

= Stretford =

Stretford (pop . 37 @, @ 500) is a town in Trafford , Greater Manchester , England . Lying on flat ground between the River Mersey and the Manchester Ship Canal , it is 3 @. @ 8 miles (6 @. @ 1 km) to the southwest of Manchester city centre , 3 @. @ 0 miles (4 @. @ 8 km) south @- @ southwest of Salford and 4 @. @ 2 miles (6 @. @ 8 km) northeast of Altrincham . Stretford is contiguous with the suburb of Chorlton @- @ cum @- @ Hardy to the east , and the towns of Urmston to the west , Salford to the north , and Sale to the south . The Bridgewater Canal bisects the town .

Historically in Lancashire , during much of the 19th century Stretford was an agricultural village , with its own market , known locally as Porkhampton , a reference to the large number of pigs produced for the nearby Manchester market . It was also an extensive market gardening area , producing more than 500 long tons (508 t) of vegetables each week for sale in Manchester by 1845 . The arrival of the Manchester Ship Canal in 1894 , and the subsequent development of the Trafford Park industrial estate in the north of the town , accelerated the industrialisation that had begun in the late 19th century . By 2001 less than one per cent of Stretford 's population was employed in agriculture .

Stretford has been the home of Manchester United Football Club since 1910 , and of Lancashire County Cricket Club since 1864 . Notable residents have included the industrialist , philanthropist , and Manchester 's first multi @- @ millionaire John Rylands , the suffragette Emmeline Pankhurst , the painter L. S. Lowry , Morrissey , Joy Division frontman Ian Curtis and Jay Kay of Jamiroquai .

= = History = =

The origin of the name Stretford is " street " (Old English stræt) on a ford across the River Mersey . The principal road through Stretford , the A56 Chester Road , follows the line of the old Roman road from Deva Victrix (Chester) to Mancunium (Manchester) , crossing the Mersey into Stretford at Crossford Bridge , built at the location of the ancient ford . The earliest evidence of human occupation around Stretford comes from Neolithic stone axes found in the area , dating from about 2000 BC . Stretford was part of the land occupied by the Celtic Brigantes tribe before and during the Roman occupation , and lay on their border with the Cornovii on the southern side of the Mersey . By 1212 , there were two manors in the area now called Stretford . The land in the south , close to the River Mersey , was held by Hamon de Mascy , while the land in the north , closer to the River Irwell , was held by Henry de Trafford . In about 1250 , a later Hamon de Mascy gave the Stretford manor to his daughter , Margery . She in turn , in about 1260 , granted Stretford to Richard de Trafford at a rent of one penny . The de Mascy family shortly afterwards released all rights to their lands in Stretford to Henry de Trafford , the Trafford family thus acquiring the whole of Stretford , since when the two manors descended together .

The de Trafford family leased out large parts of the land , much of it to tenants who farmed at subsistence levels . Although there is known to have been a papermill operating in 1765 , the area remained largely rural until the early 20th @- @ century development of Trafford Park in the Old Trafford district north of the town . Until then Stretford " remained in the background of daily life in England " , except for a brief cameo role during the Jacobite rebellion of 1745 , when Crossford Bridge was destroyed to prevent a crossing by Bonnie Prince Charlie 's army during its abortive advance on London ; the bridge was quickly rebuilt .

Until the 1820s one of Stretford 's main cottage industries was the hand @- @ weaving of cotton . There were reported at one time to have been 302 handlooms operating in Stretford , providing employment for 780 workers , but by 1826 only four were still in use , as the mechanised cotton mills of nearby Manchester replaced handlooms . As Manchester continued to grow , it offered a good and easily accessible market for Stretford 's agricultural products , in particular rhubarb , once known locally as Stretford beef . By 1836 market gardening had become so extensive around Stretford that one writer described it as the " garden of Lancashire " ; in 1845 more than 500 tons of vegetables were being produced for the Manchester market each week . Stretford also became well

known for its pig market and the production of black puddings , leading to the village being given the nickname of Porkhampton . A local dish , known as Stretford goose , was made from pork stuffed with sage and onions . During the 1830s , between 800 and 1 @, @ 000 pigs a week were being slaughtered for the Manchester market .

