



TOWN GROWTH PLAN

Audenshaw



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Audenshaw

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CONTEXT

Audenshaw is one of nine neighbourhoods located within the Metropolitan Borough of Tameside, situated approximately 1.7 miles to the west of Ashton-under-Lyne, 4.9 miles east of Manchester and bisected by the M60 motorway.

Audenshaw comprises the single Ward of Audenshaw and is bound by the Tameside neighbourhoods of Droylsden to the north, Denton to the south, Ashton and Dukinfield to the east and the Manchester neighbourhoods of Audenshaw and Gorton to the west.

The origin of the name Audenshaw probably derived from a Saxon personal name 'Aldwine' and the old English suffix 'shagh' meaning copes or woodland; the earliest records for which date from the 12th century and 13th century.

Nico Ditch, an Anglo-Saxon period linear earthwork (bank and ditch) extends 6 miles between Ashton under Lyne to Stretford. Remains of a 300m section of Nico Ditch within Audenshaw (south of Cornhill Lane and north Dogeleach Brook), a section of ditch is thought to be below Audenshaw Reservoir.



Historically Audenshaw (consisting of the hamlets of Woodhouses, Waterhouses, Littlemoss, Audenshaw, Medlock Vale and Hooley Hill) was one of the four divisions of the Parish of Ashton which was established in approx. 1280.

Manchester and Ashton Canal established by an Act of Parliament in 1792 – built to supply coal from Oldham and Ashton to Manchester.

An Act of Parliament was passed in 1732 which permitted the construction of a turnpike road from Manchester to Mottram (later the Manchester to Saltersbook Turnpike Road) which ran through Audenshaw along the route of the existing A635 Manchester Road/ B6390 Audenshaw Road. A toll bar was established at 'Old Audenshaw' and a new bypass section to the turnpike began in 1824 extending along Manchester Road across the eastern end of Ashton Moss.

Turnpike Road established by an Act of Parliament in 1818 and the original Manchester to Saltersbrook Turn pike road along Manchester Road/ Audenshaw Road and the later 1824 extension out to Ashton Moss.



This period also saw the arrival of the Stockport to Stalybridge Branch of the London and Northwestern railway and the Manchester, Sheffield and Lincolnshire Railway line. These developments significantly improved the town's connectivity, linking more effectively with the industrial centres. The proximity to Guide Bridge station made Audenshaw an increasingly attractive location for both workers and businesses, enabling the growth of local industries such as textiles, hat-making, and engineering. The railways also played a pivotal role in shaping the town's urban expansion and infrastructure.

In 1874 it established its own local board and in 1894 became an Urban District.

By c.1890 the Manchester Carriage and Tramway Company had extended their horse drawn tramcar services to outlying areas including Ashton-under-Lyne, Audenshaw and Droylsden. However, the Corporation of Manchester had taken over the modernisation and running of the tramways using overhead electric cables by 1895. The new electric trams services from Piccadilly extended to Openshaw and Audenshaw by c.1903, evidence for which can be found in the remaining (former) transformer pillar erected behind the stone trough on this same junction. By the c.1930s operating and infrastructure improvements costs made the running of many tram services unprofitable, which instigated the replacement of the electric trams by motorised buses and trolley buses including the replacement of the old trams on Ashton Old Road with new trolleybuses in 1936. This was shortly followed by a decision in 1937 to abandon all trams in favour of trolley buses or motor buses. The last trolley bus route in Manchester was abandoned by the end of 1966.



EXTENT

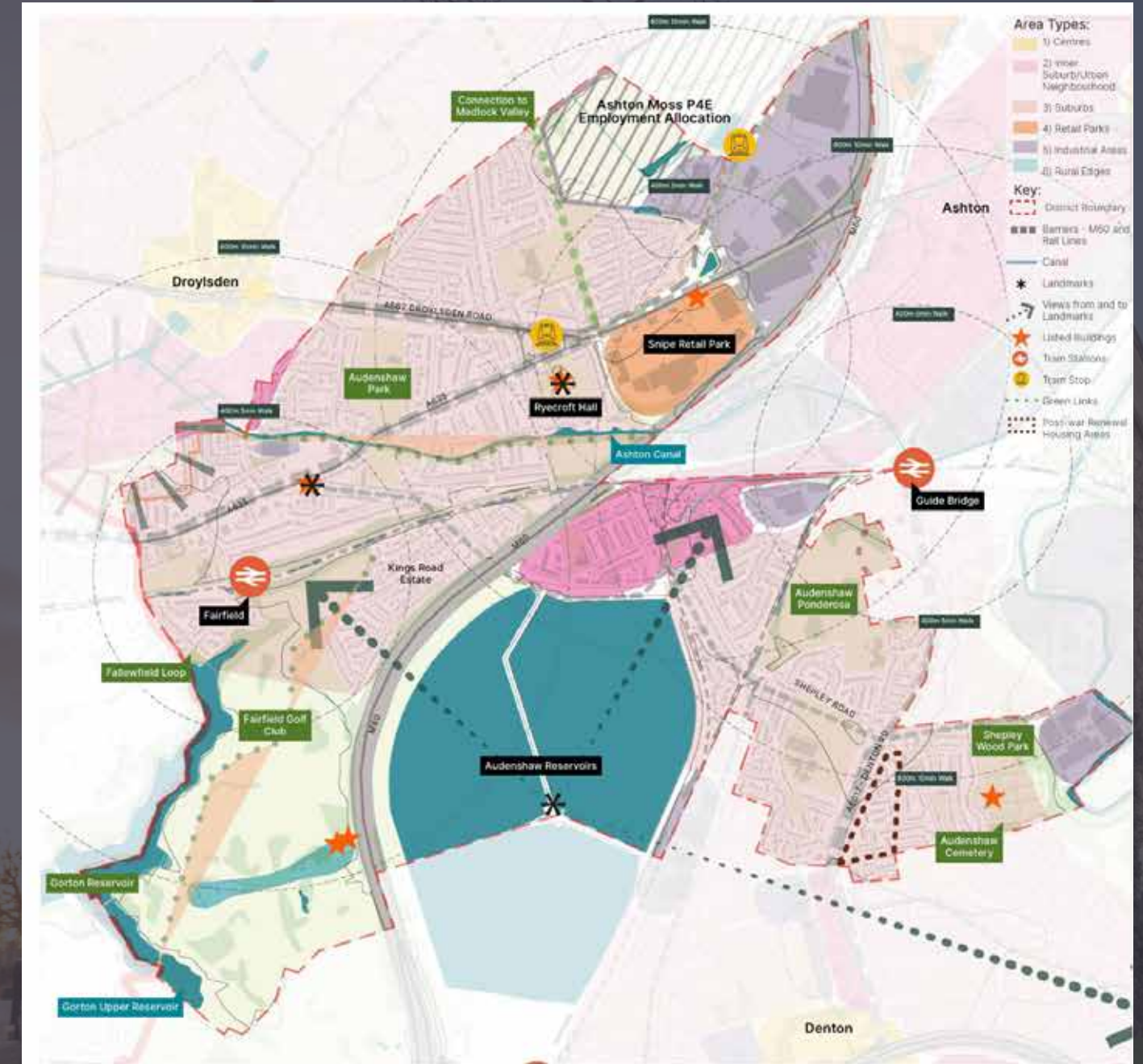
Audenshaw presents a predominantly residential character shaped by its late 19th and 20th-century development. The area is defined by a mix of historic red-brick terraces and more recent semi-detached and detached homes, set within generous plots that contribute to a distinctly suburban feel. Building heights are generally low-rise, ranging from one to four storeys, reinforcing the area's domestic scale.

