

= Radcliffe , Greater Manchester =

Radcliffe is a town in the Metropolitan Borough of Bury , Greater Manchester , England . It lies in the Irwell Valley 2 @. @ 5 miles ( 4 km ) south @-@ west of Bury and 6 @. @ 5 miles ( 10 @. @ 5 km ) north @-@ northwest of Manchester and is contiguous with Whitefield to the south . The disused Manchester , Bolton & Bury Canal bisects the town .

Historically a part of Lancashire , evidence of Mesolithic , Roman and Norman activity has been found in Radcliffe and its surroundings . A Roman road passes through the area , along the border between Radcliffe and Bury . Radcliffe appears in an entry of the Domesday Book as " Radeclive " and in the High Middle Ages formed a small parish and township centred on the Church of St Mary and the manorial Radcliffe Tower , both of which are Grade I listed buildings .

Coal lies under the area of mines opened in the Industrial Revolution , providing fuel for the cotton spinning and papermaking industries . By the mid @-@ 19th century , Radcliffe was an important mill town with cotton mills , bleachworks and a road , canal and railway network .

With a population of 34 @, @ 239 , falling to 29 @, @ 950 at the Census in 2011 . Radcliffe is predominantly a residential area whose few remaining cotton mills are now occupied by small businesses .

= = History = =

= = = Toponymy = = =

The name Radcliffe is derived from the Old English words read and clif , meaning " the red cliff or bank " , on the River Irwell in the Irwell Valley . The Domesday Book records the name as " Radeclive " . Other archaic spellings include " Radclive " ( recorded in 1227 ) , and " Radeclif " ( recorded in 1309 and 1360 ) . The Radcliffe family took its name from the town .

= = = Early history = = =

The first human settlements in the area , albeit seasonal , are thought to have been as far back as 6,000BC during the Mesolithic period . Archaeological excavations in 1949 at Radcliffe E 'es ( a level plain along the north bank of the Irwell , formed by retreating glacial deposits during the previous ice age ) found evidence of pre @-@ historic activity , suggesting a lake village site , but dating techniques of the time were unreliable . Further investigations in 1961 revealed rows of sharpened posts and worked timbers , but no further dating evidence was collected . In 1911 while repairs to the bridge at Radcliffe bridge were underway , a stone axe @-@ hammer was found in the river bed . The 8 @. @ 5 @-@ inch ( 22 cm ) large tool artefact weighs 4 pounds ( 1 @. @ 8 kg ) and is made from polished Quartzite , with a bore to take a shaft .

South of the present @-@ day Withins reservoir is a possible location for a Hengi @-@ form Tumulus . The town also has Roman associations ; a Roman road passes through the town , along the border between Radcliffe and Bury on a south @-@ east to north @-@ west route . It allowed easy travel between the Roman forts at Manchester ( Mamucium ) and Ribchester ( Bremetennacum ) . The approximate route was through Higher Lane in nearby Whitefield , through Dales Lane and across the Irwell over Radcliffe E 'es through the site of the former East Lancashire Paper Mill . The route passes up Croft Lane , over Cross Lane and over the route of the Manchester Bolton & Bury Canal under the 10 3 / 4 milestone . It then crosses Bury and Bolton Road , and heads through Higher Spenn Moor .

Other than placenames , little information about the area survives from the Dark Ages . Radcliffe was likely moorland and swamps .

Following the 11th century Norman conquest of England , Radcliffe became a parish and township in the hundred of Salford , and county of Lancashire . One of only four parishes from the hundred mentioned in the Domesday Book and held by Edward the Confessor as a Royal Manor , it initially

consisted of two hamlets ; Radcliffe , near to the border with Bury and centred on the Medieval Church of St Mary and the manorial Radcliffe Tower , and further to the west Radcliffe Bridge , at a crossing of the Irwell . As a Royal Manor , the hide may originally have been up to four times the size it was when it was recorded in 1212 as being held by William de Radeclive , of the " Radclyffes of the Tower " family .

In the 15th century the Pilkington family who , during the Wars of the Roses , supported the House of York , owned much of the land around the parish . Thomas Pilkington was at this time lord of many estates in Lancashire . In 1485 Richard III was killed in the Battle of Bosworth . The Duke of Richmond , representing the House of Lancaster , was crowned Henry VII . Sir William Stanley may have placed the crown upon his head . As a reward for the support of his family , on 27 October 1485 Henry made Thomas Stanley the Earl of Derby . Thomas Pilkington was attainted , and in February 1489 Earl Thomas was given many confiscated estates including those of Pilkington , which included the township of Pilkington , and Bury . During the English Civil War Radcliffe , along with nearby Bolton , fought on the side of the Parliamentarians against the Royalist Bury .

In 1561 after about 400 years rule by the Radclyffes , Robert Assheton ( Lord of the Manor of Middleton ) bought the manor of Radcliffe for 2 @, @ 000 Marks . From 1765 the Assheton estates were divided between the two daughters of the late Ralph Assheton , one of whom married Thomas Egerton , 1st Earl of Wilton . The manor of Radcliffe appears to have been included in her share , and thereafter was included in the Wilton estates .

