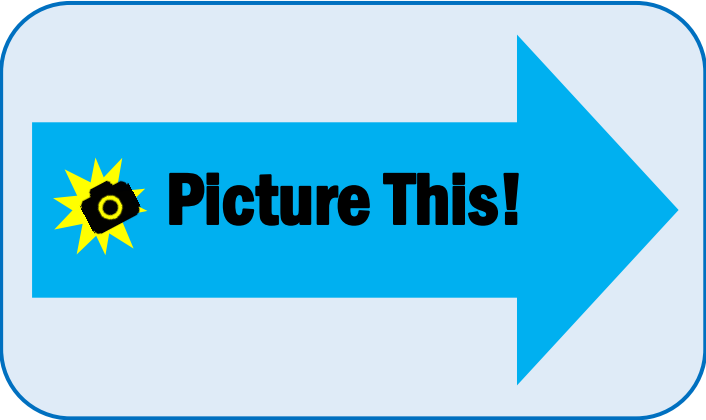


Picture This Project Report

September 2019

By Sarah Spanton



Contents:

| | |
|---|------|
| 1. Overview | p.2 |
| 2. Picture This Community Engagement Project | p.5 |
| 3. Platt Bridge Business Premises Audit | p.9 |
| 4. Platt Bridge Community Green Visioning Project | p.11 |
| 5. Neighbourhood Plan Policy Development | p.14 |



1. Overview

1.1 Abram Ward Community Cooperative¹ (AWCC) and Abram Communities Together² (ACT) Neighbourhood Forum and came together to commission the 'Picture This' project, running from Oct 2018 to August 2019. Sarah Spanton, director of Waymarking³, led the project, working closely with members of ACT Forum, AWCC trustees and other community partners to develop a co-produced approach to its delivery.

The programme's main outputs comprised four strands of Activity (Figure 1):

- A community engagement project also entitled 'Picture This'
- Platt Bridge Business Premises Audit
- Platt Bridge Community Green Visioning Project
- ACT Neighbourhood Plan Policy Development

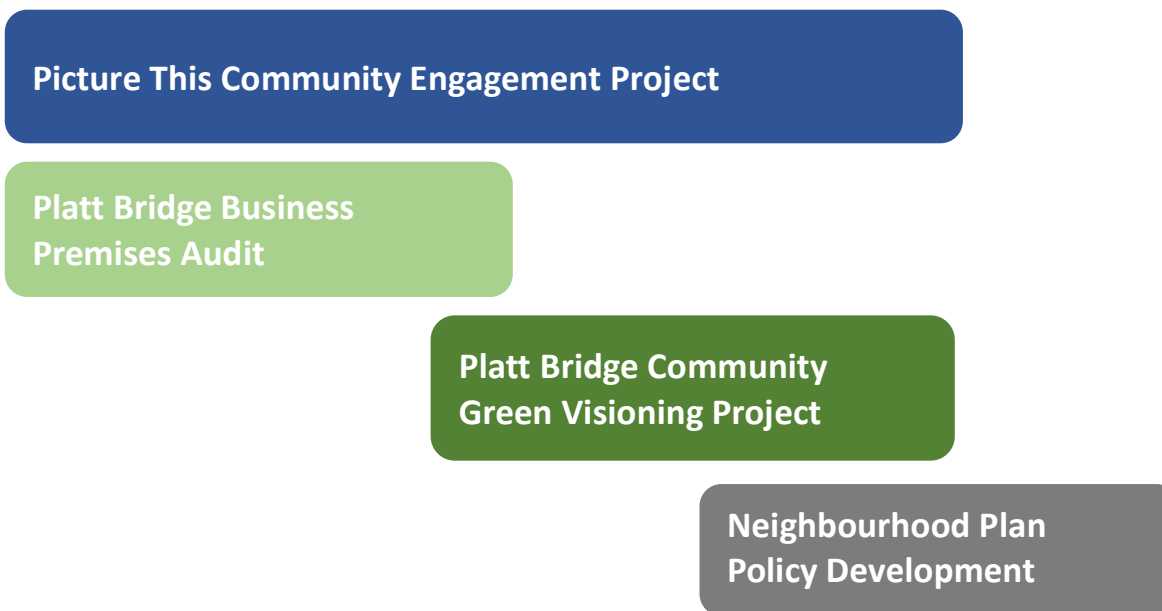
This project was funded by the Empowering Places Programme (from Power to Change⁴).

1.2 A range of people were involved in the project. A Picture This Team was formed to develop, plan and help deliver the Project, working closely with Sarah. The team comprised nine people from AWCC, community businesses seed-funded supported by AWCC and other local AWCC partners:

- Jonny Ashcroft (Wigan Men's Sheds)
- Dave Baxter (Director, AWCC)
- Jackie Lowe (ACT Forum and Bicky Lads and Lasses)
- Julie Davis (Operations Manager AWCC and Tastebuds Cafe)
- Amanda Robinson (Miss Places)
- Genette Smith (ACT Forum and AWCC Trustee),
- Chris Hamnett, Lynn Hamnett, Nicole Robertson, (Staff from Embrace Wigan and Leigh)

The project was also supported by Empowering Places lead, Victoria Bettany (Centre for Local Economic Strategies, CLES).

Figure 1 Four strands of activity



¹ <https://www.madeinwigan.org/>

² <https://abramwardplan.co.uk/>

³ <https://www.waymarking.org.uk>

⁴ <https://www.powertochange.org.uk/get-support/programmes/empowering-places/>

1.3 Sarah Spanton’s role was as community-led planning, regeneration and economic development consultant. She also took the lead in co-ordinating and managing the project, as well as facilitating Team meetings. Sarah also supported the promotion of the project, including liaison with AWCC partners undertaking website development. Her approach was to encourage collective working, using a ‘learning through doing’ approach, fostering co-design and co-production processes wherever possible, to support capacity building for AWCC staff and partners.

Team meetings began in October 2018, taking place monthly through til April 2019 (see Table 2 for dates of meetings and numbers of participants). Sarah attended two ACT Forum meetings in May and June 2019. Additionally, face-to-face and phone meetings were also held with Dave Baxter director of AWCC⁵.