The settlement is divided by major infrastructure elements, most notably the M60 motorway, the Ashton Canal, and the Audenshaw Reservoirs, all of which create a prominent physical and visual presence in the landscape. The northernmost two of the Audenshaw reservoirs lie within the Audenshaw town boundary, defining its southern edge. The nearby Audenshaw Ponderosa is located within the eastern portion of the town and provides a significant expanse of green space.

The Ashton Canal, a historic transport corridor, traverses the north of the town, connecting Audenshaw with the neighbouring towns of Ashton under-Lyne to the east and Droylsden to the west. Debdale park, situated within the west, and the landscaped grounds of Ryecroft Hall to the north, both assist in contributing to Audenshaw's sense of openness and green character, reinforcing the town's connection to recreational assets.

Audenshaw is strategically located between Manchester and Tameside, with its character and development strongly shaped by excellent transport connections. Major arterial routes such as the A635 and M60 provide vital road links, while the Metrolink and Fairfield Railway Station offer direct access to destinations including Manchester Piccadilly and Marple, enhancing regional accessibility. Despite these advantages, the road network and railway corridor that crosses Audenshaw also act as physical divides, separating neighbourhoods and limiting local permeability.

Audenshaw does not have a traditional town centre; instead, the Grade II Listed Ryecroft Hall serves as the cultural heart of the town, within much of Audenshaw's community focus anchored within this location. Commercial activities such as shops, takeaways, and other local services are dispersed along key routes including Droylsden Road and Audenshaw Road. Snipe Retail Park, developed in the 1980s, lies to the northeast and provides big box retail services, while Shepley Industrial Estate to the southeast supports local employment.



CENTRES

Strengths

- Snipe Retail Park caters to larger scale shopping needs – creates stability and footfall.
- 4.9 miles east Manchester
- Ryecroft Hall as a cultural hub

Weaknesses

- No specific focus
- No town centre
- Small, independent retail and services dispersed along corridors such as Droylsden Road
- Fragmented public realm
- Droylsden Road is severed by the Metrolink, limiting enhancements to this location
- Shopping opportunities and access to services are car oriented

Opportunities

- Improve the quality and accessibility of the canal corridor to create symbiosis with neighbouring towns
- Support the promotion of heritage assets alongside the development of walking and cycling routes
- Opportunity to relocate/reconfigure access to retail park
- Focus for development around Ryecroft Hall

Challenges

- Proximity to Manchester city centre presents challenges for the development of local retail opportunities
- Smaller convenience stores and services face challenges related to pricing and long-term viability
- Snipe Valley vulnerable to retail trends as more people shop online
- Snipe Valley retail park is not very accessible via public transport as it was situated between two tram stops



ENVIRONMENT

Strengths

- Ashton Canal
- Four sites of biological importance.
- There are a number of playing fields, Shepley Park Wood, a section of the Ashton Canal, Audenshaw Ponderosa, Ryecroft Hall ground all within our boundaries and close proximity to Debdale Park & the Fallowfield Loop within a short walk

Opportunities

- Existing green and blue infrastructure enhancements to support biodiversity
- Previous tip and former brickworks factory between Guide Lane and Stamford Road – Audenshaw Ponderosa is a significant piece of greenspace to be explored
- Opportunity of a canal corridor from Ashton to Droylsden
- Opportunity for EV charging in Snipe retail park, park and ride, and Ashton Moss tram stop
- Opportunity for community garden on the land disused land between Ryecroft Hall & the Metrolink station

Weaknesses

- No access to Audenshaw reservoir without a permit.
- Vehicular traffic and noise
- No designated country parks or local nature reserves
- Lack of waste and lighting infrastructure along the canal inhibiting canal corridor opportunities

Challenges

- Barriers to pedestrian connectivity to nearby green space
- Queries and conflict over canal maintenance and ownership – issue of responsibility
- Potential for increased footfall to the canal to exacerbate existing maintenance challenges



