improve properties in poor condition.
- Threat of Section 215 action secured improvements.





# Investment

- Town Team established in 2013.
- c£900k Refurbished Market House and Market – catalyst for regeneration.
- £3m Public Realm Improvements – further works planned.
- £19m Transport Interchange
- £17m Hospital.
- Loan Scheme –£260,000 loaned to new businesses in Altrincham to date.



# Town Centres Business Growth Programme

- Interest free loans up to £10,000.
- Help to refurbish vacant units or fund marketing costs.
- Physical improvements and year 1 overheads can be funded.
- Match funding of 30% required.
- 23 new businesses have opened in Altrincham.
- Created c102 new jobs and levered c£640k investment.

# Why was the partnership so important?

- Altrincham Forward provided the strategic direction and a ‘whole town centre’ approach.
- It helped instil business, investment and residents confidence in the town.
- Delivered business and skills support initiatives and a whole range of events and promotional activity.
- It influenced and lobbied the Council to focus resources.
- It stimulated a night-time/leisure economy.



# Altrincham Forward Structure





## What was the legacy?

- Vacancy levels have fallen to 7.3%.
- Footfall has increased 11.4% since 2015.
- 2019 to date is currently up 7.6% on last year (this compares to -3.0% average for UK market towns).
- c10,000 visitors per week visiting the Market House.
- c£60m total investment to date.





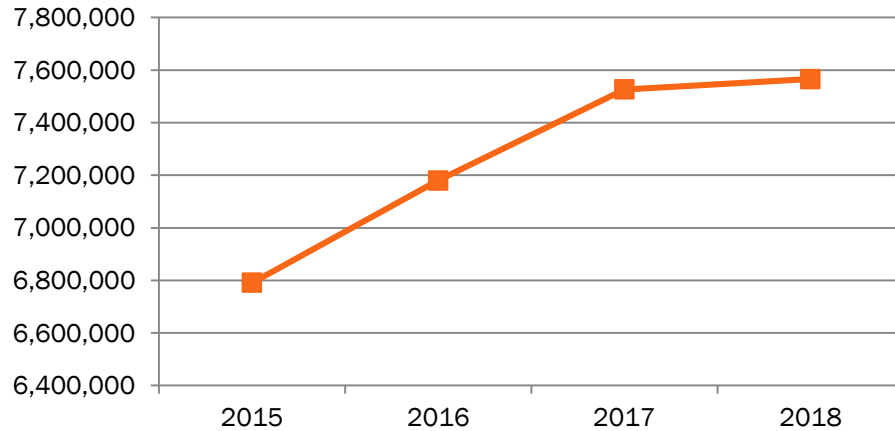
## What was the legacy?

- Council continues to invest in the town – c£3m of further public realm works in development.
- Town Centres team established by the Council to cover 4 main towns in borough (inc. Altrincham).
- Champion High Street in England 2018 in the Great British High Street Awards.
- Featured as an exemplar town on BBC News, Sky News, The One Show, 5Live and many more.

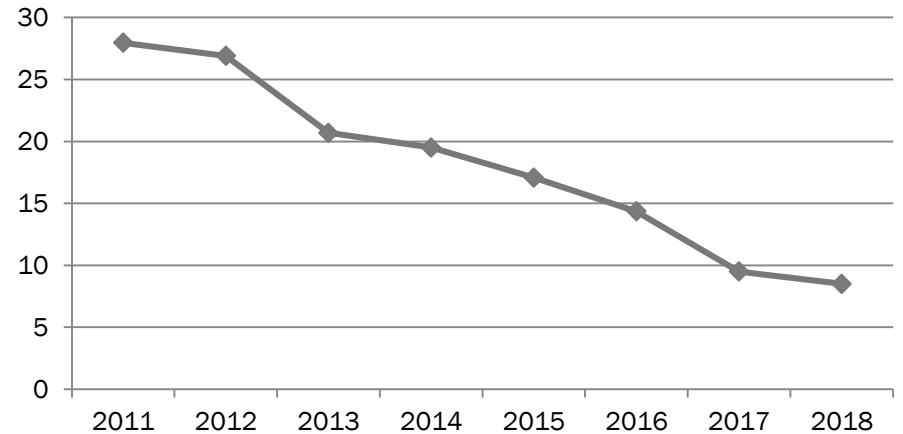


# Facts and Figures

## Footfall - Up 11.4%



## Vacancy Rate – Down to 7.3%





## Establishing a BID

- Altrincham Forward made the policy decision to start developing a BID and the Council worked closely with businesses to develop the proposal.
- Successful BID ballot in November 2015
- Altrincham Forward wound up in Dec 2016.
- £1.4 million over 5 years.
- The drive, focus, commitment and strong partnership continues through Altrincham Unlimited.







# BID Projects

Activity includes:

- Marketing campaigns.
- A year round events programme.
- Christmas lights, switch on and lantern parade.
- Business training / workshops.
- Deep cleaning / jet washing.
- Cost savings on utility bills.
- Appointment of a Town Ranger.





## Perfect Day (May 2019)

- High Street Report (Dec 2018) – “one day a year where town centre looks and feels the best it possibly can”.
- Altrincham was pilot town - BID, Council, One Trafford, and community volunteers worked in partnership.
- Cleaning, litter picking, weeding, maintenance of planting.
- High Street Festival on the day.
- Business support – promotion of offers, mystery shopping.
- Regional and national media coverage on day





# What was the legacy?



**New Hospital**





# What was the legacy?



## New Transport Interchange



# What was the legacy?



**Improved Public  
Realm**



# What was the legacy?

## An Award Winning Market



## Everyman Cinema



## Regent Road - Mixed Use Development / Car Park



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## Altair – Mixed Use Development



## New Library





## Lessons Learned

- Vital that the Council plays a strong leadership role.
- Important that all sectors are engaged e.g. business, education, transport, landlords, developers & community
- Importance of a USP (e.g. Altrincham Market).
- Creating an experience – diversifying offer.
- Improving public realm attracts footfall and investment.
- BIDs are critical to ensuring that longer term investment / resourcing can be sustained.





## What next for Altrincham

- Neighbourhood Business Plan (2017) guides future development and growth over next 15 years.
- Council continues to work closely with the BID.
- Acquisition of Grafton Shopping Centre.
- Bringing forward new development and supporting an increased residential offer (e.g. Altair and Regent Road).
- Public realm design currently out to tender.
- Commitment of additional finance to loan scheme.