Situated on the border with Manchester , Stretford became a fashionable place to live in the mid @- @ 19th century . Large recreation areas were established , such as the Royal Botanical Gardens , opened in 1831 . The gardens were sited in Old Trafford on the advice of scientist John Dalton , because the prevailing southwesterly wind kept the area clear of the city 's airborne pollution . In 1857 , the gardens hosted the Art Treasures Exhibition , the largest art exhibition ever held in the United Kingdom . A purpose @- @ built iron and glass building was constructed at a cost of £ 38 @, @ 000 to house the 16 @, @ 000 exhibits . The gardens were also chosen as a site for the Royal Jubilee Exhibition of 1887 , celebrating Queen Victoria 's 50 @- @ year reign . The exhibition ran for more than six months and was attended by more than 4 @. @ 75 million visitors . The gardens were converted into an entertainment resort in 1907 , and hosted the first speedway meeting in Greater Manchester on 16 June 1928 . There was also greyhound racing from 1930 , and an athletics track . The complex was demolished in the late 1980s , and all that remains is the entrance gates , close to what is now the White City Retail Park . The gates were designated a Grade II listed structure in 1987 .

= = = Industrialisation = = =

The arrival of the Manchester Ship Canal in 1894 , and the subsequent development of the Trafford Park industrial estate in the north of the town ? the first planned industrial estate in the world ? had a substantial effect on Stretford 's growth . The population in 1891 was 21 @, @ 751 , but by 1901 it had increased by 40 % to 30 @, @ 436 as people were drawn to the town by the promise of work in the new industries at Trafford Park .

During the Second World War Trafford Park was largely turned over to the production of matériel , including the Avro Manchester heavy bomber , and the Rolls @- @ Royce Merlin engines used to power both the Spitfire and the Lancaster . That resulted in Stretford being the target for heavy bombing , particularly during the Manchester Blitz of 1940 . On the nights of 22 / 23 and 23 / 24 December 1940 alone , 124 incendiaries and 120 high @- @ explosive bombs fell on the town , killing 73 people and injuring many more . Among the buildings damaged or destroyed during the war were Manchester United 's Old Trafford football ground , All Saints ' Church , St Hilda 's Church , and the children 's library in King Street . Smoke generators were set up in the north of the town close to Trafford Park in an effort to hide it from enemy aircraft , and 11 @, @ 900 children were evacuated to safer areas in Lancashire , Cheshire , Derbyshire , and Staffordshire , along with their teachers and supervisors . A memorial to those residents who lost their lives in the bombing was erected in Stretford Cemetery in 1948 , over the communal grave of the 17 unidentified people who were killed in the blitz of December 1940 .

Between 1972 and 1975 , what is now the B & Q store in Great Stone Road was the 3 @, @ 000 @- @ capacity Hardrock Theatre and Village Discothèque , hosting some of that period 's major artists in their prime . Led Zeppelin , David Bowie , Bob Marley , Elton John , Hawkwind , Yes , Chaka Khan , Curved Air and Lou Reed were amongst those who appeared . Tangerine Dream was the last band to perform at the Hardrock , on 19 October 1975 . In more recent years , Lancashire Cricket Club 's Old Trafford ground , next door , has provided a concert venue for bands such as Oasis , Foo Fighters , The Cure , Radiohead , Coldplay , Arctic Monkeys and Take That .

= = = Transport history = = =

Stretford 's growth was fuelled by the transport revolutions of the 18th and especially the 19th century : the Bridgewater Canal reached Stretford in 1761 , and the railway in 1849 . The completion of the Manchester South Junction and Altrincham Railway (MSJAR) in 1849 , passing through Stretford , led to the population of the town nearly doubling in a decade , increasing from 4 @, @ 998

in 1851 to 8 @, @ 757 by 1861 .

Because Stretford is situated on the main A56 road between Chester and Manchester many travellers passed through the village , and as this traffic increased , more inns were built to provide travellers with stopping places . One of the earliest forms of public transport through Stretford was the stagecoach ; the Angel Hotel , on the present day site of what used to be the Bass Drum public house , was one of the main stopping places for stagecoaches in Stretford , and the Trafford Arms was another . The stagecoach service through Stretford is believed to have ended some time in the 1840s , about the time that horse @-@ drawn omnibuses arrived , in 1845 . The Manchester Carriage Company 's tramway from Manchester to Stretford was built in 1879 , terminating at the Old Cock Hotel on the A56 road , next to which a small depot was built to house the cars and horses . A 1900 timetable shows that trams left for Manchester every 10 minutes between 8 : 00 am and 10 : 15 pm . The horse @-@ drawn trams were replaced with electric trams in 1902 , and after the Second World War the trams were replaced by buses .