4 Sites of Biological Importance intersect Ashton

- Grassland Opposite Kings Road Farm,
- Audenshaw Reservoir
- Ponds at Denton Golf Course
- Ashton Canal (East)



HOMES

Strengths

- 88.4% houses/bungalow
- 48.7% of households are not classified as deprived, compared to 48.4% across England

Opportunities

- Encourage expansion housing stock to include range of type and tenure

Weaknesses

- Only 11.5% of the housing stock consists of flats, maisonettes, or apartments, which is relatively low compared to the national average

Challenges

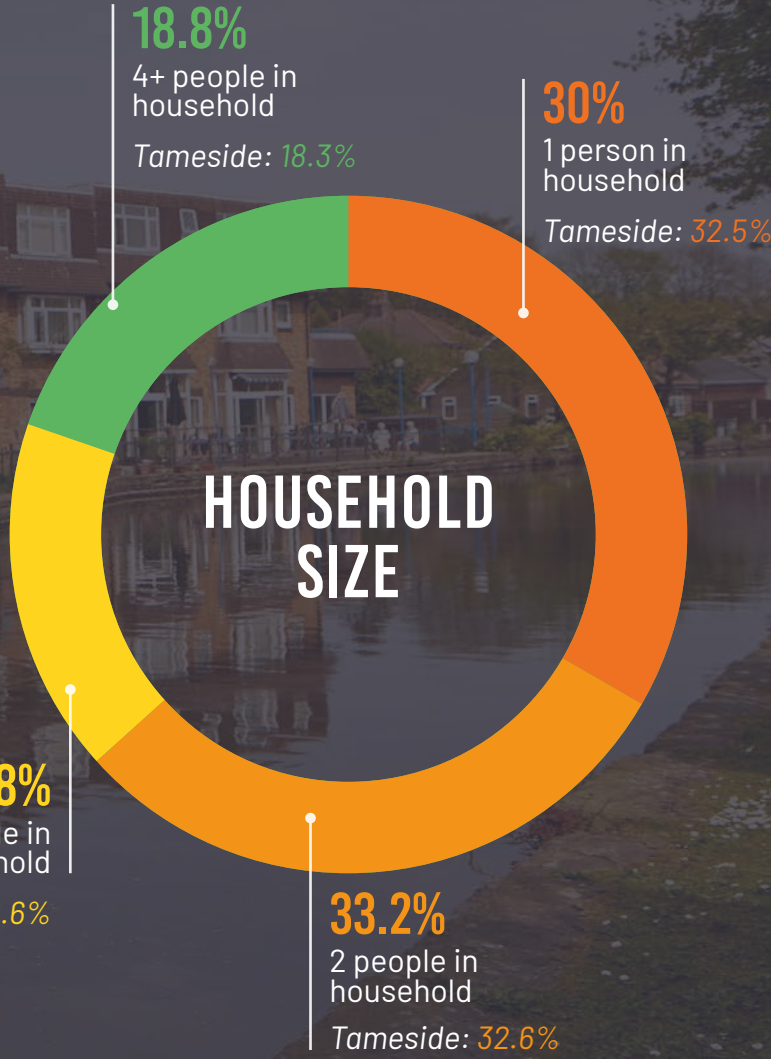
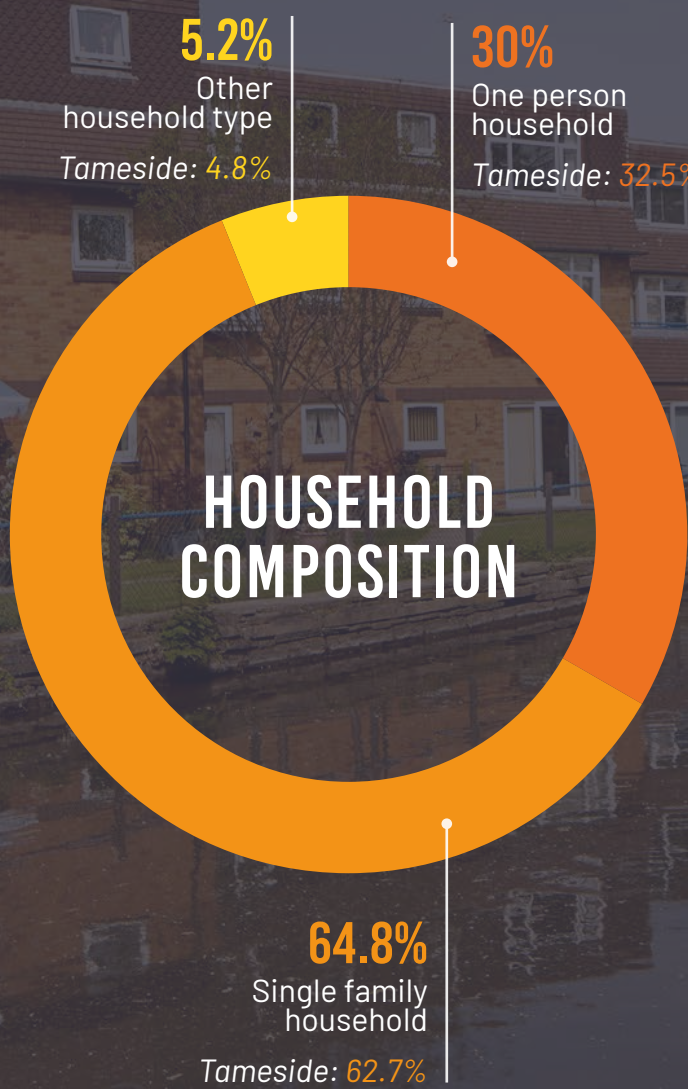
- High density of Houses of multiple occupancy's (HMO) on Fairfield Road & Manchester Road

