

The page features a vibrant, colorful geometric pattern composed of various triangles and squares in shades of blue, orange, green, pink, and dark blue. These shapes are arranged to form stylized buildings, trees, and abstract architectural elements, creating a festive and modern aesthetic. The pattern is most prominent at the top and bottom of the page, framing the central text.

# Pride, Progress, PARTNERSHIP.

Impact Report 24/25

Thank you to every organisation, frontline worker, volunteer, and resident who has contributed to this journey so far. The foundations are strong, and the next year is all about building on them.



Leader of Oldham Council,  
**Cllr Arooj Shah**

**Foreword**

When we launched the Oldham Plan—Pride, Progress, Partnership— last year we were clear: no single organisation can deliver the kind of change our borough deserves. It takes all of us, working together, with a shared purpose, shared values and a shared responsibility.

This first annual Partnership Report shows what that looks like in practice.

Over the past 12 months, our partners across public services, the voluntary and community sector, education, health, and business have stepped up—not just to deliver services, but to drive real change. From our first digital inclusion deep dive to the delivery of new homes and community facilities, from grassroots health work to bold regeneration plans, we’ve shown what we can achieve when we work as one team for Oldham.

Our three missions—**Healthier, Happier Lives, a Great Place to Live,** and a **Green and Growing** borough—have never felt more relevant. They’ve helped bring focus and clarity to our collective ambition, and they’ve given us a common language for talking about what matters to residents.

This report highlights just a few of the stories behind that work, but they all point to the same truth: **partnership working isn’t a nice-to-have, it’s essential.** Whether we’re supporting families, tackling inequality, or building a greener economy, we are stronger, smarter and faster when we act together.

So, thank you to every organisation, frontline worker, volunteer, and resident who has contributed to this journey so far. The foundations are strong, and the next year is all about building on them.

**Let’s keep going, together.**



# ‘Celebrating our success!’

**“Our dream at Oldham Athletic is to lead a proper, positive, and sustainable change for Oldham – not just for the football club, but for the town as a whole.**

We want to inspire pride, opportunity, and progress in every corner of our community, creating a legacy that lasts well beyond the pitch.

What a year it’s been – not just for Oldham Athletic, but for Oldham as a whole.

Our promotion back to the Football League has been a landmark moment for the club, but more than that, it’s a symbol of belief. Belief in the people, in the passion that runs through this place, and in what’s possible when you work with focus, with purpose, and with a team around you that refuses to give up.

In many ways, that same spirit is what’s driving the change we’re seeing across Oldham right now. From housing and regeneration to health and green spaces, we’re building momentum – and doing it together. As a club, we’re proud to be part of that, and proud to be part of the Leading Oldham Partnership.

This year’s announcement of Oldham SportsTown is a game-changer. SportsTown isn’t just about sport – it’s about sport, health, wellness, and education. It shows that what happens off the pitch is just as important as what happens on it. It’s about wellbeing, opportunity, community, and ambition. It’s about giving our young people pathways to thrive – and putting pride back into our neighbourhoods.

At Oldham Athletic, we believe in this town. And we believe in what partnership can achieve. The work ahead won’t always be easy – but if the last year has shown us anything, it’s that when Oldham pulls together, we can go further than anyone expects.

Here’s to building on that success – and to the season ahead.

## Foreword

**Darren Royle,**  
Chief Executive,  
Oldham Athletic AFC





# Introduction

Last year, we launched the Oldham Plan: Pride, Progress, Partnership—a shared vision for the future of our borough, rooted in ambition, collaboration, and a renewed sense of local pride. This marked the beginning of a new chapter for Oldham and the recharged Leading Oldham Partnership, which now brings together leaders, organisations, and communities around a common purpose.