= = = Textiles and the Industrial Revolution = = =

The first documented reference to industry in Radcliffe is after 1680 , in the Radcliffe parish registers , which make increasing mention of occupations such as woollen webster ( weaving ) , linen webster , and whitster ( bleacher ) . These were cottage industries which worked alongside local agriculture . In 1780 Robert Peel built the first factory in the town , several hundred yards upstream from Radcliffe Bridge ( at the end of Peel Street ) . With a weir and goit providing motive power for a water wheel , the factory was built for throstle spinning and the weaving of cotton ? a relatively new introduction to Britain . The water wheel proved to be insufficient , and so around 1804 the goit was extended . The weir ( known as Rectory Weir ) was made from timber . Conditions were poor ; the mill employed child labour bought from workhouses in Birmingham and London . Children were boarded on an upper floor of the building , and bound until they reached the age of 21 . They were unpaid , and were kept locked up each night . Shifts were typically 10 ? 10 @. @ 5 hours in length , and children returning from a day shift would sleep in the same bed as children leaving for a night shift . Peel himself admitted that conditions at the mill were " very bad " . In 1784 an outbreak of typhoid prompted Lord Grey de Wilton to inform the magistrates of the Salford Hundred ; keen to prevent the spread of the disease to neighbouring towns and villages , they sent doctors to assess the situation . Their recommendations included leaving the windows of the mill open at night , fumigation of rooms with tobacco ( as this was thought to discourage disease ) , regular cleaning of rooms and toilets and occasional bathing of children . The report forced the magistrates , led by Thomas Butterworth Bayley , to abandon the practice of binding parish apprentices to any mill not adhering to these conditions . The report also prompted Peel to introduce an Act of Parliament to improve factory hygiene , which later became the Factory Act of 1802 . Over time , conditions at the mill improved ; in the mid @-@ 1790s the physician John Aikin , a critic of the factory system , praised working conditions at the mill , and in 1823 inspections by local magistrates of conditions in mills across the county revealed that unlike many others , the factory at Radcliffe was adhering to all requirements of the Factory Acts .

The underlying coal measures throughout the parish were a valuable source of fuel . Radcliffe already had an established textile industry before the arrival of steam power . The first recorded instance of coal getting in the North West of England was in 1246 , when Adam de Radeclive was fined for digging de minera on common land in the Radcliffe area . Coal outcroppings were not uncommon ; as recently as 1936 members of the public were seen carrying away large pieces of coal from a seam revealed by the landslip caused when the Manchester , Bolton & Bury Canal

breached at Ladyshore . Mining was initially limited to bell pits until the arrival of steam engines , which along with improved ventilation , made possible much deeper pits . The earliest known local use of such an engine was in 1792 at Black Cat Colliery . The parish of Radcliffe was once home to as many as 50 pits , but with the exceptions of Outwood Colliery and Ladyshore Colliery , all were either exhausted or closed by the end of the 19th century . During the 1926 General Strike many striking miners illegally took coal from exposed seams around the Coney Green area of the town , to sell to local housewives . In the 1950s to the north of the town the National Coal Board did some open cast mining near Radcliffe Moor Road , but the last legal instance of coal mining in Radcliffe was between 1931 and 1949 , close to Bury and Bolton Road .

The transformation of the area from an industry based upon water power , to one based upon steam power , may not have been without problems . A story in W. Nicholl 's History and Traditions of Radcliffe ( 1900 ) tells of a " great crowd " of protesters from Bury who marched on Bealey 's Works , demanding that work be halted . James Booth ordered the gates closed , gave the ringleaders £ 5 , and promised to halt work the next day . The crowd then marched on other businesses within the town before heading along the canal to Bolton , at which point they were apparently turned back by news of approaching soldiers .

There were many smaller textile concerns in the parish . Thomas Howarth owned a cottage in Stand Lane from where he sent yarn to be dyed and sized . He made his own warps which were weaved in the town . He would then travel to Preston and Kendal where drapers would purchase his products . His nephews founded A. & J. Hoyle 's Mill in Irwell Street , which employed power weaving to produce their specialities in Gingham and shirting . The mill closed in 1968 . Messrs Stott & Pickstone 's Top Shop on Stand Lane was the first company to employ powered looms and spinning around 1844 . Many of their employees would eventually leave to start their own businesses , such as Spider Mill , built by Robert and William Fletcher , and John Pickstone . This mill closed around 1930 .

Radcliffe was at one time home to around 60 textile mills and 15 spinning mills , along with 18 bleachworks of which the Bealey family were prominent owners . However , the textile industry was not the town 's major employer ; other industries such as mining and paper making were also important sources of employment .

