



CASTLEFIELD FORUM

2025: A Year in Review - Trustees' Annual Report



including Treasurer's Report

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Another busy year draws to a close and we wanted to firstly thank everyone who has helped us in Castlefield this year, from our volunteers and trustees, partner organisations, through to one-off clean ups (which included 100 hours of help delivered in one day!). We have always done best when we work together and this year is no exception. Secondly, we wanted to pull out a few key wins from this year as we get ready for a very exciting 2026 which will include structural repairs to Castlefield Viaduct in readiness for the permanent extension and the formal visioning process starting for 'where next for Castlefield?'

Big wins this year include:

- Castlefield Viaduct Phase 2 planning granted and funding has come forward for majority of the build
- Formalised relations with our 6 ward councillors through quarterly meetings
- Submitting a report featuring a list of strategic asks for help to the Council, via our councillors so that we can focus on the big things that matter
- Renewed relations with Deansgate ward Policing
- Brand new action group for south Castlefield
- 8th year in a row of Level 5 Outstanding for our Clean & Green activity - huge kudos to the team of volunteers who helped make this happen
- Over 1300 volunteer hours delivered this year across all of our clean & green, action group, and trustee activity
- Huge effort has gone into our Local Plan feedback to the Council, which helps us be ready for the Council visioning process
- We've strengthened ties with local organisations including the Museum and new neighbours Lower and Upper Campfield: we have a Saturday market again!
- And we've seen the best archaeological remains revealed for 25 years
- To top things off our chair, Calum, has been made a Deputy Lieutenant of Greater Manchester, and Gary, who's one of our clean and green experts, has made multiple media appearances!

Some of the big challenges we've faced:

- We lack fundraising expertise, something that needs addressing
- The Roman Gardens project continues to move very slowly and is in danger of planning consent lapsing for a second time
- Graffiti blight continues to spiral out of control
- The Castlefield Landowner Forum has mostly fizzled out, without a clear replacement, which leaves various strategic challenges hanging in the balance



- The visioning process, being led by the Council, is months behind schedule meaning more and more missed opportunities to bring developers to the table to contribute: the longer we delay, the more sites will be completed
- We have lost two trustees: Our resident expert trustee on charitable matters has stepped down after 7 years service; thank you Ian McIlveen; and Ian Hay, director of Saul Hay Gallery and our first business owner trustee has also stepped down. Thank you both. We shall miss you and wish you well in your new adventures

As ever, if you'd like to get involved, or spot opportunities you think we should be pursuing, please get in touch; details are at the end of this report.

Castlefield Forum Board of Trustees

February 2026

A Cleaner and Greener Castlefield

VOLUNTEER WORK

- 178 bags of litter collected across 2025 (down on last year's 237 and the lowest number since we started our records). We will look at how we can improve this for 2026
- Over 750 volunteer clean and green hours for 2025
- Prepared for RHS It's Your Neighbourhood 2025 judging
- 6 companies supported us through Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) volunteering sessions, thank you!

COMMUNITY VEGETABLE GARDEN

- Prepared the Visitor Centre Garden for spring planting, ensuring it is well-maintained and ready for community use.
- Had a super year of vegetables (so many gourds), herb and fruit harvests including production of the 2025 vintage of Castlefield cordial!
- We added a mini greenhouse, trellises for clematis, an arch of beans, bug hotel and bird box to the garden. The mini greenhouse will help us mature plants such as chillies which we have struggled with getting crops from as the temperatures drop in autumn.
- We added new peach and magnolia trees to our collection and got 3 perfect peaches in the first year!



COUNCIL ACTIVITY



- We got 3 of the new trees properly staked on Blantyre Street triangle as they were waving around and were going to get damaged
- As a positive side effect of the now-vanished Castlefield Landowners Forum which was run by the Council, and because of the tourism pull, CityCo have started cleaning activities down Liverpool Road since April and added back some hanging baskets (after an ask to the Council) for the first time since the austerity cuts - thank you to Michael Fletcher, Neighbourhood Officer for Deansgate, for organising the hanging baskets which after a spring planting were renewed for the summer with drought-resistant planting; and thank you to CityCo for adding extra cleaning muscle
- All of our Castlefield information boards were deep cleaned by the Council
- Roman Gardens are tidier than ever: lots of clearance in November and December by the Council
- The large trees on Liverpool Rd at the Roman Gardens got some love with new raised areas, paving renewal and removal of wonky paving

NEW ACTION GROUP: ELLESMERE STREET

- We agreed to support as needed (– but not run –) the Clean and Green ambitions of the South Castlefield group by: providing advice, lending equipment, helping them to network, e.g. putting their sessions online

South Castlefield bulb planting and coffee Sat 22/11

Grab a free delicious
Banyan Tree

- Organised regular litter picks, developed a plan for, refurbished and replanted the planters on Ellesmere Street and planted 500 tulip bulbs; a huge thank to Richard and Paula who took the lead on all this hard work.
- Walkover survey plan was agreed with City of Trees for some of Castlefield
- Started making a plan for installing 14 trees on Ellesmere: slow due to the funding being sat with a previous developer. Thanks to Cllr Wright for trying to chase things down
- Has been actively working with the Council on issues such as 'missing trees' from the McAlpine (Flintoff) development and has achieved with Council help to get 20mph speed signs put down the road