Lower Quartile house price change (2007-2024) = £110,000 to £190,000 = 72.7%

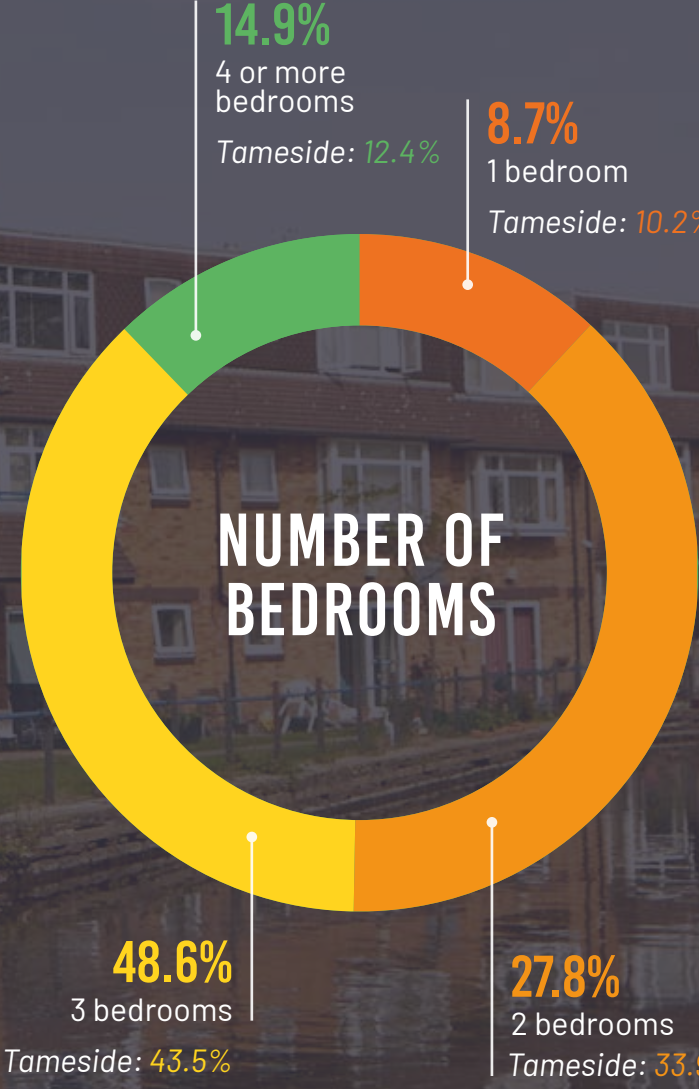
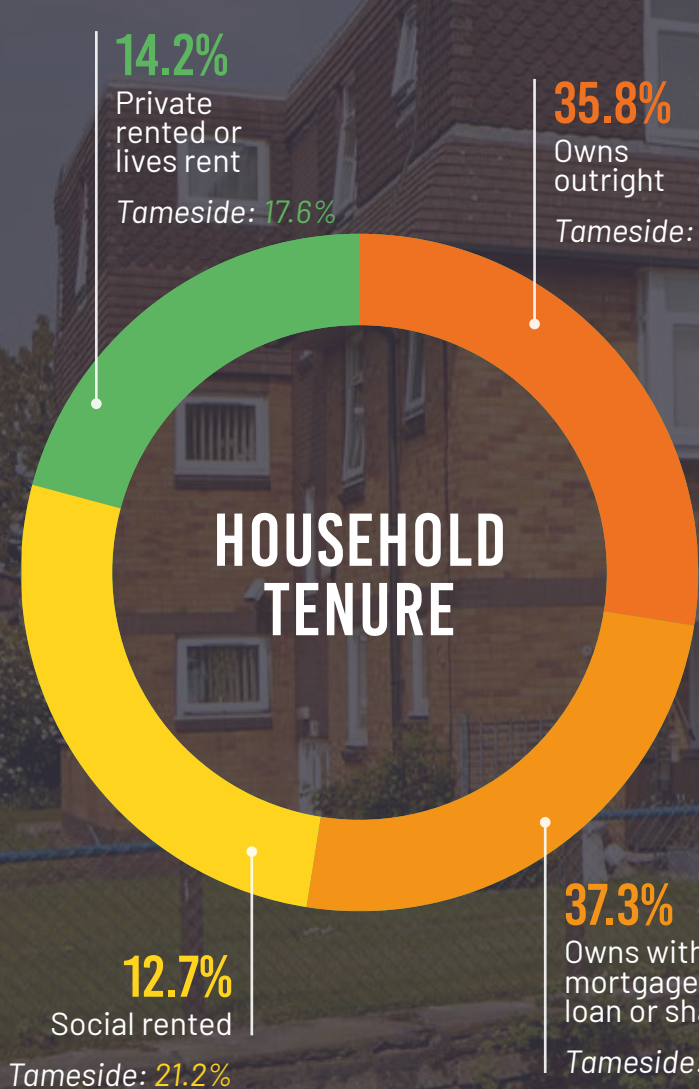
Medium Quartile house price change (2007-2024) = £132,250 To £252,000 = 90.5%

Lower Quartile rent each month = £891

Medium Quartile rent each month = £1148



HOMES



- Older people living alone = **35.2%**
- Overcrowded houses = **4.7%**
- Households in fuel poverty = **12.4%**
- Second Homes = **9**
- Vacant Properties = **78**
- HMOs = **7**

JOB

Strengths

- Economic activity levels among Audenshaw residents exceed national averages
- 44.2% of residents commute less than 10 miles to work, with a further 29.1% working predominantly from home