The MSJAR railway line through Stretford was electrified in 1931 , and was converted to light rail operation in 1992 , when it became part of the Manchester Metrolink tram network . The first Metrolink tram through Stretford ran on 15 June 1992 .

= = Governance = =

= = = Civic history = = =

Stretford was part of the ancient parish of Manchester , within the historic county boundaries of Lancashire . Following the Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834 , a national scheme for dealing with the relief of the poor , Stretford joined the Chorlton Poor Law Union in 1837 , one of three such unions in Manchester , before transferring to the Barton @-@ upon @-@ Irwell Poor Law Union in 1849 . In 1867 , Stretford Local Board of Health was established , assuming responsibility for the local government of the area in 1868 . The board 's responsibilities included sanitation and the maintenance of the highways , and it had the authority to levy rates to pay for those services . The local board continued in that role until it was superseded by the creation of Stretford Urban District Council in 1894 , as a result of the Local Government Act 1894 .

Stretford Urban District became the Municipal Borough of Stretford in 1933 , giving it borough status in the United Kingdom . Stretford Borough Council was granted its arms on 20 February 1933 . The roses are the red roses of Lancashire , and the lion in the centre represents John of Gaunt , 1st Duke of Lancaster . Above the lion are a crossed flail and scythe ; the flail comes from the arms of the de Trafford family ; the scythe is a reminder of the agricultural history of the area ; the thunderbolts above represent the importance of electricity in Stretford 's industrial development . The boat at the bottom represents Stretford 's links to the sea via the Manchester Ship Canal .

In 1974 , as a result of the Local Government Act 1972 , the Municipal Borough of Stretford was abolished and Stretford has , since 1 April 1974 , formed part of the Metropolitan Borough of Trafford , in Greater Manchester . Trafford Town Hall ? previously Stretford Town Hall ? is the administrative centre of Trafford .

= = = Political representation = = =

The constituency of Stretford was created in 1885 , and existed until 1997 , when it was replaced by the present constituency of Stretford and Urmston . Kate Green , a member of the Labour Party , became the MP at the 2010 General Election , with a majority of 8 @, @ 935 , representing 48 @. @ 6 percent of the vote . The Conservatives took 28 @. @ 7 percent of the vote , the Liberal Democrats 16 @. @ 9 percent , the United Kingdom Independence Party 3 @. @ 4 percent , the Green Party 2 @. @ 0 percent , and the Christian Party 0 @. @ 4 percent .

Stretford is one of the four major urban areas in Trafford ; the other three are Altrincham , Sale and Urmston . The area historically known as Stretford , between the River Irwell in the north and the

River Mersey in the south , has since 2004 been divided between the Trafford local government wards of Clifford , Longford , Gorse Hill , and Stretford . Each ward is represented by three local councillors , giving Stretford 12 of the 63 seats on Trafford Council . The wards elect in thirds on a four yearly cycle . As of the 2014 local elections , all 12 of the councillors representing the Stretford area are members of the Labour Party .

= = Geography = =

Stretford occupies an area of 4 @. @ 1 square miles (10 @. @ 6 km²) , just north of the River Mersey , at 53 ° 26 ' 48 " N 2 ° 18 ' 31 " W (53 @. @ 4466 , 2 @. @ 3086) . The area is generally flat , sloping slightly southwards towards the river valley , and is approximately 150 feet (46 m) above sea level at its highest point . The most southerly part of Stretford lies within the flood plain of the River Mersey , and so has historically been prone to flooding . A great deal of flood mitigation work has been carried out in the Mersey Valley since the 1970s , with the stretch of the Mersey through Stretford canalised to speed up the passage of floodwater . Emergency floodbasins have also been constructed , Sale Water Park being a prominent local example , lying immediately to the south of Stretford .