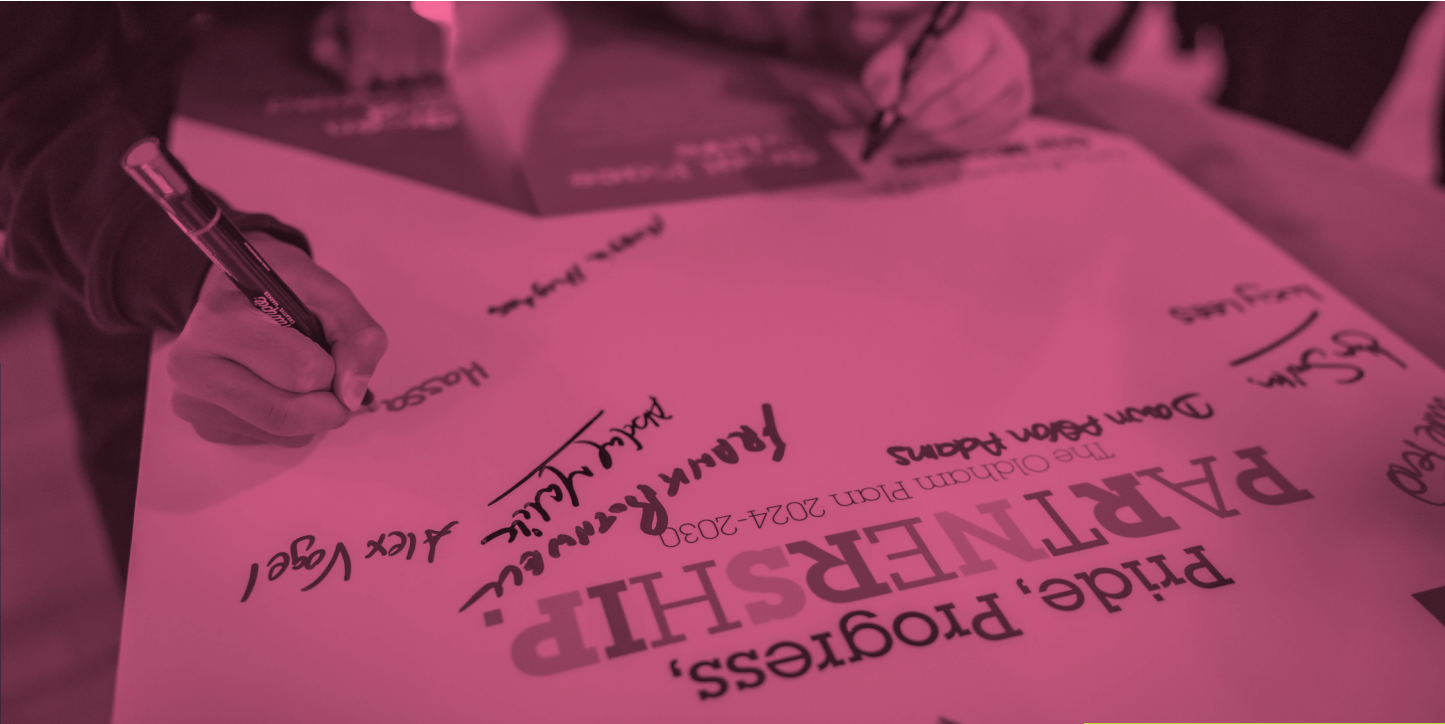
As we approach the first anniversary of the Oldham Plan, this inaugural ‘annual report’ serves as a moment of reflection and accountability. It offers an honest look at the progress we’ve made so far and the challenges we continue to face. It is the first in what will become an annual record of the collective journey we are on—one defined by shared ownership and responsibility for Oldham’s future.

## Our work is shaped by three bold missions:

Healthier, Happier Lives

A Great Place to Live

Green and Growing



These missions are more relevant than ever, resonating strongly with the current national focus on health, place-based regeneration, and sustainable growth. They are the lens through which we align our efforts and measure our progress.

Over the past year, we’ve seen early signs of momentum. We launched our first Policy Deep Dive, exploring key issues in greater detail to drive better, evidence-led collaborative decision making. Regeneration of the town centre continues to transform the heart of Oldham, making it a more vibrant, accessible, and future-ready place. And the exciting announcement of Oldham SportsTown has laid the foundations for a borough-wide movement to harness the power of sport to inspire pride, wellbeing, and opportunity.