Opportunities

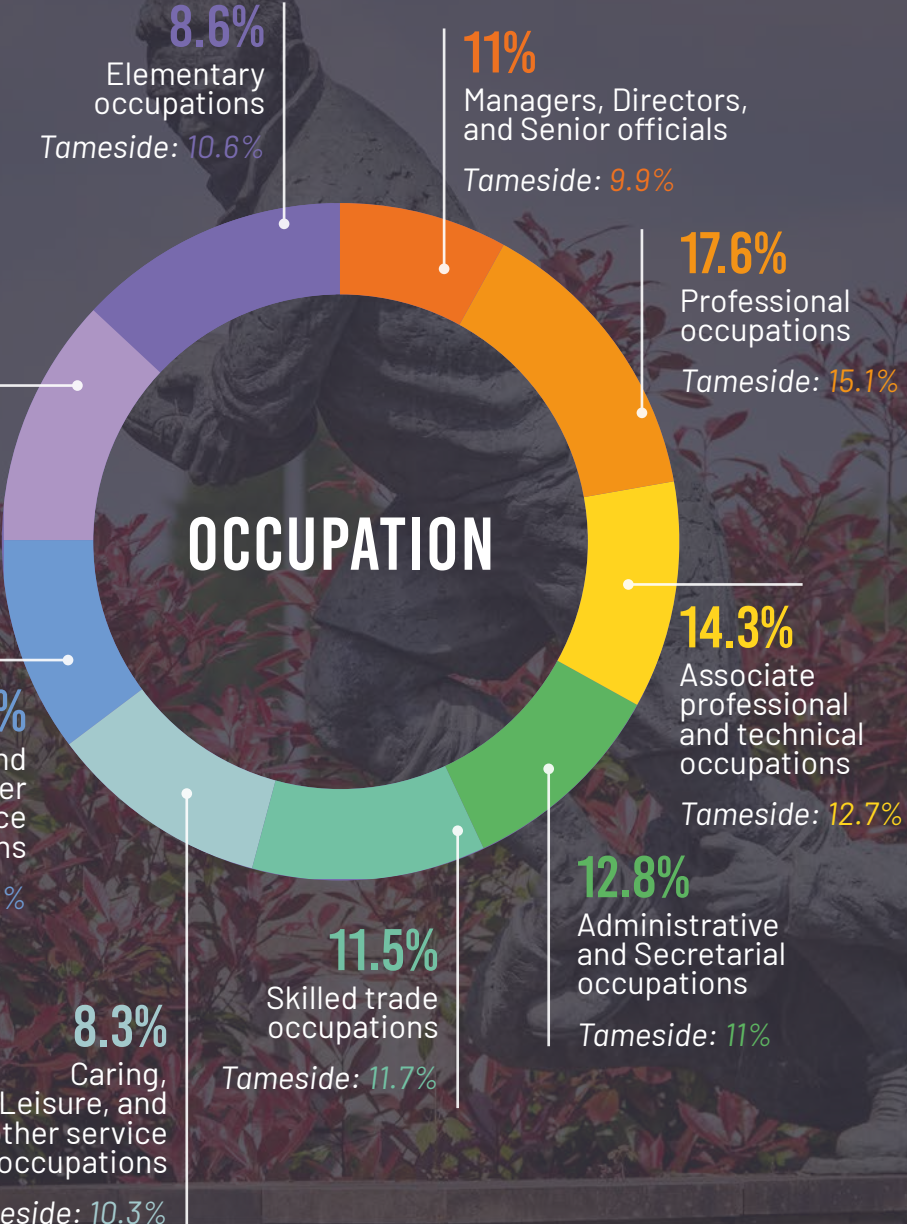
- Promote training and education opportunities
- promote training for those NEET and link in with colleges or local businesses to achieve this.

Weaknesses

- The proportion of residents without formal qualifications stands at 19.9%, indicating a lower rate than the national benchmark

Challenges

- Lack of skills
- Access to employment



JOB



6.9%
Apprenticeships
Tameside: 5.3%



PEOPLE

Strengths

- 48.7% of households are not classified as deprived, compared to 48.4% across England
- The town benefits from several primary education facilities
- A variety of open spaces, including local parks and recreational areas
- Number of play areas on Kings Road Estate, Leechbrook Estate, Ryecroft Park & Cemetery Road with varying levels of facilities for children

Opportunities

- Improve access to walking routes and recreation spaces
- Existing active travel infrastructure upgrades and enhancements are required to ensure that they are safe, inclusive, and easily accessible
- Improve access to recreation spaces with safety and accessibility for all users in mind