Stretford comprises the local areas of Old Trafford , Gorse Hill , Trafford Park and Firswood . Its climate is generally temperate , with few extremes of temperature or weather . The mean temperature is slightly above average for the United Kingdom . Annual rainfall and average amount of sunshine are both slightly below the average for the UK .

Stretford 's built environment developed along the A56 road in two separate sections , corresponding to the original two manors . The area in the south , near to the border with Sale , grew around the church of St Matthew ? an old alternative name for the town was Stretford St. Matthew . The northern part of Stretford was centred on Old Trafford , with undeveloped countryside separating them . During the 19th century , the sections merged .

The western terminus of the early medieval linear earthwork Nico Ditch is in Hough Moss , just to the east of Stretford ; it was probably used as an administrative boundary and dates from the 8th or 9th century .

= = Demography = =

As at the 2001 UK census , the Stretford area wards of Clifford , Longford , Talbot and Stretford had a total population of 37 @, @ 455 , and a population density of 9 @, @ 158 persons per square mile (3 @, @ 537 per km²) .

Stretford residents had an average age of 36 @. @ 7 years , younger than the 38 @. @ 9 Trafford average . For every 100 females , there were 96 @. @ 7 males . Of all residents , 52 % were single (never married) : in Trafford , 44 % were single . Of the 16 @, @ 078 households , 37 % were one @- @ person households , 14 % were married couples with dependent children , and 9 % were lone parents with dependent children . Of those aged 16 ? 74 in Stretford , 33 % had no academic qualifications , higher than the 25 % in all of Trafford .

With 83 % of residents born in the United Kingdom , there is a relatively high proportion of foreign @- @ born residents reported . There is also a high proportion of non @- @ white people , as 73 % of residents were recorded as white . The largest minority group was Asian , at 15 % of the population .

In June 2004 , Trafford adopted a revised set of ward boundaries , and the ward of Talbot was replaced by the new ward of Gorse Hill . Re @- @ aligning the 2001 census figures with the 2004 ward boundaries gives Stretford a population of 42 @, @ 121 .

In 1931 , 18 @. @ 7 % of Stretford 's population was middle class and 19 @. @ 7 % working class compared to 14 % middle class and 36 % working class nationally . The rest of the population was made up of clerical workers and skilled manual workers . By 1971 , the middle class in Stretford had declined steadily to 14 @. @ 9 % whilst the working class had grown to 31 @. @ 3 % compared to 24 % middle class and 26 % working class nationally .

== Economy ==

Until the end of the 19th century Stretford was a largely agricultural village . The development of the Trafford Park industrial estate in the north of the town , beginning in the late 19th century , had a significant effect on Stretford 's subsequent development . At its peak in 1945 the park employed an estimated 75 @, @ 000 workers ; housing and other amenities had to be constructed on what had previously been agricultural land . Trafford Park is still a very significant source of employment , containing an estimated 1 @, @ 400 companies and employing about 44 @, @ 000 people . As at the 2001 UK census , 0 @. @ 3 % of Stretford 's working population was employed in agriculture .

The main shopping centre is Stretford Mall in the commercial centre of Stretford , previously known as Stretford Arndale . It was opened in 1969 and changed its name in 2003 . Stretford Mall was built on the site of the original shopping centre in the former King Street . The Trafford Centre , a large shopping and leisure complex opened in September 1998 , lies to the northwest of Stretford . Frequent shuttle buses run between Stretford Metrolink tram station and The Trafford Centre , about 2 @. @ 5 miles (4 @. @ 0 km) away .

According to the 2001 UK census , the industry of employment of residents in Stretford was 18 % retail and wholesale , 14 % property and business services , 13 % manufacturing , 12 % health and social work , 8 % education , 8 % transport and communications , 6 % construction , 5 % finance , 5 % public administration and defence , 5 % hotels and restaurants , 0 @. @ 7 % energy and water supply , 0 @. @ 3 % agriculture and 5 % other . This was roughly in line with national figures , except for the town 's relatively low percentage of agricultural workers . Many people commute into Stretford ; as of the 2001 census , there were 23 @, @ 595 jobs within the town , compared with the town 's 13 @, @ 399 employed residents .