- Has inputted loads of great ideas into the Local Plan feedback and into our own visioning process for a thriving Castlefield

REMEMBERING OTHERS

- Carol Standfield - our legendary former gardener who we miss dearly - a commemorative plaque has been designed, manufactured and will be installed in February 2026 up on the Viaduct. Thank you again Carol for all that you did for Castlefield



ROMAN GARDENS

- Some small gains on the Roman Gardens but a very slow year overall and we are in danger of the planning consent lapsing again
- Contractors for Talbot Mill produced for free a cost plan for Phase 1; thank you to CRUK and thank you to Richard Waite for co-ordinating this

NATIONAL TRUST CASTLEFIELD VIADUCT

- Castlefield Viaduct permanent phase gained planning consent!! This project when delivered in 2027 will more than double it in length and turns the pilot project into a permanent park in the sky
- We continue in our role as lead community partner for the viaduct and our Chair Calum continues his volunteer position on the National Trust's Delivery Board
- Viaduct funding has come forward for Phase 2... please refer to our Media section below to see how it was positioned on ITV Granada News
- We contributed to a commercial ideas workshop for how to get the viaduct paying more for itself so that it can remain free to use for everyone, forever
- We shared fundraising ideas with the National Trust from Victoria Baths and it could also help us at the Forum - thanks to retired Victoria Baths MD Sibby for a wealth of useful information

CYAN LINES

- We were invited to the Cyan Lines kick off: this initiative has the potential to transform the city centre with 100 miles of green and blue connected spaces – its squares, pocket parks, rivers, canals and viaducts – to enable residents and visitors alike to enjoy, understand and better connect with nature and each other – and with it bring even more purpose and amenity to Castlefield; our neighbourhood is slated to be one of the first Lines and we look forward to more formal engagement with them.

GM POLICE RELATIONS: HULME WARD POLICE

- A disappointing year, with relations vanishing almost completely. We seem to exist in this yo-yo situation and something we need help with addressing in 2026, especially as this part of Castlefield continues to increase in population. Changes in personnel seem to leave voids, lacking any handover or stakeholder management

GM POLICE RELATIONS: DEANSgate WARD

- Deansgate ward things have improved vastly this year with PC Riaz coming on board and hosting regular drop-ins, attendance at our public meetings and frequent Police and Communities Together (PACT) meetings hosted at Barca
- We had a formal welcome walk around with PC Riaz who has shown brilliant engagement and organising of multiple Coffee with a Cop events
- We also had Police presence at our last AGM with the outgoing PC



A **better, thriving** Castlefield

CASTLEFIELD VIADUCT

- At our AGM we had a deep dive from BDP landscape architects and Viaduct masterplanners on Phase 2 of the Viaduct and how it's likely to look and feel

COUNCIL ENGAGEMENT & STRATEGIC CONVERSATIONS

- Christmas lights are back on Liverpool Road (but it's sadly not been easy and we may never do it again...)
- Castlefield deserves better - our community faces multiple challenges and we felt that it was right to raise them all at once instead of a piecemeal approach. We raised them via our Ward Councillors as many of the items are ultimately asks for help from the Council (see section ahead about Challenges) and as we head into 2026 want to ensure we move from talk to tangible action
- Bev Craig - leader of the Council - has agreed to a meeting with us, though it has yet to materialise
- We received £5000 from the 2024 Sounds of the City gigs and are promised a similar amount from 2025's concerts
- We received 200 free tickets for Sounds of the City - 200 free tickets!!!! Thank you to the Council and to organisers SJM for the complimentary ticket allocation for residents - a wonderful gesture

FORMAL MEETINGS WITH OUR ELECTED MEMBERS

- We now have formal quarterly meetings in the diary with both sets of Ward councillors. Since our inception in 2009 this is the first time we have formalised things and it's already proving really useful so thank you Annette, Lee, Lee-Ann (Hulme) and Anthony, Joan and Marcus (Deansgate) for your ongoing support - it has been very useful to connect on a more formal basis
- On the Hulme part, we now have a very clear understanding that we all believe we need to improve street tree coverage and making sure we don't lose any more green space
- In Deansgate it's worth highlighting the work behind the scenes to ensure that the former Castlefield Centre is not lost to the community. We cannot wait to see this turn into a win for Castlefield