Mount Sion Mill along Sion Street was founded in the early 19th century and during the First World War manufactured guncotton . A weir was constructed along with a goit , used to turn a water wheel which powered a beam engine to pump water to the reservoirs above .

Radcliffe became well known for its paper industry ; its mills included the East Lancashire Paper Mill and Radcliffe Paper Mill . The former was founded by the Seddon family on 29 March 1860 , along the banks of the Irwell . Its construction provided much @-@ needed employment : in the 1860s living standards within the town were poor , and local mills often operated on " short time " . A reduction in the demand for coal had placed many colliers out of work , and the Lancashire Cotton Famine was starving Lancashire of raw materials , especially cotton . Soup kitchens were opened by local benefactors , and many local residents were on poor relief . The mill began producing low grade paper and newsprint , moving on to other products including high quality printing and writing papers . Radcliffe Paper Mill was formed during the First World War , when it took over from a paper mill and a pipe plant . It originally produced paper suitable for roofing felt , to cater for a national shortage . After World War II the mill employed over 600 people and produced 70 @,@ 000 tons of paper annually . British Plaster Board Industries ( BPB ) took over the company in 1961 .

Other industries in the town included brick making and chimney pot manufacture . Raw materials were sourced from local collieries . In Mill Street carts , waggons , and bicycles were manufactured from 1855 , and elsewhere motor vehicles were also produced until the late 1950s . John Cockerill moved to the town from Haslingden before leaving for continental Europe to become the founder of Cockerill @-@ Sambre . James Cockerill , employed Radcliffe man William Yates as his manager . Several foundries and machine manufacturers were located around the town , including Dobson and Barlow at Bradley Fold , and Wolstenholme 's along Bridgewater Street . Munitions , aircraft and tank components were manufactured during the Second World War . Chemicals were manufactured by companies such as Bealey 's and J. & W. Whewell .

== Post @-@ industrial history ==

From the 1950s Radcliffe 's textile industry went into terminal decline , and although its paper industry survived to the end of the 20th century , both the town 's largest paper mills have now been closed and demolished . One of the larger mills in Radcliffe was the Pioneer Mill , built between 1905 and 1906 , and which ceased weaving in July 1980 ? the last mill in Radcliffe to use cotton . The building is now occupied by several different businesses .

Although the town retains much of its existing Victorian and Edwardian housing stock , new estates have been built on former brownfield land including that of the Radcliffe Paper Mill Company . Since deindustrialisation the local population has continued to grow . Radcliffe 's housing stock of 23 @, @ 790 properties is a mixture of mainly semi @-@ detached and terraced housing , with smaller percentages of detached housing and flats . In 1974 the town became a part of the Metropolitan Borough of Bury , and as a result has been described as losing its independence , and to some extent its identity .

== Governance ==

Following the Poor Law Amendment Act 1834 , Radcliffe formed part of the Bury Poor Law Union , an inter @-@ parish unit established to provide social security . Radcliffe 's first local authority was an early form of local government in England . In July 1866 the Radcliffe Local Board of Health was established . With reference to the Local Government Act 1858 , it was a regulatory body consisting of 12 members , responsible for standards of hygiene and sanitation in the township . Richard Bealey J.P. was chairman of the local board until April 1876 In the same year , the parish was extended to include parts of the former township of Pilkington , formerly in the parish of Prestwich @-@ cum @-@ Oldham .

Radcliffe became a part of the Municipal Borough of Bury in 1876 , but following the Local Government Act 1894 it left the district ( by then the County Borough of Bury ) , becoming an urban district within the administrative county of Lancashire . The district boundary was extended to include the Stand Lane district The extension made the area covered by Radcliffe Urban District 3 @, @ 084 acres ( 12 @. @ 48 km<sup>2</sup> ; 4 @. @ 819 sq mi ) . Radcliffe Urban District was governed by a council of 24 members , made from six councillors from each of the four wards , Radcliffe Hall , Radcliffe Bridge , Black Lane , and Stand Lane . Alker Allen J.P. was the first chairman of the new council . A town hall was built in 1911 , replacing an earlier building on the junction of Water Street and Spring Lane . It formed the public administrative centre for the district with a large council chamber on the first floor , with public gallery , and four committee rooms .

The Lancashire ( Southern Areas ) Review Order of 1933 extended the district to include the township of Ainsworth , and a portion of the township of Outwood . This increased the area covered by Radcliffe District to 4 @, @ 915 acres ( 19 @. @ 89 km<sup>2</sup> ) . A new ward was created for Ainsworth , comprising the former township and a portion of the Black Lane ward . Three councillors were added to the council , and the total number of electors became 15 @, @ 009 . On 21 September 1935 the urban district received a charter as a municipal borough , which gave it borough status , and elevated it to the Municipal Borough of Radcliffe .

Under the Local Government Act 1972 the town 's urban district status was abolished , and Radcliffe has , since 1 April 1974 , formed an unparished area of the Metropolitan Borough of Bury , a local government district of the metropolitan county of Greater Manchester .