There is still a long road ahead. But with strong foundations in place and a clear sense of direction, this report sets out not only where we are—but where we’re heading, together.



## MISSION

# Healthier Happier Lives

## Case Study SportsTown

### Building Healthier, Happier Lives Through Sport

In March 2025, Oldham took a significant step towards enhancing community well-being with the announcement of a £5 million investment to initiate SportsTown—a visionary £70 million sports, education, health, and wellbeing campus centered around Boundary Park. This ambitious project aims to transform local opportunities, fostering a new era for sport and health in the borough.

### A Catalyst for Community Health and Wellbeing

SportsTown is designed to deliver state-of-the-art sporting, health, and educational facilities, directly supporting the “Healthier, Happier Lives” mission. By providing essential services and much-needed facilities on-site, the initiative seeks to improve health outcomes and promote active lifestyles among residents.

The project builds upon a previous £1 million investment by Oldham Council, which funded a new playing surface at Boundary Park. This development secured a permanent home for Oldham RLFC, enhancing community access to high-quality sports facilities.



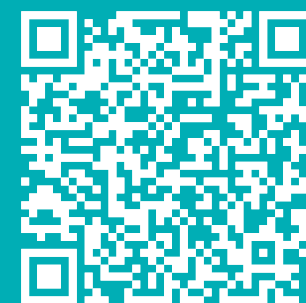
### Educational and Career Opportunities

Beyond physical health, SportsTown is set to create real educational and career opportunities in sports, health, and related fields. The initiative aligns with the findings of the Oldham Economic Review Board and the Oldham Economic and Skills Strategy, aiming to harness the power of sport, health, wellness, business, and education to benefit the community.

### A Collaborative Vision for the Future

The success of SportsTown is rooted in collaboration among Oldham Council, Boundary Park owner Frank Rothwell, Oldham Athletic AFC, and Oldham Rugby League Football Club. Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) provided £5 million through the Greater Manchester Strategy Fund, while Oldham Active will act as the local delivery partner for sports and wellbeing. This partnership exemplifies the collective commitment to creating opportunities for residents and ensuring that communities can grow and lead healthier, happier lives.

**SPORTSTOWN**  
OLDHAM



**SCAN  
ME**



## MISSION

# Healthier Happier Lives

### Case Study

### The New Day Care Centre

In December, Oldham celebrated the opening of Age UK Oldham's 2nd day care centre dedicated to promoting independence for residents living in Oldham who need care and support in later life. Housed in their large bungalow in the heart of a residential community, the facility offers a welcoming, homely environment where people spend the day joining in activities, socialising with their peers and enjoying home cooked nutritious meals.

### A Collaborative Approach to Care for Older people

This centre exemplifies the power of partnership in addressing community needs. Oldham Council has always championed day care for older people with assessed care needs, and this collaborative approach gives all older people choice through care packages, direct payments and self-funding which invigorates a sense of community and shared responsibility.

### Promoting Healthier, Happier Lives

Aligned with Oldham's mission to promote "Healthier, Happier Lives," the day care centre plays a crucial role in supporting the physical and mental health of older residents. Through various programs and activities, the centre encourages active lifestyles, social engagement, and continuous learning, all of which contribute to overall wellbeing.

### Looking Ahead: Opportunities for Further Collaboration

The centre opens doors for future partnerships aimed at expanding services and reaching more residents. By continuing to work together, stakeholders can develop innovative solutions to meet the evolving needs of Oldham's aging population, ensuring that every individual has the opportunity to lead a fulfilling and healthy life.

**"Day care services like this give great social benefits to those who attend and help people and their families to connect, whilst also combating loneliness"**





## MISSION

# Great Place to Live

### Case Study

### Bridging the Digital Divide

In January 2025, Oldham hosted its inaugural Leading Oldham Partnership policy deep-dive event, bringing together organisations from across the borough to address the pressing issue of digital exclusion. This collaborative effort aimed to position Oldham as one of the UK's most digitally inclusive towns.