Weaknesses

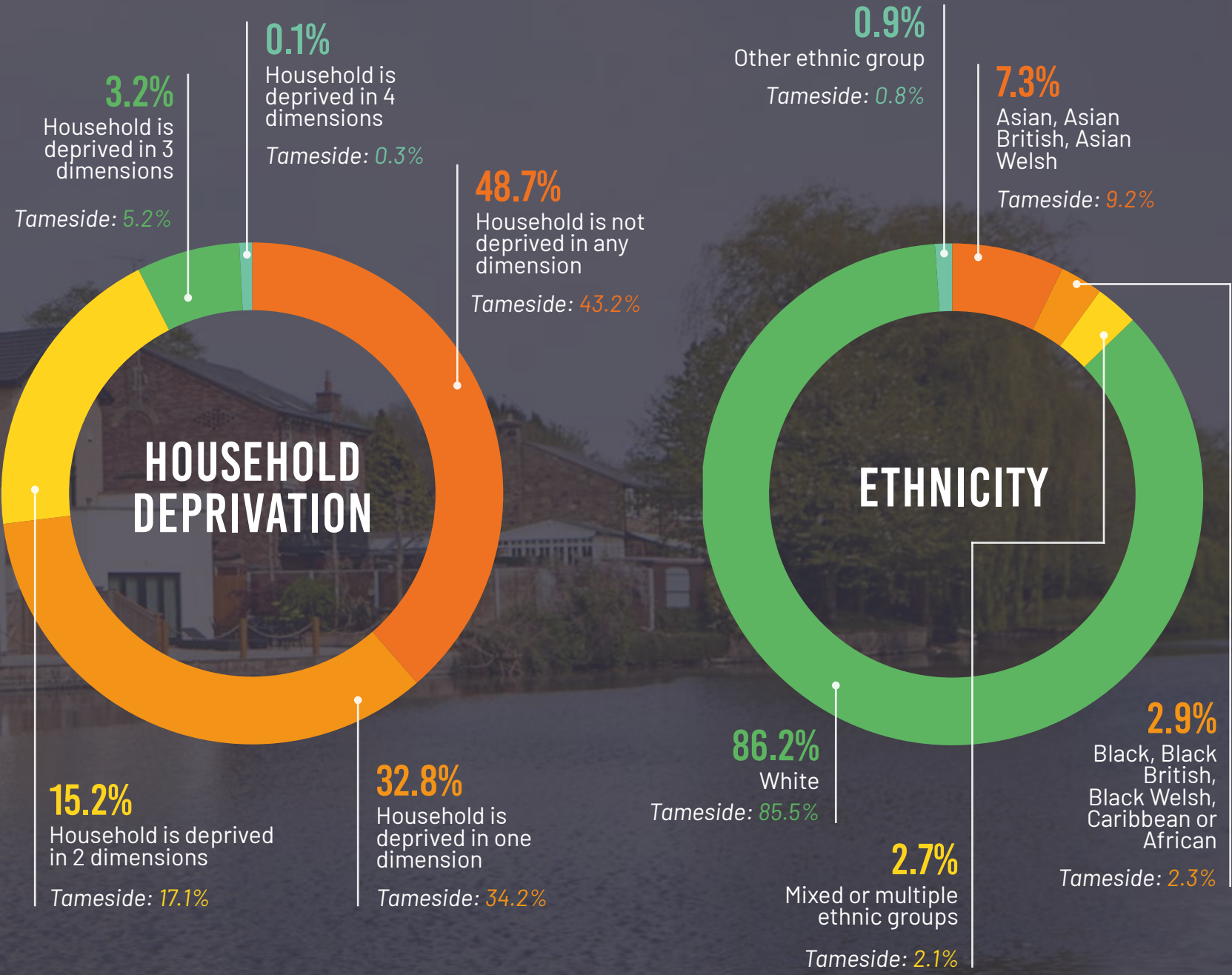
- Limited secondary school provision – 2 within the town, however 2 just on the border within walking distance.
- Limited services such as GP and dental surgeries
- Require additional play area provision
- The town lacks sufficient play provision in suitable and accessible locations to support the needs of young children

Challenges

- Large parts of the area are short on play provision for children and young people



Resident population
12,792



PEOPLE

DISABILITY

83.1%
Not disabled under
the Equality Act
Tameside: **82.5%**

16.7%
Disabled under
the Equality Act
Tameside: **17.3%**

GENERAL HEALTH

13%
Fair health
Tameside: **12.7%**

33.5%
Good health
Tameside: **33.7%**

48.4%
Very good
health
Tameside: **48.5%**

4%
Bad health
Tameside: **4%**

1.1%
Very bad health
Tameside: **1.2%**



4 Primary
schools **1** Secondary
schools

Emergency admissions in children under 5
(crude rate per 1000) = **222.7**

Emergency admissions for injuries in children
under 5 (crude rate per 10,000) = **166**

Emergency hospital admissions for injuries in
under 15 (crude rate per 10,000) = **96.2**

Emergency hospital admissions for injuries in
15-24 (crude rate per 10,000) = **80.2**

TRAVEL

Strengths

- Fairfield Railway Station
- Audenshaw Tram Stop
- Bus services along Manchester Road
- Canal tow path – good lighting of an evening and a great link to Ryecroft Hall

Opportunities

- Improvements to active travel infrastructure can enhance the interconnectedness of the town
- Improve canal signs and access onto the canal be considered.
- Unlock existing canal network to improve opportunities for active travel and leisure
- Improve crossing points over roads, and connectivity between the Fallowfield Loop, Ashton Canal and Medlock Valleys.
- Improved crossing on Audenshaw Road near the Roker Park Estate to assist both some of our elderly residents and children from this estate who attend Audenshaw Primary School.
- Improvements to existing walking routes by provision of street lighting and clearing of overgrown vegetation