The census recorded the economic activity of residents aged 16 ? 74 as 38 @. @ 8 % in full @-@ time employment , 11 @. @ 1 % in part @-@ time employment , 5 @. @ 6 % self @-@ employed , 4 @. @ 5 % unemployed , 2 @. @ 9 % students with jobs , 5 @. @ 5 % students without jobs , 12 @. @ 2 % retired , 7 @. @ 0 % looking after home or family , 7 @. @ 7 % permanently sick or disabled , and 4 @. @ 7 % economically inactive for other reasons . The 4 @. @ 5 % unemployment rate in Stretford was high compared with the national rate of 3 @. @ 3 % . According to the Office for National Statistics estimates , between April 2001 and March 2002 the average gross income of households in Stretford was £ 415 per week (£ 21 @, @ 664 per year) .

== Landmarks ==

== Longford Cinema ==

Longford Cinema , opposite Stretford Mall , on the eastern side of the A56 Chester Road , is perhaps the most visually striking building in the town . Designed by the architect Henry Elder , it was the height of Art Deco fashion when it was opened by the Mayor of Stretford in 1936 . Its unusual " cash register " frontage was intended to symbolise the business aspect of show business .

The building incorporated many modern features , such as sound @-@ proofing and under @-@ seat heating , and it was also the first cinema in Britain to make use of concealed neon lighting . It had a seating capacity of 1 @, @ 400 in the stalls and 600 in the circle , with a further 146 seats in the café area . When built , the cinema had a short pedestrian approach to the facade , but this was removed when the A56 was widened . During the Second World War the building was used for concerts , including one given by a young Julie Andrews . It also played host to the Hallé Orchestra after the orchestra 's own home , the Free Trade Hall , was bombed and severely damaged during the Manchester Blitz of 1940 .

After a change of ownership in 1950 , the cinema was renamed the Stretford Essoldo . It continued to operate as a cinema until 1965 , when it was converted into a bingo hall , which it remained until

its closure in 1995 . The building has been unused since then . It was designated a Grade II listed building in 1994 .

= = = Great Stone = = =

The Great Stone , which gave its name to the Great Stone Road , where it was located until being moved in 1925 , is one of Stretford 's most easily overlooked landmarks . The stone is composed of millstone grit and was probably deposited as a glacial erratic . It is rectangular in shape , about 5 feet (2 m) wide , 2 feet (1 m) deep , and 3 feet (1 m) tall , with two 7 @-@ inch (18 cm) deep rectangular slots cut into its upper surface .

Several suggestions have been made for the history of the Great Stone . There was a succession of plagues in Manchester from the 14th century onwards , and during the Great Plague of 1655 ? 56 the holes in the top of the stone were filled with vinegar or holy water , through which coins were passed in the belief that would halt the spread of the disease . But the holes are probably too deep for that to have been the stone 's original purpose . It may have been a marker on the Roman road between Northwich and Manchester , or some kind of boundary marker . The Great Stone is also thought to have been the base of an Anglo @-@ Saxon cross shaft . A local legend had it that the stone was slowly sinking into the earth , and that its ultimate disappearance would mark the end of the world .

When the Great Stone Road was widened in the late 19th century , the stone was moved back from the road slightly . In 1925 , the stone was moved again , to its current location outside the North Lodge of Gorse Hill Park , about 328 feet (100 m) from its historical location . The stone is a Grade II listed structure .

= = = Cenotaph = = =

Stretford Cenotaph , opposite the Chester Road entrance to Gorse Hill Park , was built as a memorial to the 580 Stretford men who lost their lives in the First World War . Their names and regiments are listed on a large bronze plaque on the wall behind the cenotaph . It was formally unveiled in 1923 , by the Earl of Derby , Secretary of State for War .

The cenotaph is 24 feet (7 m) high and 11 feet (3 m) wide at its base . It cost £ 2 @,@ 000 to build , raised by public subscription and a donation from the Stretford Red Cross . The memorial bears the legend " They died that we might live " on one side , and " In memory of the heroic dead " on the other . It is a Grade II listed structure .