#### A Unified Approach to Digital Inclusion

The event marked a significant step in building connections among the Leading Oldham Partnership, Inclusive Bytes, Tameside Community Computers, and GMCA, who provided £70,000 in funding. The event focused on increasing residents' access to digital services within a 15-minute walk from their homes, along with how businesses and organisations can save money on recycling technology by repurposing technology for those who don't have devices to get online.

**“As a part of my time with Inclusive Bytes I have run workshops with a variety of people, teaching them how to use various websites and digital tools, and learning online safety. It has become easier to talk with people each time, and as I have become more familiar with and passionate about explaining things, these conversations with new people now come naturally.”**

Inclusive Bytes Young Volunteer



#### Innovative Solutions: H.O.O.T Hubs

A key development shared and expanded on the day was the establishment of H.O.O.T Hubs (Hands On Opportunities in Tech) across public spaces in Oldham. These hubs provide residents with support in getting online, completing digital forms, and accessing various online resources, thereby nurturing digital literacy and inclusion.

#### Empowering the Community

The deep-dive event also emphasised the importance of promoting awareness of social tariffs and increasing the number of organisations with dedicated digital champions and data banks. This holistic approach ensures that residents are not only connected but also supported in navigating the digital landscape.





## MISSION

# Great Place to Live

### Case Study

### Reviving Oldham Coliseum

Oldham's cultural ambitions are rooted in the belief that culture thrives when it created with, by, and for our communities. By working cooperatively through Oldham's cultural partnership, we are bringing together historical cultural institutions, artists, residents, and business to share resources, ideas and opportunities.

In a remarkable demonstration of community spirit and collaboration, the historic Oldham Coliseum Theatre is set to reopen its doors in 2026, following a successful campaign to save the venue from closure. This £10 million refurbishment project, supported by £6.1 million from the Towns Fund and the remainder from Oldham Council's regeneration budget, underscores the borough's commitment to preserving its cultural heritage and enhancing community spaces.

### A Collaborative Effort

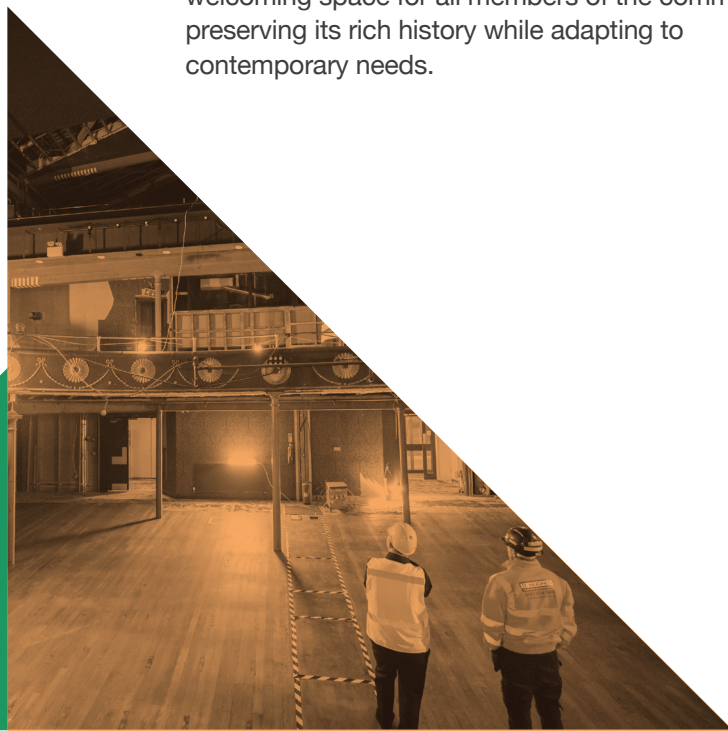
The revival of the Coliseum is a testament to the power of partnership. Oldham Council, local artists, community groups, and passionate residents united to advocate for the theatre's restoration. The appointment of heritage contractor Tilbury Douglas to lead the refurbishment further exemplifies this collaborative approach, bringing expertise to breathe new life into the Fairbottom Street venue.

