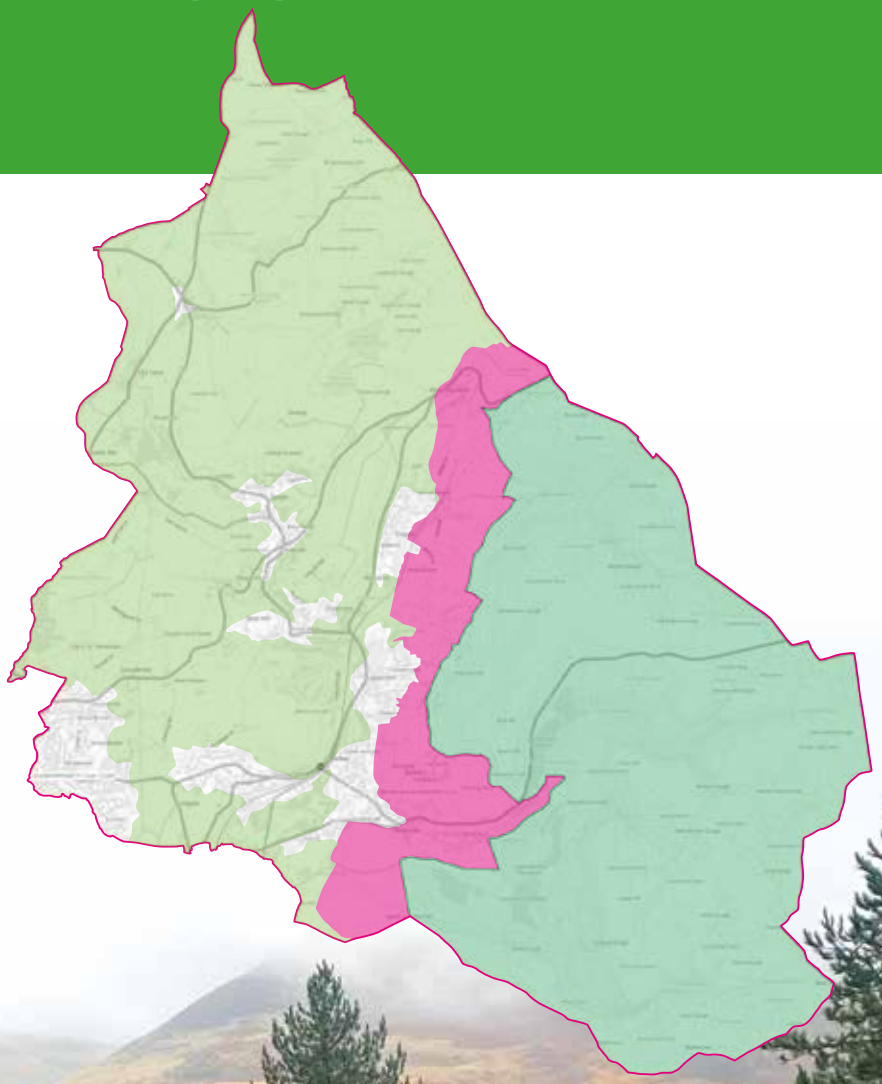
SADDLEWORTH NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN 2025–2045

Referendum



Introduction

A Neighbourhood Plan helps to shape what happens in an area for years to come. This plan will help to shape what happens in the Parish of Saddleworth over the next twenty years. These policies sit alongside those in other strategic planning policies, listed in full on pages 12–13.

The Neighbourhood Plan will be reviewed every five years to determine if an update is required and covers a period to 2045.

The designated area agreed with Oldham Council and the Peak District National Park is the land within the boundary of the Parish of Saddleworth.

Neighbourhood Planning gives residents the power to develop a vision for their neighbourhood and shape the development and growth of their locality. This plan allows them to have their say on what new homes, shops, offices and community facilities should look like, what infrastructure should be provided, and ensuring the highest possible quality of development.

Neighbourhood Planning provides a powerful set of tools for local people to use to ensure that they get the right sort of development for their neighbourhood and where the ambition of the residents is in line with the needs and priorities of the wider area.

Consultees on the plan were:

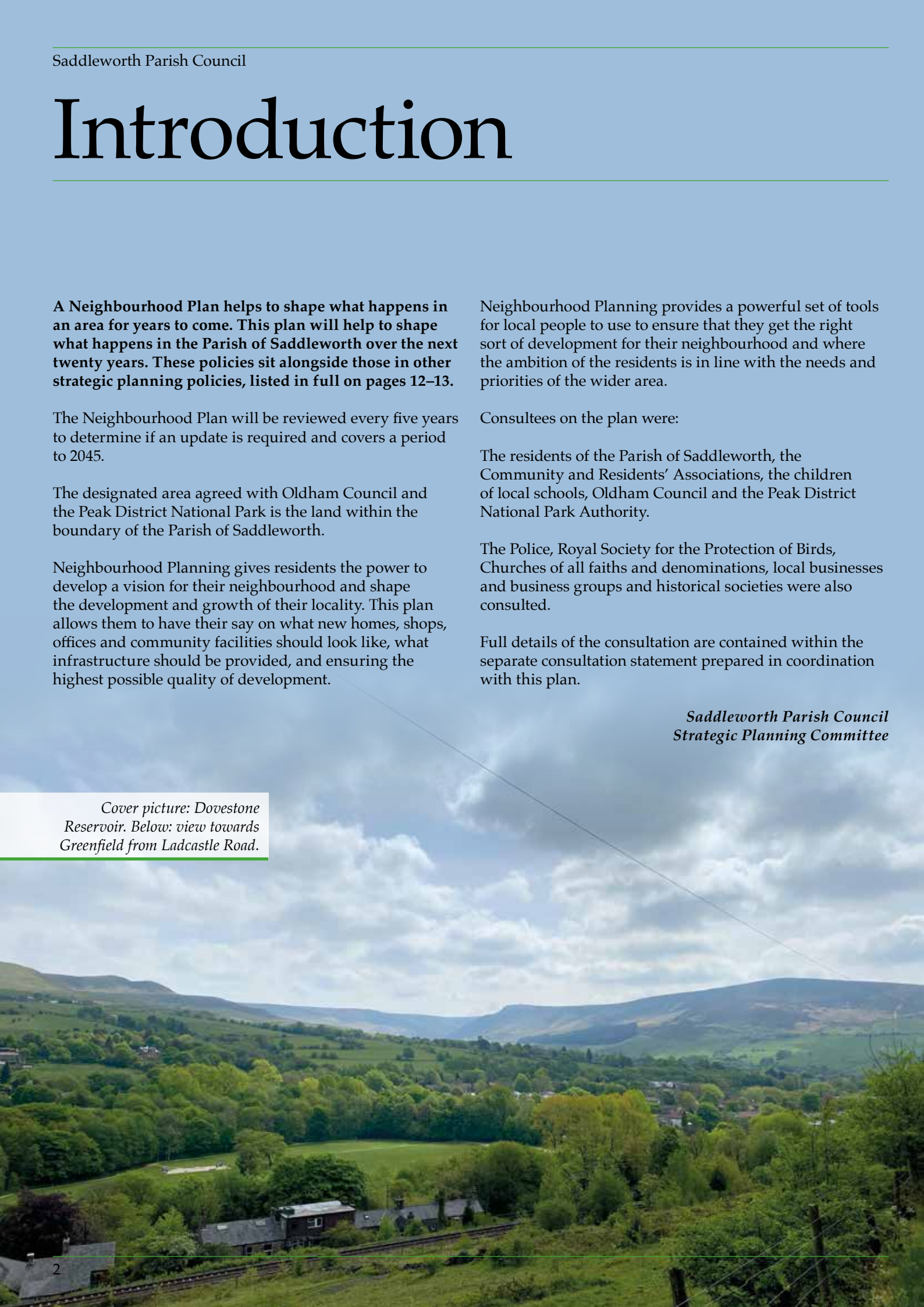
The residents of the Parish of Saddleworth, the Community and Residents' Associations, the children of local schools, Oldham Council and the Peak District National Park Authority.

The Police, Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, Churches of all faiths and denominations, local businesses and business groups and historical societies were also consulted.

Full details of the consultation are contained within the separate consultation statement prepared in coordination with this plan.

Saddleworth Parish Council
Strategic Planning Committee

Cover picture: Dovestone Reservoir. Below: view towards Greenfield from Ladcastle Road.



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History

Saddleworth is crossed by two rivers – the river Tame and its tributaries in the east and the river Medlock and its tributaries in the west. The river Tame and its catchment area contains the settlements of Denshaw, Delph, Dobcross, Diggle, Uppermill and Greenfield. The river Medlock catchment area contains the settlements of Scouthead, Austerlands, Grasscroft, Lydgate, Grotton and Springhead.

Situated on the western side of the Pennines, but historically part of the West Riding of Yorkshire, Saddleworth has long looked in two directions – over the Pennines and eastward to the towns of Huddersfield, Halifax and Leeds and westward to its Lancashire neighbours of Oldham, Ashton, Rochdale and Manchester. This dual identity is as true today as it was in the Middle Ages and in the time of the Tudors and the Stuarts, when its absentee Lords of the Manor lived far away in Yorkshire and administration was from Pontefract and later Wakefield. Ecclesiastically, however, it was in the Parish of Rochdale and Diocese of Chester. Today, it is administered by Oldham Council, forms part of the sub-region of Greater Manchester, but is partly in the Peak District National Park and is a part of the South Pennines Countryside Character Area.



Slackcote Mill is one of the Saddleworth mills which has found a new lease of life as a home to modern industry

Saddleworth was at the forefront of the industrial revolution with many water-powered textile mills[2] springing up along the River Tame and the emergence of one of the most impressive turnpike road networks in the country. The construction of the Huddersfield Narrow Canal, with its three miles long tunnel under the Pennines, was one of the major engineering feats of its day.

The second half of the twentieth century witnessed a transformation of Saddleworth from a community of industrial stone built villages to a largely dormitory area for the major employment centres on both sides of the Pennines. The motorway network accelerated this change. Local shops and services declined in most of the villages and with this change came a decline in the local economy. House building mushroomed especially in the west, as Saddleworth was transformed from an industrial landscape to a district of attractive Pennine villages with a valued industrial heritage.

This industrial heritage, and its beautiful natural setting, means that the Parish has a thriving tourist, hostpitality and retail trade, in addition to the growing homeworking sector.

The present Civil Parish dates from the local government reorganisation of 1974, but its boundaries are essentially the same as those of its predecessor which was formed by the amalgamation of Saddleworth Urban District Council with Springhead Urban District Council in 1937. Saddleworth Urban District Council had been in existence since 1900, and the medieval Township dated back to the Saxon period. This long history gives a real sense of local identity both at a parish level and at a village community level.

[2] Oldham's Mill Strategy was published in 2022, which includes a history of Oldham's mills, and listings of the existing mills in Saddleworth. It can be found at https://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/201213/local_plan_review/2819/oldham_mills_strategy

Profile

Saddleworth, like many communities, faces many challenges today and in the future. These relate mostly to the pressure of development accompanied by rising land prices, the decline of a mixed local economy, the lack of affordable housing, and the expense of maintaining local services and infrastructure in a geographically large rural district. However, these are balanced by Saddleworth's strengths: its largely prosperous, healthy, and well-educated population; its strong community spirit; its businesses and entrepreneurial spirit; and its beautiful countryside, recreational facilities, farming, tourism, biodiversity and heritage. The vibrancy of the community is shown by the large number of voluntary societies and organisations and community festivals such as the annual Whit Friday Brass Band Contest, and the Rush Cart Weekend.

The population of Saddleworth is around 26,000. It is split 49%/51% male/female, which is a marginally larger gap than across Oldham borough as a whole.

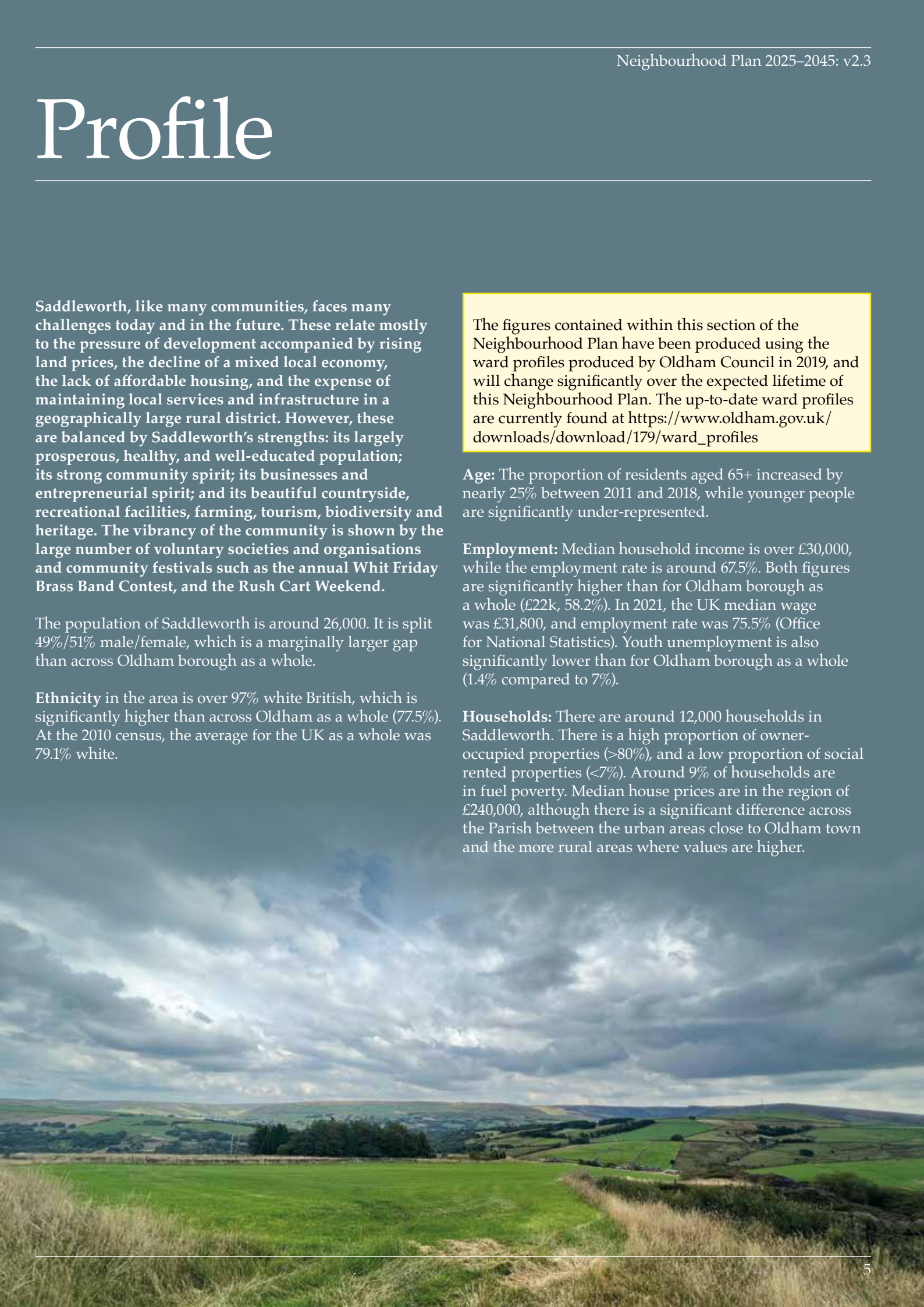
Ethnicity in the area is over 97% white British, which is significantly higher than across Oldham as a whole (77.5%). At the 2010 census, the average for the UK as a whole was 79.1% white.

The figures contained within this section of the Neighbourhood Plan have been produced using the ward profiles produced by Oldham Council in 2019, and will change significantly over the expected lifetime of this Neighbourhood Plan. The up-to-date ward profiles are currently found at https://www.oldham.gov.uk/downloads/download/179/ward_profiles

Age: The proportion of residents aged 65+ increased by nearly 25% between 2011 and 2018, while younger people are significantly under-represented.

Employment: Median household income is over £30,000, while the employment rate is around 67.5%. Both figures are significantly higher than for Oldham borough as a whole (£22k, 58.2%). In 2021, the UK median wage was £31,800, and employment rate was 75.5% (Office for National Statistics). Youth unemployment is also significantly lower than for Oldham borough as a whole (1.4% compared to 7%).

Households: There are around 12,000 households in Saddleworth. There is a high proportion of owner-occupied properties (>80%), and a low proportion of social rented properties (<7%). Around 9% of households are in fuel poverty. Median house prices are in the region of £240,000, although there is a significant difference across the Parish between the urban areas close to Oldham town and the more rural areas where values are higher.



Education: Across Saddleworth, >85% of pupils enter the Early Years Foundation stage with a good level of development, compared to a UK average of 71.8%. Less than 17% of adults have no qualifications, and >35% of adults have a first degree.