LOCAL BUSINESSES & PARTNERS

- At our AGM we heard from Capital+Centric and their build-to-rent Talbot Mill scheme where they are lovingly restoring this handsome old industrial relic
- The Ox Noble pub has a new lease of life as do a couple of empty units at the Vicus Building: we have a new corner shop and a new restaurant
- We received a £1000 community donation towards our green causes from Rosgal for the Deansgate roadworks & disruption
- There was another Factory International Neighbours Event in June, where we had the opportunity to meet new people and seed new friendships
- We were invited to a private Factory International meeting to provide neighbourhood feedback on what they do and how they operate Aviva Studios
- We had a private meeting with Sally MacDonald from the Science + Industry Museum who showed us aspirations through to the end of 2029, including a proper use for 1830 warehouse which will be leased, the Lower Yard renovations, Wonderlab to replace some of the first floor kids interactive stuff, plus a Technician Lab where you can find out about the jobs of the future. We are looking forward to the Power Hall renovations drawing to a close and are pleased to see the building back into public use after many years of renovation. The Upper Yard plans are also taking shape - 2026 will be the year it all comes together.
- We hit our three year anniversary of the Veg Box scheme (search for Veg Box People to sign up!). Yay to sprouts!



LOCAL PLAN 2025: MANCHESTER CITY COUNCIL

In summary:

- The Manchester Local Plan 2025 guides the development of Manchester
- It sets out the long term policies for Manchester's future development
- It will form the framework that planning applications will be assessed against

As part of this the Council has held a Public Consultation: our Spirit of Castlefield action group has invested dozens of hours into formulating a formal response and pulling together a list of green sites as part of the Council's 'Call for Sites'. We also ran a segment on this at our final public meeting of the year. Our action group trawled and responded to relevant sections of the 218-page draft Local Plan and local writer and tour guide Jonathan Schofield was super impressed by our thorough list of green sites.

We believe, as part of our response:

- In one cohesive, noticeably cleaner & greener, thriving neighbourhood
- That Castlefield is not visible enough in the Local Plan

For more information, [please visit this link](#).

LOWER AND UPPER CAMPFIELD MARKETS

- We are thrilled to see a weekly market in Lower Campfield: it is years since we had a Castlefield Market so it's great to see them back!

MORE ARCHAEOLOGY!

- Roman Archaeology is back - and it's the best find in Castlefield for 25 years according to Graham Mottershead at Civic. Visit our Media section below to find out more!

OPERATIONAL MATTERS

- We filled our secretary vacancy and are thrilled to welcome back Debbie who has worked with us before
- We are getting better at comms, with more regular posts to our main social channels. If there's more stuff you want us to be broadcasting, just get in touch and we will see what we can do
- We have restarted our periodic newsletter again
- We closed down the former Britannia Basin Community Forum (it merged with our Forum some years ago) so we now have one brand and less confusion
- Website refresh: we have an overhaul of our website ready to launch imminently

SPIRIT OF CASTLEFIELD

- In July we restarted our Spirit of Castlefield action group to focus on our future visioning & strategy work and they also led on our Local Plan response. The group has worked really hard this year as a solid team and we're grateful for all their efforts. The work towards the Local Plan is also reusable for our visioning work so an efficient use of time
- Reviewed the Council's Our Manchester 2035 strategy so we help contribute towards making it a reality
- We want to get bolder as an organisation: How? Flex our community assets (our people and Places). As part of the future vision for Castlefield we want to really showcase what Castlefield can offer to help stakeholders and potential partners achieve their goals by working in collaboration and we realised we need to tell our story better - pitching the value of Castlefield Forum and what the community offers through an updated vision and improved marketing communications
- We have ensured we will be consulted as part of longer-term visioning and had our first proper meeting about this with Council



ST JOHN'S

- Thrilled to see the old Granada site evolving into the new St John's district. This area sits within the Conservation Area and we are so pleased to welcome new business such as The Stables and Grub

SUPPORTING EDUCATION

- We supported Manchester School of Architecture (MSA) with multiple projects:
 - This autumn our Chair was invited to lecture at MSA to talk about our visioning work and some of the biggest challenges and opportunities in Castlefield
 - In March we took part with students from Loreto College & MMU in a Heritage Pathways pilot with Manchester School of Architecture to help bring more of our neighbourhood story to life
 - We supported MSA's MA programme where students had a showcase on Castlefield Viaduct to explore new ideas for Castlefield; we have since also supported second year students with Castlefield project work

In the Media

ON RADIO

- We had a media moment at the Museum - our chair was on BBC Radio Manchester - [recordings here](#), kindly provided by the Museum

ON TV

Castlefield has been on telly again, twice in 2 days!!

- In July - The Viaduct, including us, was on ITV - We even bought our first ever T-shirt in readiness for our Granada appearance: [Plans unveiled to improve historic city centre 'sky park' viaduct - Latest From ITV News](#)
- Roman remains on ITV (we have never had Castlefield on the telly for 2 days running!) - [Archaeologists make exciting discovery in heart of Manchester - Latest From ITV News](#)
- Plus our own media star and Trustee Gary was on [BBC Gardener's World!](#)

ONLINE

Roman Remains! Here's Graham Mottershead from Civic. Credit to Donna Marie Lomax. Find more content about this amazing find in our Appendix.