For electoral purposes , Radcliffe is now divided into three wards ; Radcliffe North , Radcliffe East , and Radcliffe West . It is in the Bury South constituency and is represented in the House of Commons by Labour Party member Ivan Lewis .

== Geography ==

At 53 ° 33 ? 41 ? N 2 ° 19 ? 36 ? W ( 53 @. @ 5615 ° , ? 2 @. @ 3268 ° ) and 170 miles ( 274 km )

northwest of central London , Radcliffe lies in the Irwell Valley on the course of the River Irwell . The larger towns of Bury and Bolton lie to the northeast and northwest . For the purposes of the Office for National Statistics , Radcliffe forms a northerly part of the Greater Manchester Urban Area , with Manchester city centre 6 @. @ 5 miles ( 10 @. @ 5 km ) to the south @-@ southeast .

Radcliffe 's position on the River Irwell has proved important in its history and development as the river provided a source of water for local industry . Radcliffe E 'es , a level plain formed along the north bank of the Irwell during the previous ice age , is now derelict and the planned location of a new school . From a highpoint of 500 feet ( 152 m ) above sea level in the northwest of Radcliffe , the surface gradually descends , particularly in the south and east , being the lowest along the River Irwell . The geology is represented by coal measure .

Radcliffe is surrounded by open space and rural land , much of which is visible from the town centre . To the east of the town the River Roch flows under Blackford Bridge , and joins the Irwell shortly thereafter , along which several weirs and goits were built as it passes through the town . Flowing from east to west the river divides the town on the north and south sides of the valley respectively . The town centre sits on the north side of the valley . Two road bridges cross the river : one in the former hamlet of Radcliffe Bridge , and another newer bridge built as part of the A665 Pilkington Bypass . Another bridge crosses the river along the eastern border with Bury . Various smaller pedestrian footbridges and two railway viaducts ( one disused ) also exist .

### = = Demography = =

According to the Office for National Statistics , at the time of the United Kingdom Census 2001 , Radcliffe had a population of 34 @, @ 239 . The population density in 2001 was 9 @, @ 132 inhabitants per square mile ( 3 @, @ 526 / km<sup>2</sup> ) , with a 100 to 94 @. @ 9 female ? male ratio . Of those over 16 years old , 28 @. @ 6 % were single ( never married ) and 42 @. @ 8 % married . Radcliffe 's 14 @, @ 036 households included 28 @. @ 1 % one @-@ person , 39 @. @ 0 % married couples living together , 9 @. @ 2 % were co @-@ habiting couples , and 12 @. @ 3 % single parents with their children . The figures for married couples households was below the borough ( 48 @. @ 5 % ) and national average ( 47 @. @ 3 % ) , and single parent households were slightly above the average for the whole of Bury ( 11 @. @ 6 % ) and England ( 10 @. @ 5 % ) . Of those aged 16 ? 74 , 31 @. @ 1 % had no academic qualifications , slightly higher than averages of Bury ( 29 @. @ 2 % ) and England ( 28 @. @ 9 % ) .

The residential areas of Radcliffe both to the north and the south of the town centre operate as suburbs of Bury and Manchester , such that their populations are not necessarily linked to the town . The socio @-@ demographic characteristics of the town 's population includes a mix of working and suburban middle classes , the layout of which are both linked to neighbouring towns .

Radcliffe is within the Manchester Larger Urban Zone , and within the Manchester Travel to Work Area .

### = = Economy = =

Radcliffe 's first market was built by the Earl of Wilton and opened in 1851 . The town was home to twelve Co @-@ op stores , the largest of which was on Stand Lane . The four storey structure , built in 1877 , had shops and offices on the ground floor , and a large area for public meetings on the second floor . The building was truncated to two stories in June 1971 , and eventually demolished . Two more Co @-@ op stores were located on Bury Street and Cross Lane . The current market hall , built in 1937 on a different site to the old market , suffered a devastating fire in 1980 but was later restored . Radcliffe was once served by several banks including the Lancashire and Yorkshire Bank , the Manchester and Liverpool District Bank , the Union Bank of Manchester , and Parr 's Bank Ltd . Today both the Royal Bank of Scotland and Halifax bank have branches in the town .

Radcliffe has two weekly newspapers , the Radcliffe Times , based at the Bury Times offices , in Bury , and the Salford @-@ based The Advertiser , which also covers the neighbouring areas of Prestwich and Whitefield .

The construction in the 1980s of the A665 Pilkington Way Bypass relieved traffic congestion along the traditional route through the town , Blackburn Street . A new bridge across the Irwell was constructed for the road , and part of Blackburn Street was pedestrianised . The road has attracted developments along former industrial land to the west of the town , including a large Asda supermarket , although it has exacerbated the decline of the retail outlets in the town centre . The bypass has created problems for cyclists and pedestrians who appear reluctant to cross the road and visit the town centre . One solution presently under consideration would involve a partial reopening of the pedestrianised section of Blackburn Street to traffic .