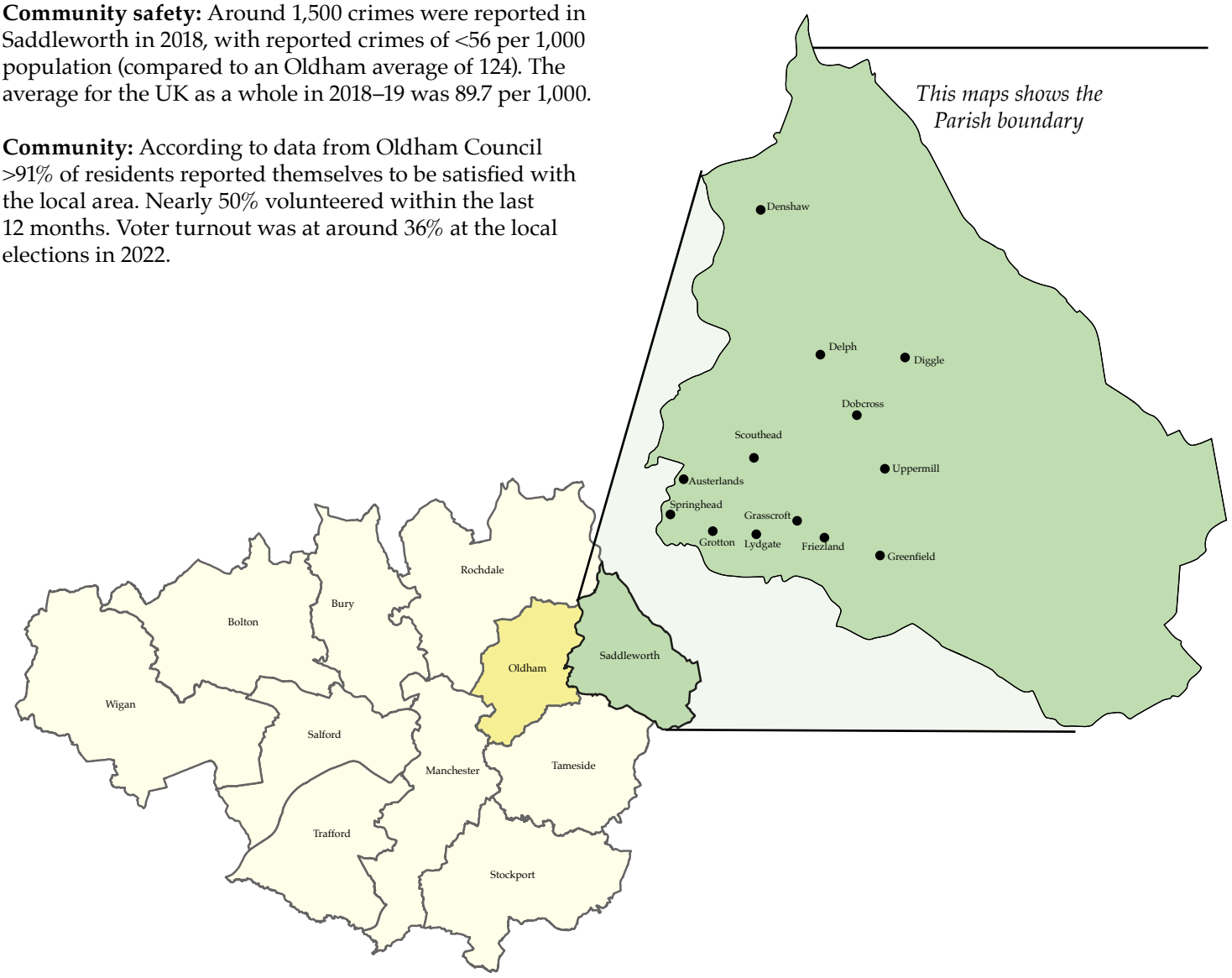
Health: <17% of adults have limiting long-term illnesses, which is higher than the proportion for Oldham borough as a whole, although this is likely to be related to the significantly higher proportion of elderly residents. Male life expectancy is over 81 years, and female life expectancy is over 85 years. People generally live healthy lifestyles, and this is then reflected in good health outcomes.

Community safety: Around 1,500 crimes were reported in Saddleworth in 2018, with reported crimes of <56 per 1,000 population (compared to an Oldham average of 124). The average for the UK as a whole in 2018–19 was 89.7 per 1,000.

Community: According to data from Oldham Council >91% of residents reported themselves to be satisfied with the local area. Nearly 50% volunteered within the last 12 months. Voter turnout was at around 36% at the local elections in 2022.

Geography: The area totals 7,876 hectares and over half is Green Belt. The lowest lying areas of Saddleworth are around the valleys of the Tame and Medlock rivers, and their tributaries, through the most populous villages, as well as Springhead and Grotton. The highest areas are above the villages, with White Hill at 467m, Standedge at 457m, and Ashway Moss at 497m.

There are substantial blanket peat bogs in Saddleworth, with work by RSPB and United Utilities being done to protect and enhance them. They cover over 4,000ha above Dovestone Reservoir (not all in Saddleworth). The peat bogs have huge significance in holding carbon, providing homes to wildlife and ensuring water quality.



Infrastructure

Education: Saddleworth has one secondary school, which has recently moved to a new site at Diggle, with capacity for 1,500 pupils.

A significant proportion of children from across the area are educated outside the Parish, with two secondary schools – Waterhead Academy and Leesbrook Academy – falling just outside the Parish boundaries, and a number of schools in Oldham borough also having intake from across Saddleworth.

There are 12 primary schools: Bright Futures; Christ Church CofE, Denshaw; Delph Primary School; Diggle School; Friezland Primary School; Greenfield Primary School; Greenfield St Mary's CofE; Holy Trinity CofE, Dobcross; Knowsley Junior School, Springhead; Springhead Infant and Nursery; St Anne's CofE Lydgate; and St Chad's CofE, Uppermill.

Health: There are medical centres located across the Parish, but many patients travel outside the Parish to receive treatment.

The main GP practice is Saddleworth Medical Practice, located in Uppermill, which has a satellite at Gartside Street Clinic in Delph. Pennine Medical Practice in Mossley, which falls under the Primary Care Board for Saddleworth, also has a satellite centre in Greenfield.

Other practices located outside the Parish but providing services for Saddleworth residents include Lees Medical Practice, Leesbrook Medical Practice, Moorside Medical Practice, and the Pennine Medical Centre in Mossley (which also falls outside the Borough). The two nearest hospitals are the Royal Oldham Hospital and Tameside Hospital (again, Tameside Hospital falls outside the Borough).

Services such as physiotherapy and mental health are also provided by smaller practices located across the area.

There are a number of dental practices across the area, with a mix of private and NHS dentists.

Transport: The Parish is served by a single railway line, and one station, located at Greenfield. Trains run towards Manchester and Huddersfield. There are accessibility issues at the station with only stepped access to the Huddersfield-bound platform.

Saddleworth School



The Metrolink service does not extend to Saddleworth. It runs through Oldham, with the nearest stations located at Oldham Mumps, Derker, Shaw and Milnrow, all outside the Parish boundary.



Bus services mainly operate as spokes from Oldham, although some services also connect to Huddersfield, Ashton and Holmfirth. There is also the Saddleworth Rambler – a local service intended to connect the individual villages. A Ring and Ride service is available upon registration for residents who find it difficult to use public transport.

The main motorways near to Saddleworth are the M62, with junction 22 at Rishworth Moor falling just outside the Parish boundary, and the M60 ring road, which falls several miles outside the Parish. The primary arterial roads through the Parish are the A62, the A672 and the A670.

With around 12,000 households in Saddleworth, and an estimated number of cars per household in the UK[2] of between 1.393 for areas classified as "rural town and fringe", and 1.77 for areas classified as "rural village, hamlet and isolated dwellings", that would suggest around 19,000 cars in Saddleworth.

Parking in many of the Saddleworth villages is restricted by the traditional rural nature of the villages, with many of the earlier homes and roads being designed prior to the need to provide parking spaces for one or multiple cars.

There is an extensive network of footpaths across Saddleworth. A full map of public rights of way in Saddleworth can be found at https://maps.oldham.gov.uk/

There are no cycle routes in Saddleworth that form part of the national cycle network; the nearest route is route 601, which runs from Oldham to Hyde. More information can be found at: https://www.sustrans.org.uk/national-cycle-network

TfGM has a map of Bee Network cycle provision in Greater Manchester, at https://mappinggm.org.uk/bee-network/. No definitive list of local cycle routes exists.

Housing: The draft Local Plan for Oldham[3, 4] includes a housing needs analysis for Saddleworth. Oldham's housing requirement, based on Places for Everyone[5] is 404 homes per year for 2022–2025, 680 homes per year for 2025–2030, and 772 homes per year for 2030–2039.

Communities: There are at least 15 churches across Saddleworth, catering to a range of denominations. There is a Buddhist Temple on Court Street in Uppermill, as well as a Spiritualist Church on High Street, and Oldham borough as a whole contains places of worship for a wide range of faiths.

The Parish also contains a large number of community centres and buildings, including the Saddleworth Civic Hall in Uppermill (which is also home to the Parish Council) and Saddleworth Museum.

Note: Infrastructure policies are dealt with by topic within the policy and parish action section – environment, design; health, well-being and education; housing; retail, commerce and tourism; and travel and transport.

[2] https://www.statista.com/statistics/299972/average-age-of-cars-on-the-road-in-the-united-kingdom/

[3] Oldham's current local plan at time of writing was published in 2011. A new local plan is under development and can be viewed at https://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/201233/local_plan_review/3095/draft_local_plan

[4] The Local Plan for Oldham covers the whole borough, excluding the part that falls within the PDNPA

[5] Places for Everyone is a long-term plan of nine Greater Manchester districts (Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Tameside, Trafford and Wigan) for jobs, new homes, and sustainable growth.

Issues

We have identified these issues through research and analysis of the Parish, combined with the opinions of the community which were expressed during our ongoing consultation.

Environment

The biggest threat to our way of life not just in Saddleworth, but across the world, is climate change and damage to the environment.

Key issues in Saddleworth include air quality, the development of the natural environment, biodiversity and resilience, energy use and production, flooding and water use, and a lack of energy-efficient housing stock.

Climate change is such a critical issue that as well the specific policies section on "Environment", it is embedded as a cross-cutting theme in all policy sections.

The Parish Council has declared its ambition to be carbon neutral as an organisation by 2030, and Oldham Council's target for the wider borough is to be carbon neutral by 2030. It is expected that all new building or renovation work should be done with that ambition in mind, with regards to building methods, environmental impact of use, and minimising associated environmental costs such as transport.

Design

There is a need to protect the unique character, landscape and heritage of the area, which can be damaged by inappropriate development that fails to take into consideration the nature of the Parish.

The existing natural beauty and heritage of Saddleworth adds significantly to the well-being of its residents, and any threat to that risks undermining its communities, and the lives of those who live and work there.



Low water levels at Dowry reservoir are a prime example of environmental change, as are more extreme weather events

Housing

Saddleworth has an identified lack of appropriate housing for young families, with local first-time entrants into the housing market unable to find properties to rent or buy. Similarly there is a lack of affordable housing for people to downsize to when they are older.

Health, well-being and education

One of the most common comments in the survey of residents was concern that there was a lack of pre-school, education and healthcare facilities, and that where there are facilities, some residents are excluded due to lack of accessible transport.

In particular, emphasised by the Covid-19 pandemic, is an issue around social exclusion, particularly for the elderly and vulnerable. For those in outlying areas, especially those poorly served by public transport, isolation can be extremely difficult to escape. This was particularly identified as an issue for mothers with young children.

As well as difficulty accessing GP services, there is a lack of support for other critical healthcare needs.

There is also a growing awareness and concern about anti-social behaviour, and its increasing impact on the sense of community that is one of the strengths of Saddleworth's villages.

Retail, commerce and tourism

There has been a gradual loss of many local facilities from villages, with post offices and banks being prime examples. As a result, an issue facing Saddleworth is ensuring that there remain cohesive communities which retain their identity. Saddleworth remains very distinct from Oldham in terms of its economy and employment, which is reflected throughout this document.

Many services which would enable people to live and work in the area, such as high-quality broadband, remain under-provided. There is also a lack of a coherent approach to employment and industries – particularly tourism, retail and farming – and no alternative vision to Saddleworth serving as a commuter area.



An empty former bank in Uppermill

Local facilities, in the form of community centres, leisure facilities and open-air facilities, e.g. playing fields, parks and allotments, are also under threat.

Travel and transport

A critical issue is the lack of public transport and public transport infrastructure. There is minimal access to the rail network, and no access to the tram network. Bus services have been massively reduced, and continue to be under threat.

At the same time, there are unresolved issues around private transport, in particular a lack of provision for electric vehicle charging or other renewables, a lack of parking both on the road network and on residential and commercial property, and the general maintenance of roads.

There is also a lack of joined up infrastructure for pedestrian and cycle routes, and a lack of investment in their maintenance.

Consultation and local voices

An additional concern voiced through the consultation was that local residents often feel overlooked in decision-making processes, particularly around investment and development – most notably planning.

Vision

> **Our vision is that Saddleworth will be made up of many thriving communities, each a place with its own strong identity, each one offering great opportunities for people to make their homes, to work, and to spend their leisure time. Many of local people's needs for services, such as for shops, education, and healthcare will be effectively met within Saddleworth. New developments will be accommodated but will be located and designed with sensitivity and with investment in the necessary supporting infrastructure. Saddleworth will be known for the quality of its countryside and the care with which land owners manage it.**

The fundamental principle which underpins our vision and the policies in this plan is that of sustainable development. This means :

- achieving simultaneous and carefully balanced progress in pursuit of economic, social and environmental objectives – not prioritising one of these issues at the expense of the others;
- considering the long term legacy of our actions – ensuring that young people and generations to come can enjoy a quality of life at least as good as that we enjoy in Saddleworth today, and that the biodiversity of the area is further enhanced;
- having a wide geographic perspective – recognising that our local actions can have much wider impacts. Climate change is just one example.

We are very clear that Saddleworth must not become just a commuter area for Greater Manchester and the West Yorkshire conurbation.

Saddleworth must work together with Oldham for the benefit of both the Parish and the wider borough.

A long term vision is an essential part of a Neighbourhood Plan. It sets out the direction in which this Plan, and future updates, should take us.

Our vision for Saddleworth reflects views expressed by local people during the extensive public engagement which has informed the preparation of this Plan.

Saddleworth will benefit greatly from its vital economic, social and environmental links with the rest of the Greater Manchester area, and also its strong connections to West Yorkshire. These neighbouring areas will continue to provide great opportunities for our residents, for instance, for employment and entertainment.

Likewise, the particular qualities which make Saddleworth such an asset to the North of England must be conserved and enhanced. The contribution which it will continue to make to the Peak District National Park is particularly noteworthy. Saddleworth's natural landscapes, its attractive and diverse villages, and its outstanding opportunities for a wide range of outdoor recreation are great strengths. These make Saddleworth a great place to live and visit, but they will also help to underpin its economic contribution.

The tourism and leisure sector is an obvious example, but we envisage that other small and medium sized enterprises will make Saddleworth their base because of its excellent environment and its vibrant communities, and because highly skilled people will choose to live here.

The Parish should be an area with a flourishing natural environment that is resilient, sustainable and well connected and that enables the free movement of wildlife through and across the Parish.



Plans & legislation

The Saddleworth Neighbourhood Plan 2025–2045 has been developed in parallel with other planning legislation, plans and strategies, which includes the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), Places for Everyone (PfE) and Greater Manchester's Transport Strategy 2040, Oldham Council's forthcoming Local Plan, and the Peak Park Management and Local Plans

The revised National Planning Policy Framework sets out government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. It currently falls under the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (formerly Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (2018 to 2021) and Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities), and can be found at https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2.

Places for Everyone is a strategic plan of nine Greater Manchester districts (Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Tameside, Trafford and Wigan) for jobs, new homes, and sustainable growth. It had been submitted to the Planning Inspectorate at the time of this Neighbourhood Plan being developed, and has now been formally adopted.. Every effort has been made to ensure that this plan is aligned to *Places for Everyone* as required by national legislation. The Places for Everyone portal can be found at https://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/what-we-do/planning-and-housing/places-for-everyone/

Oldham Council's Local Plan is still under development at the time of this Neighbourhood Plan being prepared. Every effort has been made to ensure that this plan is aligned to the current and forthcoming Local Plans for Oldham, as required by national legislation. The portal for Oldham Council's Local Plan can be found at https://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/200199/planning_and_building/1809/local_plan_review

The Development Plan Document (DPD) for Oldham Council was adopted in November 2011, to supersede the majority of the 2006 Unitary Development Plan (UDP) policies. This is available at https://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/201229/current_local_planning_policy/978/joint_core_strategy_and_development_management_policies_development_plan_documents_dpds

Allocation of sites

Places for Everyone allocates sites for development. The Oldham Local Plan will also consider allocating sites. There are no legislative powers for the Neighbourhood Plan to over-ride those.

The role of this Neighbourhood Plan is to ensure that the character and quality of the Parish is enhanced if any of those sites are brought forward for development.

The Parish Council covers an area with a number of sensitive environmental assets, and in addition to this, a large proportion of the area of the Parish Council falls within the Peak District National Park, where the Peak Park Local Plan is the relevant planning document for development (under the direction of the Management Plan).

The planning policies for the Peak District National Park are found in the Development Plan which consists of the Core Strategy (2011) (https://www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/planning/policies-and-guides/core-strategy) and the Development Management Policies (DMP) Document (2019) (https://www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0024/95091/Webpage-Final-Branded-DMP-Doc-Copy.pdf). Other plans and guidance (which can be found on their website) include the Authority Plan 2023–28, Management Plan, Corporate Strategy 2019–24, and the Landscape Strategy. The statutory purposes of National Parks are defined in the Environment Act 1995, S61 and S62. Major development is not appropriate in the National Park other than in exceptional circumstances.

A screening has been carried out to assess whether this plan requires a Strategic Environmental Assessment, to determine whether it is likely to have significant environmental effects. That screening, published separately, confirms that it does not.

The planning process – background

At the moment, planning decisions for proposals in Saddleworth outside the National Park are decided by Oldham Council, either by delegated decision by officers, or through the Borough Planning Committee. The Parish Council is statutorily notified of planning applications, and provides responses to the Council via the Parish's Planning Committee.

Planning applications within the National Park are decided by the Peak District National Park Authority, with the Parish Council as a consultee.

Previously, some decisions on planning applications submitted to Oldham Council were delegated to the Parish Council, and there is no legal impediment to decisions being delegated on this basis in the future.

The majority of land in Saddleworth is classified as Green Belt or other protected open land (OPOL)[2] , in addition to which there are 22 defined Conservation Areas. As such these environmental assets have been already classified, and protected by existing plans and legislation. This can be viewed at https://mappinggm.org.uk

Further links to relevant policies and guidance can be found on page 59 of this Neighbourhood Plan.

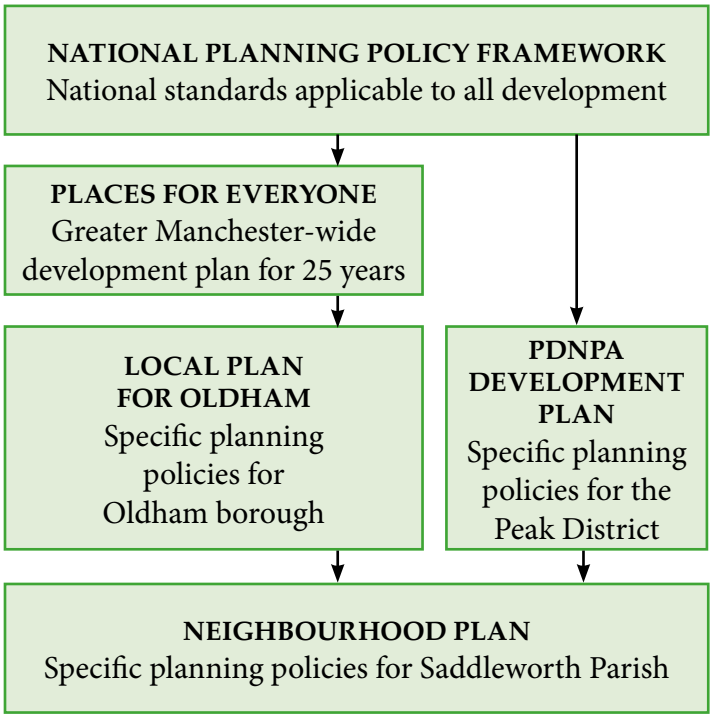


Figure 1: flow chart showing the hierarchy of national and local planning legislation and local plans. Plans also include the GM Waste and Minerals Plans.

