

= Astley , Greater Manchester =

Astley is a settlement within the Metropolitan Borough of Wigan in Greater Manchester , England , variously described as a suburb or a village . Astley lies on flat land to the northwest of the city of Manchester , and is crossed by the Bridgewater Canal and the A580 " East Lancashire Road " . It forms a continuous urban area with neighbouring Tyldesley , and is equidistant from Wigan and Manchester city centre , both 8 @. @ 3 miles (13 @. @ 4 km) away . The Astley Mosley Common ward of Wigan MBC , which covers both settlements , had a population of 11 @, @ 654 in the 2001 Census , falling to 11 @, @ 270 at the 2011 Census .

Historically a part of Lancashire , the name Astley is derived from Old English , indicating Anglo @- @ Saxon settlement . It means " east Leigh " or " east of Leigh " , a reference to Astley 's location relative to the town of Leigh ; or ?astl?ah the " eastern wood or clearing " . Throughout the Middle Ages , Astley constituted a township within the parish of Leigh and hundred of West Derby . Astley first appears in written form as Asteleghe in 1210 , when its lord of the manor granted land to the religious order of Premonstratensian canons at Cockersand Abbey .

Medieval and Early Modern Astley is distinguished by the dignitaries who occupied Damhouse , the local manor house around which a settlement expanded . The newly extended Bridgewater Canal reached Astley in 1795 , and the Liverpool and Manchester Railway in 1830 . The Industrial Revolution introduced mechanised coal mining and the factory system to the region in and around Astley , triggering its expansion . The village 's only cotton mill was built in 1833 .

Mining subsidence coupled with structural and political changes to the mining industry began the decline in Astley 's industrial activities during the mid @- @ 20th century ; its cotton mill closed in 1955 , and the last coal was brought to the surface in 1970 . However , Astley has grown as part of a commuter belt , supported by its proximity to Manchester city centre and inter @- @ city transport links . Astley Green Colliery Museum houses collections of Astley 's industrial heritage .

= = History = =

= = = Toponymy = = =

Astley is of Old English derivation , and means " East Leigh " , a reference to its position in relation to Leigh . Leigh is derived from leah , meaning a " wood " , a " clearing " or a " meadow " . The earliest written record of Astley was in documents dated 1210 when it appeared as the Middle English Asteleghe . Other archaic spellings include Asteleye (1292) and Astlegh (14th and 15th centuries) .

= = = Early history = = =

The earliest evidence of human activity in the area is the remains of a Roman road which served as the route between Roman camps at Coccium (Wigan) and Mamucium (Manchester) . The road ran to the north of Astley , past Keeper Delph and through Tyldesley . Evidence for the presence of Anglo @- @ Saxons in the sparsely populated , heavily wooded and isolated region is provided by place names incorporating the Old English suffix leah , such as in Leigh , Tyldesley , Shakerley and Astley .

= = = Manor = = =

Astley emerged during the Early Middle Ages as a township in the parish of Leigh . It was mentioned in documents in 1210 , when Hugh of Tyldesley , Lord of the Manors of Tyldesley and Astley , granted land to Cockersand Abbey . In 1212 , he was recorded as tenant of Astley Hall , the manor house for both Astley and Tyldesley , located just inside the Tyldesley township . After his death , his son Henry inherited the manors . He was succeeded by his son , another Henry , who ,

when he died in 1301 , divided the lands between three of his six sons . It is from this division that the manors of Astley and Tyldesley were separated . Tyldesleys lived at the Astley manor until April 1353 when Richard Radcliff bought it for 100 marks . The Radcliffs remained there until 1561 when William Radcliff died childless and the land passed to his half @-@ sister Anne , who married Gilbert Gerard .

In 1606 Adam Mort bought the manor house and land in Astley . He was a wealthy man who built the first Astley Chapel as a chapel of ease for the parish church in Leigh . The chapel was consecrated in 1631 , the year that he died . He built a grammar school that stood for over 200 years until 1833 , when it was demolished and rebuilt . Adam Mort 's grandson , also Adam , rebuilt Damhouse in 1650 and his initials are carved in the plaque over the front door . The stone and timber structure was named from the stream which was dammed to supply water to a waterwheel powering a corn mill near the house . It is possible the hall was once surrounded by a moat .

Adam Mort 's descendants continued to support the chapel and school and remained at Damhouse until 1734 when it was bought by Thomas Sutton . After Sutton 's death in 1752 the house was inherited by Thomas Froggatt of Bakewell who contributed to rebuilding the chapel in 1760 . Froggatt 's descendants owned Damhouse until 1800 when it was leased to tenants , one of whom was George Ormerod , owner of the Banks Estate in Tyldesley who gave land for its churchyard and church school . In 1839 the house became the property of Captain Adam Durie of Craig Lascar by marriage to Sarah Froggatt . Damhouse was dilapidated when the Duries moved in . Captain Durie gave land to build a school on Church Road . After his death in 1843 his widow , Sarah , married Colonel Malcolm Nugent Ross . The Ross 's Arms public house at Higher Green is named in his honour . The Durie 's daughter Katharine , who married first , Henry Davenport and second Sir Edward Robert Weatherall , became lady of the manor after her mother 's death but the family was in financial difficulties and the house and estate sold in November 1889 .