The closure of the East Lancashire and Radcliffe Paper Mills , both of which employed thousands of people , has left a large gap in the town 's local economy . Along with the decline of local industry the town 's shopping centre has suffered a severe loss of trade and is now barely viable as a retail outlet . Radcliffe 's market hall compares poorly with the neighbouring Bury Market . Amongst other shops , the town 's central shopping precinct retains a Boots . A Dunelm Mill store now occupies the former site of the town 's Asda supermarket .

" Re @-@ inventing Radcliffe " is the name given on a report of a proposed improvement scheme . The report envisages several initiatives , and includes the creation of new housing both to the north and south of the town . Existing industry to the west of the town and along Milltown Street would be retained and improved , along with sections of the former Radcliffe Paper Mill and Pioneer Mill . The market would be redeveloped along with the Kwik Save site and bus station , and the town could become a centre for the arts . To improve transport links , new crossings of the Irwell and canal are proposed , along with a new school to replace the two closed secondary schools . Finally , the report suggests improving the image of Radcliffe within the Bury area .

" Newlands " is a regeneration programme run by the Forestry Commission . One site under consideration for regeneration is the former waste tip of Radcliffe E 'es .

= = = Population and employment change = = =

In 1921 2 @,@ 394 men and 3 @,@ 680 women were employed in the textile industry . By 1951 these figures had fallen respectively to 981 and 1 @,@ 852 . A more drastic fall is evident in the numbers of people employed in the mining and quarrying industries ; in 1921 591 people were employed in both , but in 1951 this had dropped to only 57 , reflecting the number of mines in and around Radcliffe that had by that time been completely exhausted .

By 2001 , from a working population of 15 @,@ 972 between the ages of 16 ? 74 only six people were employed in mining . 3 @,@ 011 people were employed in manufacturing , 103 in public utilities , and 985 in construction . 3 @,@ 371 people worked in wholesale and retailing ; repair of motor vehicles , 682 in hotels and catering , and 1 @,@ 185 in transport ; storage and communication . 642 people worked in financial intermediation , 1 @,@ 711 in real estate , 694 in public administration and defence , 987 in education , 1 @,@ 876 in health and social work , and 657 in other work .

= = Landmarks = =

Radcliffe Tower is all that remains of an early 15th @-@ century stone @-@ built manor house . The structure is a Grade I listed building and protected as a Scheduled Monument . The construction of a nearby tithe barn is not documented , but it was probably built between 1600 and 1720 . It was used for storage of the local tithes ( a tenth of a farm 's produce ) . Along with Radcliffe Tower , the Parish Church of St Mary is a Grade I listed building . The town also has two Grade II \* listed buildings ; Dearden Fold Farmhouse , completed during the 16th century , and Radcliffe Cenotaph , built in 1922 to commemorate the First World War . Outwood Viaduct , and Radcliffe 's most visible landmark , St Thomas ' Church , are Grade II listed buildings . St Thomas ' took nine years to complete . The first stone was laid by Viscount Grey de Wilton ( grandson of the Countess Grosvenor ) on 21 July 1862 , and it was consecrated in 1864 by the first Bishop of Manchester , James Prince Lee . Construction of the tower began in 1870 and the building was completed in

1871 . The building cost £ 7 @, @ 273 , ( £ 610 thousand today ) and the tower cost £ 1 @, @ 800 ( £ 150 thousand today ) . The first vicar was the Reverend Robert Fletcher .

Radcliffe 's first public ornament was a drinking fountain located at the bottom of Radcliffe New Road . It was presented to the town by a Mrs Noah Rostron in memory of her husband , and erected in August 1896 . The fountain no longer exists at this location .

Built in 1911 the town hall was on the junction of Water Street and Spring Lane . For many years after the town lost its urban district status , the building was unoccupied . It was converted to private accommodation in 1999 .

= = Transport = =

The Manchester to Blackburn packhorse route passed through the town ( hence the name Blackburn Street ) . The bridge across the Irwell was likely first erected during the late Medieval period at the site of a ford . An Act of Parliament in 1754 authorised the first turnpike through the hamlet of Radcliffe Bridge , and included Manchester to Bury via Crumpsall , and from Prestwich to Radcliffe . An Act of 1821 created a turnpike from Bury to Radcliffe , Stoneclough and Bolton . An Act of 1836 created a turnpike from Starling Lane to Ainsworth , and Radcliffe to Bury and Manchester Road ( near Fletcher Fold ) . A turnpike from Whitefield to Radcliffe Bridge via Stand Lane was created in 1857 with toll houses at Besses o ' th ' Barn , Stand Lane , the junction of Dumers Lane and Manchester Road , on Bolton Road near Countess Lane , and on Radcliffe Moor Road at Bradley Fold . Radcliffe New Road was created in an Act of 1860 which enabled the construction of a toll road between Radcliffe and Whitefield . To prevent damage to the road surfaces , weighing machines were used at various strategic positions including at the bridge end of Dumers Lane , at Sandiford turning , and on Ainsworth Road .