1.4 The Picture This Project’s objectives are set out in Table 1.

Table 1 Picture This Project objectives

| Picture This Project Objectives |
|--|
| • To bring more people on board with the Empowering Places programme |
| • To increase (wider and deeper) community understanding of what community economic development (CED) is - buying and making local in Abram Ward |
| • To explore, and more deeply understand the history/heritage of retail and business in Abram Ward |
| • To support local pride, aspiration and inspiration in the area |
| • To ensure the Team (and local people that join in) have increased their capacity |
| • To change perceptions of the local area |
| • To work towards ensuring that new buildings are community-led |
| • To work towards ensuring that existing buildings are in good use / use for (community business) |
| • To appreciate value of Business Premises and Public Realm Visioning processes |
| • To develop towards a new social and community-led vision for the public realm in Platt Bridge |
| • To significantly develop community-led Neighbourhood Plan policies |
| • To significantly develop the technical writing of Neighbourhood Plan |

⁵ 2.10.19 Dave; 24.10.18 Dave; 6.11.18 Dave; 13.12.18 Dave and Victoria; 9.1.19 Dave and Genette; 19.2.19 Genette

1.5 The programme took place from October 2018 to August 2019. See Table 2 for the schedule of the key dates and activities.

Table 2 Picture This Project Schedule

| | Oct 18 | Nov 18 | Dec 18 | Jan 19 | Feb 19 | Mar 19 | Apr 19 | May 19 | Jun 19 | Jul 19 | Aug 19 |
|---|-----------------------|---------------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Community Engagement Picture This | | Gathering <i>Picture This</i> stories | | | | | 'We Count You In' Gathering & Artwork | | | | |
| Platt Bridge Business Premises Audit | | Business Premises Audit Workshop 1 | | | | | | | | Platt Bridge Business Premises Report | |
| Platt Bridge Community Green Visioning | | | | | Community Green Visioning Workshop 2 | | Testing vision with community | | Community Green Visioning Report | | |
| ACT Plan Policy Development | | | | | | | | 13.5.19 Forum Meeting | 17.6.19 Forum Meeting | | Draft ACT N'hood Plan |
| Picture This Team Meetings | 25.10.18 6 members | 14.11.18 5 members | 4.12.18 5 members | 22.1.19 5 members | 27.2.19 5 members | 26.3.19 4 members | 16.4.19 4 Members | | | | |

2. Picture This Community Engagement Project

2.1 Introduction

The Picture This community engagement project was intended to act as a way to help local people in Abram Ward become more aware of the other three projects in the programme, to support them to engage in a fun and positive way into the work of AWCC and ACT Forum, to create a local 'buzz' around the programme of work and to enable local people to practically contribute to the programme by gifting their memories, stories and photos to the project.

Sarah worked alongside AWCC and ACT Forum to find a way to creatively engage local people in Abram Ward with AWCC's idea of building a stronger local economy in the area.

Overall the project took place between November 2018 and April 2019 and it was comprised of three main elements; collecting stories and memories about shops, shopping and small business; a bespoke textile artwork; and the 'We Count You in Gathering' event.

2.2 Collecting stories and memories

Picture This! was a community history, photography, planning and economic regeneration project. It celebrated the history of shopping, shops and local small businesses in Abram Ward's five villages; Abram, Bamfurlong, Bickershaw, Platt Bridge and Spring View. It aimed to bring people together to think about how they'd like their neighbourhoods to be in the future - starting by sharing all the good things about local and community businesses in the past. The project asked local people to share memories, stories and photos—which became part of a textile artwork which went on public display at Platt Bridge Community Zone (PBCZ, which is home to AWCC).

Local people were asked to complete A5 postcards (Figures 2-3) at community events and meetings by the Picture This Team members, and via social media, including Twitter and Facebook, and using the hashtag #PictureThisAbramWard. Around 130 stories and memories were collected in between November 2018 to February 2019 (Figure 4).

Picture This!

A community history, photography & planning project, from Abram Ward Community Cooperative

MADE IN WIGAN

Community Cooperative Abram Ward

power to change

**With thanks to Wigan World and its contributors for the great images—
www.wiganworld.co.uk**

Celebrating the history of shopping, shops and local small businesses in

- Abram,
- Bamfurlong,
- Bickershaw,
- Platt Bridge &
- Spring View

Share your memories, stories & photos from 1900s... to 1950s... to 2000s—which will become part of a fantastic artwork which will go on public display

Write your story or memory about shopping, shops or local small businesses in Abram Ward HERE!
Return to a Collection Point:

Drop off stories and/or photos & get a free cuppa at Collection Points (we will scan photos & return)

- **Bickershaw** Village Community Club (M-F:10-2pm, Sat:7-1pm)
- **Platt Bridge** Community Zone (M-F:10--2pm)
- 607 Bolton Road, **Bamfurlong** (drop off only)

For info / to take part online:
Email: hello@madeinwigan.org
<https://www.facebook.com/abramwardcommunitycooperative>
Twitter: @pbcommzone

**With thanks to Wigan World and its contributors for the great images—
www.wiganworld.co.uk**

Figures 2-3 Picture This Postcard

Figure 4 Examples of collected stories

'My Mum's relation had a Clock Shop – he had a big clock in the window and people got the time when they went past on the bus'

'Furlong Stores and Finny's Pies – he used to bake his own pies. People used to fight for the pies'

'You often had to queue up for ages in Muriels', but it was pure entertainment! Either Bill or Muriel would be arguing behind the counter or Muriel would be hammering on the window at little lads playing outside. There was never a dull moment'



2.3 Bespoke textile artwork

Sarah Spanton brought in professional artists from her pool of freelancers Helen Mather (lead artist) and Cath Long (associate artist), with a small budget, to take the stories collected and selected by the Picture This team and use them to create a bespoke textile artwork. The artwork is comprised of three printed voile panels presenting a collage of collected photographs and stories from across the five villages (Figures 5-7). This is now permanently hung in the windows of the stairwell at PBCZ.