[2] These are under consideration for redesignation as Local Green Spaces.

Policies

The policies contained within this document must be viewed as a whole, and with the other plans and policies listed on page 3, most specifically Places for Everyone, the Oldham Local Plan, and the PDNP Development Plan.

For clarity, if a specific policy says that something "will be supported", this is only when all other policies and plans are also met.

Each section has a series of objectives. The objectives have been placed in the most relevant section, where they are followed by policies which directly address that objective. However, it should be noted that other policies throughout the document will also contribute to meeting those objectives. Any supporting information for the policies is provided immediately after.

Some information which doesn't fall into these categories was still considered important for context and has been included in yellow boxouts.



For clarity, it should be noted that this document does not allocate any sites for development. Any sites referred to in this document – in particular the site at Chew Brook Vale, policy 9 – have already been designated for development in other planning policy documents, such as *Places for Everyone*, and the Parish Council has no powers under which to change the status of these sites.

Throughout the consultation process, there was a substantial concern that previous versions of the plan did not address a lack of healthcare facilities in the Parish. This has resulted in the introduction of the Health, Wellbeing and Education section of this document, to bring together into one place all relevant parts of the plan regarding these aspects for clarity.

Again, while there were strong calls in the consultation feedback for this Neighbourhood Plan to include a specific requirement for new GPs and dentists, the Parish Council has no legislative powers to do this.

We have included the strongest possible requirements that we believe to be possible under current legislation in the Health, Wellbeing and Education section, as we believe these concerns to be valid. We support calls for legislation to be changed to deliver these increased services, so that they could be included in either further iterations of this plan, or in other legislation.



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Environment

The Environment section should be read in conjunction with Oldham's Green Infrastructure Strategy which has been prepared to inform the Local Plan review for Oldham.

OBJECTIVE 1: To ensure that development maintains green belt purposes and protects and enhances green spaces.

To ensure that development delivers a high quality, well-integrated natural environment, and protects and enhances the existing natural environment, particularly recreation and nature conservation corridors, local green spaces and green belt.

POLICY 1: GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

1.1 Developments should:

- **deliver the provision of new appropriately-sized open and/or green spaces, in line with identified needs, such as pocket parks and active green spaces (e.g. green walls and green roofs) and their maintenance, or an appropriate enhancement of existing of green infrastructure and/or open spaces;[2]**
- **deliver a positive impact on the relationship between urban and natural features, where the development is adjacent to existing green spaces, so that it integrates positively with any natural features (for example, this would include green corridors such as canals and former railway lines); and**
- **replace any loss of green space with an equal or greater new provision of green space.**

1.2 If a development replaces a lost green space with a replacement which creates a new requirement on the local authority to manage, provision should be made to maintain the site without additional impact on the public purse.

[2] See Oldham Council's Local Plan Green Infrastructure and Open Space Strategies for reference, including the identified needs and deficiencies.

1. In the Neighbourhood Survey carried out to support the Neighbourhood Plan, 73.26% of people cited environment as one of the three most important issues concerning Saddleworth currently, rising to 79.78% of people when asked for the three most important issues concerning Saddleworth in 20 years time. Only housing rated more highly as an issue.

2. The reclaimed railway lines which run through Saddleworth are particularly noteworthy in creating recreation and nature conservation corridors. These are already identified as Recreation Routes/Open Spaces and these should be treated as key Green Infrastructure features.

3. The dramatic and distinctive rural landscape of Saddleworth provides many great benefits. These include its:

- scenic value,
- aesthetic function as a backdrop for the local villages,
- contribution to local and distant views,
- providing a setting for recreation and tourism,
- creating a sense of personal well being, and
- economic, cultural and artistic value.

4. The landscape of Saddleworth is a huge asset, not only for the community of the Parish but for the whole of Oldham, Greater Manchester and beyond.

5. Many parts of the Saddleworth countryside have been greatly enhanced over recent decades. Tree planting and derelict land reclamation has had a transformational impact, particularly along the valley bottoms. The Huddersfield Narrow Canal has been restored to use. Disused rail lines have become tree lined recreation routes. New countryside leisure areas have been created and the network of footpaths, cycleways and bridleways has been enhanced.

6. Nonetheless the Saddleworth landscape is fragile. The stretches of countryside between and around the Saddleworth villages are narrow. They are under great pressure from various types of development even though much of the land is within the Green Belt. The open slopes on the valley sides are highly visible. Any landscape change on these hillsides has a great impact on local and distant views. It would be very easy for all the great benefits provided by the Saddleworth landscapes to be eroded.



The Linear Park at Springhead

7. The Neighbourhood Survey identified over-development as a major concern, and several respondents drew particular attention to the impact on community cohesion and community identity. This was in particular identified in response to question on how people would like to see Saddleworth in 20 years time. A typical response was:

> "I would like it to be pretty similar to as it is today but with a thriving, varied, independent economy that reaches all of the villages. I would like all green spaces to be preserved as these are some of the last in Oldham and are the very reason I moved back to Oldham."

and more simply:

> "Not an urban sprawl"

8. Map A indicates the areas of Saddleworth covered by the green belt in light green and dark green. The area which is dark green also adjoins the Peak District National Park and is the subject of a specific policy in this plan (Policy 5). The exact area covered is available on Oldham Council's Mapping system at maps.oldham.gov.uk.

9. A high percentage of the rural area of Saddleworth outside the National Park is in the Green Belt. This can protect the landscape against urban and suburban encroachment but is no guarantee against other unwelcome landscape changes. These changes can have many causes. They can result from inappropriate development, from unsympathetic land management, direct damage, and from the impacts of climate change, such as land erosion and invasion by non native flora.

10. Other changes can result from:

- tipping on or reshaping of land;
- dressing of access tracks with builders' waste materials such as broken tiles, glass and plastics;
- culverting of watercourses and rerouting of watercourses (sometimes leading to increased bank erosion);
- redundant farm machinery left to decay;
- disrepair of the dry stone walls which are such a feature of the upland landscape;
- barn conversions in open countryside; especially where garden "clutter" is uncontrolled, e.g. sheds, greenhouses, inappropriate boundary structures, etc;
- barns built to create the opportunity for converting to new houses.

11. All proposals for development within the Green Belt will need to be in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which makes clear that inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances.

12. The NPPF says: "Once Green Belts have been defined, local planning authorities should plan positively to enhance their beneficial use, such as looking for opportunities to provide access; to provide opportunities for outdoor sport and recreation; to retain and enhance landscapes, visual amenity and biodiversity; or to improve damaged and derelict land."

13. The National Planning Policy Framework refers to National Parks and states that "development within their setting should be sensitively located and designed to avoid or minimise adverse impacts on the designated areas".

14. The existing protection of Saddleworth's open countryside by a Green Belt designation is an essential component of the overall planning policy position. However that is not sufficient on its own to safeguard the landscape against a gradual erosion of its character and beauty.

15. PfE and the Oldham Council's Local Plan contain policies which are designed to add further protection (see paragraph 46 below – Landscape Character Areas.)

POLICY 2: BIODIVERSITY

2.1 Developments should:

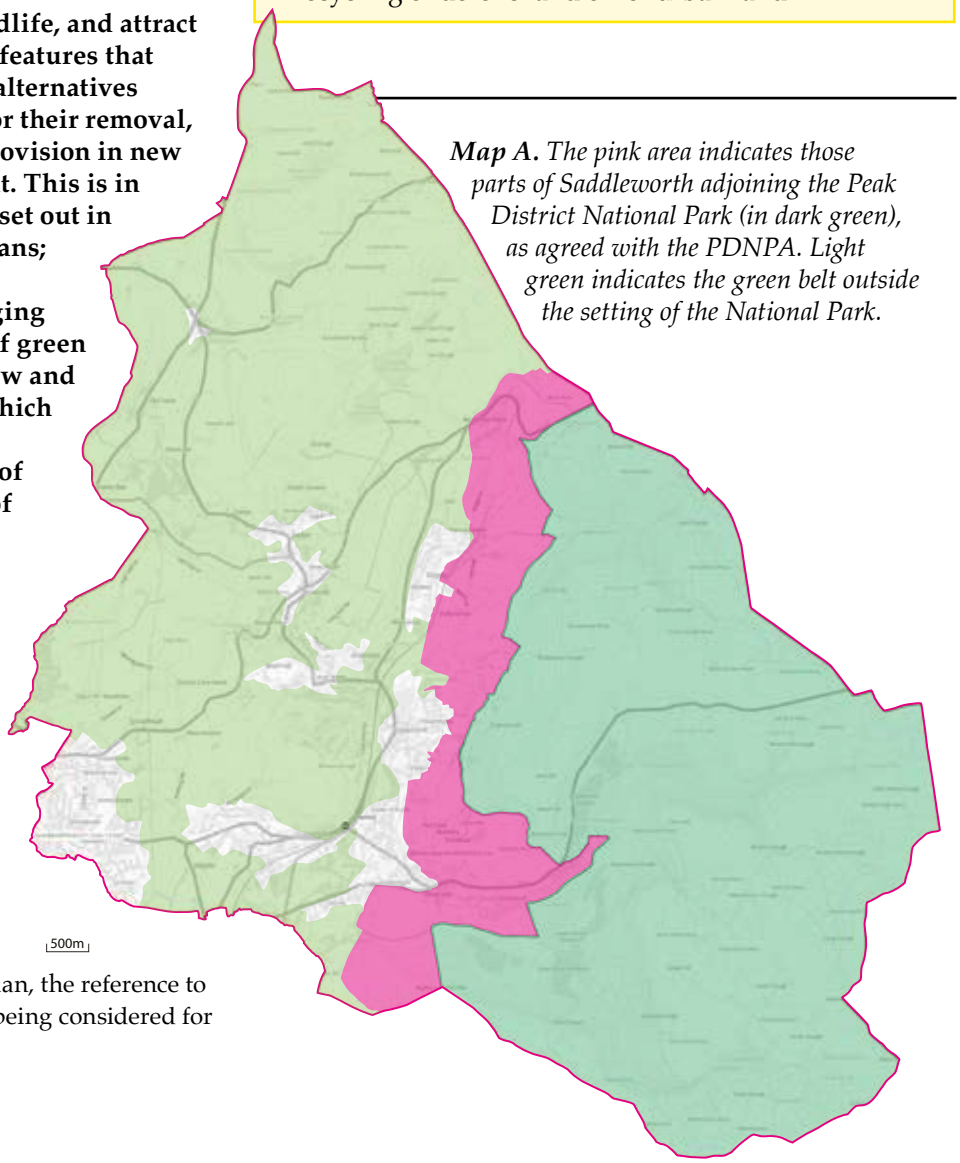
- **protect and enhance any existing wildlife, and attract new species, particularly by keeping features that support existing wildlife, providing alternatives where there are overriding reasons for their removal, and incorporating new supporting provision in new buildings and across the development. This is in line with the mitigation hierarchy as set out in national planning policy and local plans; and**
- **support wildlife movement and foraging through, for example, the provision of green infrastructure such as native hedgerow and tree planting (or additional species which have been agreed to provide greater diversity and resilience), and the use of native wild flower planting in areas of green spaces.[3]**

2.2 Development must respect the need for increased tree coverage in the Saddleworth lowlands[4][5], and in particular encourage the expansion of native species across the district.

The purpose of the Green Belt

The NPPF sets out the five purposes of Green Belt:

- to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas;
- to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;
- to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
- to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
- to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.



Map A. *The pink area indicates those parts of Saddleworth adjoining the Peak District National Park (in dark green), as agreed with the PDNPA. Light green indicates the green belt outside the setting of the National Park.*

[3] All developments should be informed by and contribute to the emerging Greater Manchester Local Nature Recovery Strategy and future ecological networks.

[4] For the purposes of this Neighbourhood Plan, the reference to lowlands is areas under 800ft which are not being considered for tree planting.

[5] See paragraphs 17–18.

2.3 Developments will not be supported which:

- **do not meet Oldham Council's target provision for the replacement of trees;**
- **result in the removal or degradation of existing green spaces such as wildlife corridors; or**
- **would result in the loss of or harm to irreplaceable habitats such as Ancient Woodland.**

16. Biodiversity net gain is now a mandatory requirement for development, under Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as inserted by Schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021), which means developers must introduce a biodiversity net gain of 10%.

Tree coverage and peatlands

17. Greater Manchester is aiming to plant a tree for every resident in the plan area over the next 25 years as part of the City of Trees initiative.

18. The GM Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy promotes work with agricultural landowners and stakeholders to promote more carbon sequestration (removing CO_2 from the atmosphere by storing carbon). There is a commitment to protect and enhance peat bogs around Denshaw Moor, agricultural land on high ground around Delph, the extensive areas in the Peak Park, and heathland around Alphin Pike.

POLICY 3: PROTECTED SPACES

3.1 The South Pennine Moors Special Protection Area (SPA) and Special Area of Conservation (SAC) are of particular importance in Saddleworth. Development is required to meet policies within PfE and Oldham Council's Local Plan[6] which address recreational impacts on the SAC/SPA, including any "functionally linked" land[7]. Any specific proposals for facilitating tourism or tree planting are required to be assessed at a project level for any significant likely effects on the special interest of designated sites. Developments which fail to do so, or which do not mitigate against such impact will not be supported.

3.2 In the SPA/SAC specific mitigation at a project level may include requiring dogs to be on leads and the provision of advice for avoiding fire risks.

Special Protection Area and Special Area of Conservation

19. The South Pennine Moors are classified as a Special Protection Area (SPA) and designated as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC).[8]

20. The SPA and SAC cover an area of 45,270.52 ha., and include part of the moorland in Saddleworth (as well as in Barnsley, Cheshire, Derbyshire, Kirklees, Sheffield, Staffordshire and Tameside).

21. The original citation states that the site qualifies as it is used regularly by more than 1% of the British population of the merlin (30–36 pairs), golden plover (443–445 pairs) and short-eared owl (22–25 pairs).

[6] Development must meet PfE Policy JP-G5 'Uplands' which deals with the issues of recreational impacts and functionally linked land and other local plan policies on nature.

[7] "Functionally linked" land means areas of land adjacent to a designated site which are critical to, or necessary for, the defined area's ecology.

[8] https://magic.defra.gov.uk/MagicMap.aspx?startTopic=Designations&activelayer=spaIndex&query=Ref_CODE%3D%27UK9007022%27



Moorland above Dovestone reservoir

Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs)

22. An SSSI is a conservation designation denoting a protected area. This can be based on biological or geological criteria. In England, SSSIs are determined by Natural England.

23. According to a DEFRA report, "SSSIs protect a large proportion of species in England and Wales, including most rare species. Although there are some gaps, they are seen to be representative of our biodiversity as a whole. SSSIs have helped to protect some species in England and Wales which would otherwise be at risk of extinction nationally."[9]

24. SSSIs in Saddleworth include Ladcastle and Den Quarries; Standedge Road Cutting, Dark Peak and South Pennine Moors.

Sites of Biological Importance (SBIs)

25. Greater Manchester Ecology Unit (GMEU) operates the SBI register for, and on behalf of, the ten Local Authorities that comprise Greater Manchester. This dataset contains all current SBI boundaries, including the name of each site and its defining features. SBIs are Greater Manchester's equivalent to Local Wildlife Sites (LWS).

SSSI impact risk zones

Natural England maintain a database of which types of developments are likely to impact on SSSIs, which can be found at https://naturalengland-defra.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/Defra::sssi-impact-risk-zones-england/explore?location=52.791703%2C-2.504131%2C7.73

26. The 16 SBIs in Saddleworth (as at 2021) are Alphin Pike & Buckton Moor (North), Dark Peak Moors, Hull Brook, Slackcote Valley, and South Pennine Moors (South) (all Grade A); Castleshaw Pasture, Dacres, Dick Clough, Hey Bank, Huddersfield Narrow Canal (North), Medlock Headwater and Strinesdale, Moorgate Quarry, Royal George (all Grade B); and Armit Road Lodge, Fields by White Brook, and Tame Water Woodland (all Grade C).

27. Collectively, the SBIs, SSSIs, and the Special Protection Area highlight the critical importance of much of Saddleworth's natural resources to the biological diversity of the UK, and as such, the critical role their protection must play in development decisions that affect the area.

[9] Mitigation strategies need to be joined up between the responsible authorities and interested groups. Co-ordination and working with partner organisations is key for strategies to be effective. See Natural England report on the Recreational Use of the South Pennines Moors and implications for strategic housing growth (Footprint Ecology 27th March 2024).

28. The protection of biodiversity within the Parish is not solely reliant on the protection of designated sites. Priority and irreplaceable habitats can occur outside of sites such as SSSI's and SBI's. Where irreplaceable habitats are present, these should be given the highest protection. Irreplaceable habitat is defined in national planning policy as habitats, which would be very difficult (or take a very significant time) to restore, recreate or replace once destroyed, taking into account their age, uniqueness, species diversity or rarity. They include ancient woodland, ancient and veteran trees, blanket bog, limestone pavement, sand dunes, salt marsh and lowland fen.

29. The subsequent policies in this section of the Neighbourhood Plan are designed to supplement all the above. They are intended to address, and be tailored to, the very particular issues affecting the Parish. They take account of the special character of the landscape, the specific pressures which threaten it, the benefits that this great asset provides if carefully conserved, and the preferences expressed by local people.

POLICY 4: LOCAL GREEN SPACES

4.1 The following sites, identified on maps in Appendix 3 of the Neighbourhood Plan, are designated as Local Green Spaces:

- **Ashfield Playing Field, Springhead;**
- **Church Fields, Dobcross;**
- **Dawson's Field, Scouthead;**
- **Diggle Fields, Diggle.**

---

30. A Local Green Space designation gives the area equivalent protection to it being in the green belt – see glossary for further details.

31. The emerging Local Plan for Oldham has identified Local Green Spaces, as well as other green infrastructure. It has already been identified that the following OPOL sites should be considered for Local Green Spaces status:

- Dacres
- Stoneswood
- Wall Hill
- Thornley Brook
- Stonebreaks
- Ryefields Drive
- Ainley Wood
- Summershades Lane

Support for green spaces

Local Green Space designation can be made in Local Plans or Neighbourhood Plans. These plans can identify on a map ('designate') green areas for special protection. Anyone who wants an area to be designated as Local Green Space should contact the local planning authority about its local plan or get involved in neighbourhood planning.

The Parish Council will endeavour to promote the use of Local Green Space status, as well as other protected statuses, such as SBIs and SSSIs, and support local residents in applying for these protected statuses, as well as applying for them itself where appropriate.