During the Industrial Revolution , as local cottage industries were gradually supplanted by the factory system the roads became inadequate for use . A convoy of horse @-@ drawn lorries carrying salt between Bealey 's Bleach Works and Northwich would take up to two weeks to make a return journey . These problems gave rise to the construction of the Manchester , Bolton & Bury Canal , which reached the town in 1796 and which was navigable throughout in 1808 . For 38 years the canal was the town 's main route for trade and transport , with a wharf near Hampson Street . The proprietors later converted into a railway company and built a line between Salford and Bolton , which opened in 1838 . A branch from this line was to have been built to Bury , along the line of the canal , but due to technical constraints this did not happen . Radcliffe 's closest railway connection therefore remained several miles distant at Stoneclough .

The opening of the Manchester , Bury and Rossendale Railway ( later known as the East Lancashire Railway ( ELR ) ) in 1846 brought the town a direct connection to Manchester and Bury . Two stations served the town , Radcliffe Bridge station , and Within Lane station ( although this closed in 1851 after only a few years of operation ) . Ringley Road station was located to the south of the parish , close to the civil parish of Pilkington . The line crossed the Irwell over Outwood Viaduct , an impressive structure which remains to this day .

The Liverpool and Bury Railway ( L & BR ) opened on 28 November 1848 , with a station to the north of the town , called Black Lane station . On 18 July 1872 the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway ( L & YR ) , which had amalgamated with the ELR some years previously , gained an Act of Parliament to construct a railway between Manchester and Bury , via Whitefield and Prestwich . This opened in 1879 with a new station , known as Radcliffe New Station , with a link to the L & BR line at Bradley Fold ( near the present day Chatsworth Road ) , and a new station along Ainsworth Road , Ainsworth Road Halt . The new L & YR route joined the existing ELR route near Within Lane ( North Junction ) , whereon they shared the connection to Bury . The L & YR gained a further Act of 1877 to construct a link between North Junction and Coney Green Farm ( West Junction ) . The LY & R line was electrified in 1916 for which a substation was constructed , between the canal and the West Fork .

The town also had an extensive tram network . The first tram ran from Black Lane ( latterly Ainsworth Road ) in 1905 , with a terminus next to St Andrew 's Church on Black Lane Bridge . In

1907 a branch was built to connect to the Bury to Bolton part of the network . A large bus station is located between Dale Street and the river . Officially abandoned in 1961 , the canal is currently undergoing restoration on the Salford arm , although a rebuilt bridge along Water Street presents a barrier to its full restoration .

Public transport in Radcliffe is now coordinated by the Greater Manchester Passenger Transport Executive ( GMPTE ) , a county @-@ wide public body with direct operational responsibilities such as supporting ( and in some cases running ) local bus services , and managing integrated ticketing in Greater Manchester .

The town is now served only by a single light rail system and regular bus services . The Metrolink opened on 6 April 1992 along the L & YR line between Manchester and Bury / Bury and Altrincham ( Manchester also servers as a change point for the rest of the Metrolink system as it expands to cover a greater portion of the region , including Oldham ) . Trams leave from the town 's station every six minutes between 7 : 15 am and 6 : 30 pm , and every 12 minutes at other times of the day . Radcliffe Bridge station closed on 5 July 1958 , and has since been replaced by the path of the A665 Pilkington Way ( the new road has been built below the level of the old station ) . The path of the ELR line is still quite visible from aerial photography , with Outwood Viaduct fully restored , and the route of the line southwest of the town converted for use as a nature trail forming part of the Irwell Sculpture Trail .

= = Education = =

One of the earliest schools in the parish was the Close Wesleyan Day School , a Dame school opened around 1840 . St Thomas 's day school was opened on 4 March 1861 , and housed over 500 children . Due to overcrowding and the risk of subsidence caused by local mining activity , the school was rebuilt on a new site along School Street , provided by the Earl of Wilton . It was opened in October 1877 by Lady Wilton . On the opposite side of the town St John 's school started life in 1860 as an institute along Irwell Street , and by 1864 contained 120 children . The buildings were enlarged in 1869 . In 1897 eight teachers and a monitor taught 358 children . In 1899 the school leaving age was twelve , and many of the senior class were " half @-@ timers " who would spend half the day at school , and the other half at work . This system was abolished in 1919 . Regular epidemics of scarlet fever , chicken pox , mumps , and especially measles , meant that in 1897 and 1903 the school was temporarily closed . St John 's School and the nearby church were demolished in the 1970s . Radcliffe also had a technical school on Whittaker Street . Formally opened by Lord Stanley on 7 November 1896 , it adjoined the public baths on Whittaker Street . The building is now used as council offices .