Figures 5-7 Gifted photograph; Bespoke textile artwork

The role of the artwork was to encourage local people to contribute stories with the potential that their story might be chosen; to ensure that participants realised they were collectively contributing; to give the project a legacy; and to highlight that the stories, memories, lives and histories of local people in Abram Ward are worth celebrating in a public and permanent way.

2.4 'We Count You In Gathering' April 2019

The Picture This programme included a final event 'We Count You In Gathering' on Friday 5th April 2019, 6-8pm at PBCZ attended by 65 people.

This was the key opportunity in the programme for the Picture This team to work together as a collective group to plan, develop and deliver a substantial event which acted as a PR event for AWCC's work as a whole (Figure 8) and specifically celebrated the Picture This strands of activity. It also enabled AWCC to integrate the Picture This programme to the other main strand of its work, the Made In Wigan programme⁶ (especially its seed-fund supported community businesses). Additional goals included to support attendees from different backgrounds (residents, businesses and community organisations) to meet each other and make connections at the event, and to encourage and recruit more local people to get involved AWCC's activities.

The event featured a number of elements and activities, which participants could choose to opt in and out of. All of the public spaces in the building were utilised for exhibitions and displays.

The Stronger Local Economy Treasure Trail was set up as a fun and friendly way to ensure that each seed-funded community business and other key organisations, such as ACT Forum would have maximum exposure to those attending the event and would keep attendees moving around the building and introducing themselves to each other. An added incentive to take part included the prizes for those who completed the most of the Treasure Trail map at the end of the night. Prizes were donated by each of the community businesses, allowing them to showcase their products.

Each of the businesses and organisations became an Ambassador for their own organisation and for AWCC as a whole, there were nine in total:

- Bettys Café – based at Bickershaw Village Community Club
- Tastebuds Café – based at PBCZ
- Wigan Men's Sheds – based at PBCZ
- Miss Places – based at PBCZ
- Embrace Wigan and Leigh – based at PBCZ
- Bicky Lads and Lasses – based at Bickershaw Village Community Club
- Made In Wigan
- Abram Ward Community Cooperative
- Abram Communities Together Neighbourhood Plan

Figures 8-9 Picture This Team; Event Poster



We invite you to the
'We Count You In Gathering'
Friday 5th April
6-8pm
Platt Bridge Community Zone
81 Ribbles Road
Platt Bridge
Wigan
WN2 5EG

d.baxter@abramwardcooperative.org
01942 732022
www.madeinwigan.org

WE COUNT YOU IN

Because...

- You support community and local business
- You support people and organisations making a positive difference in your area
- You've a business idea you want to take further
- You've an interest or skill and you'd like support to turn this into a product or service

Together we're growing a stronger local economy for the benefit of the local community

- Celebrate the history or shops, shopping and small business in Abram Ward
- Unveiling of new artwork by professional artists which local people have contributed to
- FREE buffet
- Meet friendly local people running community and local businesses
- Find out about how Made In Wigan can help you
- Comment on the community-led plans for changing our communities for the better

AWCC
Platt Bridge Community Zone

Community Cooperative
Abram Ward
MADE IN WIGAN
power to change
LOTTERY FUNDED

⁶ <https://www.madeinwigan.org/>

Each Ambassador had an exhibition board and most made a display of their products and services, positioned in different parts of the building (Figure 10). Ambassadors were encouraged to use this as a way to meet future clients, suppliers, commissioners and advocates. Event attendees were given a map on arrival and asked to visit and chat for at least 3 minutes to as many Ambassadors as possible, after 3 minutes they received a sticker to add to their map (Figure 13).

Other elements of the event included:

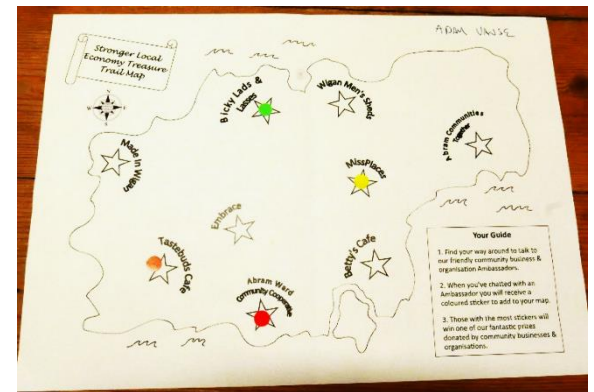
- Asking attendees to sign up to an AWCC mailing list (Figure 11)
- An opening speech from Dave Baxter about the work of AWCC and the Picture This programme
- A buffet, produced by Tastebuds Café
- The unveiling of Picture This textile artwork
- An exhibition presenting the ACT Neighbourhood Plan and some of the Platt Bridge Business Audit evidence (Figure 14)

The promotional publicity (posters, cards and social media, Figure 9) integrated the messages from the Made In Wigan campaign (Figure 12) with that of Picture This and was aimed at local residents and local businesses encouraging them:

- To meet and chat to friendly local people running community and local businesses.
- To see the grand unveiling of the new artwork celebrating the history or shops, shopping and small business in Abram Ward, that local people have contributed to.
- To be the first to find out how Made In Wigan can help you... *'if you've an interest or skill and you'd like support to turn this into a product or service OR if you've a business idea you want to take further'*.
- To find out what local people and organisations in Abram Ward are doing to make a positive difference in the area.
- To support community and local businesses and be part of making the local economy stronger.
- To comment on the community-led plans for redesigning the Platt Bridge Community Green.



**WE COUNT
YOU IN** 



Figures 10 – 14 We Count You In Gathering

3. Platt Bridge Business Premises Audit

3.1 Introduction

Platt Bridge Business Premises Audit was undertaken in order to more deeply understand the business and retail landscape in Platt Bridge, which is the largest settlement and is centrally located within Abram Ward, and is identified by Wigan Council as a Local Centre (Figure 15).

The Platt Bridge Business Premises Audit successfully achieved its four main aims:

- Seeking essential economic evidence for ACT Neighbourhood Plan
- Understanding more deeply the current business and retail character of Platt Bridge Centre
- Finding out about a range of current business premises/site-related issues
- Beginning a dialogue between the community and local businesses about building a stronger local economy together

3.2 Evidence

Evidence was gathered in three main ways, through on-site evidence gathering, publicly accessible online information and liaison with Wigan Local Planning Authority for further data.