32. Consultation responses revealed a significant concern about the loss of existing green space to residential development.

33. The feedback from the surveys conducted for this Neighbourhood Plan also identifies an extensive number of sites which might be included as further Local Green Spaces.

34. Some of these responses sought protection of the Green Belt and OPOL in general. However, others suggested particular sites for Local Green Space designation. All iof the suggested were evaluated for their suitability for designation, and in terms of the policy protection which the sites would enjoy (e.g. under Polices 5, 7 and 10).

35. Based on this assessment the Neighbourhood Plan proposes four sites for Local Green Space designation:

- Ashfield Playing Field, Springhead (proximity and recreational value);
- Church Fields, Dobcross (proximity, significance, recreational value, historic importance and demonstrably special);
- Dawson's Field, Scouthead (proximity, recreational value and demonstrably special);
- Diggle Fields, Diggle (proximity, recreational value and historic importance).

36. A further site, defined as suffrage field, Lydgate, has also been recommended for Local Green Space status. However, due to ongoing planning challenges, this site has been recommended to be processed as part of Oldham Council's forthcoming Local Plan.

37. The defined borders of the Local Green Spaces are provided in the supplementary report Suggested Local Green Spaces, available at www.saddleworthparishcouncil.org.uk/downloads/for-inspection/suggested-local-green-spaces.pdf, and Appendix 3 to this document.

OBJECTIVE 2: To promote and encourage the stewardship and conservation of a beautiful and locally distinctive rural landscape in a period of changing climatic and economic conditions.[10]

[10] Including partnership work as outlined in Parish Action 4– farming and rural environment).



The Church of St Chads

POLICY 5: CHARACTER AND QUALITY OF LAND ADJACENT TO THE NATIONAL PARK

4.1 Development must respect the setting of the Peak District National Park (the indicative area adjacent to the National Park as shown in Map A, and appendix 1)[11] by being sensitively located and designed so as to avoid or minimise adverse impacts on the National Park.

The setting of the Peak District National Park

38. Approximately 40% of Saddleworth is in the Peak District National Park. This area makes a tremendous contribution to the local landscape with all the benefits that this entails.

39. "The 1995 Environment Act establishes the statutory purposes of national park designation as:

> *i) to conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the national parks; and*
>
> *ii) to promote the opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of those areas by the public*

40. Section 62 of the Act also places a general duty on all relevant authorities to seek to further these purposes. In pursuing these purposes, section 62 also places a duty on the National Park Authority to seek to foster the economic and social well-being of the local communities.

41. Where there is irreconcilable conflict between the statutory purposes, the Sandford Principle[12] will be applied and the conservation of the National Park will be given priority.

[11] Development outside the area defined in Map A could be considered to have an impact on the setting of the National Park, but a demonstration of exceptional circumstances would be required.

[12] As per the Environment Act 1995, the Sandford Principle states that, where there is a conflict between the statutory purposes of national parks, any relevant authority "shall attach greater weight to the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the area comprised in the National Park".

42. Most of the area of PDNP in Saddleworth is classed as Natural Zone (Core Strategy policy L1 and DMP DMC2). The Natural Zone are the wildest and least developed parts of the national park and development is only acceptable in exceptional circumstances (i.e. for the management of the Natural Zone or for the conservation and/or enhancement of the PDNP).

43. This Neighbourhood Plan should have regard to the NPPF requirement in respect of the setting of the National Park. Saddleworth's rural landscapes adjoin a long section of the boundary of the northernmost part of the Peak District National Park. Along most of this length the landscapes on each side of the boundary are not separated or distinguished by any strongly marked geographical feature or character differences. The Peak District National Park Authority wishes to see the requirements of the NPPF reflected in this Neighbourhood Plan.

44. The geographic extent of a "setting" is difficult to define. A large development or one which would involve a very significant change in the landscape might have a very significant impact on the National Park even though it is located at some distance from the boundary.

45. Map A (page 18, and appendix 1) shows the rural areas which can be described as "directly adjoining the National Park". Proposed developments within this area would be assessed against policy 5. However, this does not exclude the possibility that proposed developments which are located at a greater distance from the National Park may be considered to adversely affect the Park by reason of being in its setting – wind turbines are one example of a potentially impacting development.



Moorland above Denshaw

Planning policies to protect Landscape Character Areas across Saddleworth

46. A Greater Manchester Landscape Character and Sensitivity Assessment (GMLCSA) has been prepared for Greater Manchester. This assesses the quality and sensitivity of different landscapes and considers cross-boundary relationships (including with the Peak District National Park). The GMLCSA identified different landscape types which include Saddleworth. PfE Policy JP-G1 will also ensure that development reflects and responds to the special qualities and sensitivities of key landscape characteristics.

POLICY 6: CONVERSION OF AGRICULTURAL BUILDINGS (BARN CONVERSIONS)

6.1 A proposal for change of use of agricultural buildings or stables will be supported if it is deemed to have no detrimental impact on the agricultural economy, nor on the openness of the landscape and people's enjoyment of the open countryside.[13]

6.2 Developments will be supported which can demonstrate the following:

- **if brought into use later than 20th March 2013, the applicant has demonstrated that the building has been in active use for the approved purpose and for no other purposes for a minimum of seven years;**
- **the building footprint or height does not increase substantially, in line with national and local plan policies;**
- **ecological surveys have been carried out;**
- **developments should incorporate green infrastructure to support biodiversity and preserve existing wildlife, including protected species such as bats; and**
- **adequate screening by appropriate features such as tree planting, hedge planting and drystone walls or the provision of such features.**

Ownership and usage

Some of the lack of information about watercourses is caused by there being no comprehensive record of the ownership/usage of Saddleworth's rural areas. Ownership, even when not recorded, falls into multiple categories, including:

- Land owned privately, mainly farmed under grazing, some set aside for wildlife conservation. In some places the land is the subject of public access requirements (such as rights of way).
- Land owned by water utilities and under the same mix of uses.
- Land owned by local authorities, often formerly derelict before reclamation for the purpose of landscape enhancement, recreation and biodiversity.
- Land owned by private individuals and managed for its landscape or biodiversity value. One or two small examples exist, but this is generally uncommon in Saddleworth.
- Land owned or managed by voluntary/charitable organisations for landscape, biodiversity or recreation purposes, for example the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) at Dovestone Reservoir.

This policy does not apply to that part of the neighbourhood area that is within the Peak District National Park.

47. Between 2018 and 2022, 27 planning applications were received which involved the conversion to or replacement with dwellings of existing agricultural buildings in Saddleworth. That is above and beyond any conversions which were allowed under permitted development rights.

48. Permitted development rights for conversion of agricultural buildings in force since April 2018 stipulate that the agricultural building must have been built prior to April 2013, or have been in agricultural use for 10 years before permitted development rights apply.

49. The conversion of unused or under-used agricultural buildings into dwellings is often positive and contributes to the achievement of housing targets.

[13] Some barn conversions will fall under "permitted development", and therefore will not be required to apply for planning permission. Such development cannot therefore be subject to these requirements.



The war memorial at Pots and Pans is an example of a significant site with publicly valued viewpoints from across Saddleworth.

50. However, it should not be the case that agricultural buildings can be erected in the green belt (without any requirement for planning permission) and subsequently converted to housing simply to avoid restrictions on housebuilding in the green belt. This policy is intended to remove that possibility; but ensure that agricultural buildings can still be built where required, and that former agricultural buildings which have fallen into disuse can still be converted where appropriate.

51. The high volume of this type of development is a very significant threat to the character and beauty of the very open, but narrow, areas of countryside in Saddleworth. Much of our agricultural land is elevated and without tree cover which might provide a degree of concealment. The agricultural buildings are generally visible over great distances. The high housing values in the area add to the pressure for conversions. New homes in the converted structures are highly sought after because they enjoy spectacular, extensive, unrestricted views across the open countryside to the local hills and the National Park.

52. A negative impact on the landscape may be increased through additional development taking place within the new gardens (e.g. sheds, greenhouses, play equipment, washing lines and unsympathetic boundary treatments). Overhead services can be another issue.

53. Saddleworth is in many ways an exemplar of an area where the cumulative impact of this type of development can be most detrimental in terms of landscape quality, tourism, leisure and (by affecting its setting) the National Park.

POLICY 7: PROTECTION OF IMPORTANT VIEWS

7.1 Development proposals which will detract or harm a valued viewpoint that is accessible to the general public through interruption of the following key identified views or through inappropriate development by virtue of its design will not be supported unless there is a clear and convincing justification:

- **Views of church spires and towers located within the Neighbourhood Area including: the Church of St Chad viewed from Pickhill Valley; St Anne's Lydgate viewed from the footpath from Coverhill Road; and St Paul's Church in Scouthead viewed from Woodbrook Valley.**
- **Views of Pots and Pans War Memorial from any of the villages in the Neighbourhood Area."**

54. The Greater Manchester Landscape Character and Sensitivity Assessment in particular notes the Saddleworth War Memorial on Pots and Pans as the subject of such a view.

55. Churches in Saddleworth have been commonly, but not exclusively, placed at the head of the valleys where congregations walked up footpaths to the church, which frames each church among the landscape.

56. As an example, in *St Anne's Lydgate: The Story of a Pennine Parish 1788–1988* by Canon CCW Airne, he states "As Lydgate Church enters into its third century, more changes will come, and new opportunities open up. Looking back over the past we learn of times of neglect and indifference: times of inspiration and progress but in spite of the ups and downs the gospel has been preached and countless people have ordered their lives by it. The Church on the Hill, battered by two centuries of wind, rain and snow, still stands as a beacon proclaiming that Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again, and calling God's people to worship and fellowship."

57. Consideration should be given to the views of church spires and towers from across the area, particularly the Church of St Chad (as viewed from Pickhill valley), St Anne's Lydgate (as viewed up the footpath from Coverhill Road), and St Paul's Church in Scouthead[14] (as viewed from Woodbrook valley).

58. Pots and Pans war memorial was designed to be viewed from each of the villages in Saddleworth at the time. It is therefore not possible to name a specific location from which the view is important, but particular consideration should be given to any developments which would significantly change the view of the war memorial from any of the villages.

OBJECTIVE 3: To protect and enhance the environment, and ensure that development adequately addresses flood risk, and promotes sustainability.

To have clear information about watercourses for the purposes of risk assessment and response.

POLICY 8: EROSION AND FLOODING

8.1 Developments will be supported which avoid exacerbating flood risk from all sources and make use of natural techniques to minimise and mitigate that flood risk, such as Slow the Flow initiatives on tributary streams and catchment areas, or "wilding" initiatives to create natural sustainable drainage systems (SUDS).

Flooding

As well as the requirement for SUDS, it is recommended that efforts should be made to identify pre-existing drainage and culverted waterways, and report them to Oldham Council, to improve knowledge of existing potential flood risks.

8.2 Development in flood risk areas will only be permitted in line with national and local plan policy requirements, subject to a satisfactory Flood Risk Assessment, which identifies appropriate mitigation for the site, where required.[15]

8.3 Any application for planning permission shall be supported by an assessment of the natural drainage patterns for the site and any existing flow paths and discharge points. The assessment shall determine how these are likely to be modified by the proposed development. The assessment shall have regard to any steep topography and ground conditions in accordance with the guidance in CIRIA C753 'The SuDS Manual' and the thereafter the development shall identify any necessary mitigating measures to protect proposed and existing properties from flood risk.

59. Incidents of extremely heavy rainfall against a background of generally wetter ground conditions have led to increased flood damage and erosion in recent years. This can damage the landscape; but the landscape if managed wisely can also play a role in slowing the speed of run off.

60. Surface water run off can be slowed by protecting and enhancing the peat bogs on the high plateaux, increasing tree cover, a reduction in close cropped or cut grassland and the creation of water holding features. Hard surfacing of the ground and straightening, channelling and culverting of watercourses exacerbates the problem.

[14] Now in private ownership.

[15] The local plan includes a comprehensive policy on foul and surface water management. This is reflected in the emerging Oldham Local Plan, see draft Policy CC4 – Sustainable Drainage – Foul and Surface Water.

61. In the Neighbourhood Survey, of 266 specific responses 79% specifically called for more to be done to address flooding issues, including avoiding development on flood risk areas, the use of SUDS (sustainable drainage systems), and the use of wilding initiatives to manage water flows.

> "More is needed – priority should be re-wetting and replanting the moors, where its low enough, or the bare farmland around it, banning land being managed for grouse, following Scotland' s recent example. Rivers should be allowed to have soft banks, which is proven to help reduce flooding – exactly the opposite of what's recently been allowed in the new build areas around Greenfield, which will make the problem worse, creating fast flowing water which will build up and flood at points where the water can escape, instead of being softened along its route. People should be made aware when houses are being built on land at flood risk."
>
> *Survey response*

62. Information on flooding concerns can be found in Dobcross responses (p 148 of the submission), and in the individual answers to question 12 on the Neighbourhood Survey.

Further policies

See also:

Policy 9 – sustainable construction, with regards to environmental standards for individual buildings, including zero-carbon approaches, energy generation and drainage.

Policy 10 – design, character and heritage, with regards to the character of individual buildings or areas, and for the identification of areas of special interest, such as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), Sites of Biological Importance (SBIs).

The Travel and Transport section (Policy 24 and Parish Action 6 – cycling, pedestrian and leisure infrastructure; Policy 26 and Parish Action 7 – public transport; Policy 25 – accessibility to transport, with regards to minimising vehicle journeys and accessing pedestrian and cycle routes or public transport, and Policy 28 – air quality and vibration monitoring), with regards to minimising vehicle journeys, accessing pedestrian and cycle routes or public transport, and air quality.

Design

OBJECTIVE 4: To ensure the sustainable design and construction of all new development.

To support opportunities for energy generation and the minimisation of energy use.

POLICY 9: SUSTAINABLE CONSTRUCTION

9.1 Developments must aim to deliver modern standards of design and construction, where appropriate, to minimise the environmental impact of the construction process. Where modern approaches are not used – for example, to match historic building methods – efforts must still be made to minimise this impact.

9.2 Developments will not be supported which do not meet or exceed national environmental guidelines and recommendations, or requirements set out in Places for Everyone for zero-carbon homes across their lifetimes.

9.3 Developments will be supported which include, where appropriate, small-scale and/or district[16] energy provision, including but not limited to solar power, hydropower, and other types of energy as highlighted in local energy plans.

This policy does not apply to that part of the neighbourhood area that is within the Peak District National Park.

See also the supporting evidence for policy 1 – green infrastructure.

63. Saddleworth Parish Council has adopted a specific target of ensuring that the Parish Council is carbon neutral by 2030, which is in line with the Oldham Council target of carbon neutrality across the borough by 2030.

64. The Local Area Energy Plan for Oldham does not include Saddleworth as a First Step Priority Area for any measures, but does designate it as a "Heat Pump Prevalent Zone" in its Long Term Deployment Areas.

65. In response to the Neighbourhood Survey question on preferred methods of providing renewable energy, preferences by weighted average (where 1 is most preferred and 5 is least preferred), were 1 – solar panels (2.26); 2 –hydroelectric (2.41); 3 – ground source heat pumps (2.63); 4 – air source heat pumps (3.17); 5 – biomass (3.34); 6 – domestic wind turbines (3.55); 7 – commercial wind turbines (4.11). A small, but significant, number of respondents did not answer the question because they did not have sufficient knowledge of the technologies involved in the question, suggesting that there needs to be better communication to accompany any approaches.

66. The student consultation showed strong support for the use of renewable energy. They gave us examples, such as the use of solar panels and wind turbines which ultimately use what is already around us, wind, sunlight and water. They also wanted further promotion of cycling and public transport to help tackle climate change. Some liked the idea of a solar powered school.

OBJECTIVE 5: To conserve and enhance historic assets, and ensure that where possible, traditional, unused heritage assets are brought back into new use.

Development must maintain or improve the unique local vernacular, with particular respect paid to historical design and methods of construction.

To ensure that new developments are, wherever possible, of a high enough standard to create new heritage assets for the Parish in the future.

POLICY 10: DESIGN, CHARACTER AND HERITAGE

10.1 Development that enhances or conserves Conservation Areas and heritage assets in the area – as well as their distinct character, appearance, and setting – will be supported.

[16] District here is defined as covering part or all of the Parish.



Traditional stone weavers' cottages in Uppermill

10.2 Developments which retain existing heritage assets and their setting, to the fullest possible extent, will be supported. Any proposal that incorporates the partial or full loss of a heritage asset must demonstrate why the reuse of the asset is not applicable, through the submission of a detailed Heritage Statement and accompanied structural/condition and viability surveys to justify the extent of harm.

10.3 Development will be supported which is of a high quality of design, and which complements and enhances the distinct local character and identity of Saddleworth's villages.

10.4 This shall be achieved by, for example:

- **the use of distinctive local building materials, to ensure complementary and sympathetic design to enhance or better reveal the distinct Saddleworth vernacular, with particular regard given to the design and materials used in weavers' cottages and associated mill buildings;**
- **a presumption in favour of a colour palette which reflects, or is in harmony with, the materials of its context. In particular, extensions and infill development should respect and be sensitive to their context and settings;**
- **taking into account the context of listed buildings, conservation areas, scheduled monuments and their settings, along with significant views (see policy 2). Whilst OPOL (and future local green spaces) and other types of protected status should also be considered;**
- **the provision of associated high-quality public realm.**

10.5 Proposals which substantially harm the special character, and/or architectural and/or historical significance, and setting of Conservation Areas, heritage assets, and adjoining vernacular styles in the area will not be supported.

10.6 Account will be taken of the Local Heritage List designations (once adopted) when considering planning and development.

10.7 Particular weight will be given in favour of developments which incorporate environmental technology in a way which is complementary to the heritage of the area.

This policy does not apply to that part of the neighbourhood area that is within the Peak District National Park.

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67. The NPPF contains strong policy to prevent harm to heritage assets.



Saddleworth Parish Council Cemetery

68. Castleshaw Roman Fort is one of two scheduled monuments listed in Saddleworth by Historic England. Saddleworth War Memorial (Pots and Pans), as well as being a grade II listed structure, is of particular relevance as the centre of Armistice Day celebrations. The Church of St Chad is a Grade II* listed building, as is Heights Chapel. The Uppermill Viaduct is a Grade II listed structure. All of these were also specifically named by residents in response to the survey question on sites that should be identified and promoted for tourism and heritage, although this is not an exhaustive list.

69. In defining Saddleworth's existing design, character and heritage, the Greater Manchester Landscape and Character Needs Assessment identifies a "unifying vernacular of traditional millstone grit farms and cottages, with small villages and clusters of buildings in sheltered locations often fringed by trees", with specific reference to St Chad's Church and Diglea.

