



Castlefield Forum AGM and Public Meeting

Tuesday 7 July 2026 | 19:00 | Aviva Studios - The Lab

MINUTES

PUBLIC MEETING	
Welcome, Forum Introductions and Apologies	Apologies from Trustees - Lou, Giles, Gary, Nena, B, Line, Steven, Nancy Cllrs - Lee Glover (Hulme), Bernard Ekbery (Hulme) GMP - PC M Riaz
Welcome to our Guests	• Anthony McCaul and Sarah Wakefield (Deansgate Ward) • Lee Ashworth - Head of Welcome, Factory • Sid Williams - Co-Founder, Embassy • Emma James - Placemaking Consultant, Visioning for Castlefield
Cllr Updates - Deansgate Ward	Cllr Anthony McCaul: • Flooding - cllrs have met with involved parties inc Peel, GMCA to discuss reasons for serious flooding events in the basin. Currently putting together an action plan. • Grocers Wharf - MCC looking at how to bring it back to life, and how to fund it. Historic England fund is a possibility. • New lift - new lift has been installed on Beaufort St and is fully operational (at time of meeting!) • Development at Water Street - this is going to planning imminently. Recommendation is that the park (or part of) is completed first. • Roman Gardens - Cllrs have been supporting Lou and the Forum on getting some works commenced to save the planning permission. New bollards installed. • "Castlefield deserves better" campaign - walkabouts asking why are owners of land not doing better. MCC could do repairs required in various places, but they would need to use a "cheapest fix" approach. Plan is to leverage assistance from MP Lucy Powell in contacting public bodies who own land. Cllr Sarah Wakefield: • Sarah introduced herself as our new Green councillor. She has a focus on a family friendly and accessible Castlefield. • Although we are in a new situation with Cllrs from different parties after the last election, she knows that it is important to work closely with existing Labour councillors
GMP Update - Castlefield/Deansgate (5 mins)	CASTLEFIELD - NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICING UPDATE • Arrest of Prolific Shoplifter – Targeted Patrols. High-visibility patrols have been carried out across St John's Gardens, the Castlefield Estate, and the commercial district following concerns about drug use and a previous encampment. Welfare checks were completed and all was found in order. During the patrol, officers received information about a prolific shoplifter repeatedly targeting a local Castlefield business. Using local knowledge and swift enquiries, officers located and arrested the male. He has now been charged with six counts of theft from a shop and remanded in custody. • Traffic Operation – Deansgate & Liverpool Road • A proactive traffic operation resulted in 11 vehicles being stopped and 6 Traffic Offence Reports issued. Officers also detained a male



	wanted since last year. He was arrested at the scene and taken into custody. • St John's Gardens – Community Update. Following reports of encampments, used needles, and anti-social behaviour, officers have been working closely with Manchester City Council and the Street Engagement Team. Welfare conversations, referrals, and safety discussions have been carried out with individuals sleeping rough. Targeted patrols have led to improved visibility and fewer concerning reports. • Weekend Patrol – Castlefield & Deansgate. During weekend foot patrols, officers responded to a report of a male acting anti-socially on Deansgate. Welfare checks confirmed he was fit, but a details check revealed he was wanted for recall to prison. He was arrested and taken into custody. • Regular Patrol Activity - Routine patrols across Castlefield and St John's Gardens have continued, with several stop-searches conducted and positive outcomes including summonses and arrests - key locations were Castlefield Bowl and St John's Garden, also around canals. • Shoplifting – New Sainsbury's, Deansgate. Seven shoplifters have been arrested and remanded to date following targeted work with the new Sainsbury's store. This forms part of our ongoing commitment to tackling repeat offending and supporting local retailers.
Lee Ashworth - Factory/Aviva Studios (20 mins)	Lee updated us about how the venue is progressing, and gave some information about current and future events.
Sid Williams - Embassy (20 m)	Sid explained how Embassy was formed, and gave an update on how the Village was progressing.
Emma James and Calum McGowan - Visioning for Castlefield (20 mins)	Emma and Calum explained the current consultation involving residents and businesses in Castlefield has been working, and how you can comment or get involved. There is a QR code in the slides to use to input into the action plan.
Recent Successes and Current Focus for Castlefield Forum	WINS • Struck new relationships with elected members • Vision process has good focus and traction • Roman Gardens planning consent SAVED - and in writing today 7/7/2026 • Consolidated One Castlefield feedback pulled • Volunteer stats of xxxx • Two new trustees • 200 free tickets for SOTC • New interest group to help with N Plan • New bakery • New framework for Water St approved (we inputted but not clear of any changes) - area is a dire mess. • Offer of more help from Manchester School of Architecture and a project to look at Castlefield boundaries. Ties perfectly with the visioning work