The audit gathered evidence in these key areas:

- Active and inactive business premises in Platt Bridge Centre
- Types of business found in Platt Bridge Centre
- Local, regional and national businesses found in Platt Bridge Centre
- Comments on Platt Bridge Centre from business owners and managers
- Amount of business premises floor space
- Use classes in Platt Bridge Centre
- Attractiveness and condition of premises
- Surveillance onto the street
- Business premises locations

3.3 Activity Day 1

The main co-produced element of this strand of the programme was the Activity Day, held in November 2018, where four local people worked with six University of Manchester Planning and Regeneration MSc students to gather evidence for the audit via external visual observations of each of the business site premises and face-to-face conversations with some business managers, owners or senior members of staff.

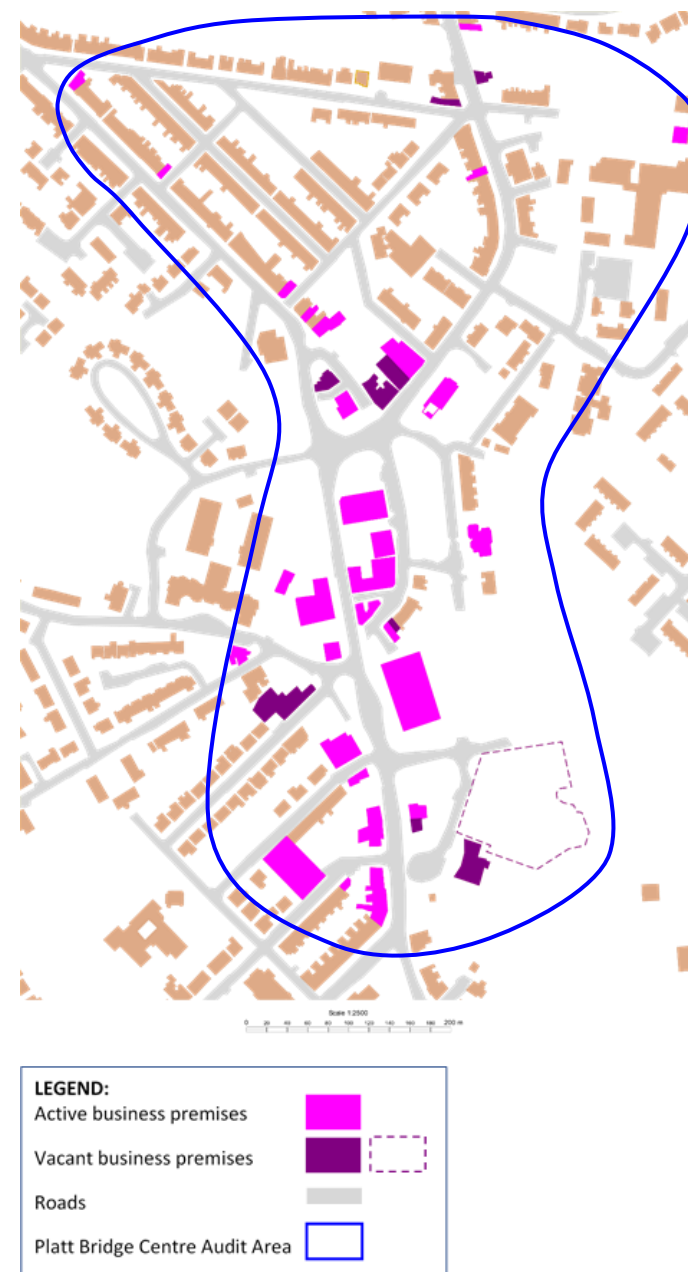


Figure 15 Platt Bridge Centre

During a previous Picture This team meeting the group explored what CED meant to team members and how they would talk about CED to local people about it. A card was produced to give out in conjunction with the Picture This story gathering postcard, when undertaking the business premises audit and talking to local shopkeepers – as part of creatively engaging local people in Abram Ward with AWCCs idea of building a stronger local economy in the area (Figure 15).

3.4 Findings

This report highlights some of the key findings from the full Platt Bridge Business Premises Report (Table 3).

3.5 Analysis

The Platt Bridge Business Premises Audit gathered and analysed evidence which has contributed to policy development in the ACT Neighbourhood Plan. Prior to undertaking the audit no detailed evidence or reporting existed on business premises in Platt Bridge Centre. The evidence analyses in the audit provide a much deeper understanding of the current business and retail character in Platt Bridge Centre for ACT Forum members and AWCC staff and trustees.

The audit revealed some previously unknown positive insights into the area, such as 75% of active businesses are local independent businesses. The audit has also identified some issues that need to be addressed in order to improve the centre, such as 38% of active businesses do not have surveillance onto the street.

Figures 16 Stronger Local Economy Card

Table 3 Key Findings

| |
|--|
| There are 61 business premises in Platt Bridge Centre. |
| Business premises in Platt Bridge Centre are predominantly building-based, they include shops, workshops, warehouses and a haulage yard. |
| There are 50 premises in active business use. |
| There are 11 business premises which are vacant and not in business use. |
| 82% of business premises are in active business use. |
| There are 49 individual businesses based in the 50 active business premises. |
| In Platt Bridge Centre business premises include both retail and other businesses selling goods and services. |
| Food and drink is the category with the highest percentage at 35% - these 17 businesses include supermarkets, off licences and takeaways. |
| Health and beauty is the category with the second highest percentage at 18.5% - these 9 businesses include hairdressers, barbers, beauticians and dentists. |
| Of 17 food and drink businesses, 9 of these are takeaways, meaning that 53% of food and drink businesses are takeaway businesses. |
| Of the 49 businesses based in Platt Bridge Centre, 75% are local independent businesses. |
| One of two key themes from comments from managers, owners and senior members about Platt Bridge Centre is the community spirit and friendliness of local people. |
| The second key theme is around calls for more police on the streets and more CCTV cameras. |
| There are 17732.83 m ² of business premises floor space in Platt Bridge Centre. |
| 39% of all business premises are in A1 Shop use class. |
| 43% of business premises in Platt Bridge are considered either in good or very good condition and attractive. |
| 62% of active businesses in Platt Bridge Centre have surveillance onto the street. |

4. Platt Bridge Community Green Visioning Project

4.1 Introduction

The Platt Bridge Community Green Visioning Project took place within the wider context of ACT Forum's need for economic-focused evidence for the Neighbourhood Plan. See Platt Bridge Community Green Report for full details.