Weaknesses

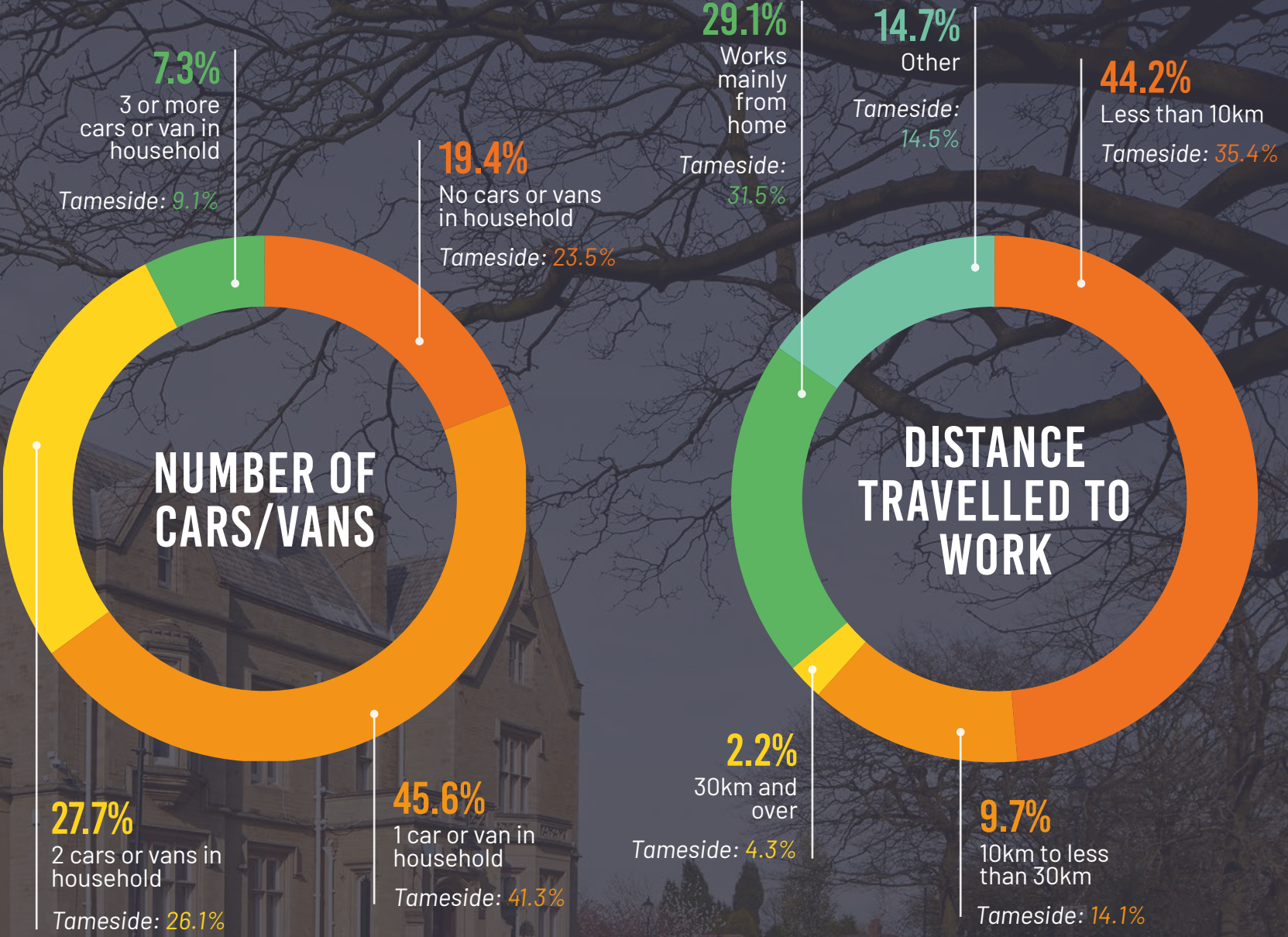
- The proportion of journeys made by walking or cycling is comparatively low when measured against national figures
- Active travel opportunities are weak in comparison to other transport modes
- Existing transport infrastructure restricts opportunities to create better pedestrian and cycle links within the town
- Existing infrastructure severs and hinders active travel within the town
- Bus service coverage in the northern part of the town is comparatively limited
- Reliance on private car travel is higher than the national average
- Poor lighting and overgrown routes restrict use of existing footpaths

Challenges

- A relatively low proportion of households have access to private vehicles
- Rising traffic congestion from regional growth
- Fairfield train station – very few trains stop there.
- Difficulty determining ownership along the Ashton canal from Ashton to Droylsden – conflicts on maintenance responsibility
- Poor direct travel to many towns in Tameside



1 Tram stop



PLACES

Strengths

- Part of Nico Ditch (SM)
- Ryecroft Hall and surrounding grounds – local hub
- Audenshaw Ponderosa
- Audenshaw Reservoir
- Ashton Canal Tow Path
- Local heritage assets (eg. Ryecroft Hall, Church of St. Stephen, Audenshaw War Memorial)
- Historic recognition of the memorial garden at the bottom of Stamford Road
- Distinctive character surrounding the canal waterside

Opportunities

- Upgrading pedestrian corridors with amenities like lighting, seating, and waste management infrastructure will improve safety, comfort, and environmental quality for all users
- Public access to Audenshaw Reservoir is encouraged to promote walking, outdoor recreation, and community wellbeing
- Open spaces, such as Ponderosa, can be enhanced, to ensure accessibility and relevance for people of all ages, backgrounds, and abilities
- Opportunity to unlock access and make enhancements to blue infrastructure, such as Audenshaw Reservoir and Ashton
- Restore and reinstate the Grade II Listed Former Transformer Pillar at junction with Audenshaw Road.
- Ryecroft Hall to be further developed as a focal point for community life, with improved amenities and programming to strengthen its position as Audenshaw’s cultural heart
- Enhanced public access to the reservoir would promote passive surveillance, creating a safer and more welcoming environment by reducing opportunities for anti-social behaviours
- Distinguish Audenshaw’s identity and its location/extents within the borough
- Further enhance character along canal waterside

Weaknesses

- The absence of a defined centre limits opportunities for the community to gather and participate in shared events
- Pedestrian routes, particularly those to assets such as Ponderosa are often uninviting and lack a sense of safety and comfort
- The area’s vistas are not being maximized and enhanced to their full potential
- Lack of seating for pedestrians
- A number of walking routes in Audenshaw lack adequate lighting, impacting accessibility and perceptions of safety

Challenges

- M60 Motorway hinders pedestrian movement and urban development
- Reservoir owned by United Utilities and unavailable as public green space
- Worry of safeguarding if reservoir opens to the public
- Number of stores on Droylsden and Manchester Road have opened and quickly closed
- Poor communication with management at Snipe retail park



7 Listed buildings
all grade II



1 Conservation Area
Fairfield



1 Article 4
1 HMO

VISION

Our vision is for Audenshaw to become a well-connected, inclusive, and sustainable community that proudly celebrates its heritage and natural assets. The town will evolve into a safe, attractive, and resilient place where residents and visitors alike enjoy a high quality of life. Through thoughtful investment and regeneration, Audenshaw will flourish as a vibrant town with a distinct identity within Tameside and Greater Manchester.

