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# Shipley Towns Fund

Introduction to  
Board Members

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[Shipley Towns Fund Website](#)



*City of*  
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METROPOLITAN DISTRICT COUNCIL



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## **Gill Thornton** Chair

Gill is Director of Better Start Bradford, a £50m programme aimed at improving outcomes for children in part of East Bradford. Working with local parents, Gill developed the Better Place Project, improving green spaces, parks and play areas and walking routes to create a healthier and more accessible green urban environment.

Gill has also worked in the voluntary and community sector for more than 35 years, with a focus on empowerment, reducing inequalities and tackle disadvantage.

Gill is a Shipley resident, having lived in the area for over 40 years.



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**Si Cunningham**  
Vice-Chair

Si is the current Chairperson of Bradford Civic Society, a charity established in 1942 to promote civic pride and better placemaking in Bradford. He also currently Chairs the city's Heritage Action Zone, a Historic England initiative administered by Bradford Council.

Si has previously served as a District Councillor in Bradford, as Assistant Executive Member for Culture and Sustainability. He was also Communications and Bid Development Manager for Bradford's successful UK City of Culture Bid.

Si lives in Shipley.



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## **Cllr Alex Ross-Shaw**

**Portfolio Holder – Regeneration, Planning & Transport (Bradford Council)**

Cllr Alex Ross-Shaw provides political and strategic direction for the Council in these areas as well as housing, homelessness and the Council's estate management.

As Portfolio Holder, Alex is leading on a number of key projects for the Council, including transport investments on Hard Ings in Keighley and the Shipley Canal Road Corridor. He is also works closely with the West Yorkshire Combined Authority and key stakeholders.





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**Alec Porter**  
Shipley Resident

Alec has lived in Shipley for 39 years and previously worked for Adult Social Care at the Council, where he retired in 2022 as Service Manager.

Alec founded the Strategic Disability Partnership, which was a voluntary organisation that made Bradford more accessible to disabled people. This included having the largest number of fully inclusive accessible toilets in the UK.

He is an IMPOWER Associate and has worked in the NHS settings to improve patient flow and experience.



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**Anna Dixon MP**  
Member of Parliament

Anna is the MP for Shipley. Anna has worked at a national level on the NHS and social care over the past 20 years, influenced national plans and secured changes to policy on housing, employment support and industrial strategy.

She chaired an independent commission on reimagining care, setup by the Archbishop of Canterbury and York, and has held senior roles at Helpforce, The Kings Fund, Department for Health and Centre for Ageing Better.



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**Dominic Pix**  
Managing Director, TecnAir

Managing Director of TecnAir Manufacturing, a family business with its HQ in Shipley, they are a pneumatic custom solutions provider with multiple UK owned overseas offices.

Professional goals are to manufacture more in the UK, currently enjoying investing in a recession with further plans to expand in the future.



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## **James Skirrow**

**Senior Property Management Surveyor, Carter Towler**

A highly experienced and well-regarded property management professional, James has over 20 years' experience. He has held senior positions with WSB Property Consultants, CBRE and Savills prior to joining Carter Towler.

He specialises in developing and executing highly effective property management strategies for national investment funds, property companies and high net worth private clients.



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**Diana Bird**  
Principal, Shipley College

Diana is the Principal of Shipley College and has a degree and masters in Cultural Studies. She is an experienced teacher and ESOL subject specialist who has held roles as Head of Teaching, Learning and Assessment and Head of Sector for Essential Skills before being appointed as Vice-Principal for Curriculum in August 2020 and became Principal in 2022.



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## **Helen Horsman**

### **Director of Central Services, The Cellar Trust**

Helen is a natural organiser and oversees all non-client facing services including communications, fundraising and estates. Prior to joining The Cellar Trust, Helen worked for some well-known Yorkshire-based companies before running her own hospitality business for many years.

Helen is passionate about working for a charity, mental health and wellbeing in the local area.

Helen enjoys being outdoors and can often be found heading off in her camper van with her dog and children, either to seek out waterfalls or to paddle on calmer waters.



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## **Nicola Murray**

Director of Kynd, Co-Chair of South Square, Facilitator at Bradford Death Cafe

Nicola runs Kynd and has over 20 years experience working across Bradford. Known for her community cohesion efforts, green credentials, advocacy for teenagers and background as an ex-Art Teacher, Nicola values nature's role in fostering creativity and wellbeing.

Versatile and creative, she is characterised by boundless curiosity and a genuine love for people.



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## **John Henkel**

Director, Old School Building Company Ltd

John is a Director of the Old School Building Company Ltd and a Trustee of a number of local charities, including the Kirkgate Community Centre and Saltaire Community Festival. He is also a school governor

Before retirement, John worked for many years in passenger transport as a Director of Metro (and of the West Yorkshire Combined Authority) leading the development and implementation of new train and bus stations, smartcard ticketing and cycle infrastructure. He was also a director of national transport organisations ITSO, Urban Transport Group and Traveline and took a leading role in the organisation of the Tour de France Grand Depart in 2014



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## **Adam Sutcliffe**

Lead Mentor of British Design Fund, Product Designer & Entrepreneur

Adam works closely with the British Design Fund's portfolio of investee companies, offering support with any aspect of their product development, business growth and strategy.

Adam has a rich mix of skills and experience, including a human-centric and holistic approach to problem solving and improving people's lives.



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## **Scot Flight**

Managing Director, Flight & Cox Financial Solutions Ltd

Scot has nearly 40 years experience in the financial and property sectors and has held senior positions at the two largest corporate property companies. Using this experience, he co-founded his own mortgage and protection brokerage which is based in Baildon.

He lives in Menston and is a father of three boys and recently became a grandfather for the first time. He is a keen golfer and been a spectator at nearly every Open Championship since 1975 . He also loves cooking, travelling and experiencing different cultures.



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**Adam Beddall**  
Project Manager, Turner & Townsend

A local resident, Adam currently works as a Project Manager for locally headquartered firm, Turner & Townsend. He specialises in managing construction projects, primarily within the public sector.

His work focuses on supporting local authorities within West Yorkshire on active travel, town centre regeneration and infrastructure improvement projects.