	CHALLENGES • Viaduct closure and no reopening date • Local Plan ignores all our hard work • Hulme Neighbourhood Plan seeks to exclude South Castlefield • One Castlefield development has come forward with much greater density incl large tower • Ground surveying started last week on Breeze Garden - planning to fell 78 trees!!!!!!!!!! NEXT FOCUS • Go into battle on Local Plan and Neighbourhood Plan • Get momentum behind Roman Gardens e.g. funding • Launch and live our updated comms plan • Where next for Visitor Centre. We know that the Council is actively looking at it • Protect our trees.... • Support next phase of Vision work where thinking becomes planning and doing
AOB	3 Tickets have become available for Sounds of the City
Close	



Please ensure that you sign in



Castlefield Forum Summer Meeting
07 July 2026 19:00, Aviva Studios



Welcome, Forum introductions and apologies –
Debbie Hubbard

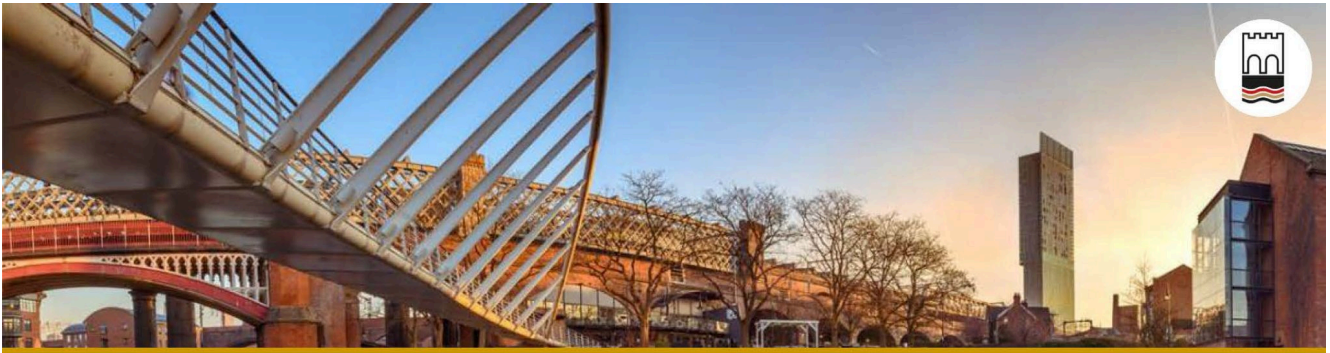


Welcome to Our Guest Speakers – Jane Black

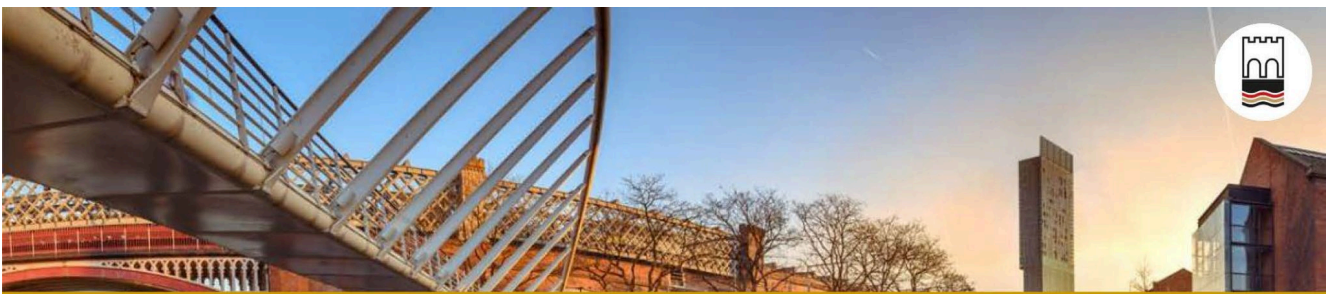
- Our Councillors - Anthony McCaul and Sarah Wakefield (Deansgate)
- GMP - update provided by PC Muhammad Riaz
- Factory International/Aviva Studios - Lee Ashworth
- Embassy Village - Sid Williams
- Visioning for Castlefield - Emma James

Tonight's Agenda

- Ward Councillor updates:
 - Anthony McCaul and Sarah Wakefield
- GM Police update
- Factory International / Aviva Studios (Lee Ashworth)
- Embassy Village Update (Sid Williams)
- Refreshing the Vision for Castlefield (Emma James and Calum McGowan)
- Our successes and current focus - Lou Pullan
- Any other business
- Date of next public meeting & Close



Our Speakers



Ward Councillor updates

- Anthony McCaul (Deansgate)
- Sarah Wakefield (Deansgate)



Deansgate ward Councillor update:

- NYE flooding update
- Grocers Warehouse update
- Castlefield lift update
- New Castlefield Park update
- Support with Roman Gardens update
- “Castlefield deserves better” campaign update

Deansgate Labour

Your voice in Manchester City Centre

Grocers Warehouse



Greater Manchester Police updates (city centre ward)



UPDATE FROM PC RIAZ

Targeted Patrols, leading to arrest of prolific shoplifter

Traffic Operation on Deansgate and Liverpool Road

St John's Gardens - Community Update

Weekend Patrol - Castlefield and Deansgate

Regular Patrol Activity

Shoplifting at the new Sainsbury on Deansgate

PACT meeting (Deansgate Ward) tomorrow 8 July 6-7pm at Barca

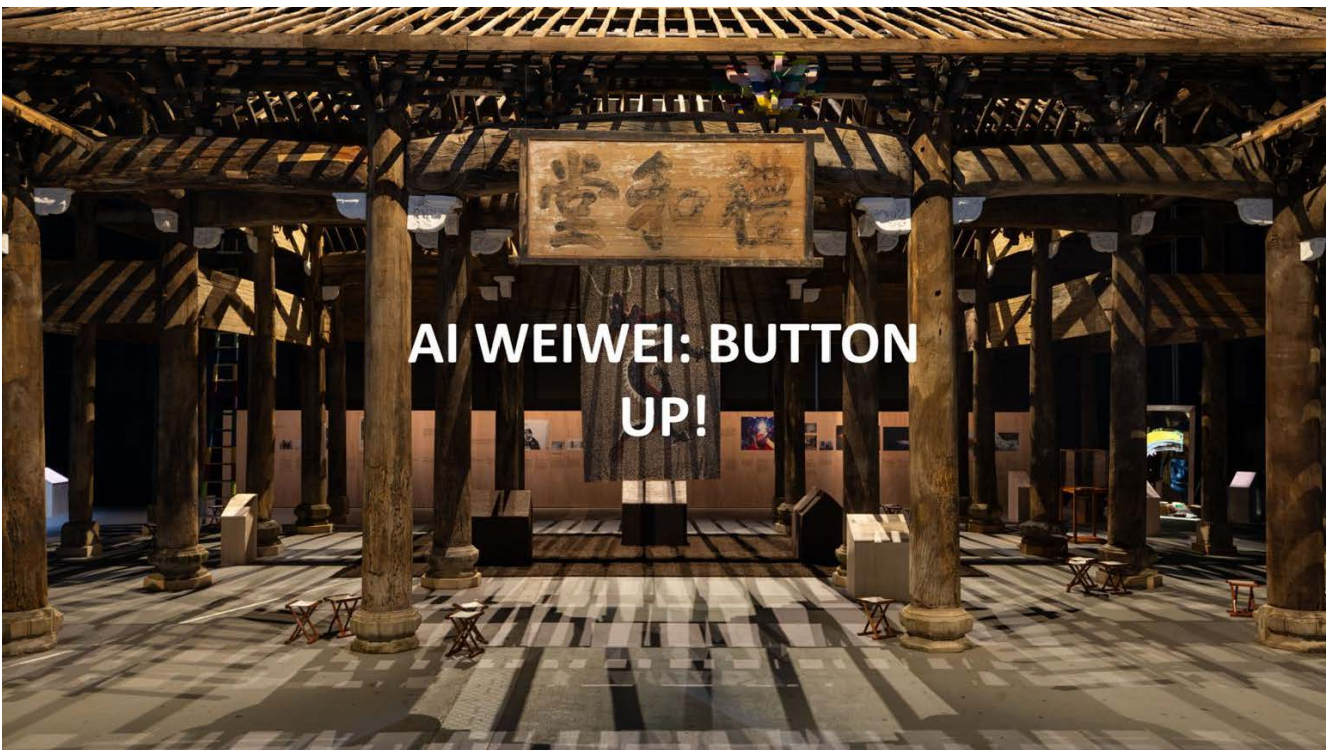
Coffee with Cop, next Wednesday 15 July, 12n-2pm, Castlefield Hotel