The Leigh Hospital Board bought Damhouse in 1893 for use as a sanatorium dealing with cases of diphtheria , scarlet fever and , in 1947 , poliomyelitis . Two bombs fell close to the hospital during the Second World War . It became a general hospital in 1948 dealing with chronically ill and geriatric patients and closed in 1994 .

= = = Industrial Revolution = = =

Astley became more industrialised during the early 19th century , but not so much as neighbouring Leigh , Tyldesley and Boothstown . A factory was built by James and Robert Arrowsmith on Peel Lane at Astley Green , near the Bridgewater Canal in 1833 . Until then , agriculture and cottage spinning and weaving had been the main economic activities . Fustians , muslins and , after 1827 , silk were woven in the area . Handloom weaving declined after the cotton factory was built . Arrowsmith 's factory lasted until 1955 , when mining subsidence damaged its foundations and it was demolished , ending Astley 's link with the textile industry .

Astley on the Lancashire Coalfield and had several coal mines within its boundaries . On a map of 1768 , a lane leading to Nook and Gin Pit Collieries was called the Coal Road and later North Coal Pit Lane . Gin Pit 's name alludes a method of coal mining , raising coal using a horse gin . An early colliery at Cross Hillock was abandoned in 1886 because of flooding . Samuel Jackson developed the mines that became Astley and Tyldesley Collieries between Astley and Tyldesley . Peat works were opened close to Astley railway station by the Astley Peat Moss Litter Company Limited in 1888 .

On 7 May 1908 the Pilkington Colliery Company started sinking No 1 Shaft of Astley Green Colliery near the Bridgewater Canal . A colliery railway moved coal from the screens to the Liverpool and Manchester Railway but some coal was transported to power stations at Trafford Park and Stretford using the Bridgewater Canal . Pit head baths , a canteen and medical centre designed for the Miners ' Welfare Committee by architect C. Kemp , were built in 1935 ? 36 at a cost of over £ 24 @, @ 000 (£ 1 @. @ 5 million as of 2016) . There was a mining accident at Astley Green on 7 June 1939 when five men including the manager died in an explosion of firedamp . Women , " pit brow lasses " , worked on the screens sorting coal from rock until 1955 . The last coal was wound on 3

April 1970 .

The headgear at Astley Green Colliery Museum remains a landmark in the 21st century . It is made from wrought @-@ iron lattice girders with rivetted plates at all the joints , three wheels , two large and one small , are mounted at the top . Built by Head Wrightson of Stockton @-@ on @-@ Tees in 1912 , it is nearly 30 metres (98 ft) high . In the winding house is a twin tandem compound steam engine made by Yates and Thom of Blackburn who also supplied 16 Lancashire boilers .

= = Governance = =

Historically , Astley formed part of the Hundred of West Derby , a judicial division of southwest Lancashire . It was one of six townships or vills that made up the ancient ecclesiastical parish of Leigh . The townships existed before the parish . Under the terms of the Poor Law Amendment Act 1834 , the townships formed the Leigh Poor Law Union established on 26 January 1837 , comprising the whole of the ancient parish and part of Winwick . There were workhouses in Pennington , Culcheth , Tyldesley and Lowton , but Leigh Union workhouse at Atherleigh replaced them in the 1850s . In 1894 the civil parishes of Astley , Culcheth , Kenyon and Lowton became part of Leigh Rural District which lasted until it was dissolved in 1933 and Astley was incorporated into the Tyldesley Urban District . The urban district was abolished in 1974 under the Local Government Act 1972 , and Astley became part of the Metropolitan Borough of Wigan , a local government district of the metropolitan county of Greater Manchester .

In 2012 Astley and Mosley Common form an electoral ward of the Metropolitan Borough of Wigan . The ward elects three councillors to the 75 @-@ member metropolitan borough council . As of 2012 , the Astley Mosley Common ward is represented by three Labour councillors .

After a review of parliamentary representation in Greater Manchester , the Boundary Commission recommended Astley should be part of the Leigh constituency at the United Kingdom general election , 2010 . At the 2010 General Election Andy Burnham retained the Leigh seat with 24 @,@ 295 votes and a majority of 15 @,@ 011 , representing 51 @.@ 3 % of the vote . Burnham was re @-@ elected MP for the Leigh constituency in 2015 with 24 @,@ 312 votes which was 53 @.@ 9 % of the total vote cast .