70. Saddleworth has, in particular, a rich heritage of weavers' cottages and traditional mill buildings, and new developments should be integrated in such a way as to address and enhance these sensitively.

71. Earlier buildings used gritstone for the walls and flagstones for the roofs. With the building of the Huddersfield Narrow Canal in the early-19th century, large amounts of slate became available and building styles changed to incorporate this much cheaper material.

72. As well as the above description of Saddleworth's vernacular; there are distinct identities and styles which exist in each village and in specific areas, such as village high streets.

73. Common vernacular styles also include terraced properties, semi-detached and detached Victorian/ Edwardian properties. Currently, character appraisals exist for only two of the conservation areas – Grasscroft and Delph, which can be accessed at https://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/200291/heritage/1908/conservation_areas – there are a further 20 conservation areas in Saddleworth for which Oldham Council is expected to produce character appraisals.

74. This Neighbourhood Plan has specifically not excluded contemporary design, but instead has stated that it must be complementary to existing design, and reflect or be in harmony with existing designs.

75. The Student Consultation wanted to protect our heritage assets, from mills and canals to other statues and landmarks. However, they understood that if sites could be of more use then perhaps we should redevelop them. They believed that our history should be kept alive.

Privately owned heritage assets and those under the control of other public authorities

76. When considering Saddleworth's local heritage, immediate thoughts are the buildings or structures that are formally 'listed'. However, heritage assets include more than just buildings and monuments; they also include sites, places, areas or landscapes. The unifying factor is that the asset has a degree of significance that merits consideration in planning decisions.

Conserving heritage assets

There are a number of heritage assets within Saddleworth which other public authorities own or for which they have a statutory duty of care. Others are in private ownership.

Saddleworth Parish Council will support residents to ensure that they can report heritage assets that are not being maintained in a manner that enhances or preserves their heritage, so that appropriate action can be taken, such as Urgent Works Notices, Repairs Notices or Compulsory Purchase Orders.

Saddleworth Parish Council will also work in coordination with other organisations to enhance and preserve existing heritage and at risk assets – including, but not limited to, Saddleworth Civic Trust, Historic England, the Yorkshire Milestone Society, Oldham Council, and the Peak District National Park Authority (PDNPA).

Saddleworth Parish Council will support and provide information on other forms of support for the maintenance and enhancement of heritage assets, such as grant funding to maintain or repair existing heritage assets.

Saddleworth Parish Council is directly responsible for a number of assets across the Parish, which have a range of heritage and green benefits.

The assets include Saddleworth Civic Hall & car park in Uppermill, Saddleworth Cemetery, Uppermill Allotments, the land opposite Three Crowns in Austerlands, and Dawson's Field in Scouthead (on lease from OMBC).

77. Historic England maintains the National Heritage List for England (NHLE) – the only official, up to date, register of all nationally protected historic buildings and sites in England – listed buildings, scheduled monuments, protected wrecks, registered parks and gardens, and battlefields.

78. There are currently 386 designated heritage assets in Saddleworth on the National List for England, of which five are Grade II* listed buildings and two are scheduled monuments – the Bowl Barrow NNE of Knarr Barn, and Castleshaw Roman Fort. Full information on listed buildings and the two scheduled monuments in Saddleworth are available at Historic England's website at https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/

79. In addition to this, there is a Local Heritage List project. The Greater Manchester Local Heritage List Project is being run by the Greater Manchester Archaeological Advisory Service (GMAAS) together with the Greater Manchester Combined Authority and Oldham Council.

80. The aim of the project is to identify non-designated heritage assets that make a significant contribution to the character and local distinctiveness of the borough and are considered by their local community to be of historic importance. Once accepted onto the Local List, these cherished historic buildings and sites can be given greater consideration in the planning process.

81. The current conservation areas are: Hey (Springhead); Stonebreaks (Springhead); Lydgate; Scouthead; Grasscroft; Royal George Mills (Friezland); Ladhill Lane (Greenfield), Boarshurst (Greenfield); Hey Top (Greenfield); Uppermill; St Chad's Church (Uppermill); Holly Grove (Uppermill); Dobcross; Tame Water (Dobcross); New Delph; Delph; Diglea; Harrop Green (Dobcross); Grange (Delph); New Tame (Slackcote); Denshaw; and Bleak Hey Nook (Delph).

82. The Parish Council is responsible for a number of assets which have heritage status or characteristics, and as such has direct responsibility for their upkeep.

- Former British Telecom phone boxes
- Bus shelters
- Saddleworth Parish Council Cemetery
- Saddleworth Civic Hall and car park

83. The maintenance of these assets falls under the remit of the Assets Management Committee of the Parish Council, which will ensure that they are maintained in a manner which enhances or preserves them and their distinct character, appearance and setting.



Former dye tanks at the Chew Brook Vale site

84. In addition, there are a number of heritage assets within the Parish that are maintained by the Borough Council. In particular, this includes heritage street lighting (at: Brook Lane, Dobcross; Carr Lane, Diggle; Dale Lane, Delph; Pastures Lane, Delph; Sandbed Lane, Scouthead; Stoneswood Road in Delph; and Oldham Road in Denshaw), and the milestones across the Parish. The Yorkshire Milestone Society maintains lists of milestones throughout Yorkshire. There are about 30 milestones situated on roads and additional ones in isolated non-road areas.

POLICY 11: DESIGN MASTERPLANS

11.1 Design masterplans should be prepared for developments of more than 25 houses, which should:

- **be in accordance with an infrastructure delivery plan, according to scale;**
- **create buildings, spaces and streets which positively reflect and respond to the local landscape, townscape and historic character;**
- **create integrated, accessible and sustainable transport systems with walking, cycling and public transport designed to be the most attractive forms of transport and effectively linking into the surrounding areas;**
- **provide a clear structure and hierarchy of pedestrian friendly streets and well-connected footpaths and cycle ways integrated with the wider built and natural environment and communities;**
- **plan for integrated and mixed-use communities with walkable locally accessible community, employment and retail facilities;**
- **positively integrate with adjacent communities and positively contribute to their character and the way the area functions, including addressing infrastructure matters;**
- **provide a diverse and distinctive range of flexible and adaptable house types, tenures and building forms to meet the differing needs of the population;**
- **provide strategies for foul and sustainable surface water management and demonstrate consideration of implications for water supply infrastructure; and**
- **create an accessible multi-functional green infrastructure network. Integrate existing areas of blue and green infrastructure in development with consideration being given to the provision of access, surveillance and the orientation of buildings to promote positive engagement with the wider blue/ green infrastructure network.**

11.2 With particular regards to large development sites (100+ houses), or mixed use developments sites of over 1.25 hectares, the masterplan should include an indication of how the development would be phased. This should be developed with the opportunity for timely participation from the local community.

This policy does not apply to that part of the neighbourhood area that is within the Peak District National Park.

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85. The NPPF states that policies should: "set clear expectations for the quality of the places to be created and how this can be maintained … and ensure that appropriate tools such as masterplans and design guides or codes are used to secure a variety of well-designed and beautiful homes to meet the needs of different groups in the community;".

86. The definition of a major development is defined in The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2010. However, it was regarded as unreasonable to set a requirement for design masterplans at 10 houses. A requirement of 25 houses was chosen to ensure that the policy would apply to developments which could have a more significant impact on the locality.

POLICY 12: CHEW BROOK VALE

12.1 The former Fletcher's Mill site in Greenfield is designated in Places for Everyone as JP Allocation 13 Chew Brook Vale.

12.2 The site is allocated for housing; and also a range of commercial, retail and leisure facilities totalling up to 3000sqm.

12.3 As part of delivering the allocation, the Neighbourhood Plan seeks to ensure development of the site:

- **creates a village setting similar in its characteristics to existing ones in the South Pennines and Dark Peak;**
- **is informed by a masterplan and design code which will distinguish it from an estate housing development including the disposition of the buildings, the design of road and pedestrian routes, the use of locally typical building styles and the retention of some characterful existing building;**
- **is informed by a flood risk assessment that takes into account the latest information on all sources of flood risk, in accordance with advice in the national planning practice guidance.**
- **provides a mixture of land uses including a minimum of 1000sqm commercial, leisure and retail facilities up to a maximum of 3000sqm; and**
- **supports throught the design the provision of any necessary public bus services and associated facilities.**

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87. Places for Everyone includes further conditions for the development of Chew Brook Vale.

88. The intention of this policy is to ensure that the development on the site of the former Fletcher's Paper Mill at Chew Brook Vale creates a real "place", a small village surrounded by countryside, and typical of ones in a National Park setting. The site is very near to the Dovestone area, one of the region's most valuable outdoor leisure destinations. It stands at an important gateway to the Peak District National Park. It has the benefit of an outstandingly beautiful setting and has an important connection to a significant aspect of Saddleworth's industrial history. This site should not be developed in the manner of a suburban housing estate. There is the opportunity for a truly exceptional scheme.

89. The development should create a place which fully reflects the character of Saddleworth. It should be one where people will be eager to live, but also where some will work. It should be an attractive destination for day visitors and longer stay tourists, providing them with facilities such as shops, a café and a restaurant that this local area currently lacks. These will add to the visitor experience and be used by local residents. They will create jobs in the village and boost the local economy. The concept is one of an integration of living, tourism and work – a vibrant community of the type found elsewhere in Saddleworth, and in many parts of the Peak Park, the Dales and the Lake District.

90. The retention and reuse of the existing buildings of the greatest heritage value will add to the character of the village. It will ensure that there is a mix of building types and architectural styles. The reuse of buildings from previous eras will give the village a distinctive identity, and provide an important memory of the unique history of the site.

91. The new village will be some distance from existing bus routes. The provision of a bus service will be of benefit to residents, those employed on the site, and leisure and tourism visitors to the Dovestone area.

92. The village should be a place in its own right, one with its own identity and heritage, and a name which reflects the history of the locality.

93. Complementary to Appendix D in PfE where "indicative transport interventions" for the Allocation are listed, the provision of a public bus service and facilities is required. An extension of the current public bus services, or a "village to village" service similar to the original Saddleworth Rambler, could serve the development if the necessary turning arrangement was created as part of the development scheme.

Further policies

See also:

Policy 1 – green infrastructure, with regards to encompassing environmental design.

Policy 8 – erosion and flooding, with regards to design of flood prevention and response.

Health, wellbeing and education

OBJECTIVE 6: To ensure developments, including public realm are designed to promote physical and mental health and wellbeing.

To design with public safety in mind, ensuring that the public realm has considered design which minimises risk from, and reduces the likelihood of, antisocial behaviour.

POLICY 13: SAFETY AND WELLBEING

13.1 Major developments[17][18] should aim to deliver:

- **new and/or enhanced spaces which deliver routes for active travel. Particular priority is given to spaces which are developed with an awareness of the benefits for physical and mental health that good design can deliver. Developments will be supported which can demonstrate clear improvements for wellbeing, for example, by having an impact on reducing social isolation. Off site development of walking and cycling infrastructure may be required;**
- **new public realm that is well-designed, safe, accessible, inclusive, easy to understand, well-connected and related to the local and historic context. Where new public realm is created that could provide a risk of anti-social behaviour, applications must be supported by a Crime Impact Assessment.**

94. The NPPF specifically requires that local planning decisions: "should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places and beautiful buildings which … are safe and accessible, so that crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion – for example through the use of beautiful, well-designed, clear and legible pedestrian and cycle routes, and high quality public space, which encourage the active and continual use of public areas;"..

95. The Neighbourhood Survey identified crime and antisocial behaviour as a significant concern for residents. Under "other" it was the second most significant current concern (after access to education and healthcare), and the third most significant future concern (over development taking second place on that question).

OBJECTIVE 7: Ensure that key infrastructure needs are supported by any development, in particular ensuring that there is sufficient capacity at schools and health centres.

POLICY 14: HEALTH, SOCIAL CARE AND EDUCATION

14.1 Development will be required to provide or contribute to health, social care and education infrastructure made necessary by that development or where it gives rise to the need for additional or improved infrastructure to mitigate its impact on existing provision.

14.2 The required infrastructure should be provided at the appropriate time during the construction of the development. It should normally be provided prior to the development becoming fully operational or occupied unless it is demonstrated that this will not have an unacceptable impact on the services required by residents or occupiers within and adjacent to the development.

14.3 Developments will be supported in particular which can provide or contribute to:

- **increased accessibility to education, social care and healthcare for isolated or inaccessible communities,**
- **mitigation of any impacts from the development on education and healthcare, and**
- **where required, deliver appropriate provision for healthcare and education support, either through facilities as part of the development, or by section 106 agreements. In particular, this should cover: new school places, health care facilities, public transport facilities, and new community facilities where there is an identified need.**

[17] As defined in defined in The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2010.

[18] Major development is not appropriate in the National Park other than in exceptional circumstances.



Saddleworth Medical Practice

14.4 Applications for major residential developments must be accompanied by a report about what local healthcare provision exists, how accessible it is to the development (with particular regards to the preference for 20 minute neighbourhoods and public transport access), and what impact the development will have on the number of people seeking to access that healthcare provision, with a view to enabling an informed decision to be taken with regards to any section 106 requirement.

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96. The NPPF specifically refers to strategic policies to "make sufficient provision for … community facilities (such as health, education and cultural infrastructure);" and "setting out the levels and types of affordable housing provision required, along with other infrastructure (such as that needed for education, health, transport, flood and water management, green and digital infrastructure)."

97. Further it states that "It is important that a sufficient choice of school places is available to meet the needs of existing and new communities. Local planning authorities should take a proactive, positive and collaborative approach to meeting this requirement, and to development that will widen choice in education."

98. Oldham Council does not use the Community Infrastructure Levy, which would otherwise form one of the primary aspects for any response on infrastructure as part of the Neighbourhood Plan. It relies instead on the use of section 106 agreements, and any contributions will have to be made through this approach.

99. This Neighbourhood Plan has looked at specific infrastructure deficiencies which need to be addressed before development can go ahead, e.g. highway impact, public open space, affordable housing, education and healthcare.

100. In particular, the answers to questions 4 and 5 of the Neighbourhood Survey, and questions 9 and 10 of the Dobcross submission provide information on identified infrastructure needs.

101. In the Neighbourhood Survey, 82.25% of people identified housing, planning and development as one of their three key issues for the next five years, and the same chose it over 20 years. In other responses, education and healthcare places, and roads and parking were the most common responses. Under "other" responses, access to healthcare and education where the most identified concerns in the survey, both for current concerns, and for future concerns.

102. The Dobcross submission primarily identified issues around traffic and parking in both the current and future issues facing the village.

103. The student consultation identified a worry amongst the students for the young people who hope to settle down here. One particular student raised the concern that if more houses were to be built in Saddleworth there would be a knock on effect across the area, with more demand being put on schools and health services not to mention the number of extra cars on the roads.

104. Compared to the rest of the borough of Oldham, Saddleworth is unique in respect to the remoteness and isolation that can be caused in its well-separated villages, which is also exacerbated by its relatively poor public transport (the tram system does not extend to the Parish, it has relatively low bus coverage, and the train line does not connect to the rest of the borough, thus providing little help for access to health and social care).

105. Its demographics show a relatively ageing population with high healthcare needs, and it has seen no new healthcare centres, unlike some comparable other districts in Oldham.

Housing

OBJECTIVE 8: To address under-provided housing needs, in particular, suitably affordable (including social) housing stock for first time entrants in to the market looking to stay in the area, or for pensioners to move into appropriate and easily maintained homes. In particular, this would include 1- and 2-bedroom homes, as indicated by the current housing needs analysis and surveys carried out for this Neighbourhood Plan.

To ensure that development prioritises the use of sustainable sites, and makes effective and efficient use of brownfield land.

POLICY 15: HOUSING

15.1 Development will be supported which delivers a range of housing types, with specific focus on the provision of affordable, social and intermediate housing. Developments which include one-bedroom accommodation targeted at young people, allowing those leaving family homes for the first time to remain in the area, and appropriate homes for the elderly and disabled, which promote accessibility, will be supported.

15.2 Individual developments which fit those needs will also be looked upon favourably.[19]

This policy does not apply to that part of the neighbourhood area that is within the Peak District National Park.

106. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires that the objectively assessed need for housing in a housing market area is met in full in local plans. Oldham Council maintains an updated Local Housing Needs Assessment, including a specific analysis of the needs of Saddleworth.

107. Places for Everyone (PfE) (formerly The Greater Manchester Plan for Homes, Jobs and the Environment – GMSF) proposes a stepped housing requirement for Oldham of: 404 homes per year for the period 2022–25; 680 homes per year for 2025–30; and 772 homes per year in 2030–39.

108. The LHNA[20] identifies that Saddleworth and Lees has the highest median house prices of any of the districts in the borough.

109. Saddleworth and the Saddleworth villages are identified as a clear identifiable sub-market, with a distinct need for affordable housing. The LHNA identifies a complete lack of 1-bedroom housing, and limited housing for older residents, both of which are needed. Demand for housing is high across the district.

110. Information on the community response to housing needs can be found on pages 71–73 of the Dobcross submission, and pages 7–10 of the data from the Neighbourhood Survey.

111. Specific data on property type and size is included on pages 45 and 46, while information on tenure is included on page 51. Comparable market rent data is on page 58 of the data from the Neighbourhood Survey.

112. The Neighbourhood Survey found that residents identified that there was little desire for shared space housing (e.g. flats) – just 9% of respondents cited it as their first priority. Just over 45% of respondents to the Neighbourhood Survey specified detached houses as their least preferred development type, by far the strongest response to any particular type of housing.

113. In order of response, the weighted preferences for types of housing (most preferred first) were: 1) Terraced (2.53); 2) Retirement homes (2.76); 3) Semi-detached (2.80); 4) Sheltered/supported accommodation (2.91); 5) Shared space (e.g. flats) (3.30); 6) Detached (3.49)[21].

[19] A Local Housing Needs Assessment has been prepared for Oldham. Developers should reference the updated 2024 document.

[20] This LHNA was carried out in 2019. Developers should refer to the latest LHNA in making this assessment.

[21] The more preferable the option, the lower the score.

114. There was little need identified for private rented accommodation, with 64% wanting more owner-occupied, and 37% wanting more social rented stock.[22]

115. There was a strong preference for three bedroom houses (64%), then two bedroom houses (39%). There was small demand identified for four bedroom or more (6.5%) or one bedroom (6%). This contrasts with the Oldham Housing Needs Analysis; however, the neighbourhood survey received only 9% of responses from people under 25, so is likely to be weighted in such a way as to fail to identify this need, so more weight is given to the Housing Needs Analysis.

116. The Student consultation showed that they understand that as they grow up they hope they will be able to continue to live in Saddleworth. However, houses will need to be made more affordable in order for this to happen.