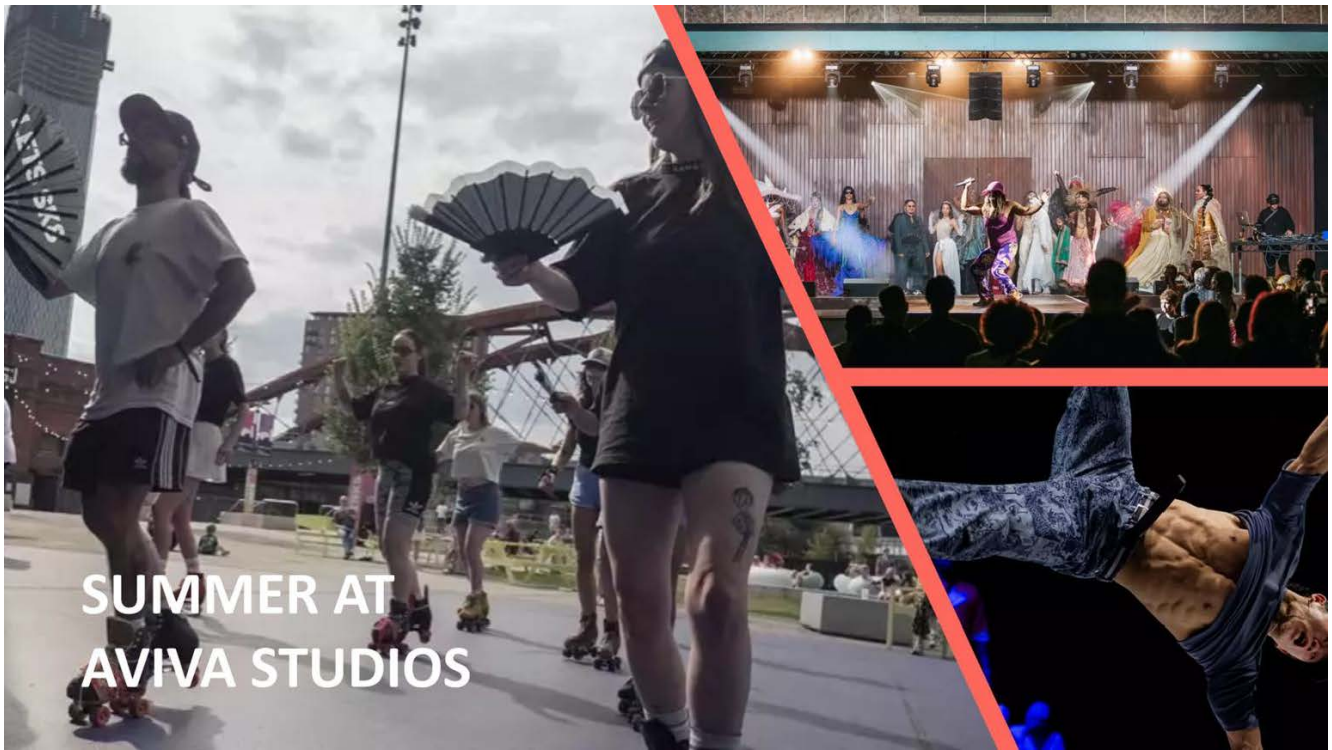
Aviva Studios and Factory International – Lee Ashworth



**FACTORY
INTERNATIONAL AND
AVIVA STUDIOS**



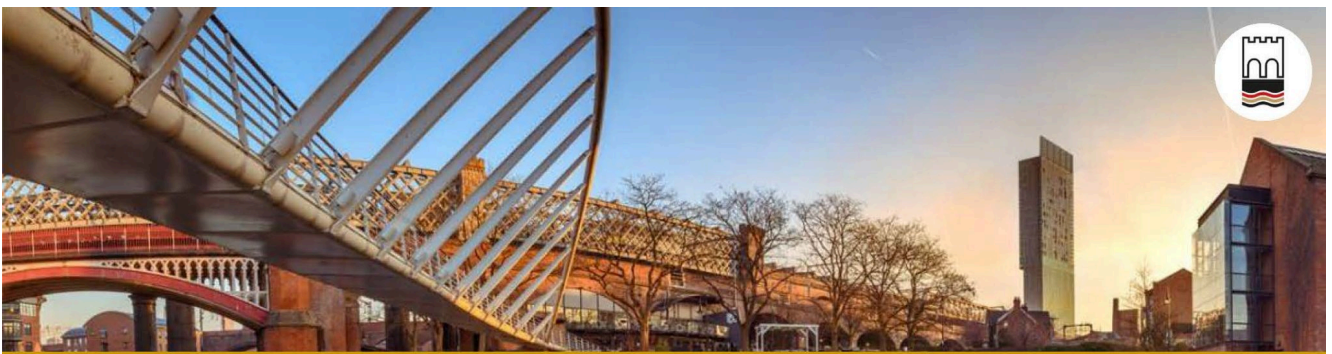
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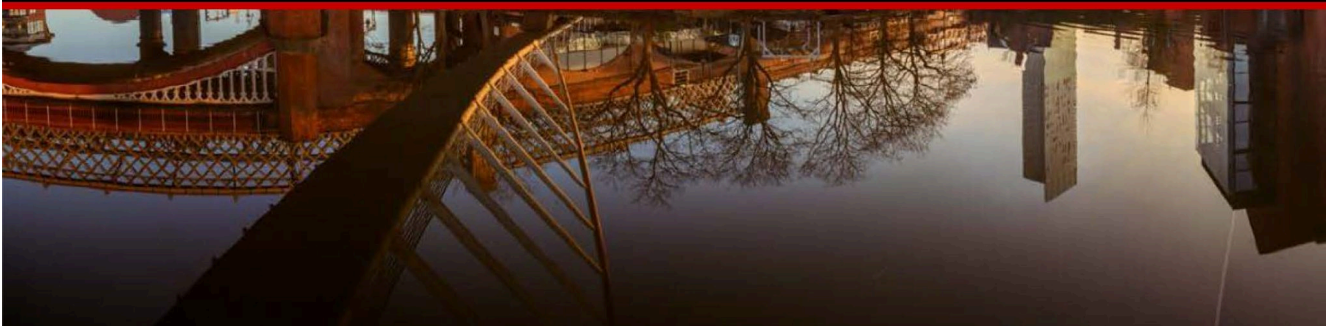