The town's green and blue infrastructure will be enhanced to support biodiversity, recreation, and wellbeing. Open spaces such as Ponderosa will be improved, building on recent works and ensuring that they are accessible and relevant to people of all ages, backgrounds, and abilities. By restoring and refilling the pond within Ponderosa, tidying the surrounding area, and enhancing its natural features, this location and its environs can become an attractive nature spot, particularly valuable for young families seeking opportunities to connect with wildlife and enjoy outdoor learning.

Public access to Audenshaw Reservoir will be sought, unlocking opportunities for walking, outdoor recreation, and community engagement in a natural setting.

Alongside this, upgrades to the canal corridor will be promoted to enhance its quality and accessibility, creating stronger links with neighbouring towns and promoting symbiosis within the Borough.

Audenshaw will promote active travel by supporting maintenance of and upgrades to pedestrian and cycling routes, improving safety and equity across the town. Green corridors will connect key areas, encouraging sustainable movement and linking residents to recreational spaces and adjoining districts. These improvements will support healthier lifestyles and contribute to mental wellbeing through increased access to nature and outdoor spaces.

Audenshaw will celebrate and embrace its heritage by conserving, enhancing, and restoring historic assets, integrating them into walking and cycling routes to strengthen local identity and pride. These cultural features will be promoted alongside new development, ensuring the town's character is preserved and celebrated. Building on Audenshaw's rich industrial past, heritage walks and trails will showcase this legacy, creating engaging experiences that connect residents and visitors with the town's history.

New development will be sustainable, carbon neutral, and inclusive, with benefits shared across the town and district. Investment will address housing, education, and employment needs, supporting regeneration and uplifting less advantaged communities. High standards of design and management will improve the quality of both the built and natural environment, reinforcing Audenshaw's identity as a place of opportunity and creativity.

Audenshaw will support diverse housing options and welcome local enterprise, creating a thriving economy and balanced communities. Safe, well-connected walking and cycling paths, pedestrian friendly streets and improvements to existing parks, trails and open spaces for recreation will encourage active lifestyles, while transport infrastructure will be strengthened to take advantage of the town's connectivity across the region, the North, and beyond.

Ultimately, Audenshaw will be a place where businesses and communities succeed, where nature and heritage are valued, and where sustainable living supports a prosperous and inclusive future for all.

DELIVERY

- Promote and enhance Ryecroft Hall as a central community hub and both indoor and outdoor events space, supporting regular activities such as heritage festivals, maker markets, and seasonal gatherings to foster local pride and social cohesion.
- Develop options and work with partners to encourage the active use of ground floor units along Droylsden Road and Manchester Road for independent retail, creative enterprise, and community services, with residential accommodation above to support vibrancy and economic engagement
- Seek to reduce severance and enhance connectivity across Audenshaw through the improvement of pedestrian and cycling corridors disrupted by Droylsden Road, the rail line, and the M60. This will be achieved through upgraded crossing points, green buffers, and safe, welcoming routes that link key assets such as Ponderosa, Ryecroft Hall, and the canal network. In parallel, the quality and accessibility of public spaces will be improved through inclusive design features, seating, lighting, and landscaping, ensuring these spaces are relevant and inviting for people of all ages, backgrounds, and abilities
- Support maintenance of and enhancements to existing walking and cycling routes through the clearing of overgrown vegetation and provision of lighting, seating and waste management infrastructure
- Develop a long-term strategy approach to celebrate Audenshaw's heritage and identity by conserving, enhancing and restoring historic assets and embedding them into walking and cycling routes, enhancing the town's character and sense of place
- Support the regeneration of fragmented and underutilised spaces, including brownfield sites, to deliver mixed-use development that meets local needs for housing, employment, and community infrastructure.
- Engage with regional partners to explore opportunities for rail and tram upgrades, improving connectivity to Manchester City Centre and neighbouring towns, and supporting sustainable growth.
- Market Audenshaw as a distinctive town within Greater Manchester, highlighting its heritage, green spaces, and proximity to major employment centres to attract investment, visitors, and new residents
- Continue and improve collaboration with the management of Snipe Retail Park to maintain and enhance its role as a subregional asset, supporting big box retail and contributing to the local economy
- Work with partners such as United Utilities to enhance public access to Audenshaw Reservoir and the Ashton Canal Towpath, unlocking blue infrastructure for walking, cycling, and outdoor recreation, while supporting biodiversity and wellbeing
- Work with Partners such as the Canal and Rivers Trust to enhance the quality, accessibility, and inclusivity of the Ashton Canal Towpath through thoughtful improvements such as inclusive design features, seating, lighting, and landscaping
- Collaborate with transport partners, including TfGM and Network Rail, to deliver upgrades to transport infrastructure and improve connectivity with neighbouring towns



POLICY APPROACH

- Support the transformational redevelopment of the disused parcel of land adjacent to the Audenshaw Metrolink stop, enhancing connectivity to Ryecroft Hall and its surrounding park.
- Conserve and enhance the area's heritage assets including the Grade II listed Ryecroft Hall as the neighbourhood's municipal centre and primary cultural asset.
- Deliver a net increase of around 290 new homes across Audenshaw.
- Recognise the role of the Snipe Retail Park as an out-of-centre location for bulky goods retailing of boroughwide importance, commensurate with national planning policy in protecting Tameside's designated town centres.
- Support significant enhancements in pedestrian and cycle connectivity across Audenshaw, maximising the use of the Canal network as a recreational route connecting Audenshaw to both Droylsden and Ashtion, alongside other assets, reducing severance, working with partners to improve its ongoing management and maintenance.
- Support the delivery of a broad mix of housing, making the most of the attractiveness of Audenshaw as a family housing market.
- Work with partners to explore opportunities to secure access to Audenshaw reservoir and potential for this to become a leisure asset of boroughwide importance.