= = = Longford Park = = =

Longford Park is the largest park in Trafford , at 54 acres (22 ha) . It includes a pets ' corner , botanical garden , bowling greens , children 's play areas , and an athletics stadium , and is the finishing point of the annual Stretford Pageant . It was the site of a Royal Garden Party in 1977 , the Silver Jubilee of Elizabeth II. theAs the Manchester ? Stretford boundary ran across the park until a Boundary Commission in the 1987 , part of it [including the Athletics Stadium] was in Chorlton @-@ cum @-@ Hardy , although it was always administered by Trafford MBC .

Longford Park was the home of John Rylands , industrialist , philanthropist , and Manchester 's first multi @-@ millionaire , from 1855 until his death in 1888 and of his widow Enriqueta Augustina Rylands until her death in 1908 . The house Rylands constructed in the park in 1857 , Longford Hall , was demolished in 1995 . It replaced an earlier house of the same name that had been the residence of Thomas Walker (died 1817) and subsequently of his sons Thomas (died 1836) and Charles . Today only the front porch , coach house , and the stable buildings remain . The estate and hall were sold to Stretford Council in 1911 after a poll of ratepayers , and the park was opened to the public the following year .

= = = Stretford Public Hall = = =

Stretford Public Hall was built in 1878 by John Rylands . It was designed by N. Lofthouse and is on the western side of the A56 Chester Road , opposite the Longford Cinema . Stretford 's first public lending library was established in the building in 1883 . On the death of Rylands in 1888 , his widow placed the building at the disposal of the local authority for a nominal rent , and on her own death in 1908 , the building was bought by Stretford Council for £ 5 @, @ 000 .

Public baths were built to the rear of the building , accessed via Cyprus Street . In 1940 the new Stretford Library was opened on King Street , and the public hall was rendered surplus . The building re @-@ opened in March 1949 as the Stretford Civic Theatre , with a well @-@ equipped stage for the use of local groups . After the Stretford Leisure Centre opened in 1977 now Stretford Sports Village , the Cyprus Street Baths wing fell into disuse , and was demolished . The remainder of the building began to fall into disrepair , despite being designated a Grade II listed structure in 1987 , until Trafford Council refurbished and converted the hall to serve as council offices in the mid @-@ 1990s . It was re @-@ opened in 1997 , once again named Stretford Public Hall .

= = = Stretford Cemetery = = =

Stretford Cemetery was designed by John Shaw and opened in 1885 . Its chapel is in the Decorated style , designed by architects Bellamy & Hardy , and quite elaborate . On the western side is a memorial to the casualties of the Second World War and to the east a newer section of the cemetery .

= = = Trafford Town Hall = = =

Trafford Town Hall stands in a large site at the junction of Talbot Road and Warwick Road , directly opposite the Old Trafford Cricket Ground . Work on the building , designed by architects Bradshaw Gass & Hope of Bolton , began on 21 August 1931 .

The town hall officially came into use as Stretford Town Hall on the granting of Stretford 's charter , on 16 September 1933 . In 1974 , on the formation of the new Trafford Metropolitan Borough , Stretford Town Hall was adopted as the base for the new council and renamed Trafford Town Hall ; it was designated a Grade II listed building in 2007 .

= = = Union Church = = =

The Union Church was formed in 1862 , with John Rylands as its patron ; he laid the foundation stone of its building in Edge Lane , close to Longford Park 's southern entrance , in 1867 . In the latter part of the 20th century the church was converted into office accommodation but by the early 21st century was standing empty . In 2012 it was restored to its original use a church having been bought by the Church of Christ ? Iglesia ni Cristo .

= = Transport = =

Stretford Metrolink station is part of the Manchester Metrolink tram system , and lies on the Altrincham to Bury line . Trams leave about every six minutes between 7 : 15 and 18 : 30 , and every 12 minutes at other times of the day . The nearest main line railway station is Trafford Park , on the Liverpool to Manchester line . Services are roughly every two hours in each direction , with extra services calling during the peak hours . The 20 @-@ acre (8 ha) Trafford Park Euroterminal rail freight terminal , opened in 1993 , is in the Gorse Hill area of Stretford . It cost £ 11 million and has the capacity to deal with 100 @, @ 000 containers a year . The containers are handled by two huge gantry cranes , the noise from which has led to complaints from some local residents .