The project was successful in its goals of:

- Understanding the current character and issues arising on the Community Green (Figure 17)
- Designing a new social and community-led vision for Platt Bridge's Community Green
- Testing that vision with community groups in Abram Ward
- Providing the evidence to contribute to policy development relating to the Community Green in the ACT Neighbourhood Plan

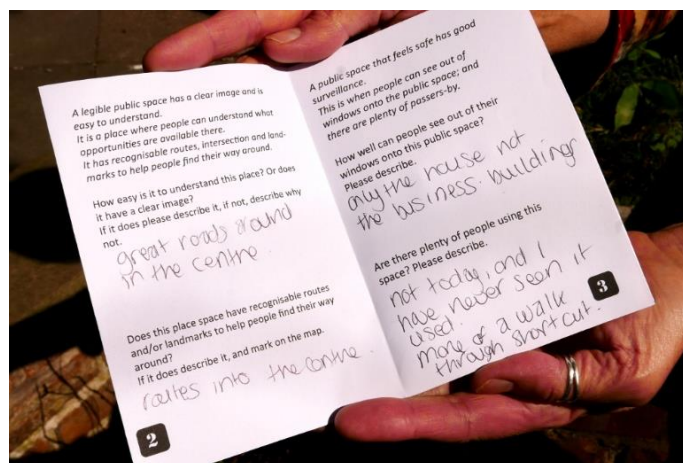


Figure 17 Community Green; Figures 18-20 Activity Day 2

4.2 Activity Day 2

The second Activity Day took place in February 2019, where seven local people and seven University of Manchester Planning and Regeneration MSc students worked together to gathered evidence about the site as it currently stands and imagine how the Green could be redesigned for the future, as a better public space.

The group walked around the site and listened in silence to the sounds, completed booklets of themed questions about the site and then workshopped ideas for the redesign back at PBCZ (Figures 18-20). Analysis of the evidence gathered was undertaken investigating which elements of the green need to be retained and which need to be addressed by the redesign (Figure 21).

For example: key elements to be retained include:

- The Community Green is very walkable to local shops
- It has a good sense of open-ness and visibility.

Some of the areas to be addressed are:

- It has unsafe crossing points
- Lacks a unique identity

4.3 Community Green Vision

The vision was generally positively received by local people across the area, where 65 people commented on it. The issues and questions raised make an excellent starting point for further refining of the vision when a partnership has been formed to take forward the redesign the Community Green.

A draft social and community-led vision for Platt Bridge Community Green has been designed (Figures 22-23), it has three overarching objectives:

- Tapping into the Community Green’s potential
- Making it a place to be, not just for passing through
- Creating a multi-use, flexible, social, healthy green space in the heart of Abram Ward

This design aims to enhance the current layout of the Green, adding 15 new elements to be delivered over three stages (or time periods). The new elements include both small-scale features such as dog bins and bird boxes, and larger projects, such as a new events surface and young children’s play area. These new elements will ensure that the Community Green will have at least ten reasons for people to use it, including a new programme of community events and activities, making it a busy community space for everyone in the area to enjoy and benefit from.

One of the contexts of the Platt Bridge Community Green Visioning Project was to gather economic-focussed evidence for the Neighbourhood Plan. The project has identified that the community are keen to see the Community Green redesigned as a flexible space able to provide a centrally located outdoor space for an occasional or regular community market, which would bring people into the ward to shop at the market, socialise together and boost footfall at the businesses in Platt Bridge Centre.