POLICY 16: DERELICT AND EMPTY PROPERTIES AND SITES

16.1 Developments will be supported which bring derelict, empty or partially empty properties back into full use.[23]

16.2 The Local Plan for Oldham has a specific policy to make the most efficient use of brownfield land, which is strongly supported for development in Saddleworth.

This policy does not apply to that part of the neighbourhood area that is within the Peak District National Park.

OBJECTIVE 9: To help facilitate appropriate housing in Saddleworth, and encourage a range of approaches to providing it (which could include such options as a community land trust with Parish Council involvement, or Parish Council supported development).

To facilitate low-cost alternative provision of appropriate housing for local residents for whom the market is not providing a means to remain in the area.

POLICY 17: COMMUNITY AND SELF BUILD

17.1 Developments will be supported which are for individual self-build or community led projects, where they:

- **demonstrate that they have a local connection (see below)[24];**
- **include as a condition that the occupancy of the property will be restricted to people with a local connection; and**
- **undertake in an agreement that they will live in the property as their main residence once it is complete for at least two years; and**
- **undertake an agreement that once the development has commenced, they will complete the building of the dwelling within two years.**

17.2 Planning obligations (section 106 agreements) will be used to ensure these requirements are fulfilled as appropriate.

[22] Respondents could choose more than one option.

[23] The Local Plan provides further polices on housing.

[24] For the purposes of this policy only, a Local Connection is classed as either being by residency or by employment and is defined as follows:

[a.] Residency qualification: have been resident in Saddleworth for 12 continuous months at the time of application; or have lived in Saddleworth for 3 out of previous 5 years; or have close family (mother, father, brother or sister, adult children or grandparent) who have been resident for five continuous years and continue to be resident in Saddleworth or the neighbouring parishes.

[b.] Employment qualification. An individual will be considered to have a Local Connection if they or their partner is in employment which meets all of the following criteria: the office or business establishment at which a person is based or from where their work is managed is within Saddleworth; and is in paid employment and works a minimum of 16 hours per week; and has been employed for a minimum of 12 continuous months at the time of their application; and is currently in employment and; has a permanent or fixed term contract or is self-employed.

This policy does not apply to that part of the neighbourhood area that is within the Peak District National Park.

117. Parish Action 1 sets out ways in which the Parish Council will set out to establish or support a community land trust in the area.

118. Oldham Council maintains a register of individuals and groups which would like to self or custom build in the area. As of May 2023 there are 334 entrants on the register, with 79 new entries added in the last year for which information is available. Of those, 29% of entrants citing Saddleworth as a desired location, making it the most desired location for a plot.

119. In our school consultation, many of the pupils believed that houses should replace the school in Uppermill, similarly some brought up the Fletchers Mill site in Greenfield in this regard. The overall opinion is that there should be considerable thought given about where houses are built.

Houses in Multiple Occupation

One frequent concern raised about planning decisions is with regards to Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs). For clarity, no planning permission is currently required for HMOs for up to six residents. The Local Plan for Oldham is currently considering the imposition of an Article 4 direction for specific areas of the borough where justified, which would change this situation – a decision which can only be taken by Oldham Council, which is analysing the whole of the borough at the time of writing.

120. The students were clear about the merits of good design, emphasizing that houses should be more attractive.



A typical housing mix in Delph: red brick semi-detached houses, stone terraces, a more modern estate, and new stone-built housing



Mixed stone and brick terraced housing in Springhead

Further policies

See also:

Policy 9 – sustainable construction, with regards to environmental standards for individual buildings, including zero-carbon approaches, energy generation and drainage.

Policy 10 – design, character and heritage, with regards to the character of individual buildings or areas.

Policy 19 – homeworking and connectivity, with regards to housing design to ensure flexible spaces for current and future working.

Policy 25 – accessibility to transport, with regards to provision of parking facilities, including cycle storage

Policy 27 – in relation to electric (or alternative renewable) vehicle charging.

Retail, commerce and tourism

OBJECTIVE 10: Retain employment sites to support existing traditional industries, take advantage of the highly-qualified workforce, and to develop opportunities in emerging and future technologies and business.[25]

To ensure that there is adequate infrastructure and support both for people who access Manchester, West Yorkshire and Oldham for work, and those who work within Saddleworth.

Ensure the provision of sporting, leisure and recreational facilities and spaces for the population.

POLICY 18: RETAIL, COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

18.1 New office, retail and commercial development[26] will be supported within existing or new employment areas subject to the following criteria:

- **the scale and nature of the proposals would not have significant harmful impacts on the amenities of adjoining sites;**
- **the scale and nature of the proposals would not have an unacceptable environmental or operational impact on existing commercial activity on adjacent land, including agricultural activity; and**
- **the proposal would not have unacceptable impacts on the local road network, particularly in respect of the volume of HGV traffic.**

18.2 Transport assessment or statements should be provided in line with the requirements of *Places for Everyone* (see Travel and Transport section).

18.3 In addition to site allocations in the Local Plan for Oldham (including PfE), proposals will be supported which result in the creation or sustainable expansion of existing and new micro (sole traders or those with fewer than ten employees) or small (ten to 50 employees) businesses.

18.4 Such proposals will be supported where the following all apply:

- **the site is located outside the Green Belt or the development is acceptable in terms of national Green Belt policy;**
- **the proposal supports new business investment or the expansion of an existing business;**
- **the site is large enough to accommodate car parking, including electric vehicle charging points (or other renewable technology), service areas and landscaped areas appropriate to the scale of the business; and**
- **the proposals recognise the overall aim to reduce carbon emissions and congestion through sustainable design and promoting access by walking, cycling and public transport.**

18.5 Employment development shall re-use existing buildings unless it is demonstrated this is not viable or practical. Where re-use of the existing buildings is not possible, redevelopment of those sites would then be considered.

18.6 There will be a presumption against the loss of commercial premises, unless it can be demonstrated the premises are unsuitable or not viable in their existing use.[27]

18.7 The Local Plan for Oldham provides the criteria for change of use around viability, marketing and regeneration benefits. In Sa ddleworth, as part of the marketing assessment, we would expect to see that land has not been in active use for at least 12 months, and that the marketing campaign would be for a continuous period of 12 months.

[25] Examples might include, but are not limited to, manufacturing on demand, smart infrastructure, energy transition, regenerative medicine, and integration of electronics and photonics.

[26] See the Local Plan for Oldham for types of use (including size thresholds), and definitions of the Saddleworth employment areas

[27] Unless they have been allocated for other uses in Places for Everyone or Oldham Council's Local Plan.

This policy does not apply to that part of the neighbourhood area that is within the Peak District National Park.

121. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) places particular importance on building a strong competitive economy and indicates that local planning authorities should plan proactively to meet the development needs of business and support an economy fit for the 21st century.

122. The NPPF also indicates that local plans should positively encourage sustainable economic growth and support the expansion of existing businesses, as well as supporting economic growth in rural areas. It specifies achieving this both through the conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings.

123. Employment land can be placed under pressure from alternative uses: therefore it is important for the wellbeing of the local economy to secure the long-term future of a range of employment opportunities.

124. The Dobcross submission states: "If more business is to be located in the area the preference would be for shops, cafés and restaurants but there is some support for office accommodation and light industrial units."

125. In the Neighbourhood Survey, around 20 per cent of respondents indicated that they were considering starting working locally in the next few years. In terms of developments most likely to help them, there was a preference for offices (32.94%) or light industrial space (32.94%), although there were also requirements for all other forms of space indicated (leisure, retail, agricultural and tourism).

OBJECTIVE 11: To ensure sufficient infrastructure, including communications, to allow residents to work from home with a view to encouraging entrepreneurial development, and to ensure that growing businesses can remain in the area.

POLICY 19: HOMEWORKING AND CONNECTIVITY

19.1 Proposals which promote the role of homeworking at an appropriate scale for the site will be supported.[28] [29]

19.2 Development proposals should incorporate suitable infrastructure to support integrated communication technologies, providing for future improvements in technology so far as possible. Developers should be encouraged to review and improve this throughout the design and build process.

19.3 Development will be supported which allows houses to be used flexibly, currently or in the future, to allow for homeworking.

19.4 New developments will be supported which make provision for homeworking, through provision of high quality broadband and telecommunications.

19.5 On sites allocated for residential development in the Local Plan for Oldham or Places for Everyone, and on all other new buildings, all properties should be served by superfast broadband (fibre optic) connections[30], unless it can be demonstrated through consultation with providers that this would not be either possible or practical.

126. Research from House of Commons library data showed that at the start of 2022, 3.1% of homes in Saddleworth had gigabit broadband connections. The current rate of progress would only deliver this to 37.2% of homes by 2025.

[28] 'It will be the responsibility of the occupant to ascertain if their homeworking will require planning permission, for example for a Change of Use.

[29] Note: The provision of business advisory groups falls outside the remit of a Neighbourhood Plan, but would be encouraged as part of an accompanying Parish Plan.

[30] Or equivalent high-standard connection, as technology improves.



One of the designated Saddleworth Employment Areas in Greenfield

127. In response to question 21 of the Neighbourhood Survey, there were very mixed responses. 29 respondents stated that broadband provision was not good enough for homeworking, and three gave mixed responses. 42 stated that it was currently good enough.

OBJECTIVE 12: To support tourism with a view to strengthening the local economy, while minimising any negative impacts, in particular where tourist activity accentuates local pinchpoints for traffic and infrastructure.

POLICY 20: TOURISM AND LEISURE

20.1 Development of new tourist facilities will be supported where it meets the following criteria:

- **it contributes to the spread of tourism across the whole of Saddleworth, in particular by making additional locations for tourism more accessible;**
- **it seeks to address needs at or close to the site, for example, the provision of parking, or the improvement of public transport connections;**
- **it creates a balance of provision, for example a mix of long-stay and short-stay tourism (with associated benefits for the local economy);**
- **it develops new facilities which also are available for the benefit of the local community, in particular if they can be demonstrated to meet a need in local provision;**
- **it is appropriate to the surrounding landscape character;**

20.2 Developers will be asked to provide a statement outlining how any amenity and recreation impacts will be managed, appropriate to the scale of the application.

20.3 Development of community, leisure and sports facilities which contribute to the improvement of the health and well-being of the population will be supported.

20.4 Development proposals which enhance or improve existing community facilities will be supported. Proposals which offer the following types of community activities will be particularly welcome:

- **opportunities to develop social networks for people who are isolated;**
- **promoting community-based healthcare and wellbeing;**
- **promoting adult learning opportunities;**
- **charitable and voluntary work;**
- **promoting early years activities for parents, carers and children; and**
- **food and craft markets.**

20.5 Development proposals that will result in the loss or reduction in scale of a non-health or education community facility will be resisted unless:

- **alternative facilities of equal or better accessibility, size and suitability are provided; or**
- **it can be demonstrated that the community facility is no longer viable.**

Please note the requirements for development to comply with policies 1 and 2, in particular the compliance with the protection of protected habitats and their supporting areas, pages 16–19.

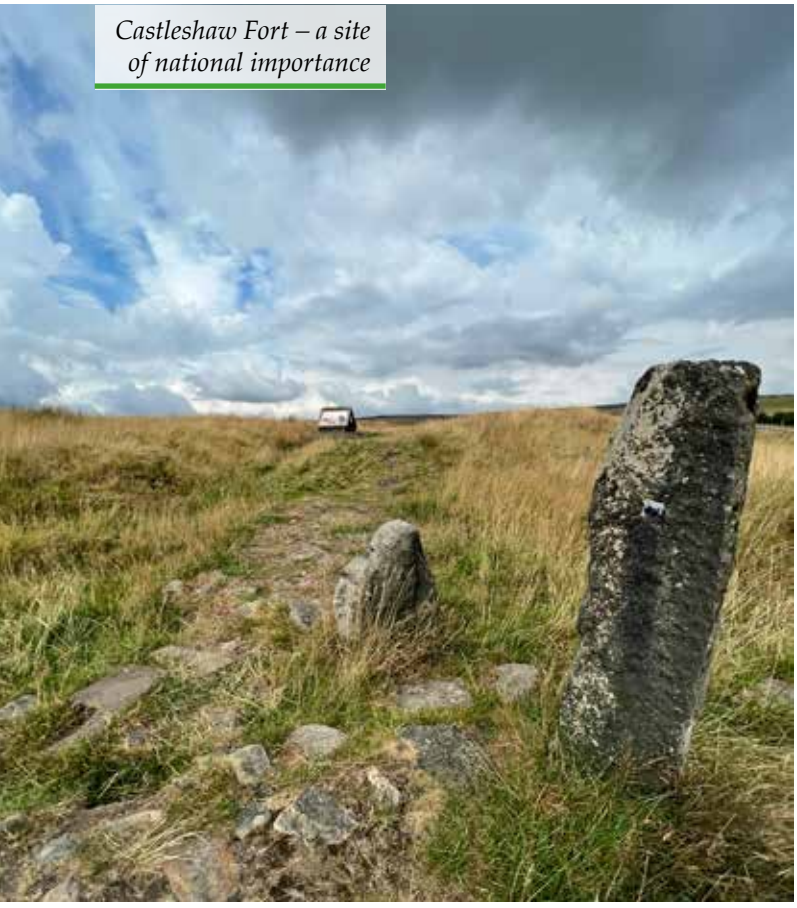
Please note the transport section with regards to the provision of walking and cycling routes, pages 48–55.

Please also note the section on heritage, and in particular the policy on protected views, page 25.

This policy does not apply to that part of the neighbourhood area that is within the Peak District National Park.

128. Parish Action 3 sets out ways in which the Parish Council will seek to promote tourism and leisure in the area.

129. Tourism makes a significant contribution to the economy, particularly in rural areas. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) recognises that the planning system should facilitate and encourage development and improvement in tourism provision.



Castleshaw Fort – a site of national importance

130. However, there can be drawbacks arising from tourism, including additional public authority costs, traffic and parking congestion, commercialisation of the historic environment and conflicting uses of land in the countryside. The Parish Council's approach is, therefore, to encourage the expansion and improvement of the range and type of tourist facilities in a sustainable manner that safeguards Saddleworth's environment.

131. In line with the NPPF, when determining applications for tourist facilities in rural areas, the local economic benefits of a proposal should be weighed against the need to protect the environment in line with Policy 1 Green Infrastructure.

132. The Neighbourhood Survey (question 22) identified a small number of people who stated that tourism had no benefits to the local economy (21). Over 92% listed economic benefits as the prime advantage of tourism, with a small number also noting that it could encourage protection and pride in green spaces and heritage sites.

133. The Survey also identified that the primary issue with tourism and leisure was the lack of parking facilities and public transport. 169 of the responses to question 24 (how to manage tourism to benefit Saddleworth) identified parking and public transport as a major issue – no other issue got more than 11 responses.

134. The most notable other issues identified from the Survey were spreading out tourism (11 responses), better information (10 responses), and being conscious of the balance of businesses it encouraged, with an over-reliance on cafés (7 responses).

135. The student consultation identified that Saddleworth has many leisure facilities and sports clubs dispersed across the whole area with most villages having their own cricket clubs, but they think there could be a broader spectrum of activities offered, and they would like to see more spaces for older children and teenagers.

136. The student consultation showed the students in favour of more cafés and pubs, they also thought there should be more places to eat and to buy clothes. They also thought a petrol station would be helpful. They worry that businesses and work places are becoming too centralised around Uppermill while other villages miss out. One pupil felt strongly that Dobcross was missing out.

137. With regards to tourism the students made it clear that the natural beauty and scenery around Saddleworth is the main appeal to tourists. Some students wondered if there could be more attractions. The children even noted that the recent fires on the moors had appealed to many tourists who came to watch it and take photographs. Whit Friday band contests are recognised as a big source of tourism from all over the world. However, some saw the problem of tourists clogging up roads as there is not enough space to park cars.

OBJECTIVE 13: To recognise the importance of farming to the economy of Saddleworth, and to ensure that it continues to contribute to and improve the economy and the local environment.

POLICY 21: AGRICULTURAL LAND

21.1 There will be a presumption against the loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land.

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138. Parish Action 4 sets out ways for the Parish Council to further engage with and promote the farming community in Saddleworth.

139. Farming makes an important contribution to the economy of Saddleworth. The geography and climate of the area favours the livestock sector.

140. The impact of new Government policies and changing trading conditions on the future direction of farming in Saddleworth is currently difficult to predict. Will upland sheep farming decline? Will "wilding" and flood control be matters of high priority, supported by grant aid? Will there be continued grant support for the conservation of upland bird habitats?

141. What is certain is that the maintenance of a high quality rural landscape is of critical importance to the future of Saddleworth. This quality must be maintained, and indeed enhanced, so that Saddleworth remains a great place for people to live, work and visit. Local farmers have a critical role in this. The challenge is to ensure that a strong agricultural sector can also provide excellent stewardship of the local countryside.

Maintenance of agricultural land

Particularly with regards to flooding, it is important to understand who is responsible for maintenance of agricultural land, particularly if there are absentee landlords.

In part, this will depend on the tenancy of the land. Some tenants may have a full repairing tenancy, in which case they will be responsible for the maintenance of any drains, ditches and watercourses.

Since 2011, most private drains have been transferred to statutory drainage providers. The landlord will therefore only be responsible if the relevant drains have not been adopted.

If flooding interferes with the tenant's 'quiet enjoyment' (i.e. possession without interruption) of the farm, the landlord can find himself liable.

142. Most local farmers act as good custodians of the countryside but sadly there have been instances where activities on some farms have been damaging to the environment. These include, for instance:

- tipping on or reshaping of land;
- dressing of access tracks with builders' waste materials such as broken tiles, glass and plastics;
- culverting of watercourses and rerouting of watercourses (sometimes leading to increased bank erosion);
- redundant farm machinery left to decay;
- disrepair of the dry stone walls which are such a feature of the upland landscape;
- barn conversions in open countryside; especially where garden "clutter" is uncontrolled, e.g. sheds, greenhouses, inappropriate boundary structures, etc.;
- barns built to create the opportunity for converting to new houses.

143. On the other hand farmers suffer from problems such as theft, vandalism, trespass, litter and dog attacks on livestock.



Agricultural land at Scouthead

144. The Parish Council wishes to help to support local farming in ways which also enhance the rural environment. It envisages a partnership with local farmers. This partnership could also engage with local shops, cafés and restaurants; with local schools; and with community volunteers with expertise in skills such as dry stone walling, hedge planting etc. (see Appendix 2).

