

Neighbourhood Policing Team  
Altrincham Police Station  
Barrington Road  
Altrincham  
WA14 1HZ

Dear Parent/Carer,

### **Urban Exploring (Urbex) – A Growing Risk to Young People**

I am writing to make parents and carers aware of a growing trend among young people known as “Urban Exploring” or “Urbex”.

Urban exploring involves individuals entering and exploring abandoned, derelict, disused or vacant buildings and sites. Social media platforms such as TikTok, YouTube, Instagram and Snapchat have helped popularise this activity, with videos often portraying it as exciting, adventurous or harmless. Unfortunately, the reality can be very different.

Across Trafford, Greater Manchester and the wider region, there has been an increase in reports of young people entering disused buildings, former industrial premises, construction sites and other unsafe locations. Many of these sites are privately owned and are not intended for public access.

The risks associated with urban exploring are significant and can include:

- Falls from height, including through unstable floors, roofs and staircases.
- Structural collapse of unsafe buildings.
- Exposure to asbestos, hazardous materials and other harmful substances.
- Injury from broken glass, exposed metal, machinery and debris.
- Entrapment in confined spaces.
- Fire risks and exposure to dangerous environments.
- Encounters with criminal activity, anti-social behaviour or individuals seeking to exploit young people.
- The possibility of arrest or prosecution for trespassing or other offences where criminal damage or associated offences occur.

Many sites may appear abandoned but can contain hidden dangers that are not immediately obvious. Social media content often fails to show the real risks involved and can encourage others to imitate dangerous behaviour in pursuit of views, likes and online recognition.

I would ask all parents and carers to speak with their children about the dangers of urban exploring and to take an active interest in where they are spending their free time,

particularly during evenings, weekends and school holidays. Please encourage them to think carefully about the potential consequences of entering abandoned or restricted sites.

I would also encourage you to discuss responsible social media use and the influence that online trends can have on decision-making. Young people should understand that not everything they see online reflects the true level of risk involved.

By working together, we can help keep our young people safe and prevent serious injury or harm.

Thank you for your continued support.

Yours sincerely

Inspector Matthew Harvey