Analysis: ISSUES THAT NEED TO BE ADDRESSED

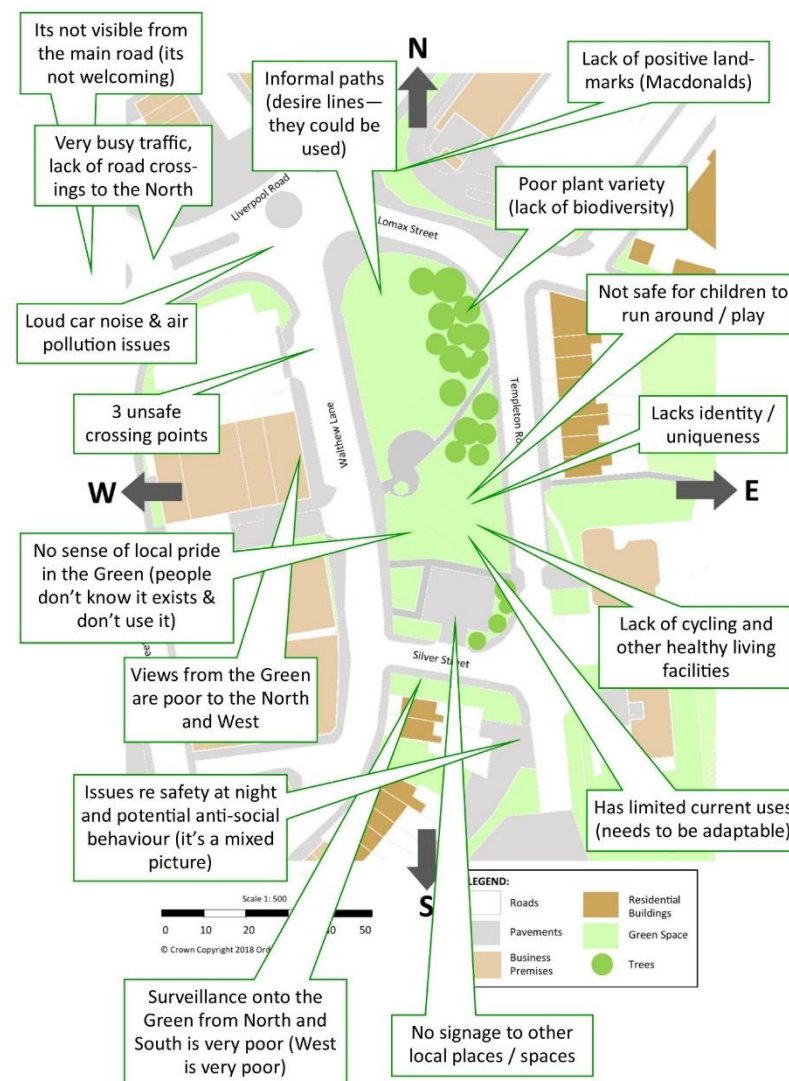
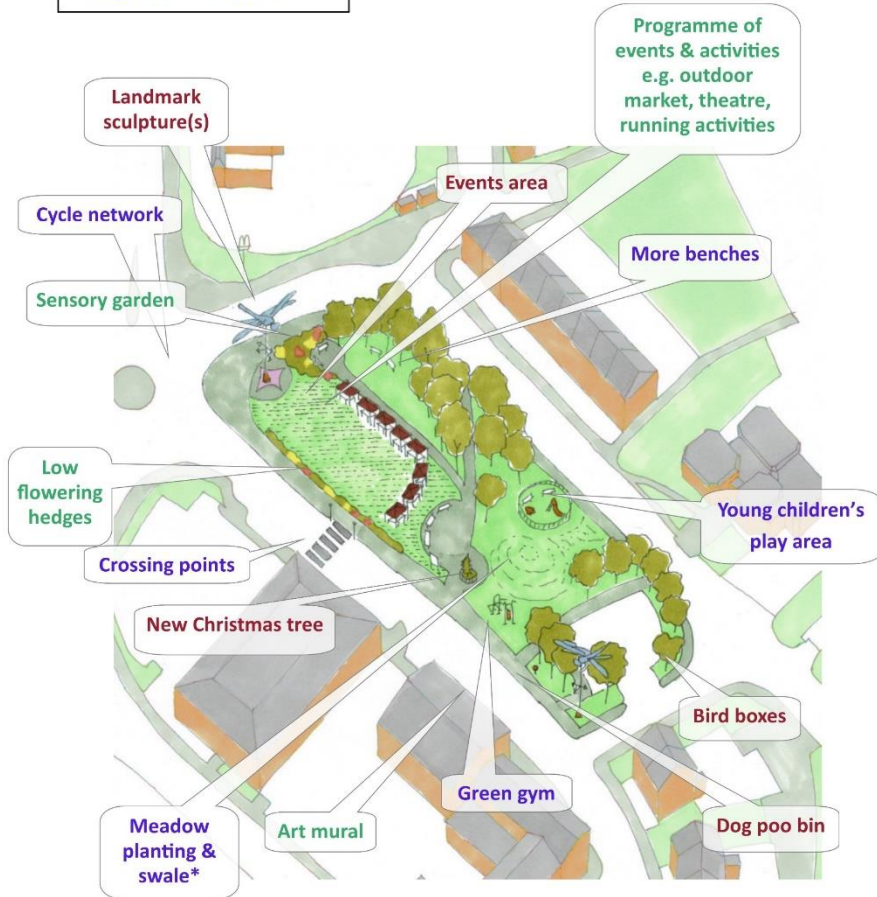


Figure 21 Issues that need to be addressed

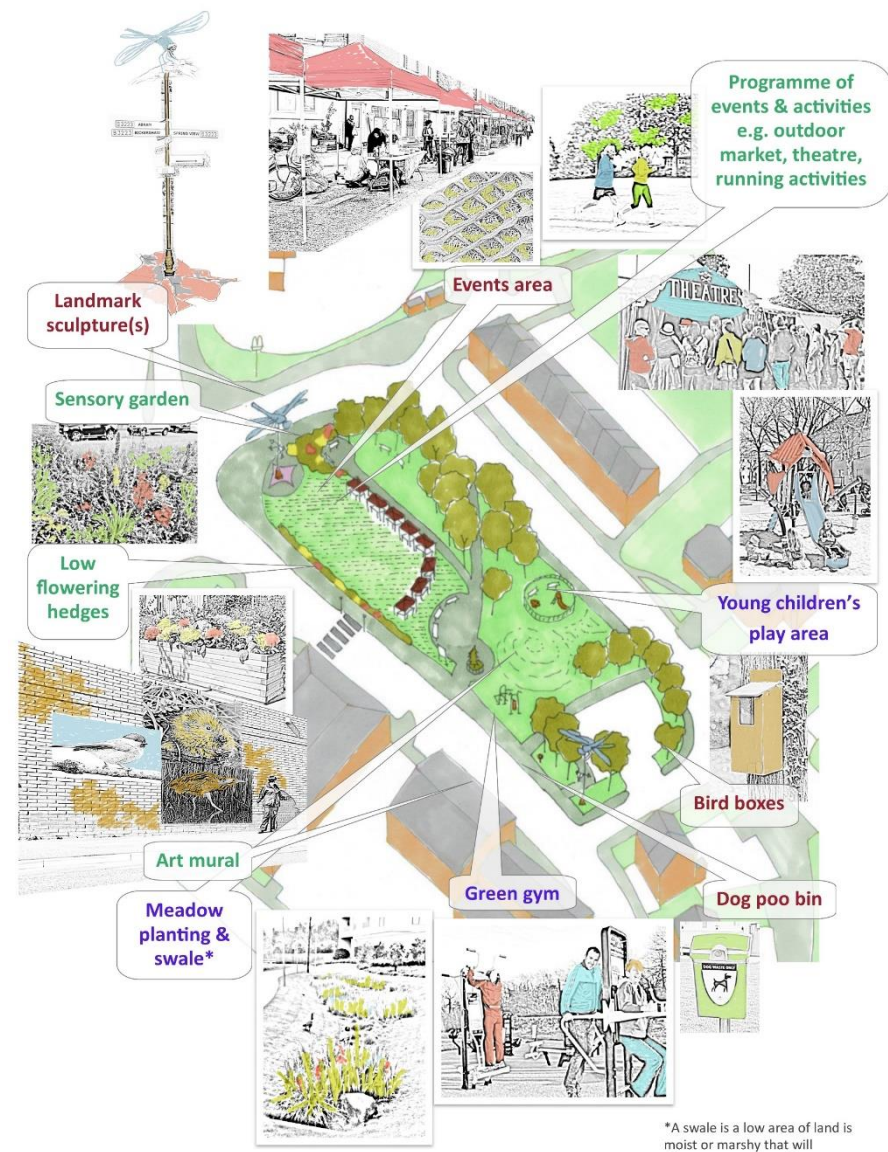
Figure 22-23 Vision for the Community Green