Awards and Recognition

- Castlefield Viaduct was awarded the 'Pro Tem' Civic Trust Award in recognition of the impact it has had as a temporary project (but don't worry, the Viaduct is not going anywhere!)
- Two RHS 'Level 5 - Outstanding' awards for our clean & green efforts in Castlefield itself and in conjunction with National Trust and the Viaduct - all as part of Britain in Bloom
- We attended the National Trust's 130th birthday in recognition for our inputs into the Viaduct project
- Our Chair was appointed a Deputy Lieutenant of Greater Manchester in recognition of his community work

For a full picture please refer to our independently-examined Treasurer's Report and accounts.

FUNDING AWARDS

We continue to pursue the Manchester City Council Neighbourhood Investment Fund grants as and when the need arises; this year they have helped to fund our clean and green activity as well as the Liverpool Road Christmas lighting.

The Forum gratefully received £5,000 as a result of the Sounds of the City event (from summer 2024). Under a draft Castlefield Events agreement, the Council's Events team felt that it would be sensible to make an annual donation as a thank you for the inconvenience that the gigs cause. Thanks to our Deansgate Ward Councillors who helped with this.

We also continue to receive ad hoc awards from Screen Manchester: we have an arrangement such that any filming in Castlefield which is deemed to cause an inconvenience (e.g. road closure, a place out of use) will result in a donation to the Forum. It is much appreciated that not only does Castlefield get to be on screen but that it helps us out too.

It is important to note that the majority of our funds are restricted as they are allocated against specific action group initiatives.

We submit independently examined accounts as part of our annual submission to the Charities Commission.

These can become opportunities with the right inputs!

Strategic challenges for the neighbourhood

BUILT ENVIRONMENT & PLACEMAKING

- **Accessibility & Lifts:** a shocking state of affairs
 - The Viaduct Lift on Beaufort is still broken despite promises of Aug 2025 fix! It now won't be working until April...
 - The brand new Watson Street Metrolink lift is not operational... due to disagreements on maintaining it
 - The Cornbrook Metrolink Lift regularly packs up, leaving residents stranded and having to make alternative arrangements
 - The main Deansgate Castlefield lift has also had break downs but has been more reliable than in previous years
- **The future of the Castlefield Heritage Trust** and assets including the former Castlefield Centre on Liverpool Road hung in the balance, though we are hoping for some far better news in 2026. We want to thank a former resident for bringing this potential asset loss to our attention and Cllrs Davies, Johns and McCaul for their help to try and turn this situation around
- **Christmas Lights:** very sadly, another year and another fiasco: anything but brilliant basics.
 - We were given about 3 days notice in September regarding Christmas lights on Liverpool Road, a cause we believe in not just because the street lights are enabled for festive lights but because it's a major thoroughfare for residents, workers and visitors
 - We were asked to contribute towards the cost, which for this year only we have agreed to do; we have suggested in future that businesses are asked via the Landowner Forum to help top up the funding given that they also benefit
 - Of the Christmas lights, 3 out of 10 do not work and the switch-on was 2 weeks later than Deansgate which not only looked strange but also meant 2 weeks less benefit combined with probably a dozen or more chases to the Council. This is anything but brilliant basics: why are we doing all the chasing when Amey should take responsibility?
- **Despite major floods** at NYE 2024/5 and significant damage to businesses such as the Y Club, there has been no dredging of the Bridgewater Canal and no clearance of the River Medlock tunnel - which will not help if we get heavy rain this winter
- **Multiple imminent development** sites remain in Castlefield, but as far as we know there are no strategic conversations happening to line developers up. But if we could, it would help massively with placemaking, visioning and community-building. We hope that the 2026 visioning work helps to address this and bring everyone together
- **Help with Roman Gardens Masterplan:** after multiple asks over the last 3 years we now have more formal help offered from MCC; planning consent lapses in under 12 months. We are hoping that this help will start to nudge the project along but remain cautious and concerned

- **Double yellow lines policy** (they should be tidy, heritage-style and consistent): Double yellow lines in Castlefield are a total mess - the opposite of brilliant basics - and this has now been escalated to the Council. It sounds petty but if you let the small things slide, it's easier for other things to go downhill as well
- **Multiple broken paving slabs in the Bowl** as an outcome from Sounds of the City 2025 (they fixed a load after last year's gigs which made even more mess): every year the gigs come, and every year it takes months and chasing to get them fixed. Even now MCC have only fixed some, so it looks shabby. This is not good enough...