Radcliffe County Secondary School was founded in 1933 on the former Peel Park Ground near School Street , but Radcliffe 's first secondary school ( apart from an endowed grammar school in nearby Stand ) was held at the New Jerusalem schoolroom from the early 1860s . Radcliffe East , latterly known as Coney Green County Comprehensive School , was built in 1975 on the site of the former railway goods yard alongside Radcliffe East Fork . Part of the school , known as " Phase One " , opened in September 1975 , with 150 first @-@ year pupils , and 70 second @-@ year pupils ( from Radcliffe County Secondary School ) . The remainder , known as " Phase Two " , opened two years later .

Radcliffe has ten primary schools , but no secondary schools . A new school was proposed to replace the former Coney Green and Radcliffe High schools , but recent developments make the construction of this school uncertain .

= = Religious sites = =

In Romano ? British times , Radcliffe was in the Diocese of York ; in Saxon times in the Diocese of Lindesfarne , then of York ; in Norman times in the Diocese of Lichfield ; after 1540 in the Diocese of Chester and since 1847 in the Diocese of Manchester .

Based on the subdivisions of the dioceses , before 1535 Radcliffe ancient parish was in Manchester



and Blackburn Rural Deanery . Between this date and 1850 the ancient parish was placed in Manchester Rural Deanery . From 1850 to 1851 it was placed in Bury Rural Deanery ; from 1851 to 1872 it was in Prestwich Rural Deanery ; from 1872 to 1912 , it was placed in Prestwich and Middleton Rural Deanery ; and since 1872 it has been in Radcliffe and Prestwich Rural Deanery .

= = = Church of England = = =

Radcliffe was an ancient parish which in its early history had duties which combined both ecclesiastical and civil matters . In 1821 Radcliffe St. Thomas ecclesiastical parish was created from the ancient parish , and it was re @-@ founded in 1839 . In 1873 further parts of the ancient parish were taken to form Bury St. Peter 's ecclesiastical parish . In 1878 parts of the ancient parish as well as part of Radcliffe St. Thomas were taken to form Radcliffe St. Andrew , Black Lane ecclesiastical parish . The Parish Church of St Mary was built during the 14th century , and the tower added in the 15th century . In 1966 it was designated a Grade I listed building by English Heritage under its former name of the Church of St Mary and St Bartholomew . In 1991 some local parishes were merged , and the church adopted its present name .

Radcliffe is also served by the Parish of St Thomas and St John . St Thomas ' is visible on the horizon for many miles . The original church was built in 1819 by Countess Grosvenor and is visible above in the image of Radcliffe Bridge . The building was later considered too small , and in 1862 was demolished and replaced with the present structure ( see landmarks ) . The Church of St John was consecrated on 19 February 1866 at the bottom of Radcliffe New Road . Built at a cost of about £ 4 @, @ 000 ( £ 330 thousand today ) the site was donated to the church by the Earl of Derby , who in 1897 also made a grant of land for the site of the Mission Church at Chapelfield . The parishes of St John and St Philip were merged with St Thomas ' in 1975 ? 76 . Radcliffe is also home to the Church of St Andrew on Ainsworth Road , which was consecrated in 1877 .

= = = Other faiths = = =

Radcliffe was also home to many smaller churches . The main Roman Catholic church , St. Mary & St. Philip Neri , on Spring Lane , was built in 1894 . Other churches included Stand Independent , a Quaker church on Foundry Street , Water Lane Congregational , and several Wesleyan churches , including one on Bridgefield Street , which in March 2008 was destroyed by fire . The church was built in 1892 . The United Reformed Church has two congregations within the town , one on Lord Street , and the other on Stand Lane . The church was originally formed from a Congregational school in 1848 . A Methodist New Connexion church has existed along Smyrna Street since 1844 . Other faiths are also catered for , with a mosque on Bridgefield Street , and a centre for Swedenborgianism on Radcliffe New Road .

= = Sports = =

Radcliffe has a rich history of sport , including football , rugby , cricket and swimming , but entertainment in Radcliffe once included bear @-@ baiting , bull @-@ baiting , and cock @-@ fighting . Cock fights were prevalent in the town and took place in local " hush @-@ shops " , generally viewed by invitation only . Bull and bear baiting was held in the Radcliffe Bridge area of the parish . In Nicholls ' History and Traditions of Radcliffe ( 1900 ) the author describes the contents of the diary of a Lord Kenyon , who wrote " W.M. Robt . James , and Thomas Radcliffe , were fined for causing a Bayre to be bayted upon Saturday being the 18th of March 1587 ? 8 , at the Bull @-@ Ringe neere the conduite in Manchester . " Trained dogs were used to attack a bull , which was donated by the Earl of Wilton . Such entertainment took place where the bridge now stands , along the banks of the river near the ford . Such spectacles were eventually outlawed by Act of Parliament , and the last bull bait in the town was held on 26 September 1838 . Horse racing replaced the sport the following year , with a course alongside the river . During the first year of racing the main spectator stand collapsed , injuring many spectators . In 1876 events were moved to a new course

approximately one mile in circumference at Radcliffe Moor , upon which site the town 's cricket club now stands .