145. The activities of a partnership might include:

- increased promotion of Saddleworth farm products in local shops and restaurants;
- farm–school links (fostering an appreciation of the importance of local food production);
- information for countryside visitors about issues such as uncontrolled dogs and littering;
- community engagement in activities such as dry stone wall repairs and tree and hedge planting;
- a Countryside Stewardship Award Scheme to celebrate the contribution made by local farmers to the conservation of the Saddleworth landscape.

OBJECTIVE 14: To ensure that each village retains or maximises a core set of services, such as banking, post offices, local shops and community facilities.

POLICY 22: SERVICES

22.1 Developments will be supported which make provision for or allow for the retention of key services within individual village centres, in particular supporting the model of 20-minute neighbourhoods.

Saddleworth Parish Council will in principle support campaigns to enhance or retain existing services in line with the retention of village centres.

146. Sustrans analysis of 20 minute neighbourhoods defines the following services part of the minimum features of a 20-minute neighbourhood: "Destination and services: food retailers and supermarkets; education, including early years, primary school and nearby secondary schools; health services, such as a pharmacy, GP and dentist; financial services, such as post office or bank; employment and jobs either within the neighbourhood or nearby; public open space, such as parks and recreation grounds; and entertainment, such as leisure, culture and entertainment facilities; Transport provision: public transport, including access to a regular bus, tram or train service, walking and cycling infrastructure, walkable access to a local centre, designed for low speeds, reduced traffic, and limited car parking; and inclusivity: a mix of diverse housing types to suit different life-stages and genuinely affordable and social housing present."

147. It does acknowledge that in rural areas, 20 minute neighbourhoods will be difficult, and that villages will need to adopt shared services, with high quality public transport.

148. The Neighbourhood Survey identified a consistent preference for the maintenance of villages with clear identities, both through comments on the retention of green belt (development on the green belt was the least preferred option), and through comments on people's vision of Saddleworth in the future, for example:

> "Villages with identity. Separation between the villages so you can tell where one starts and ends. Central services in each village."

149. The Dobcross submission revealed that over 80% respondents thought it was very important that Dobcross keeps its Post Office and shop.

Further policies

See also:

Policy 6 – Conversion of agricultural buildings (barn conversions), with regards to the use of agricultural land

Policy 10 – design, character and heritage, with regards to the character of individual buildings or areas (with particular awareness of local high streets as commercial areas that have a distinct heritage).

The section on health, well-being and education, with regards to provision of health and education services.

Policy 24 – cycling, pedestrian and leisure infrastructure with regards to facilities in retail, commercial and tourism developments, 20-minute neighbourhoods and access to services.

Policy 25 – accessibility to transport, with regards to provision of parking facilities, including cycle storage and electric (or alternative renewable) charging.

Travel and transport

OBJECTIVE 15: To address the under-provision of parking across the area, and to ensure that on street parking is used appropriately, and make parking available for specific uses.

POLICY 23: PARKING STANDARDS FOR HOUSING

23.1 New housing development should aim to deliver[31]:

- **provision for two parking spaces per dwelling. The exception to this would be new one-bedroom housing, which would make provision for one parking space per property, or in the case of houses in multiple occupancy, one space per tenant;**
- **provision of visitor car parking, with a ratio of 0.5 spaces per dwelling, in line with the preferred design guidelines encouraging off-road parking; and**
- **provision for cycle parking, including secure lockable storage facilities.**

23.2 Any major developments where this level of provision is not being proposed will need to demonstrate how high accessibility[32] will mitigate the requirement for this, particularly in relation to the relatively low provision of public transport across the area.

This policy does not apply to that part of the neighbourhood area that is within the Peak District National Park. Peak District National Park parking standards can be found in Appendix 9 of the Development Management Policies (DMP) document, and are the relevant standard for developments in the National Park.

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150. Saddleworth has significantly low provision of public transport, with one train station, no tram system, and limited (and reduced) bus services. Therefore, particular attention needs to be given to the provision of parking facilities, with a view to also ensuring capacity for electric or alternative renewable vehicles.

151. The Neighbourhood Survey showed that transport is a major concern for over two thirds of respondents, whether that was across Saddleworth as a whole, or in their village.

152. More specifically, in the "other" category, lack of parking was raised by over 25% of the responses in their village.

153. The Dobcross submission on travel and transport showed: "Over 90% of respondents thought having parking spaces and access to a main road should be a prerequisite to gaining planning approval."

154. Transport assessment or statements which will identify any highways safety issues and mitigation measures are being covered in the Connected Places chapter in *Places for Everyone* under "traffic requirements".

Please see policy 19 – retail, commercial and industrial development, for specific criteria for parking on commercial development.

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155. Parish Action 5 sets out ways for the Parish Council to engage with other groups to address the limited parking across the area.

156. In the Neighbourhood Survey, transport was the current third priority of concern. When it came to future priority it became more important to people the further they were from the urban end of Saddleworth – in Springhead it was the 4th priority (32%); in Uppermill it was the 3rd priority (67%); and in Slackcote it was the 2nd priority (80%).

157. Car ownership in the survey showed that the majority of households owned one (44.24%) or two cars (38.01%). Only 6.23% owned no car at all.

158. It was a common consensus in the Student consultation that there was much need for more car parking spaces, and some even went as far as to say that the quality of the roads was appalling in parts with lots of potholes. They agreed that traffic and congestion can get so bad they find it easier to walk to and from school.

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[31] Within the National Park developments must abide by the Peak District National Park Parking Standards.

[32] As defined in the Local Plan for Oldham.

OBJECTIVE 16: Ensure safe and accessible cycling and pedestrian routes, and enhance the provision of Bee Network routes across the area.

Reduce existing congestion on the local and key route networks running through Saddleworth by ensuring that new developments are located so that they contribute to a reduction in the need for private car journeys.

POLICY 24: CYCLING, PEDESTRIAN AND LEISURE INFRASTRUCTURE

24.1 Major developments should include cycle and pedestrian access, and where there is limited vehicle access, additional measures should be provided.

24.2 For commercial development, additional facilities should be included, such as indoor changing, shower rooms, and drying rooms (which should be accessible, easy to use, and secure).

24.3 Developments which improve existing cycling and pedestrian infrastructure will be supported, particularly those which join together routes which are currently separated.[33, 34]

24.4 Public realm works which improve the provision of safe cycle parking points in all villages and at key sites will be supported.

24.5 Developments will not be supported which reduce the quality or overall provision of existing rights of way. Should a development require the diversion of a public right of way, the provision of an alternative right of way which is through green spaces will be required.

159. Parish Action 6 establishes the principle that the Parish Council will work with other authorities to improve cycling, pedestrian and leisure infrastructure, and to promote its use.

[33] See also policy 25 – accessibility to transport

[34] The historic nature of Saddleworth's villages, in particular its road and route layouts mean that there are restrictions on what can be achieved in some areas.

Environment

Environmental issues were identified as cross-cutting and crucial in the issues section at the start of this plan. Transport is a particular area of concern for improving the environment.

In particular, Oldham Council have set a target for the borough to be carbon neutral by 2030, and the Parish Council has set an ambition for the district specifically to be carbon neutral by 2035.

160. On cycling, the TfGM Transport Plan 2040 states that "while strategic routes have been developed inside the M60, investment elsewhere has been more piecemeal." While the Bee Network has been envisaged as a way of improving facilities, no Bee Network plans currently exist to deliver any new provision in Saddleworth, meaning that prioritising cycle routes must be achieved through other means.

161. The Huddersfield Narrow Canal runs from the Ashton under Lyne basin, through Saddleworth to Huddersfield. It was abandoned in 1944 and the last small section in 1963. In the 1980's a campaign was started to reopen stretches of the canal and it was fully reopened in 2001. It has the highest, longest and deepest canal tunnel in Standedge Tunnel in the UK. It is now used by leisure craft, mainly narrowboats, and sight seeing trips. This contributes to the tourism economy of the area. The towpath is also used by many walkers and forms a recreational link between the Saddleworth villages along the canal.

162. The student consultation particularly identified a need for more road crossings to enhance the safety of pedestrians.

POLICY 25: ACCESSIBILITY TO TRANSPORT

25.1 Development will be supported which delivers:

- **easy access to existing public transport (within recommended guidelines for distances to bus or train stops in the local plan);**



Saddleworth Viaduct

- **high-quality pedestrian and cycle access design for major developments. In particular, designs which close existing gaps in the provision of cycling and pedestrian infrastructure will be su pported, creating safe and convenient continuation the Bee Network;**
- **safe, accessible, secure cycle storage and facilities (i.e. showers); and**
- **improved accessibility for walking, wheeling and cycling.**

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163. Feedback on parking space requirements and access is included on pages 77–78 of the Dobcross submission. Over 90 per cent of respondents said that parking spaces and access to a main road should be prerequisites for planning permission. Responses on electric cars is included on pages 92–97. Over 65% of respondents said that they were considering an electric car in the next five to 10 years. 56% said that they would be able to charge it at home. 48% said that public charging facilities would be a factor in their purchasing decision.

164. The Dobcross submission on travel and transport showed: "Over 90% of respondents thought having parking spaces and access to a main road should be a prerequisite to gaining planning approval."

165. Saddleworth is under-served by public transport, which means that it will remain overly dependent on private transport – particularly cars. Our Policies therefore are concentrated on two aspects, provision of environmentally friendly charging points to ensure that private transport is as low impact as possible, and the improvement of 20 minute neighbourhoods, to minimise the need for private or public transport when using local facilities. (Policy 22). A number of proposeed Parish Actions intended to enhance public transport services are included in Appendix 2.

166. Feedback on footpaths and bridle paths is included in the responses to question 29 of the Neighbourhood Survey. Suggestions largely centred on working with community groups, and increased maintenance.

Support for development of tram system

There is a need for long-term thinking about integrated public transport, which could include the extension of the Metrolink tram system in to Saddleworth, and the Parish Council would be interested to hear proposals for improved systems.

167. The Dobcross submission showed: "A small majority of people (54%) think that the lack of pavements on certain roads [is] an important issue." Particular locations referenced in Dobcross were around the bridge near Dobcross School and along Platt Lane and Sugar Lane leading into the Square. Residents also highlighted issues at the top of Woods Lane and on Sandy Lane.

168. Feedback on car usage is on page 34 of the summary responses (question 30), with the vast majority of respondents having 1 (44.24%) or 2 (38%) cars.

169. Suggested locations for charging points are included in the responses to question 31 (primarily existing car parks).

170. Charging points for housing are referenced in policy 23. and requirements for retail and commercial development are referenced in policy 18. When considering money raised through section 106 agreements with developers, public electric vehicle charging points should be viewed as a local requirement.

171. Cycling facilities were addressed on question 33 of the Saddleworth consultation. Safety issues were cited extensively, with users requesting better road management to make cyclists feel safe and better, more joined-up, off-road provision.

172. The Dobcross submission specifically referenced that "Most respondents are dissatisfied with the state of the roads and footpaths."

173. Accessibility needs are included in responses to question 34 of the Neighbourhood Survey. The most common issue raised was the availability of bus services.

OBJECTIVE 17: To ensure quality public transport infrastructure, including connections between villages, as well as to the rest of the borough and beyond. Connections to healthcare provision and leisure facilities should be a particular priority, and transport for work as a priority for local and wider connections.

To minimise the reliance on private transport across the district.

To promote local representation on the development of local transport plans for Saddleworth.

To maximise accessibility for those with mobility and health needs throughout the Parish, especially in rural areas.

POLICY 26: PUBLIC TRANSPORT

26 .1 Development which addresses the accessibility restrictions at Greenfield Station will be supported.

26.2 Developments which would increase the capacity and usage of the rail network in Saddleworth will be supported, where they comply with other policy requirements, including the enhancement of Greenfield Station and the provision of additional stations in the Parish.

174. Parish Action 7 establishes support for various improvements to public transport across the area, as well as ways to engage with other groups to enhance provision across the Parish.

"[Saddleworth needs] better transport links so that people can realistically choose to live here as adults and not need a car but be able to rely on good bus and train links" – *Survey response*

175. Greenfield in Saddleworth has the only rail station in the Oldham borough. The number of trains is restricted by the age of the track and lack of investment in the infrastructure. Being up to 3 miles from the nearest Metrolink station means that commuters rely on this service.



Electric vehicle charging

176. Greenfield train station currently has no accessible method of reaching the Huddersfield-bound platform; the only access is via a rail bridge with 23 steps at each side.

177. The nearest Metrolink station is three miles from many of the remoter areas. There has not been a real drive to link all the modes of transport together other than providing park and ride facilities for motorists. There is no suggestion of extending metro link eastwards into Saddleworth in the TfGM Transport Plan 2040.

178. The need for bus routes which allow for residents to connect between the village centres is reinforced by the TfGM Transport Plan 2040 which states "Quality bus transit can provide a step-change in the public transport offer, especially for travel between adjacent town centres and intermediate locations".

179. The TfGM Transport Plan 2040 notes that cross-border journeys can also be a problem because of differing ticketing and fares. This is a significant issue for communities living close to the Greater Manchester boundary, such as in the Pennine areas of Oldham, where people wish to access towns such as Huddersfield.

180. It further states: "The Peak District National Park, which extends into Oldham, is a natural and recreational resource of both local and national importance and a significant trip attractor. Leisure trips add to localised congestion in communities on the eastern fringe of the conurbation, where the roads also form part of vital transpennine routes. Pressure on the road network in this area is increasing as incidents on the motorway cause motorists to seek alternatives. There is also a need to improve access for leisure without causing damage to the environment, and improved evening and weekend public transport services would be beneficial."

OBJECTIVE 18: To improve air quality, particularly near vulnerable groups. This would include monitoring and improving air quality across the area, as well as other criteria such as sound and vibration.

To reduce risks to buildings from additional heavy traffic.

POLICY 27: CLEAN FUEL VEHICLES

27.1 Development will be supported which delivers provision of electric charging (or alternative renewable provision) unless it can be demonstrated that this is not practical[35]. Where this is not practical, the developer should demonstrate the provision of additional access to alternative travel means.

[35] Since June 2022, the Part S building regulations have required all new build homes and buildings to include provision for electric vehicle charging.



Greenfield Station, showing the step only access to the Huddersfield-bound platform

POLICY 28: AIR QUALITY AND VIBRATION MONITORING

28.1 Applications for development will be supported which provide robust air quality monitoring, especially in locations where there are existing air quality issues, vulnerable people, and traffic congestion. Ideally this information should be made freely available to the public.

28.2 To be supported, development that may cause damage, including through vibrations, to heritage assets or other adjacent buildings, must demonstrate effective mitigation and monitoring measures.

181. The NPPF refers to the need to "mitigate and reduce to a minimum potential adverse impacts resulting from noise from new development – and avoid noise giving rise to significant adverse impacts on health and the quality of life;".

182. In the Neighbourhood Survey, environment was the second most important consideration for residents across Saddleworth as a whole (73.26%), and in their village (70.11%), and this increased when considering the most important issues in Saddleworth in 20 years time (79.78%).

183. Compared to the rest of the borough, Saddleworth has particularly unique narrow roads, with traffic close to long established buildings of particular heritage value. Typically the buidlings were constructed prior to modern traffic levels, leading to particular concerns around high levels of traffic or heavy vehicles.

Further policies

See also:

Policy 18 – retail, commercial and industrial development, with regards to parking provision on commercial developments

Integrated Transport Plan for the North and Midlands

The Parish Council welcomes the upgrading of the existing cross Pennine rail line which passes through Saddleworth. This is being carried out as part of the Transpennine Route Upgrade (TRU) programme. In November 2021 the Government issued an Integrated Rail Plan for the North and Midlands (IRP). In that document it described its intentions for the upgrading of the existing route as "significant improvements to the previous TRU plans between Manchester and Leeds, including electrification of the whole route, digital signalling throughout, significantly longer sections of three and four-tracking, and gauge upgrades to allow intermodal container freight services."

In the IRP the Government also proposed that a High Speed line be constructed from Warrington to Marsden (i.e. through Saddleworth). This would be instead of creating a longer High Speed line across the North of England as had previously been proposed (i.e. an HS3 route) . It appears that this would, in some undefined way, eventually replace this section of the TRU route. The Parish Council is strongly opposed to this idea. It believes that the IRP demonstrates a serious lack of knowledge about Saddleworth. More specifically, the IRP shows no understanding that construction of a High Speed line through Greenfield, Uppermill and Diggle would be

- a huge engineering challenge involving major, disruptive construction works and enormous cost;
- extremely damaging to the landscape and environment of Saddleworth, and to the setting of the Peak District National Park;
- very damaging to the amenity of local communities, and to the role of Saddleworth as a high quality residential location;
- entirely contrary to the role Saddleworth fulfils as a tourism and leisure destination of regional importance;
- highly counterproductive in terms of the local train services used by Saddleworth residents and visitors to Saddleworth – because the primary purpose role of the new line would be to provide limited stop, high frequency, High Speed services.

Glossary

Active travel: Active travel refers to modes of travel that involve a level of activity. The term is often used interchangeably with walking and cycling, but active travel can also include trips made by wheelchair, mobility scooters, adapted cycles, e-cycles, scooters, as well as cycle sharing schemes

Affordable housing: The full definition is found in Annex 2 of the National Planning Policy Framework. In the main, it refers to houses for sale or rent discounted by at least 20% from the prevailing market rate for the area. More information can be found at https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2

Ancient Woodland – Ancient woods are areas of woodland that have persisted since 1600 in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, and 1750 in Scotland. This is when maps started to be reasonably accurate so we can tell that these areas have had tree cover for hundreds of years. They are relatively undisturbed by human development. As a result, they are unique and complex communities of plants, fungi, insects and other microorganisms.. More information can be found at https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/trees-woods-and-wildlife/habitats/ancient-woodland/

Community Infrastructure Levy – The Community Infrastructure Levy is a charge which can be levied by local authorities on new development in their area. Oldham Borough does not operate a Community Infrastructure Levy. More information can be found at https://www.gov.uk/guidance/community-infrastructure-levy

'Functionally linked land' (FLL) – A term often used to describe areas of land or sea occurring outside a designated site which is considered to be critical to, or necessary for, the ecological or behavioural functions in a relevant season of a qualifying feature for which a Special Areas of Conservation (SAC)/ Special Protection Area (SPA)/ Ramsar site has been designated. These habitats are frequently used by SPA species and supports the functionality and integrity of the designated sites for these features. More information can be found at: https://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/6303434392469504#:~:text=%27Functionally%20linked%20land%27%20(FLL,Areas%20of%20Conservation%20(SAC)%2F

GMAAS: Greater Manchester Archaeological Advisory Service – an organisation funded by the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) primarily to provide advice to the county's ten district authorities on all matters relating to archaeology and the planning process. More information can be found at https://gmaas.salford.ac.uk

GMCA: Greater Manchester Combined Authority. Saddleworth Parish Council falls under Oldham Council, which in turn is one of the 10 authorities that make up the Combined Authority.