### Enhancing Accessibility and Heritage

The refurbishment includes extensive structural changes to improve accessibility, such as the removal of asbestos and the creation of more wheelchair-accessible backstage entrances. These upgrades ensure that the Coliseum remains a welcoming space for all members of the community, preserving its rich history while adapting to contemporary needs.

**"We're excited for the future, and will be a key part in taking Oldham audiences with us"**

Julie Hesmondhalgh



### A Vibrant Programme Ahead

While renovations are underway, the Coliseum continues to engage audiences through a collaborative programme of shows at various venues across Oldham. The Spring Programme 2025 features a diverse lineup of comedy, music, and theatre, showcasing the borough's creative talent and commitment to accessible arts.

Additionally, initiatives like the "Crafted" programme support local artists in developing and presenting original works, fostering a nurturing environment for creative expression.

### Looking Forward

The reopening of the Oldham Coliseum Theatre symbolizes more than the restoration of a building; it represents the resilience and unity of a community dedicated to creating a vibrant, inclusive, and culturally rich environment. As the theatre prepares to welcome audiences once again, it stands as a beacon of what can be achieved through collective effort and shared vision.





## MISSION

# Green and Growing

## Case Study

## Northern Roots

Oldham's green heart is beating stronger than ever.

A £13 million ground breaking project will bring a new visitor centre, café, and forestry hub to the Northern Roots site next to Alexandra Park, with the centre expected to open by summer 2026, providing our residents with skills, support opportunities, and an enhanced local environment.

The site has also been bolstered with over £249,000 in new funding from The National Lottery Heritage Fund, Northern Roots is taking a bold step forward in transforming 160 acres of underused urban green space into a living landscape of opportunity, sustainability, and pride.

This isn't just about land—this is about legacy.

### Cultivating the Future, Rooted in the Past

Northern Roots is more than a regeneration project. It's a movement to create a community-powered destination where Oldhamers can grow food, learn new skills, discover wildlife, spark creativity, find employment, and connect—both with nature and with one another.

This latest project will celebrate the rich natural, social, and industrial heritage of the site, spotlighting the incredible legacy of working-class scientific and environmental pioneers like James Neild, and community-led movements like the Oldham Microscopical Society, which continues to inspire curiosity and conservation to this day.

**£13 Million**  
ground breaking project



**£249,000**  
in new funding from  
The National Lottery  
Heritage Fund

### Partnership in Action

Northern Roots shows the power of partnerships in action—between charities, funders, ecologists, museums, and most importantly, residents. This is what the Green and Growing mission is all about: creating a borough where the natural environment flourishes, people thrive, and heritage is a living, growing part of daily life.

As we head toward 2026, Northern Roots will continue to sow the seeds of hope, resilience, and regeneration—bringing people together to nurture a greener, more connected future for Oldham.

### Heritage, Jobs, and Community-Led Impact

Thanks to funding granted by the National Lottery, Northern Roots will be able to:

Create local jobs and training, including roles for Citizen Researchers, Citizen Rangers, and Heritage Champions

Empower local people to explore, preserve, and share Oldham's heritage

Support Northern Roots' vision to open as a major visitor destination by 2026—with people and place at its core

From seasonal wildlife surveys to creative storytelling and hands-on conservation, the community will be at the centre of shaping the future of Northern Roots.



# Green and Growing

## Case Study

## FCHO Delivering Homes

Oldham Council's housing partner, First Choice Homes Oldham (FCHO), has delivered a range of high-quality, eco-friendly homes across the borough, supporting economic growth, community wellbeing, and sustainable living.



### West Vale, Coldhurst

## 88 Apartments and family homes

**Overview:**  
One of the largest social housing schemes in Greater Manchester, West Vale replaces the outdated tower blocks (Crossbank and Summervale) with a modern, attractive neighbourhood of 88 high-quality homes.

**What's Being Delivered:**  
A mix of townhouses and apartments, all energy-efficient with the latest air source heat pumps, accessible, and affordable.