The town has good access to the motorway network . Junction 7 of the M60 is just to the north of Stretford 's boundary with Sale , and the A56 road gives easy access to the south as well as to Manchester city centre in the other direction . Cycle paths exist as part of the Trafford cycle initiative

Manchester Airport , the busiest in the UK outside London , is about nine miles (14 km) to the south of Stretford .

= = Education = =

Along with the rest of Trafford , Stretford maintains a selective education system assessed by the Eleven Plus examination .

The proportion of pupils leaving Stretford Grammar School with five or more GCSEs at grades A * ? C in 2006 , was 98 @. @ 3 % , compared to an average of 66 @. @ 7 % for all secondary schools in Trafford and a national UK average of 61 @. @ 3 % . More than half of the school 's pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds , and approximately a quarter of all pupils have a first language other than English , significantly above the national average . Stretford Grammar was awarded specialist Science College status in September 2005 . The school was assessed as " satisfactory " in its March 2006 Ofsted report .

Stretford High School Community Languages College , like Stretford Grammar , has a much higher proportion than the national average of pupils with a first language other than English , many of them being either asylum seekers or refugees . In 2004 Stretford High School was made subject to special measures , as it was considered not to be providing an adequate education for its pupils . Substantial improvement has taken place since then ; the school was assessed as " satisfactory " in its November 2005 Ofsted report and was removed from special measures . Further improvements saw Stretford High School gain an " outstanding " assessment from Ofsted , following its February 2008 inspection . GCSE results also placed the school in the top one per cent of schools in the country for adding value to its students .

Stretford also has the specialist Arts College , Lostock College .

= = Religion = =

The date of the first church to be built in Stretford is unrecorded , but in a lease dated 1413 , land is described as lying next to a chapel . Many of the present day churches in the area were constructed during the late 19th and early 20th century , as the population of Stretford began to grow .

Methodism was a significant influence in 19th @-@ century Stretford , but of the seventeen churches in the town today , only one is Methodist whereas five are Roman Catholic . The Catholic mission in Stretford was begun in 1859 , in a small chapel on Herbert Street .

As at the 2001 UK census , 65 % of Stretford residents reported themselves as being Christian , 12 % as Muslim , and 2 % as Sikh . No other religion was represented at higher than 1 % of the population , with 12 % reporting themselves as having no religion .

Stretford is in the Roman Catholic Diocese of Salford , and the Anglican Diocese of Manchester .

There are two Grade II listed churches in Stretford : the Church of St Ann and the Church of St Matthew . St Ann 's is a Roman Catholic church , built in 1862 ? 7 by E. W. Pugin for Sir Humphrey and Lady Annette de Trafford . It was officially opened by Bishop William Turner on 22 November 1863 , and was consecrated in June 1867 . Features include a historic organ built by Jardine & Co (1867) and a good number of fine stained glass windows by Hardman & Co of Birmingham . St Matthew 's church was built in 1842 by W. Hayley in the Gothic Revival style , with additional phases in 1869 , 1906 and 1922 .

= = Sports = =

Stretford has been the home of Manchester United Football Club since 1910 , when the club moved to its present Old Trafford ground , the western end of which is still unofficially called the Stretford End .

Old Trafford was originally the home of Manchester Cricket Club , but became the home of Lancashire County Cricket Club in 1864 upon that club 's formation . The ground is on Talbot Road ,

Stretford , where it has been since 1856 . Similar to its counterpart , one end of the Old Trafford cricket ground is called the Stretford End . It has been a test venue since 1884 and has hosted three World Cup semi @-@ finals . After the 2005 Ashes Test , when more than 20 @,@ 000 fans had to be turned away , the decision was made to increase the ground 's capacity from 20 @,@ 000 to 25 @,@ 000 . Initial plans included building a new stadium on the site of Trafford Town Hall , opposite the present ground . However , Trafford Council voted against the demolition of the town hall and instead , in 2007 , signed an agreement jointly with Lancashire County Cricket Club , Ask Developments , and Tesco , to redevelop the ground on its present site .

The new cricket ground will be at the heart of a 750 @,@ 000 square feet (69 @,@ 677 m2) development that will also include business space , residential , retail , hotel and leisure facilities . More than £ 25 million is expected to be invested in the redevelopments at Old Trafford .