BLUE AND GREEN CONCERNS

- Extensive areas of grotspots & graffiti blight: Some success at Slate Wharf - but it is not being kept clean. Graffiti continues to get worse and is going unchecked. We have asked multiple times for an update and each time are given a stock response. This is the historic heart of the city and not enough is being done...
- Potential loss of green space to development: we have submitted a list of opportunities as part of the Local Plan feedback but remain extremely concerned about the loss of Pioneer Quay and Beaufort/Duke corner to development... we will campaign as needed to help protect these spaces

FUTURE STATE AND OUR COMMUNITY

- A Vision for Castlefield: this was first tabled by MCC in April 2024 but by the end of 2025 there has been very little movement despite multiple chases. We have felt shut out of the process which is why we spun up our Spirit of Castlefield group to avoid getting left behind once the process begins
- Lack of One Neighbourhood, One Castlefield Mindset: we are starting to see improvements in this, through stronger working with our ward councillors and are hopeful that the proposed extension of Manchester City Centre to cover all of Castlefield will help (this however will not happen until at least early 2027)
- The Castlefield Landowner Forum: despite the great fanfare and great idea, this seems to have fizzled to a close. Once again we have done a lot of chasing to find out what's going on and are yet to receive a satisfactory answer
- We asked for a meeting with Bev Craig (she said yes) to ensure she understands our local ambitions for Castlefield but it has not been forthcoming. This is frustrating given how slow things are moving in the neighbourhood and the challenges which are continuing to chip away at what should be a prize asset for Greater Manchester

Organisational challenges to address in 2026

- After 7 years of great advice and stewardship of charitable ways of working, Ian McIlveen stood down as a trustee. And since the start of 2026, Ian Hay has also retired as a trustee. Thank you to you both!
- We lack direction for fundraising
- We are under represented in certain demographics including age and location (e.g. we would benefit from more representation from younger people, and from people in the southern part of Castlefield)

Looking ahead, and closing remarks

It's not all bad... We have the following to look forward to in 2026!!!!

- We hope to have a community stall at Campfield Market... watch this space!
- Visioning process: a co-designed approach to where next for our mighty neighbourhood
- Essential structural works on Viaduct in readiness for the permanent extension to the sky garden
- Enough progress on the Roman Gardens so we don't lose planning consent
- Exploring deeper tie-ins with University of Manchester, potentially around culture in Castlefield
- Nurturing existing relationships, and building new ones including with:
 - Cyan Lines
 - St John's / Allied London

Please continue to support us and don't hesitate to get stuck in.

Finally, a reminder that the Forum exists by you, for you. A huge thank you to all of our Trustees and supporters who helped to keep the Forum diverse, alive and thriving. And if you feel like you might want to get involved yourself, please get in touch.

Thank you,

Calum McGowan

Chair - Castlefield Forum on behalf of Castlefield Forum Board of Trustees

info@ourcastlefield.co.uk

CASTLEFIELD FORUM
ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30/04/2025

Treasurer's Report

I have prepared the accounts for Castlefield Forum for the year ending 30th April 2025.

These accounts comprise an Income & Expenditure overview and a Balance Sheet to provide visibility on general and restricted funds held.

All payments made have been verified by invoice copies.

As Treasurer, I confirm these accounts represent a true and fair view of Income & Expenditure for the period.

These accounts will now be reviewed by an independent examiner.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Giles Grover', written in a cursive style.

Giles Grover
29th January 2026

Income Expenditure

<u>Y/E: 30/04/2025</u>	<u>General</u>	<u>Restricted</u>	
	<u>Funds</u>	<u>Funds</u>	<u>Total</u>
	£	£	£
<u>Income & Expenditure</u>			
<u>Income</u>			
Donations - Castlefield Filming	6,750		6,750
Donations - Individuals & Organisations	694		694
Calendar Sales	440		440
MCC - Parks in Partnership - Roman Gardens		10,000	10,000
MCC - Castlefield Viaduct		410	410
Clean & Green - NIF		2,577	2,577
Britannia Basin		3,517	3,517
Carol Standfield - Plaque (Non-Forum Funds Held in Trust)		551	551
Total income	7,884	17,054	24,938
<u>Expenditure</u>			
Roman Gardens		145	145
Castlefield Viaduct		410	410
Clean & Green		2,577	2,577
Ellesmere Street Planters		343	343
Calendar Production	492		492
Forum Admin Expenses (Zoom, website, meetings)	622		622
Public Liability Insurance	438		438
Total Expenditure	1,552	3,475	5,027
Surplus/(deficit)	6,331	13,580	19,911

Statement of Financial Position

	<u>2024/25</u>	<u>2024/25</u>		<u>2023/24</u>		
<u>Y/E: 30/04/2025</u>	<u>General Funds</u>	<u>Restricted Funds</u>	<u>2024/25</u>	<u>General Funds</u>	<u>2023/24</u>	<u>2023/24</u>
			<u>Total</u>		<u>Restricted Funds</u>	<u>Total</u>

Statement of financial position

Assets

Bank	17,804	40,782	58,586	11,473	27,202	38,675
Petty cash	20	0	20	20	0	20
Total	17,824	40,782	58,606	11,493	27,202	38,695

Liabilities

Charity General funds (repayable)	0	0	0	0	0	0
Restricted funds (repayable)	0	0	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0	0	0

Total assets less liabilities

17,824	40,782	58,606	11,493	27,202	38,695
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Reserves

B/f:	11,493	27,202	38,695	5,723	26,805	32,528
Movement in reserves (surplus/(deficit))	6,331	13,580	19,911	5,770	398	6,167
Reserves c/f:	17,824	40,782	58,606	11,493	27,203	38,695