= = Geography = =

At 53 ° 30 ? 3 ? N 2 ° 26 ? 44 ? W (53 @.@ 5008 ° , ? 2 @.@ 4454 °) , and 163 miles (262 km) northwest of central London , Astley is on the northern side of the Chat Moss bog , about 177 feet (54 m) above sea level . It forms a continuous urban area with Tyldesley to the north , and , according to the Office for National Statistics , is a part of the Greater Manchester Urban Area , the United Kingdom 's third largest conurbation .

Astley is 8 @.@ 3 miles (13 @.@ 4 km) west @-@ northwest of Manchester city centre , and 0 @.@ 75 miles (1 @.@ 2 km) north of the Bridgewater Canal , which straddles the village 's southern hinterland from east @-@ to @-@ west . Astley is crossed east @-@ to @-@ west by the A572 and A580 roads . The hamlet of Astley Green lines a straight road leading southwards through Chat Moss , to the former Astley railway station , which is 2 miles (3 @.@ 2 km) south of the village . Astley spans an area of 2 @,@ 685 acres (10 @.@ 87 km2) , of which 1 @,@ 000 acres (4 km2) is peat bog . Astley and Bedford Mosses is one of the last surviving fragments of Chat Moss , most of which has been drained for agriculture or lost through peat removal . It occupies a 33 @-@ hectare (82 @-@ acre) site between Astley and the Liverpool and Manchester Railway . It has been a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) since 1989 . Astley Moss is crossed by the Astley Brook and Moss Brook , tributaries to the Glaze Brook and the River Mersey .

The underlying geology consists of the Permo @-@ Triassic New Red Sandstone in the south , and the Middle Coal Measures of the Manchester Coalfield to the north . The upper soils are a mixture of clay and sand , with a subsoil of clay . The Astley area encompasses smaller , suburban and semi @-@ outlying areas , including Blackmoor , Astley Green , Gin Pit and Cross Hillock . The isolated hamlet of terraced houses at Gin Pit was built by the Astley and Tyldesley Collieries Company .

Peace Street , Lord Street and Maden Street were named after directors of the company .

= = Demography = =

= = Economy = =

Before deindustrialisation in the late 20th century , Astley 's economy was linked with the textile industry and coal mines which developed during the Industrial Revolution . Now the main concentration of employment is at the Chaddock Lane Industrial Estate on either side of the A572 road between Astley and the East Lancashire Road .

Since the early 1980s , much of the area between Tyldesley and Astley has been built on for housing . Indicators show that the township has a strong housing market , with a high owner occupancy rate of almost 80 % . Parts of Astley are among the 5 % least deprived areas in the Metropolitan Borough of Wigan , whilst parts of the Blackmoor area , where social housing is concentrated , are within the 10 ? 20 % most deprived neighbourhoods nationally . Facilities in the village include a small local shopping centre at Blackmoor . The development of Astley Green Colliery Museum and the heritage centre at Damhouse attract visitors interested in the area 's heritage .

= = Landmarks = =

The site of Astley Green Colliery Museum , a scheduled ancient monument , retains its engine house and headgear , a prominent feature that can be seen from around the local area .

Damhouse , the former manor house , is a listed building , parts of which were dated to 1595 by the Greater Manchester Archaeological Unit . The house was extended in 1650 . In 1999 , Morts Astley Heritage Trust was formed to preserve Damhouse and open the surrounding woodland to the public . It is situated within the Astley Village conservation area .

Morleys Hall lies on part of the lands donated to Cockersand Abbey by Hugh Tyldesley in 1210 . It was owned by the Morleys until 1431 , then subsequently by the Leylands . In 1540 it was described as being largely built of timber on stone foundations and surrounded by a moat . It was rebuilt in 1804 , but parts of the old hall survive . Edward Tyldesley of Wardley Hall married Anne Leyland and inherited Morleys in 1564 . Their granddaughter , Elizabeth Tyldesley , became abbess of the Convent of Poor Clares at Gravelines in the Spanish Netherlands . Sir Thomas Tyldesley was the most famous of this line of the family , having been a Cavalier commander and supporter of Charles II , King of England during the English Civil War . He died in the Battle of Wigan Lane and is buried at the Church of St Mary the Virgin , Leigh . The hall passed through the Legh and Wilkinson families until it was sold to Tyldesley Urban District Council and the land used for a sewage works . The hall is a private residence .

= = Transport = =

Public transport in Astley is co @-@ ordinated by Transport for Greater Manchester . Bus services operate to Bolton , The Trafford Centre , Tyldesley , Atherton , Wigan and Manchester , operated by Diamond Bus North West , Stagecoach Manchester and First Greater Manchester . Major A roads link Astley with other settlements , including the A580 " East Lancashire Road " , which opened in 1934 bisecting the village . Its dual carriageway crosses the Bridgewater Canal on a bridge at Morleys . The A572 road connects Astley and Worsley and the A5082 road heads north east to Tyldesley .