Our vision for the Community Green

Stage 1: in red
 Stage 2: in green
 Stage 3: in blue



*A swale is a low area of land is moist or marshy that will allow water to run off a site



*A swale is a low area of land is moist or marshy that will allow water to run off a site

5. ACT Neighbourhood Plan Policy Development

5.1 Introduction

Sarah Spanton had previously worked with ACT Forum in Summer 2017 and then again from November 2017 to May 2018 to undertake a Baseline Evidence Report, facilitate ACT Forum meetings and support the Forum to begin to develop its Neighbourhood Plan policies, for the designated plan area Abram Ward (Figure 24). The Picture This Project enabled a third phase of work with ACT Forum to take place, to continue supporting the development of the overall Neighbourhood Plan, its policies and policy maps.

5.2 Activity

ACT Forum members updated Sarah on the previous years' Neighbourhood Plan activity. Sarah facilitated two ACT Forum meetings and also held face-to-face meetings and online liaison with Forum partners such as the principal planning officer at Wigan Council and staff at Lancashire Wildlife Trust. Sahe helped facilitate two ACT Forum meetings to move forward policy development.

5.3 Policy development

Sarah drafted an updated version of the Abram Communities Together Neighbourhood Plan, including amending the Vision and Objectives (Figure 25) and drafting 18 draft policies (and several draft policy maps) in the Plan's theme areas, Environment, Health and Wellbeing, and Economic Development (the third being Housing).

Figure 24 Abram Ward Plan Area and Key Roads

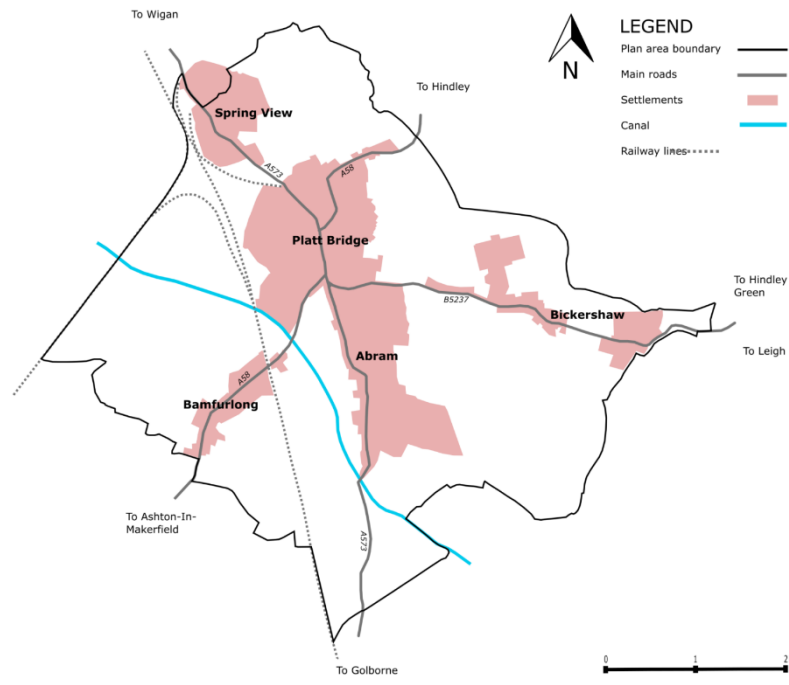


Figure 25 Vision and Objectives

3. Vision and objectives

3.1 Introduction

As a Neighbourhood Forum we aim to work together to make the ward an even better place to live for jobs, amenities and services, health and wellbeing and community spirit. We want to encourage the five villages to collaborate to make a positive difference to the ward overall. We acknowledge the distinguishing characteristics and historic roots of each of the five villages and want to build on and enhance these, as part of our offer and approach to attracting new residents. We aim for Abram Ward to be a vibrant, creative, inclusive, healthy and safe neighbourhood, which supports a strong sense of community, and is a pleasant and attractive place to live, work, shop and spend leisure time.

3.2 Abram Communities Together Neighbourhood Plan vision

For our neighbourhood to be a great place to live and work, with the environment at its heart – making it attractive, resilient, ambitious, thriving and sustainable

3.3 Objectives

To deliver our vision we have set out three key objectives to help deliver the vision:

3.3.1 To enhance and protect our internationally significant landscapes and green spaces

Abram Ward is home to some beautiful, biodiverse habitats and countryside which need ongoing protection and enhancement. We want local people in Abram Ward, across the Wigan Borough and regionally to be able to appreciate and enjoy these internationally significant landscapes, green and open spaces more, through improved access and better connectivity between the five villages. Upgraded access to these green spaces will provide learning and healthy outdoor leisure opportunities. We aim to support community and local businesses to find the productive potential of some of these green spaces.

3.3.2 To retain and increase community facilities, create local employment opportunities, including community business development and encouraging local and regional tourism

We aim for Abram Ward to be an ambitious, innovative and prosperous neighbourhood, where current and new residents can access enhanced community facilities and find fulfilling and varied employment opportunities. We are keen to attract new residents, businesses and visitors into the area. We actively support the development of new local and community businesses, along with the provision of appropriate premises and work-places in our neighbourhood. We aim to encourage local and regional tourism, and 'green' business opportunities which will make the most of our landscapes and green spaces.