Reserves

Y/E: 30/04/2025

Changes in reserves

<u>Movement in General funds</u>	<u>2023/24 Op bal</u>	<u>2024/25</u>	<u>2024/25 Cl bal</u>
General reserves	11,493		11,493
Surplus/(deficit) Current year		6,331	6,331
Total General funds	11,493	6,331	17,824

<u>Movement in Restricted funds</u>	<u>2023/24 Op bal</u>	<u>2024/25</u>	<u>2024/25 Cl bal</u>
Roman Gardens	26,005	9,855	35,860
Castlefield Viaduct	50	0	50
Britannia Basin	0	3,174	3,174
Carol Standfield - Plaque (Non-Forum Funds Held in Trust)	0	551	551
Clean & Green NIF (Forum Funds)	0	1,148	1,148
Clean & Green (Non Forum Funds Held in Trust B/f)	1,148	-1,148	0
Total Restricted funds*	27,202	13,580	40,782

Total Reserves	38,695	19,911	58,606
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*Restricted Funds reflect where Neighbourhood Investment Funding grants have been received for a specific project and the closing balance at year end is £40,782.

This funding is monitored and evaluated by Manchester City Council and, in certain circumstances, may be subject to repayment.

Banking - Detailed Analysis

				Roman Gardens	Castlefield Viaduct	Britannia Basin	Clean & Green NIF (Forum Funds)	Clean & Green (Non Forum Funds Held in Trust B/f)	Carol Standfield - Plaque (Non- Forum Funds Held in Trust)	Filming Donation	Individual & Organisation Donation	Forum Admin		Restricted Funds	Non- Forum Funds Held in Trust	General Funds	Closing Balance at 30/04/25
B/f	Details																
	Opening balance 01/05/2024			26,004.59	50.00	0.00	0.00	1,147.50	0.00	1,000.00	5,532.86	4,960.07		26,054.59	1,147.50	11,492.93	38,695.02
	TRF C&G from Non forum funds to forum funds						1,147.50	-1,147.50						1,147.50	-1,147.50	0.00	
03/05/2024	Clean & Green Payment (made by intra-year loan from General Funds)	Expenditure					-1,178.00							-1,178.00	0.00	0.00	-1,178.00
13/05/2024	Fundraiser for Carol Standfield Plaque	Income							550.83					0.00	550.83	0.00	550.83
14/05/2024	Trustee Refund RE - Forward Fund Plants for Viaduct - NT Claim being made	Expenditure			-410.00									-410.00	0.00	0.00	-410.00
28/05/2024	Transfer from Britannia Basin bank account	Income				3,516.67								3,516.67	0.00	0.00	3,516.67
29/05/2024	Castlefield Hotel	Income									92.00			0.00	0.00	92.00	92.00
31/05/2024	Screen Mcr	Income								250.00				0.00	0.00	250.00	250.00
04/06/2024	Manchester Parks Development Team - Parks in Partnership	Income		10,000.00										10,000.00	0.00	0.00	10,000.00
28/06/2024	National Trust Grant - Viaduct Plants	Income			410.00									410.00	0.00	0.00	410.00
22/07/2024	Trustee Refund JB - Meeting Expenses	Expenditure										-18.85		0.00	0.00	-18.85	-18.85
19/09/2024	MCDA NO.2 Filming	Income								1,000.00				0.00	0.00	1,000.00	1,000.00
21/10/2024	Manchester City Council - C&G NIF (Refund General Funds Loan)	Income					1,300.00							1,300.00	0.00	0.00	1,300.00
30/10/2024	Trustee Refund JB - In Bloom Tickets	Expenditure										-30.00		0.00	0.00	-30.00	-30.00
30/10/2024	Trustee Refund JB - 2025 Calendars	Expenditure										-492.49		0.00	0.00	-492.49	-492.49
30/10/2024	Wix - ourcastlefield.org.uk Domain 2 years	Expenditure										-201.60		0.00	0.00	-201.60	-201.60
30/10/2024	Wix Payment - Trustee Donation	Income									201.60					201.60	201.60
31/10/2024	MCDA NO.2 Filming	Income								500.00				0.00	0.00	500.00	500.00
05/11/2024	Banyan Donation - 2025 Calendars	Income									100.00			0.00	0.00	100.00	100.00
08/11/2024	Calendars sold - 7	Income										70.00		0.00	0.00	70.00	70.00
15/11/2024	PIB Risk Services - P/L	Expenditure										-437.52		0.00	0.00	-437.52	-437.52
19/12/2024	Calendars sold - 5	Income										50.00		0.00	0.00	50.00	50.00
31/12/2024	MCDA NO.2 Filming	Income								1,500.00				0.00	0.00	1,500.00	1,500.00
06/01/2025	Calendars sold - 2	Income										20.00		0.00	0.00	20.00	20.00
15/01/2025	Trustee Refund GR for C&G payment	Expenditure					-122.00							-122.00	0.00	0.00	-122.00
15/01/2025	Trustee Refund BH - Zoom	Expenditure										-155.88		0.00	0.00	-155.88	-155.88
17/01/2025	Calendars sold - 28	Income										280.00		0.00	0.00	280.00	280.00
30/01/2025	Calendars sold - 2	Income										20.00		0.00	0.00	20.00	20.00
30/01/2025	MCDA NO.2 Filming	Income								1,500.00				0.00	0.00	1,500.00	1,500.00
10/02/2025	Trustee Refund GR - Ellesmere Street Planters	Expenditure				-343.00								-343.00	0.00	0.00	-343.00
10/02/2025	MCC - C&G NIF - 262465269 - 4 wood planters	Income					815.00							815.00	0.00	0.00	815.00
17/02/2025	MCC - C&G NIF - Tools, signage and planting	Income					461.50							461.50	0.00	0.00	461.50
28/02/2025	MCDA NO.2 Filming	Income								1,500.00				0.00	0.00	1,500.00	1,500.00
07/03/2025	MCC - RG Planning Application	Expenditure		-145.00										-145.00	0.00	0.00	-145.00
07/03/2025	Trustee Refund BH - Viaduct Domains 4 yrs	Expenditure										-215.86		0.00	0.00	-215.86	-215.86
18/03/2025	YMCA Donation - Calendars	Income									100.00			0.00	0.00	100.00	100.00
24/03/2025	Clean & Green - NIF x 2	Expenditure					-1,276.50							-1,276.50	0.00	0.00	-1,276.50
28/03/2025	Castlefield Estates - Calendars	Income									200.00			0.00	0.00	200.00	200.00
30/04/2025	MCDA NO.2 Filming 15/04	Income								500.00				0.00	0.00	500.00	500.00
	Closing balance 30/04/2025			£35,859.59	£50.00	£3,173.67	£1,147.50	£0.00	£550.83	£7,750.00	£6,226.46	£3,847.87		£40,230.76	£550.83	£17,824.33	£58,605.92