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Embassy Village – Sid Williams

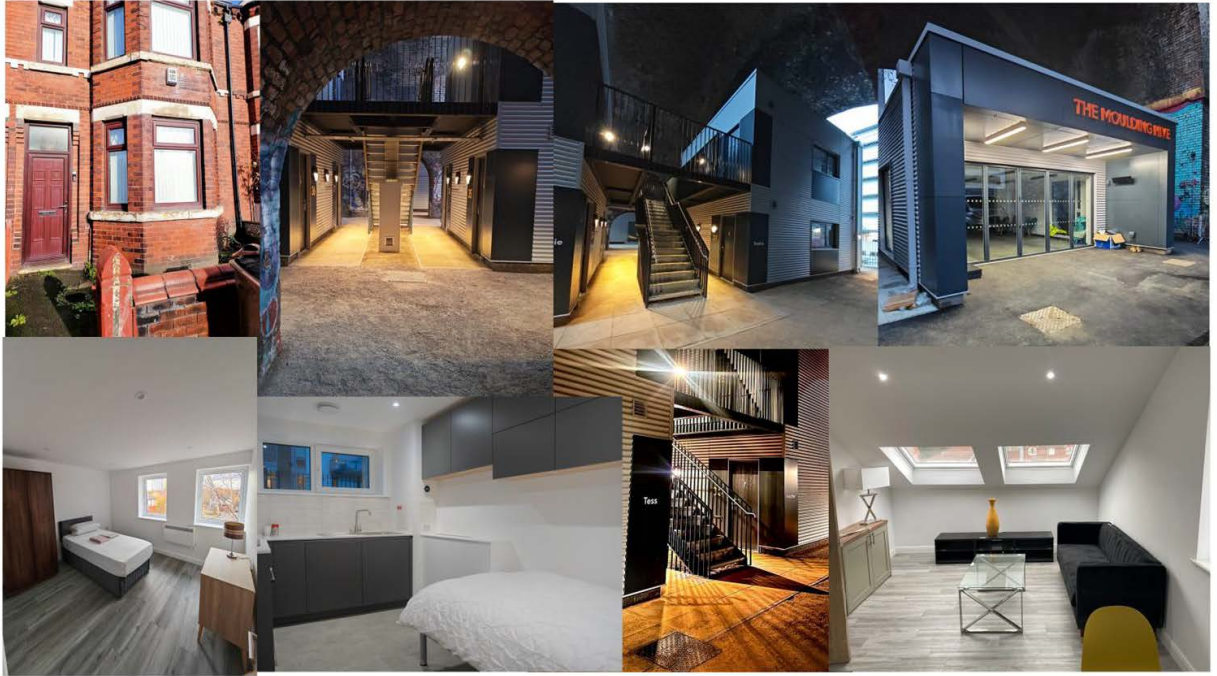


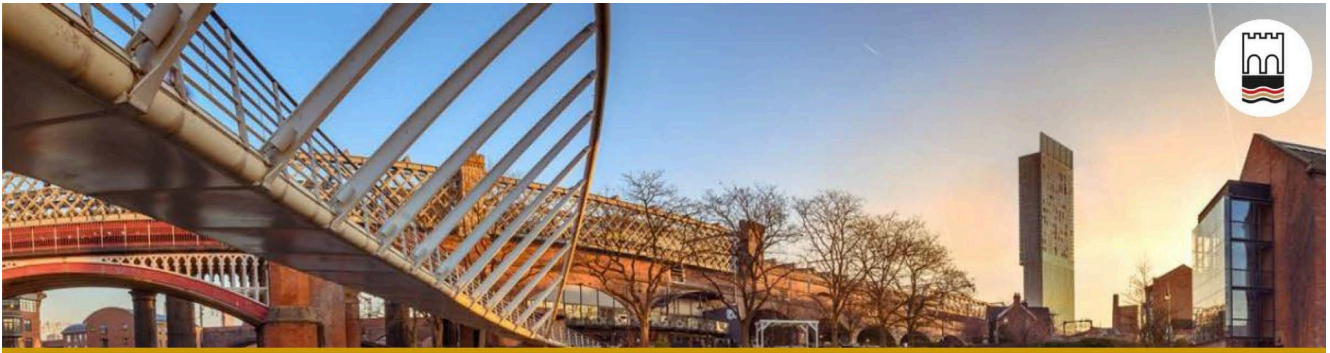


Embassy Village

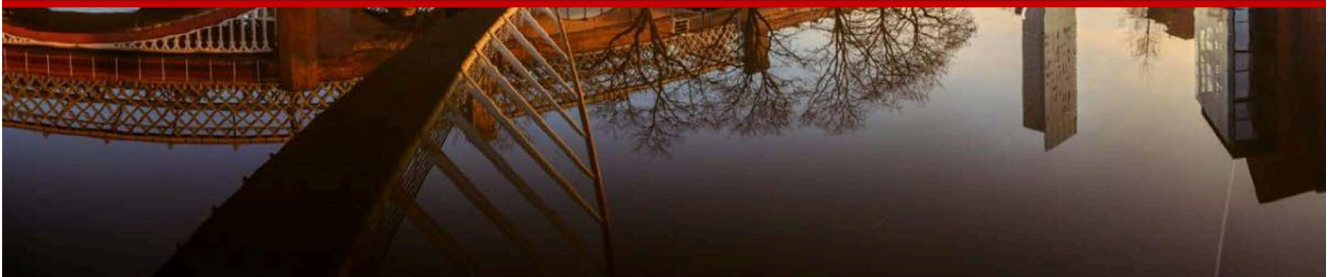








Refreshing the Vision for Castlefield – Emma James and Calum McGowan



Refreshing the Vision for Castlefield

Building on the Spirit of Place work and
recent engagement

A shared vision for the future of Castlefield



What we are talking about today

Castlefield Vision and Action Planning

- Who we are
- What we set out to do
- Spirit of Place
- What have done so far
- Summary of engagement findings to date
- Key Themes for Action planning
- What happens next



Aims

The aim of this work is to create a shared vision and action plan for Castlefield (defined as the conservation area) that reflects its unique qualities and aspirations.

Specific outcomes include:

- Residents, stakeholders, landowners and businesses alongside the Council, are engaged in and committed to a shared vision, a collaborative approach and take ownership for delivering agreed actions (building on the Spirit of Castlefield).
- Castlefield's profile is raised as a distinctive place to visit, live, and work
- Existing spaces and assets are enhanced to improve public realm, connectivity, and usability.