By 1795 , the original Bridgewater Canal from Worsley to Manchester had proved an economic success , prompting its owner , Francis Egerton , 3rd Duke of Bridgewater , to seek powers to extend it route to Leigh via Astley . The Duke 's plans were approved , despite opposition from the local population . Canal traffic brought trade to Astley Green where the Hope and Anchor Inn (now

the Boathouse) was built with stabling for horses that pulled the barges . The original canal bridge built to connect Lower and Higher Green lasted until 1904 , when it was replaced . The second bridge was replaced in 1920 by an iron bridge , which could be raised to counter the effects of mining subsidence . A boatyard was established by Lingards Bridge .

The Liverpool and Manchester Railway of 1830 crosses Astley Moss . It was built on a raft of branches and cotton bales to prevent the track sinking into Chat Moss . The early engines reached speeds of 25 mph (40 km / h) . The first passengers told the driver where they wished to alight until Astley railway station was built in the mid @-@ 1840s . The railway was distant from the village and early travellers came on horseback or in carriages .

An early tramway ran to a wharf on the Bridgewater Canal at Marsland Green and a mineral railway system linked Gin Pit Colliery to the Tyldesley Loopline at Jackson 's sidings and Bedford Colliery and Speakman 's Sidings . The colliery locomotives were named after Gin Pit Colliery 's company directors .

= = Education = =

Adam Mort established a grammar school by the chapel in 1631 which was in use until 1833 . Children from poor families were admitted free and those who could afford to pay covered the costs . Mort 's School closed in 1894 . In 1832 children were taught in a barn at the vicarage , the curate , Alfred Hewlett , improved it and the chapel was used as a classroom . A national school built by subscription on land donated by Captain Durie of Damhouse opened in November 1841 . Meanleys Infant School was opened at Gin Pit in 1904 to serve the mining community that had grown up by there . Other schools were built at Ellesmere Street and Marsland Green .

= = Religion = =

Adam Mort built Astley Chapel which was completed in 1630 and consecrated 3 August 1631 . It was the first of three chapels in Astley , and the first chapel of ease of Leigh parish church . Astley Chapel was rebuilt in 1760 ; Thomas Froggatt gave a contribution towards the cost . The new church was built of brick and measured 54 ft 6 in (16 @.@ 61 m) in length and 36 ft (11 m) in width and held 170 people and was enlarged in 1834 , 1842 and 1847 . It had a small chancel and its embattled western tower contained a single bell . The church , dedicated to Saint Stephen , was destroyed by arson on 18 June 1961 . Also destroyed was the book collection , acquired by the Morts , memorials to the old families and the First and Second World War memorials . It was too severely damaged to restore and a third church has been built on a nearby site .

Prominent Catholic families in the Leigh parish did not abandon the Catholic faith after the English Reformation despite penalties levied on papists . Secret Roman Catholic masses were held in private homes , including Morleys Hall , home of the Tyldesleys . On Easter Sunday 1641 , the Catholic priest , Ambrose Barlow was arrested during a service at Morleys Hall at the instigation of the vicar of Leigh . He was taken to Lancaster Castle , tried as a traitor and executed on 10 September 1641 . He was canonised by the Roman Catholic Church as one of the Forty Martyrs of England and Wales . A church and school bear his name . The St Ambrose Barlow parish was formed in 1965 and the church was built in 1981 . St Ambrose Barlow parish is in the Leigh Pastoral Area in the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Liverpool .

There were two Methodist churches but one in Lower Green closed in 2009 . Astley Unitarian Chapel was demolished and the site built on . Gin Pit School doubled as a chapel for Wesleyan Methodists .

= = Sport = =

Astley and Tyldesley Miners ' Welfare Club at Gin Pit is the venue for several sporting groups including Astley and Tyldesley Cricket Club and the Astley and Tyldesley Roadrunners . The Astley and Tyldesley Cycle Speedway Club was formed in 1989 and built a race track at the Miners '

Welfare Club in 1991 .

= = Public services = =

Astley is policed by the Greater Manchester Police force from Atherton Police Station , which covers Atherton , Tyldesley , Astley and Mosley Common . The statutory emergency fire and rescue service is provided by the Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service , from Leigh and Atherton fire stations . Hospital services are provided by the Wrightington , Wigan and Leigh NHS Foundation Trust who provide an Accident and Emergency service at Wigan Hospital and outpatient clinics at Leigh Infirmary . Health services in the Wigan borough are provided by the Wigan Borough Clinical Commissioning Group . Waste management is co -ordinated by Wigan Metropolitan Council , which is a statutory waste disposal authority in its own right . Astley 's Distribution Network Operator for electricity is Electricity North West Ltd . United Utilities manages Astley 's drinking and waste water .