Petty Cash

	£
Petty Cash Balance as at 30/04/2024	20.17
Expenditure	_*
Petty Cash Balance as at 30/04/2025	£20.17

*No petty cash movements as all payments now made via online banking.

Dan Coles FCCA
09/02/2026

FAO: Giles Grover
Treasurer
Castlefield Forum
Manchester

Dear Giles,

Thanks for the attached supporting information in your emails.

I report to the trustees, my examination of the accounts of Castlefield Forum (the Charitable Incorporated Organisation) for the period ended 30 April 2025.

I have completed an examination of the provided set of accounts and supporting documentation. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination, giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

- 1) Accounting records were not kept in respect of the Charity as required by section 130 of the Act
- 2) The accounts do not accord with those records
- 3) The accounts do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'D Coles', with a horizontal line extending to the right.

Dan Coles FCCA

Special news item: Roman Remains!

Roman Remains: "The best remains found in Castlefield in last 25 years" - Graham Mottershead from Civic. The following comes from Ian Miller - Heritage Management Director at Greater Manchester Archaeological Advisory Service.

"I just wanted to let you know that I asked for an archaeological watching brief to be carried out during the improvement works to the paving around Castlefield House on Liverpool Road, directly opposite the Roman Gardens. This advice was duly accepted and Ollie and Graham from Civic Heritage took on the project and have uncovered some pretty remarkable archaeology.

An intact and well-preserved section of the main Roman road extending from the north gate of the fort is visible at the left-hand end of the excavated trench. At the other end of the trench (right-hand side of the shot), Graham is recording one of two large Roman ditches, with another two archaeologists in the centre excavating a Roman third ditch.

The top of the road was unearthed just below the modern ground surface, and this is currently being excavated by hand down to the level required by the development (the idea is to install some tree planters, hence the depth of the trench). This has provided remarkable evidence for the development of the road and adjacent land use between the late 1st century and perhaps the later 3rd century. The excavation has also uncovered the remains of several large Roman ditches, a series of ovens and various features that suggest Roman timber structures / buildings. Without exaggeration, it's the best Roman archaeology I've seen in Manchester this century!!

Ollie and Graham's team are actively excavating the site and they will be completed fairly soon (probably before the end of next week), but I'm sure that they would be more than happy to give you / the Castlefield Forum a quick tour / explanation of the site / findings if you're interested and have the time."

[The YouTube video can be found here](#) (credit: Annabel Knowlson).



Castlefield Forum is a voluntary community group established in 2009 with the key aim of making Castlefield a better place for local residents, businesses, workers and visitors. Part of the Forum's original remit was set up to contribute to and influence Castlefield as a locality, whilst conserving and enhancing its heritage assets.

We are a multi-award winning neighbourhood organisation having been received the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service as well as over a dozen awards from the RHS, including 8 years in a row of 'Level 5 - Outstanding' for our Clean & Green efforts.

We became a Charitable Incorporated Organisation in 2019 and have always worked to bring people together for the long-term benefit of Castlefield.