Greater Manchester Integrated Care Partnership: This new NHS organisation is in charge of the NHS money and making sure services are in place to put plans into action. Made up of representatives from the NHS and the local council, it is responsible for making decisions about health services in their area. You may see this abbreviated to 'NHS Greater Manchester' or 'NHS GM'. The partnership operates at three levels: neighbourhood, locality and Greater Manchester and has a single vision and strategy.

GMEU: Greater Manchester Ecological Unit – provides specialist advice to the ten district councils that make up the GMCA, as well as maintaining the list of sites of biological interest for Greater Manchester. More information can be found at https://www.tameside.gov.uk/ecologyunit

Green Belt – defined and maintained areas established by local authorities in their local plans intended to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open. More information can be found at https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/sn00934/

Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) – a habitats regulations assessment (HRA) tests if a plan or project proposal could significantly harm the designated features of a European site. In this case, it is used to test this Neighbourhood Plan in the context of the Special Area of Conservation and Special Protection Area in the Peak District National Park. More information can be found at https://www.gov.uk/guidance/habitats-regulations-assessments-protecting-a-european-site

HMOs: Houses in multiple occupation – a planning term referring to a house where both of the following apply: at least 3 tenants live there, forming more than 1 household; and it has shared toilet, bathroom or kitchen facilities with other tenants. A large HMO is where at least five tenants live there. More information can be found at https://www.gov.uk/private-renting/houses-in-multiple-occupation

Landscape Character Areas – Landscape Character Assessment is a method of describing an area in a systematic way. It describes what elements make a place distinctive. It does not assign values to landscapes. Landscape Character Areas for Saddleworth are defined in the GM Places for Everyone plan.

LGS: Local Green Space – this specific planning designation is a way to provide special protection against development for green areas of particular importance to local communities. More information can be found at https://www.gov.uk/guidance/open-space-sports-and-recreation-facilities-public-rights-of-way-and-local-green-space

LHNA: Local Housing Needs Assessment – this is the method used by local authorities to assess the need for housing in an area, as required by the National Planning Policy Framwork. More information can be found at https://www.gov.uk/guidance/housing-and-economic-development-needs-assessments

LWS: local wildlife sites – areas of land that are especially important for their wildlife. They are some of our most valuable wildlife areas. Local Wildlife Sites are identified and selected locally using scientifically-determined criteria and surveys. See also *sites of biological importance*. More information can be found at https://www.wildlifetrusts.org/local-wildlife-sites

Major developments – For housing, development where 10 or more homes will be provided, or the site has an area of 0.5 hectares or more. For non-residential development it means additional floorspace of 1,000m2 or more, or a site of 1 hectare or more, or as otherwise provided in the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015. More information can be found at https://www.gov.uk/guidance/national-planning-policy-framework/annex-2-glossary

NHLE: National Heritage List for England – the only official, up to date, register of all nationally protected historic buildings and sites in England - listed buildings, scheduled monuments, protected wrecks, registered parks and gardens, and battlefields. More information can be found at https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/

NPPF: The National Planning Policy Framework – this sets out government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. More information can be found at https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2

OPOL: Other Protected Open Land – a local land designation. Under the new Local Plan for Oldham, all sites are being reassessed against Local Green Space criteria. The Local Plan seeks to re-designate OPOL sites that meet the criteria as Local Green Spaces.

Public realm – The 'public realm' is the collective term for all the spaces between buildings in towns and villages to which the public has access. This includes streets, squares, greens, parks and footpaths.

SAC: Special Area of Conservation – a site of community importance designated by the Member States[2] through a statutory, administrative and/or contractual act where the necessary conservation measures are applied for the maintenance or restoration, at a favourable conservation status, of the natural habitats and/or the populations of the species for which the site is designated. More information can be found at https://naturalengland-defra.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/Defra::special-areas-of-conservation-england/about

SBIs: Sites of biological importance – a non-statutory designation used locally by the Greater Manchester, Cheshire and Staffordshire County Councils in England to protect locally valued sites of biological diversity which are described generally as Local Wildlife Sites by the UK Government. https://www.data.gov.uk/dataset/81cbf1a0-6304-470c-ade8-60272be0d219/sites-of-biological-importance-sbi-lws-in-greater-manchester

[2] This designation was created when the UK was part of the EU, but has been maintained since.

Section 106 – Planning obligations are legal obligations entered into to mitigate the impacts of a development proposal. Planning obligations are also commonly referred to as 'section 106', 's106', as well as 'developer contributions' when considered alongside highways contributions. More information can be found at https://www.gov.uk/guidance/planning-obligations

Social housing: Social housing has rents pegged to local incomes and provides truly affordable, secure housing options for people. More information can be found at https://england.shelter.org.uk/support_us/campaigns/what_is_social_housing

SPA: Special Protection Area – land classified under Directive 79/409 on the Conservation of Wild Birds. SPAs are strictly protected sites classified in accordance with Article 4 of the EC Birds Directive, which came into force in April 1979. More information can be found at https://naturalengland-defra.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/Defra::special-protection-areas-england/explore?location=52.742087%2C-2.229306%2C7.47

SSSIs: Sites of Special Scientific Interest – the finest sites for wildlife and natural features in England, supporting many characteristic, rare and endangered species, habitats and natural features. More information can be found at https://naturalengland-defra.opendata.arcgis.com/maps/f10cbb4425154bfda349ccf493487a80

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) – Strategic environmental assessment are tools used at the plan-making stage to assess the likely effects of the plan when judged against reasonable alternatives. More information can be found at https://www.gov.uk/guidance/strategic-environmental-assessment-and-sustainability-appraisal

SUDS: sustainable drainage systems – systems designed to manage stormwater locally (as close to its source as possible), to mimic natural drainage and encourage its infiltration, attenuation and passive treatment. More information can be found at https://www.local.gov.uk/topics/severe-weather/flooding/sustainable-drainage-systems

TfGM: Transport for Greater Manchester – the local government body responsible for delivering Greater Manchester's transport strategy and commitments. More information can be found at https://tfgm.com/

Twenty minute neighbourhood: The basic premise is a model of urban development that creates neighbourhoods where daily services can be accessed within a 20 minute walk. More information can be found at: https://tcpa.org.uk/collection/the-20-minute-neighbourhood

Links

Bee Network: https://beeactive.tfgm.com/bee-network-vision/

Bee Network cycle routes: https://mappinggm.org.uk/bee-network/

Character appraisals for the Grasscroft and Delph Conservation Areas: https://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/200291/heritage/1908/conservation_areas

Climate Change and the Peak District National Park: https://www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/looking-after/climatechange/climate-change-and-the-peak-district

Greater Manchester Landscape Character and Sensitivity Assessment: https://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/media/1727/greater-manchester-landscape-character-and-sensitivity-report.pdf

Historic England listed buildings: https://historicengland.org.uk

Integrated Transport Plan for the North and Midlands: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/integrated-rail-plan-for-the-north-and-the-midlands

Local Energy Plan for Oldham (and other Greater Manchester local authorities): https://gmgreencity.com/resource_library/greater-manchester-local-area-energy-planning-overview-and-insight/

Local Heritage List for Oldham: https://local-heritage-list.org.uk/greater-manchester/oldham

National Cycle Network map: https://www.sustrans.org.uk/national-cycle-network

National Planning Policy Framework: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2

Oldham Local Housing Needs Assessment: https://www.oldham.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/5590/local_housing_needs_assessment_2024.pdf

Oldham Local Plan portal: https://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/200199/planning_and_building/1809/local_plan_review

Oldham Mill Strategy: https://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/201213/local_plan_review/2819/oldham_mills_strategy

Oldham Ward Profiles: https://www.oldham.gov.uk/downloads/download/179/ward_profiles

Peak District National Park Management Plan: https://www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/looking-after/strategies-and-policies/national-park-management-plan

Peak District National Park Corporate Strategy 2019–24: https://www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/looking-after/strategies-and-policies/corporate-strategy

Peak District National Park Landscape Strategy: https://www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/looking-after/strategies-and-policies/landscape-strategy

Peak District National Park Planning Policies: https://www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/planning/policies-and-guides

Peak District National Park Cultural Heritage Strategy: https://www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/looking-after/strategies-and-policies/landscape-strategy/culturalheritage

Places for Everyone: https://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/what-we-do/planning-and-housing/places-for-everyone/

Public rights of way in Oldham: https://maps.oldham.gov.uk/

TfGM Transport Strategy 2040: https://tfgm.com/2040-transport-strategy

Addendum

This section is intended to give a very brief description of the villages of Saddleworth, particularly as information for those less familiar with the Parish.

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Austerlands is on the western edge of Saddleworth, and is contiguous with Scouthead and Springhead, and also Waterhead and Lees which lie outside the Parish. It is on the A62, and the most prominent landmark is Austerlands Chimney. It lies on the traditional border between Yorkshire and Lancashire.

Delph lies on the River Tame, adjacent to the A62. It contains the New Delph; Delph; Bleak Hey Nook, and Grange conservation areas. One of the two GP satellite practices in Saddleworth is located here. The Castleshaw Roman Fort and Bowl Barrow, the two scheduled monuments in Saddleworth fall within its boundaries.

Denshaw is the northernmost of the villages of Saddleworth, and contains the Denshaw conservation area. The centre of the village is located on the junction of the A640 and A672.

Diggle is the easternmost of the villages of Saddleworth, and one of three lying adjacent to the Peak District National Park. It lies between the A672 Standedge Road and the Huddersfield Canal. It contains the Diglea conservation area. It contains the new Saddleworth School which opened in 2022.

Dobcross contains three conservation areas: Dobcross, Tame Water, Harrop Green. It lies between Delph and Uppermill, alongside Delph New Road, which links the two main arterial roads in Saddleworth, the A670 and the A62.

Friezland is contiguous with Greenfield and Grasscroft, lying south of the A635, which links Saddleworth with Tameside. It contains the Royal George Mills conservation area. The River Tame and the Huddersfield Narrow Canal run through the village.

Grasscroft – lies on the A669, and is continguous with Lydgate and Friezland. It contains the Grasscroft conservation area.

Greenfield is one of the three villages which border the Peak District National Park. The only train station in the Parish (and wider Oldham borough) is located in Greenfield. The Conservation areas are Boarshurst, Ladhill Lane, and Hey Top. It lies along Chew Brook, with the River Tame running along the north-west end of the village. The A669 also runs through the village. To the east of the village is Dovestone Reservoir. It also contains one of the two satellite GP practices which serve the area.

Grotton is contiguous with Springhead, lying towards the west of the Parish, on the A669.

Lydgate is contiguous with Grasscroft, and lies across the junction of the A6050 and A669, with the original centre, adjacent to St Anne's Church forming the basis of the Lydgate conservation area.

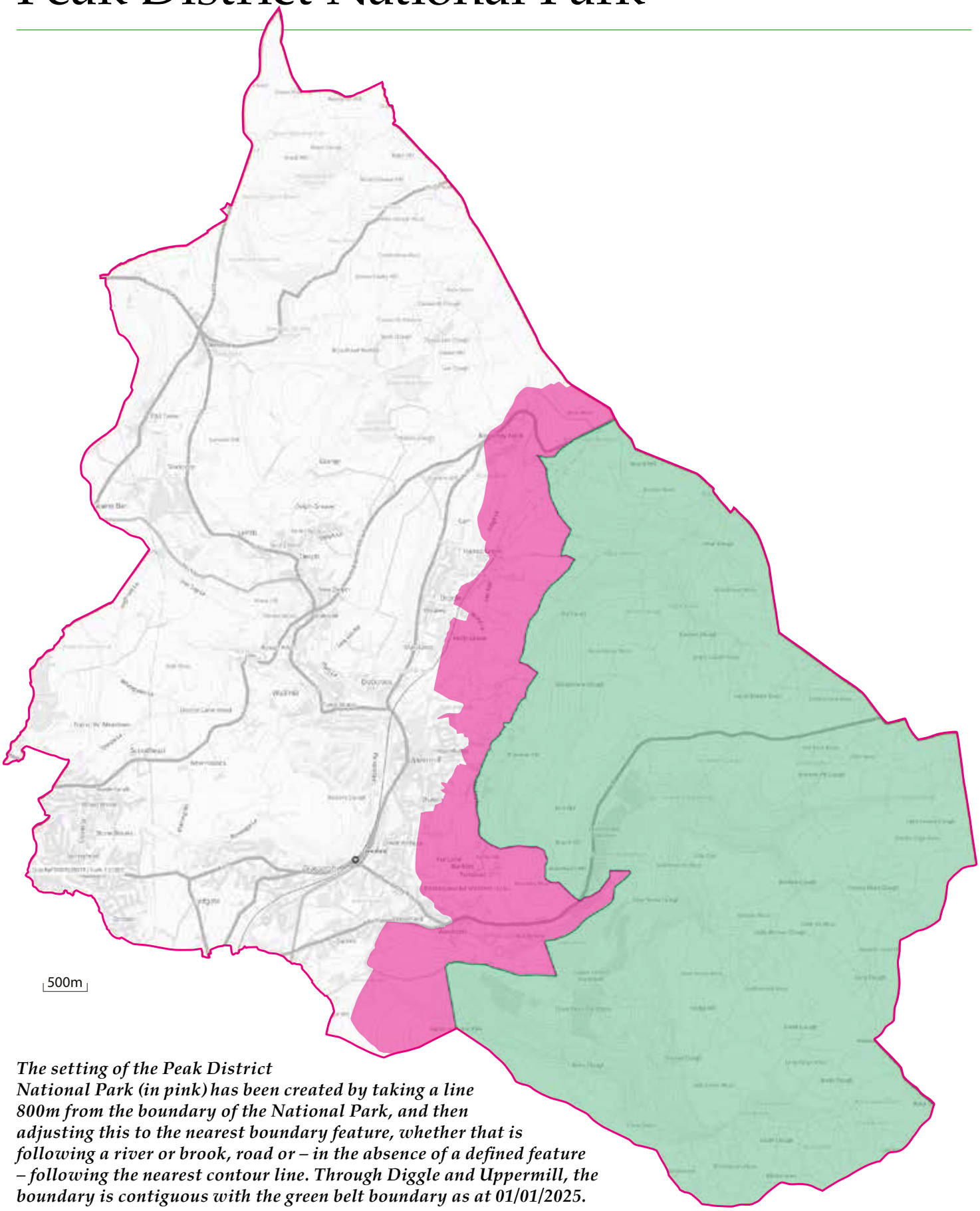
Scouthead is contiguous with Austerlands and Springhead, lying on the A62. It contains the Scouthead conservation area.

Slackcote is a small hamlet sitting between Delph and Denshaw, which is most notable for the New Tame conservation area.

Springhead – is the westernmost village of the Parish. It is contiguous with Grotton to the east, Scouthead and Austerlands to the north, and Lees to the west (which lies outside the Parish). It contains the Hey and Stonebreaks conservation areas. The spring which Springhead is named after forms the traditional border between Lancashire and Yorkshire.

Uppermill contains the Civic Hall where Saddleworth Parish Council is based, and the Uppermill, St Chad's Church and Holly Grove conservation areas. It lies on the river Tame, and is adjacent to the Peak District National Park. It contains the main GP practice for the area.

Appendix 1: Map of the setting of the Peak District National Park



The setting of the Peak District National Park (in pink) has been created by taking a line 800m from the boundary of the National Park, and then adjusting this to the nearest boundary feature, whether that is following a river or brook, road or – in the absence of a defined feature – following the nearest contour line. Through Diggle and Uppermill, the boundary is contiguous with the green belt boundary as at 01/01/2025.

Appendix 2: Parish Actions

The following Parish Actions have been identified as community aspirations that will help improve the neighbourhood area but which are not suitable to be statutory planning policies and do not form part of the Development Plan.

PARISH ACTION 1: HOUSING – COMMUNITY LAND TRUSTS

PA1.1 Saddleworth Parish Council will explore, or encourage others to explore, the creation of a Community Land Trust. In particular, it should explore options for self-build and community build.

PARISH ACTION 2: CONSULTATION

PA2.1 Saddleworth Parish Council will seek to encourage the creation of consultation groups with local residents and groups, for large developments, to discuss the development between planning approval and completion. This is to facilitate positive and proactive engagement with the community by those bringing forward plans for development, both as plans are prepared and submitted, and as development takes place.

PARISH ACTION 3: TOURISM AND LEISURE

PA3.1 To support local events which add to the tourism and leisure potential of Saddleworth, particularly to identify opportunities for funding and promotion.

PARISH ACTION 4: FARMING AND RURAL ENVIRONMENT

R4.1 The Parish Council will seek to engage in a partnership scheme with local farmers for the twin purposes of promoting the farming industry in Saddleworth and conserving and enhancing the rural environment in the area.

PARISH ACTION 5 – PARKING

PA5.1 Saddleworth Parish Council will work with other public bodies and groups to identify methods to redress lack of availability or misuse of parking facilities.

PARISH ACTION 6: CYCLING, PEDESTRIAN AND LEISURE INFRASTRUCTURE

PA6.1 Saddleworth Parish Council will work with neighbouring authorities and the Peak Park Authority to provide and promote sustainable and responsible off-road cycling and walking.

PA6.2 Saddleworth Parish Council will work with those groups which maintain and preserve the Huddersfield Narrow Canal.

PARISH ACTION 7: PUBLIC TRANSPORT

R7.1 There needs to be greater consultation with the residents on any changes to bus services and routes.

R7.2 The Parish Council welcomes Oldham Council's support for a future Bee Network pass, including support for developments which include provision of Bee Network passes as part of the development.

R7.3 A rural bus service which takes into account alternatives to the traditional bus services should be introduced in order to meet the needs of all the villages.

R7.4 Saddleworth Parish Council will support the provision of a dedicated budget for the upkeep of rights of way and bridleways and other leisure sites.

R7.5 The Parish Council will look to support transport planning across the borough and wider region that recognises the lack of public transport infrastructure across the Parish, and provides opportunities for better connectivity for people travelling outside Saddleworth for work.

R7.6 Support will be given to public transport approaches which help reduce the reliance on private cars throughout Saddleworth, with particular attention drawn to the issues at beauty spots such as Dovestone reservoir.

R7.7 Support for public transport approaches which ensure comprehensive access across the whole of Saddleworth, including late at night.

R7.8 Saddleworth Parish Council will work with neighbouring authorities and transport authorities to address the particular expense of travel from Greenfield to Marsden and onwards through Yorkshire.

Appendix 3: Boundary maps of Local Green Spaces



Diggle Fields, Diggle



Dawson's Field, Scouthead



Playing field at Ashfield, Springhead



Church Fields, Diggle



SADDLEWORTH NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN 2025–2045

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