**Partnership:**  
Delivered by FCHO, supported by Homes England and Oldham Council, and built by Caddick, with a focus on high-quality design and placemaking.

**Impact:**  
Transforming a previously underused estate into a vibrant, safe, and sustainable community hub in the heart of Oldham.

### Hardman Street, Failsworth

## 14 Affordable, Green Homes

**Overview:**  
A £3.7 m development of 14 family homes (seven 3-bed, five 2-bed shared ownership, and two 2-bed affordable rent), situated on long-term brownfield land.

**Sustainability & Support:**  
All homes designed to EPC B standards, funded by Homes England, and constructed by Lancet Homes

### Wellyhole Street, Lees

## 17 Modern Family Homes

**Overview:**  
£3.2 m investment delivering 17 three-bedroom houses for affordable rent, developed off-plan from an existing estate.

**Community Benefit:**  
Aligned with Council housing allocations, offering energy-efficient new homes to residents

### Farrow Street, Shaw

## 10 New Family Homes

**Overview:**  
Transformation of a former bowling green into ten four-bedroom homes (five for shared ownership, five for affordable rent).

**Sustainability:**  
Designed with a "fabric-first" approach, achieving EPC B ratings; built by Beardwell Developments with support from Homes England .

### Cherry Avenue, Alt

## 38 Eco-Homes Completed

**Overview:**  
A previously vacant brownfield site reimaged into 38 two- and three-bedroom homes for affordable rent.

**Sustainability:**  
Built 15% more energy-efficient than required, with enhanced insulation, reducing energy bills for tenants.

**Community Impact:**  
Funded by Homes England (£1.5 m), delivered by Tyson Construction, and enhanced the precinct through waste-clearance activities and community projects.





# The year ahead

will be one of continued delivery across Oldham. With the Oldham Plan setting a clear direction, partners from across sectors are stepping forward with purpose — working together to improve lives, tackle inequality, and create opportunity.

Below is a snapshot of what to expect under each of our shared missions.



## Healthier Happier Lives

### **Northern Care Alliance**

will expand delivery of its integrated 0–19 health service offer, working closely with Family Hubs, GPs and early years providers to support children's health and development in neighbourhood settings.

### **Your Health Oldham (ABL Health)**

will target support for smoking cessation, weight management and long-term conditions—building on work that has helped Oldham deliver some of the strongest quit rates in Greater Manchester.

### **Action Together and VCFSE partners**

will strengthen social prescribing pathways and wellbeing activities for older people and carers, using data from health services to target those most at risk of isolation or poor mental health.



# Great Place to Live

## **First Choice Homes Oldham**

will begin letting the first homes at West Vale and move ahead with development at South Werneth, Derker and Shaw—delivering more affordable, energy-efficient homes across the borough.

## **Greater Manchester Police (Oldham)**

will continue to embed neighbourhood policing across the borough and work with the Council and youth services on violence reduction programmes in hotspot areas.

## **Oldham College**

will expand its T Level and apprenticeship offer with employers across health, care, digital and construction—helping local people access training linked to real job opportunities.

## **Oldham's Digital Inclusion Partnership**

will grow digital access through device loan schemes, digital support sessions and connectivity solutions in community settings, building on learning from the borough's first digital policy deep dive.



# Green and Growing

## **Northern Roots**

will deliver construction of its Visitor Centre and Forestry Skills Hub, offering new training, enterprise and volunteering opportunities ahead of its full opening as a visitor destination in 2026.

## **Oldham Council and Oldham Athletic Community Trust**

will begin implementing the SportsTown vision, including capital improvements to local sports facilities and work to open up sport and physical activity to all ages and backgrounds.

## **Oldham Minewater District Heat Network**

is a project using heat from disused coal mines to power council buildings, cultural venues and homes. Supported by over £10 million in government and GMCA funding, with further private investment to follow, the scheme will save around 3,700 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> a year once operational.

## **Environmental partners and local schools**

will collaborate on a new climate education initiative focused on green careers and environmental action—ensuring young people are equipped for the low-carbon future Oldham is building.





# Pride, Progress, **PARTNERSHIP.**