Stretford Stadium , adjoining Longford Park , is the home of Trafford Athletic Club . Trafford is one of the UK 's top athletic clubs , with more than 100 members having competed at international level .

The Stretford Sports Village run by Trafford Community Leisure Trust comprises two main centres : the original Stretford Leisure Centre , now called the Chester Centre , and the facility at Stretford High School called the Talbot Centre . The Stretford Sports Village is located in one of the UK 's sporting hot spots , sandwiched between Manchester United Football Club 's Old Trafford Stadium and Lancashire County Cricket Club 's Old Trafford Ground . The centre 's have a 25 @-@ metre pool , a 20 @-@ metre children 's pool , four gyms , a table tennis room , twelve badminton courts , two 5 @-@ a @-@ side courts , a spinning studio , practice hall , training rooms , community room , a cafe , outdoor full @-@ size floodlight 4G artificial pitch , full @-@ size grass pitch . Trafford Water Sports Centre lies just across Stretford 's southern border with Sale , about one mile (1 @.@ 6 km) from Stretford town centre .

= = Culture and cultural references = =

Although Stretford town centre is busy during the day , there is very little in the way of a night @-@ time economy . There are no restaurants or other entertainments except for a number of public houses and members @-@ only social clubs . There are two public libraries , Greatstone Library , part of Stretford Sports Village , and Stretford Library , both run by Trafford Council .

The Stretford Pageant is an annual Rose Queen festival held on the last Saturday of June ; the inaugural pageant was staged in 1919 . There is a procession of decorated floats through the streets , collecting money for local charities and ending at Longford Park , where the Rose Queen is crowned . The tradition of the Rose Queen derives from an earlier event organised by St Peter 's Church from 1909 until the pageant began in 1919 . Various other entertainments are provided in the park on the day of the pageant , such as a fun fair and a car boot sale . Stretford Pageant , along with similar events in other parts of Trafford , is under threat because of the council 's proposals to reduce funding and support for such events in the future .

The Stretford Wives is a television drama that was broadcast by the BBC in August 2002 , watched by 5 @.@ 7 million viewers . Written by Danny Brocklehurst , it is the story of three sisters living in Stretford , although most of the filming took place in nearby Salford . The programme received a mixed critical reception .

= = Invention and discovery = =

The Stretford process was developed at the North @-@ Western Gas Board 's laboratories in Stretford , during the 1940s . It was the first liquid phase , oxidation process for removing hydrogen sulphide (H₂S) from town gas to gain widespread commercial acceptance . Many Stretford plants were built worldwide .

= = Public services = =

Policing in Stretford is the responsibility of the Greater Manchester Police , who have their headquarters in the town . The force 's " M " Division , responsible for policing in Trafford , is also based in Stretford , close to Trafford Town Hall .

Waste management is co -ordinated by the local authority via the Greater Manchester Waste Disposal Authority .

= = Notable people = =

Perhaps fittingly for an area so close to Trafford Park , the world 's first planned industrial estate , one of the world 's first industrial espionage agents , John Holker , was born in Stretford , in 1719 .

Two of Stretford 's famous residents were the suffragette Emmeline Pankhurst and painter L. S. Lowry , who was born in Stretford in 1887 . Manchester 's first multi -millionaire John Rylands and his wife Enriqueta Augustina Rylands lived at Longford Hall in Stretford in the later parts of their lives .

Sir Walter Baldwin Spencer KCMG (1860 ? 1929) a British -Australian biologist and anthropologist was born in Stretford , as were rock climber Derek Hersey and television actor John Comer , best known for his role as café owner Sid in the BBC sitcom Last of the Summer Wine .

Musicians who have lived in the area include Morrissey , the front man of ' 80s alternative rock band the Smiths , whose family moved to King 's Road in Stretford , when he was 10 years old . Jay Kay , lead singer and songwriter of Jamiroquai , was born in Stretford in 1969 .

A number of Manchester United players , including some of those who lost their lives in the Munich air disaster of February 1958 , lived in lodgings at 19 Gorse Avenue . A blue plaque was unveiled at the house by former lodger and Munich survivor Sir Bobby Charlton in recognition of the house 's association with Manchester United . The owner of the house during the 1950s was Margaret Watson , although by the time of the plaque 's unveiling more than 50 years later it was occupied by a different family .