Our objectives are:

- To protect and promote the Castlefield Conservation Area
- To secure the preservation, protection, development and improvement of features or areas of historic or public interest
- To promote the conservation of the environment
- To educate the public in the geography, history, natural history, culture and architecture of the area
- To promote high standards of planning and architecture
- To promote urban regeneration

Who we are

Organisational overview for the period ending December 2026.

Trustees who served during the year:

1. Calum McGowan (Chair)
2. Lou Pullan (Vice-Chair)
3. Giles Grover (Treasurer)
4. Debbie Hubbard (Secretary; it's great to have Debbie back as she has previously served with us)
5. B Hunter
6. Gary Rumens (on paternity leave until May 2026)
7. Ian Hay
8. Ian McIlveen (stepped down in November 2025; we want to thank you Ian for your deep knowledge of the charitable sector and for being our moral compass)
9. Jane Black
10. Line Hilton
11. Nena Adrienne

Our organisation

The Forum is run by you, for you. Without the Trustees the Forum would not exist. None of us are paid for our roles, some work full or part time, none of us bring egos and we all strive for a better neighbourhood, so a huge thank you to all of them for all of their hard work. The pandemic taught us that you don't need to be in Castlefield to have a positive impact on Castlefield.

Membership is open to anyone who lives, works or has an interest in Castlefield. It's a great way to meet others in the community, to have a say in what happens and to give something back to this amazing place. Join us!

The Forum meets publicly three times a year and meetings and our action groups are open to all. Our elected Trustees typically meet twice a quarter, setting goals across a 4-month period and feeding back on progress and challenges to the wider Forum. If you missed any of our public meetings, we can share the slides with you.

Operating model

As Trustees, we hold ourselves accountable for the work that we do - which includes setting ambitious but realistic goals - and the decisions that we make. Because our volunteer Trustees have other commitments, sometimes things do not move quite as fast as we might like. But we are very grateful for the diverse group that makes up our Trustees and indeed the time that they give to our cause of making Castlefield a great place to be.

We are also heavily reliant on third parties to deliver many of our aspirations, such as the City Council's Neighbourhood Delivery Team and the National Trust for our Viaduct ambitions.

The Trustees run our action groups which help to address our four key themes around **Cleaner, Green, Safer** and **Better**. Our Trustee activity is planned in a quarterly cadence using the 'objectives and key results' framework.

We continue to break down our objectives into clear goals. Each objective has measures under it, graded from:

Good	(the bare minimum we would like to achieve) to
Great	(even better) to
Incredible	(bit of a long shot!)

At our public meetings we may discuss our objectives and results and are happy to go into detail as the need arises.

Action Groups

As part of our reach we also look to build a stronger local community and voice, and provide several ways for people to get involved. The Forum consists of a board of Volunteer Trustees (including residents and business owners) and Action Groups - run by our Trustees - which work to meet these objectives, including:

- **Clean & Green Castlefield**, who have delivered over 4,000 volunteer hours over the last 5 years
 - To work in conjunction with Manchester City Council (MCC) and other local partners to keep the area attractive, green and tidy
 - Expanding the group's remit to maintain and develop green spaces, including community growing space
 - To work in liaison with MCC and local partners to present a credible entry to the 'It's Your Neighbourhood' section of North West in Bloom, aiming for a Level 5 'Outstanding' award each year
- **Roman Gardens** masterplan delivery, to realise exciting, inspiring urban retreat in Manchester city centre
 - The group are now working to discharge planning conditions so that we can protect the planning consent for the upgrade of the Roman Gardens

- **Castlefield Viaduct**, working as lead community partner alongside the National Trust and BDP to help deliver the long-term masterplan
- **Spirit of Castlefield**, our group which is focused on future visioning work and direction for the neighbourhood
 - Building on our work with the National Trust to understand the spirit of Castlefield, including its value to the city of Manchester and beyond, its heritage, people, buildings, open spaces, structures, waterways and stories.
 - Supporting the National Trust's consultation, fundraising and delivery of the viaduct pilot and development of the full scheme

And these groups, both currently paused:

- Castlefield Landowners Forum, which is run by the Council and where we have a voice at the table with some of the bigger players in Castlefield.
 - Sadly this action group has fallen off a cliff as there has not been an MCC-arranged meeting since March 2025
 - We are extremely disappointed that it has fizzled out with very limited communication since March
- Events, Marketing, Media & Signage,
 - To raise the profile of Castlefield within the city, to develop our own events and contribute to events organised by others
 - To increase financial self-reliance for the Forum by developing Castlefield's marketing potential, including improving our website
 - To extend our programme of replacing damaged and out-of-date signage by producing new interpretative signs for new locations throughout the area

If you would like to get involved with any of our activities - or spot opportunities you think we should be involved with - please get in touch; we would love to hear from you.

Join us as a member by contacting - info@ourcastlefield.co.uk (opt out at any time) or sign up on our website, or visit our socials:

Forum website	www.ourcastlefield.co.uk
Forum Facebook Group	Castlefield Forum Facebook
Forum Instagram	Castlefield Forum (@castlefieldforum)
Clean & Green Group	Clean & Green Castlefield Facebook