The town is home to Central Lancashire Cricket League side Radcliffe Cricket Club . For many years Sir Frank Worrell played for the club , and a street near the cricket ground was named in his honour . Sir Garfield Sobers joined the club in 1958 at the age of 21 . The town also has two Football teams , Radcliffe Town , and Radcliffe Borough . Former players include Paul Gascoigne and Matt Derbyshire .

Radcliffe was also home to Nellie Halstead , who in her time was known as " Britain ' s greatest woman athlete " . A multiple world record holder , she represented Great Britain at the 1932 Olympic Games in Los Angeles .

= = Public services = =

= = = History = = =

The Rivers Pollution Prevention Act 1876 posed a problem for the local authorities ; disposal of sewage was generally an expensive proposition , and efforts to resolve the practical problems involved were often unsatisfactory . After initial experiments , in 1894 contracts were let for work . Chairman of the Local Board Samuel Walker Esq cut the first sod on 23 April 1894 , and the works were completed in the following year .

The town was provided with electricity by a coal @-@ fired power station along the south bank of the river , to the west of the town . Authorised by the Radcliffe Electric Lighting Order of 1894 , and inaugurated on 5 October 1904 , Radcliffe Power Station was opened by the Earl of Derby on 9 October 1905 . It originally had two 1 @,@ 500 kW turbo sets made by British Thomson @-@ Houston , and was the first power station in the country to transmit electricity over bare electrical conductors .

In 1921 the Radcliffe and Little Lever Joint Gas Board purchased the Radcliffe & Pilkington Gas Company . Constituted in 1921 by an Act of Parliament , the board consisted of six members of the Radcliffe Council and one member of the Little Lever Council . The area supplied included all the districts of Radcliffe and Little Lever , and also Prestwich , Whitefield , Unsworth , Outwood , and Ainsworth . In 1935 the company supplied 263 @,@ 000 @,@ 000 cubic feet ( 7 @,@ 400 @,@ 000 m3 ) of gas to 16 @,@ 748 consumers , and provided gas for public street lighting . Water supplies were provided both by upland watersheds and by the Bury & District Joint Water Board , of which Radcliffe was a constituent authority .

By 1935 a fire brigade and ambulances were available to protect the town during emergencies . The Gamewell system of fire alarms was used and consisted of 16 alarm boxes spread throughout the district . Three motor ambulances and a motorised utility van were kept at the fire station , operated by permanent staff .

= = = Modern services = = =

The North West Ambulance Service provides emergency patient transport , and the statutory emergency fire and rescue service is now provided by the Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service .

Home Office policing in Radcliffe is provided by the Greater Manchester Police . The force 's " ( N ) Division " has a police station in Radcliffe , along Railway Street . Waste management is coordinated by the local authority via the Greater Manchester Waste Disposal Authority . Radcliffe 's Distribution Network Operator for electricity is United Utilities .

= = Notable people = =

Born in Radcliffe , Private First World War veteran James Hutchinson was a recipient of the Victoria

Cross . Radcliffe was also the birthplace of Canadian author Donald Jack and also the home of Olympic Medal @-@ winning cyclist Harry Hill who took bronze at the 1936 Summer Olympics . Nellie Halstead was a runner who represented Great Britain in both the 1932 Summer Olympics and 1936 Summer Olympics . Radcliffe was also the birthplace of Oscar @-@ winning film director Danny Boyle and the three times World Champion snooker player , John Spencer .

= = Culture = =

Radcliffe 's wealth as a mill town gave rise to many outlets for the entertainment of its population . These included cinemas and public houses . Several cinemas were built in the town , including the Picturedrome in Water Street , and an Odeon cinema , built in 1937 along Dale Street . Whittaker Street public baths were built in 1898 and demolished in 1971 . Radcliffe Pool ( as of 2015 due to storm damage the main building has been condemned , with temporary facilities under construction at a local school ) now provides swimming facilities for the local population . A public library was opened in 1907 on a site donated by Andrew Carnegie , who also contributed £ 5 @, @ 000 ( £ 480 thousand today ) towards the cost of the building . Two branch libraries were opened in Ainsworth between 1933 and 1935 . A museum was located in the upper rooms of Close House before it was demolished in March 1969 .

Radcliffe Brass Band has performed in the town since 1914 , when it accompanied one of the Whit Walks that used to take place on Whit Friday . Popular as these were , support later dwindled to a point where they were abandoned around 1977 . Rushcart processions were once popular , held on the first Saturday of September , finishing on the following Sunday at the Parish Church .

The town has several parks , including Coronation Park near Radcliffe Bridge and Close Park near Radcliffe Tower . Much of the land for Coronation Park was in 1900 donated by the Earl of Derby . Close House and the grounds around it were formerly the home of the Bealey family , and were donated by the Bleachers ' Association . The town is also along the route of the Irwell Sculpture Trail .