3.3.3 To provide affordable, energy efficient, high-quality homes for our communities of all ages

We aim for our neighbourhood to be socially inclusive and to provide homes for families, couples and single people of all ages and backgrounds, these homes will include small and large properties: apartments, houses and bungalows. We also aim for homes in Abram Ward to have a mix of tenures, from social housing, affordable rented homes, affordable homes to buy as well as larger homes to rent or buy. It is essential that new homes are built to high-quality standards with environmental sustainability and energy efficiency at the forefront.

Policies drafted included Connecting the Villages and Green Corridor Designation (in the policy theme of Environment, health and wellbeing, Figures 26-27) and Village Commercial Zones (in the policy theme Economic Development). ACT Forum is now ready to discuss and amend the draft policies, and to take their plan further towards completion.

Figure 26 Draft policy examples

2.2 The Plan Area's Local Nature Reserves (LNRs), Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) and Sites of Biological Importance⁷ (SBIs) are:

- a). Low Hall Park (LNR, SBI)
- b). Ince Moss (LNR, SSSI, SBI area known as Horrocks Flash which occupies the same area as Ince Moss)
- c). Abram Flashes (LNR, SSSI)
- d). Three Sisters (LNR, SBI overlapping with neighbouring ward Ashton)
- e). Amberswood Common (SBI)
- f). Barlow's Farm (SBI overlapping with neighbouring ward Hindley Green)
- g). Maypole Wood (SBI, BE para 3.3)
- i). Platt Bridge Heath (SBI)

See Policy Map 4.

2.3 This Plan identifies three other key green spaces in Abram Ward. These are identified in Wigan Council's open spaces classification 'Open Space, Sport and Recreation Provision and Needs Assessment' (OSSR)⁸ as Natural and semi-natural greenspace, these are:

- Victoria Fields (see Policy EH7)
- Viridor Woods (see Policy EH6)
- Kingsdown Flash (known locally as Polly's Pond, see Policy EH7)

2.3 Farming as well coal mining has also been important to the Abram Ward area, there are a number of designated rights of way (BE para 7.16) and many other footpaths, bridle-paths leading through and across the countryside surrounding the five villages. Additionally, the Leigh Branch of the Liverpool and Leeds canal is part of Wigan's Greenway Network (BE para 3.12).

2.4 This plan aims for local people in Abram Ward to be able to easily access these local nature reserves, and other green spaces. Improving connectivity between the villages will improve local people's connection to local nature reserves and other green spaces in the ward, which the Placed consultation identified a need for (PC p.15).

2.5 Walking (and cycling) in and around these green spaces and from one village to another is key to enhancing and maintaining local people's physical and mental health, and was identified in the Placed consultation as very important to local people (BC p.12).

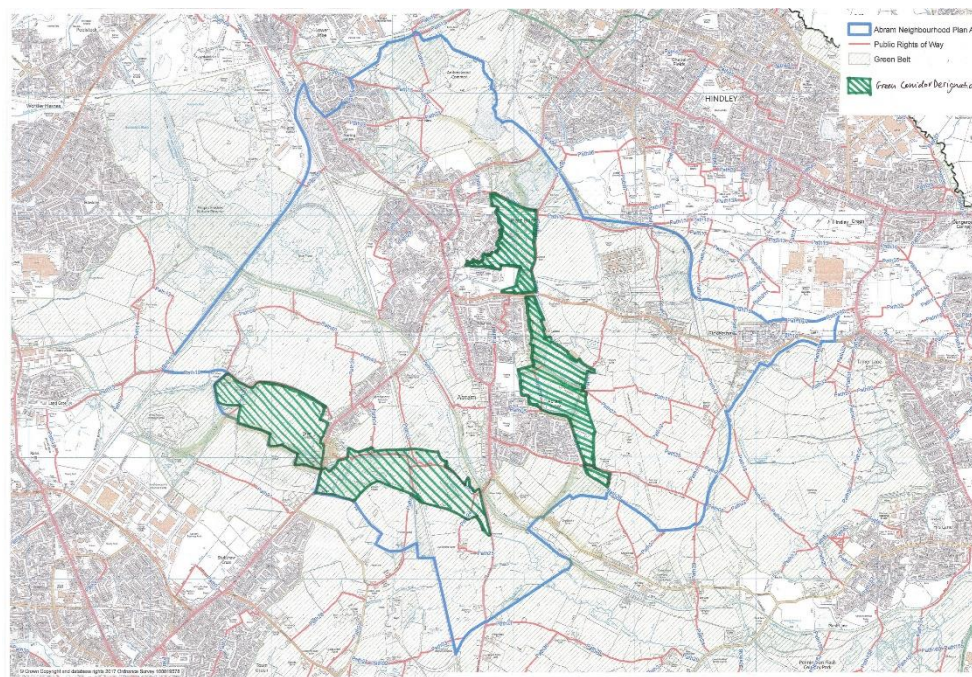
2.6 This plan also aims for those living elsewhere in the borough and further afield across the region to recognise and appreciate these landscapes for themselves.

EHW4 Protecting Abram Circular Walks
Development proposals adjacent or near to Abram Circular Walks (used by pedestrians and cyclists), which impede access to village centres from Abram Circular Walks, will be discouraged. Abram Circular Walks should be enhanced wherever appropriate (Policy Map 3).

EHW5 Connecting the five villages
Development proposals will be required where possible and appropriate to include footpaths, cycle paths and/or bridleways linking to existing routes, taking the most direct practicable route towards village centres, and have appropriate signage and, where appropriate link to Abram Circular Walks.

Project EHW-c
ACT Forum and AWCC will work with Lancashire Wildlife Trust, Carbon Landscape Project and other partners to ensure Abram Circular Walks are opened up where land owners have closed public rights of way down, are safe and accessible, signposted and that downloadable maps are produced.

Figure 27 Green Corridor Designation Draft Policy Map



⁷ Greater Manchester has designated a number of sites of biological importance (SBIs). The Environment Partnership (2010), *Wigan's Biodiversity: An Audit of the Biodiversity Resource within the Borough*

⁸ Wigan Council (2017), *Open Space, Sport and Recreation Provision and Needs Assessment*