- Castlefield's unique history and heritage is recognised and celebrated, ensuring it remains central to the wider city centre offer in the context of neighbouring developments.
- New partnerships, relationships and networks are formed to support the delivery of an action plan.





The Council is supporting this by:

Leading engagement and consultation activity and funding facilitation work, working alongside stakeholders to support this process

- Leading on difficult conversations with diverse stakeholders
- Contributing to the process, committing to and disseminating the vision and action plan, and seeking to link and co-ordinate the actions with other related pieces of work.
- Facilitating internal and external conversations around how we can collectively deliver on the vision and working together to pursue funding opportunities for identified projects, break down any barriers and build momentum to support the action plan.

There is no new or additional council funding or resource set aside specifically as part of this process, but funding opportunities will be explored and supported.

Our Manchester
Partnership 2025-2035



Welcome to Castlefield:
Our 'Spirit of Place'





What was the 2019 'Spirit of Place'

... and why did we need one?



Spirit of Place brings together key stakeholders to unpick and identify what makes a place distinctive and unique.



How did it work?

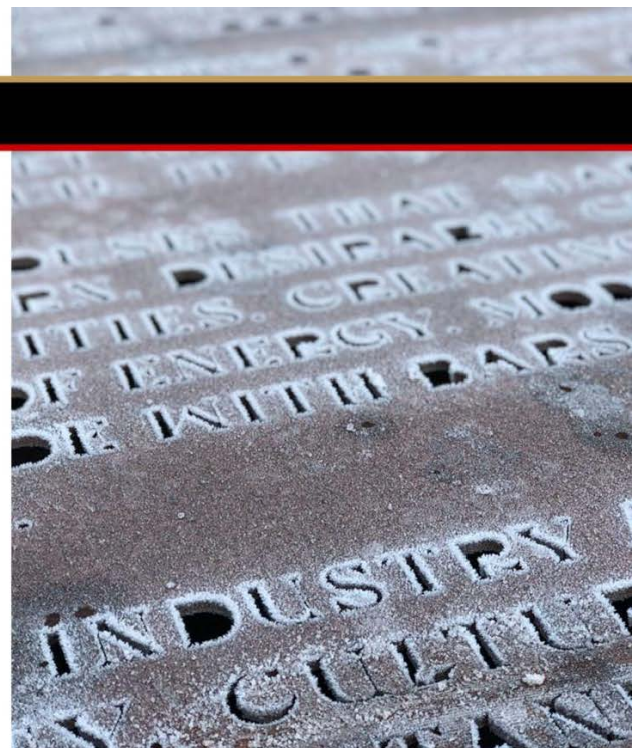
Extensive consultation process:

- Residents
- Workers
- Businesses
- Visitors - past and present
- Agencies and organisations

Key outputs included:

Shared vision, 'Spirit of Castlefield' Statement and an Action Plan.

MCC pledged support & co-hosted a Summit back in 2019





Building on the Spirit of Castlefield Work in 2026

What we have done so far

- ❖ Public Survey
- ❖ Resident Workshop
- ❖ Stakeholder Workshop
- ❖ Community Feedback
- ❖ Castlefield Forum submissions
- ❖ Local Plan feedback
- ❖ Spirit of Place review

There was a strong degree of consistency across different audiences.





What We Asked

Three key questions sat behind the engagement:

- ❖ What makes Castlefield special?
- ❖ What challenges need addressing?
- ❖ What opportunities should we embrace?

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Strategy 2025–2035

What Makes Castlefield Special?

- ❖ Heritage
- ❖ Waterways
- ❖ Green Space
- ❖ Community
- ❖ Peacefulness
- ❖ Discovery
- ❖ Culture
- ❖ Identity
- ❖ Liveability

Castlefield offers something increasingly rare: a place where world-class heritage, nature, culture and city living coexist.

- ❖ Nationally significant heritage
- ❖ Strong community identity
- ❖ Strategic city centre location
- ❖ Growing cultural profile

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What Challenges Were Raised?



Five consistent themes:

- ❖ Stewardship & maintenance
- ❖ Movement & accessibility
- ❖ Environmental quality
- ❖ Managing growth
- ❖ Co-ordination between organisations

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Challenges Are Not New

2019 Spirit of Place

- ❖ Fragmented ownership
- ❖ Underused spaces
- ❖ Orientation
- ❖ Place management
- ❖ Storytelling
- ❖ Cultural identity
- ❖ Not benefitting from development

2026 Engagement

- ❖ Stewardship
- ❖ Connectivity
- ❖ Accessibility
- ❖ Co-ordination
- ❖ Visitor pressures



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What Has Changed Since 2019?

New Assets

- Castlefield Viaduct
- Aviva Studios
- St Johns and Campfield
- Water Street proposals
- New residential growth
- Improved public realm investment

New Pressures

- Increased visitor numbers
- Growth in city centre population
- Maintenance challenges
- Traffic and accessibility concerns
- Balancing tourism and residential life

New Opportunities

- Stronger cultural identity
- Better connections
- More family-friendly activity
- Greener neighbourhood ambitions

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Retain

- Heritage
- Waterways
- Identity
- Community

Refresh

- Discovery and storytelling
- Public realm
- Connectivity

Add

- Bio-diversity & Climate resilience
- Stewardship
- Accessibility and Inclusivity
- Family friendly
- Creativity and culture



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Shared Responsibility

Future delivery cannot sit with one organisation

The engagement points towards a shared role for:

-  Public Sector
-  Private Sector
-  Community Sector
-  Cultural Sector
-  Environmental Partners



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Refreshing the Vision for Castlefield

Building on the Spirit of Place work and
recent engagement

A shared vision for the future of Castlefield

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What Makes a Strong Place Vision?

- ❖ Based on best practice place visioning guidance:
- ❖ A successful vision should be:
- ❖ Aspirational
- ❖ Place-specific
- ❖ Inclusive
- ❖ Easy to understand
- ❖ Rooted in evidence
- ❖ Focused on long-term outcomes
- ❖ Capable of guiding decisions
- ❖ A vision should describe:
- ❖ **"What we want Castlefield to become" not "How we will deliver it"**

(That comes later through the action plan.)



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The Original Spirit of Castlefield

The original Spirit of Place work described Castlefield as:



- ❖ Manchester's birthplace
- ❖ A place that changed the world
- ❖ A unique landscape of waterways, heritage and industry
- ❖ A place of discovery
- ❖ A neighbourhood as well as a destination
- ❖ A place where history, nature and city life meet

Key ambition:

A Cleaner, Greener, Safer, Better Castlefield

We are now updating this based on findings from recent engagement

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Draft Vision Principles

The updated vision , could be supported by six principles based on stakeholder engagement:

❖ **Celebrate Heritage**

Protect and reveal Castlefield's unique stories.

❖ **Connect People and Places**

Improve accessibility, movement and wayfinding.

❖ **Nurture Nature**

Strengthen biodiversity, waterways and green infrastructure.

❖ **Support Community**

Put residents and local communities at the heart of decisions.

❖ **Encourage Culture**

Support creativity, events and cultural activity.

❖ **Care for the Place**

Promote stewardship, maintenance and collective responsibility.



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Moving From Vision To Action

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Proposed Action Plan Workstreams

Six proposed workstreams

- Heritage & Storytelling
- Public Realm & Environment
- Access & Connectivity
- Community & Wellbeing
- Culture & Activation
- Stewardship & Partnership

Share your
views here:



What will go in the plan?

Now we are starting to put feedback into a draft action plan. How will we decide what goes on there? Each proposed action will be scored against:

- **Impact/benefit on Castlefield**

How much does this action improve things like environment, heritage etc, thinking specifically about the action within the workstream it is in

- **Number of people benefiting**

What type of numbers, or mix of audience groups or stakeholders would benefit from this action

- **Deliverability/complexity**

Think about level of collaboration involved, cost of undertaking

- **Speed of Possible delivery**

Is this something that can be done quickly or is this a long term project



Making it Happen

We will then look at who can lead on different actions to make sure they happen

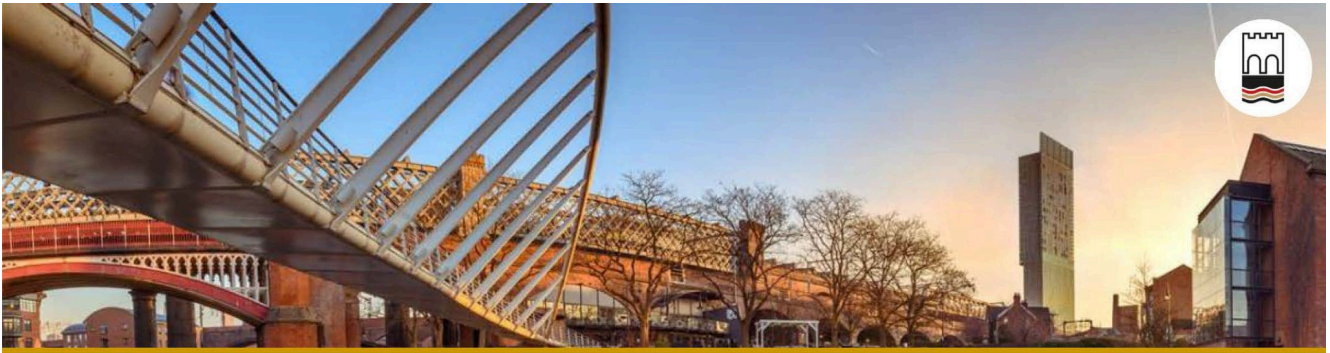
All will be added into a complete action plan, marked with priorities, areas of responsibilities and suggested timescales



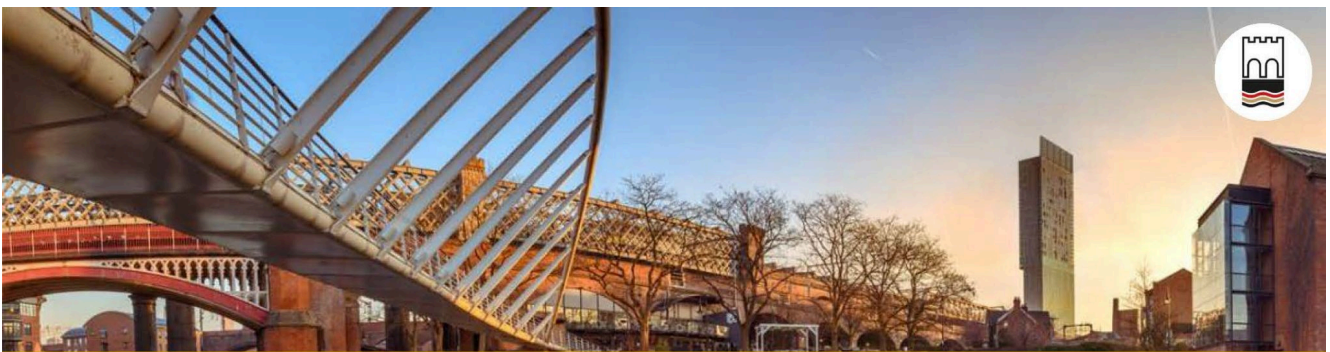
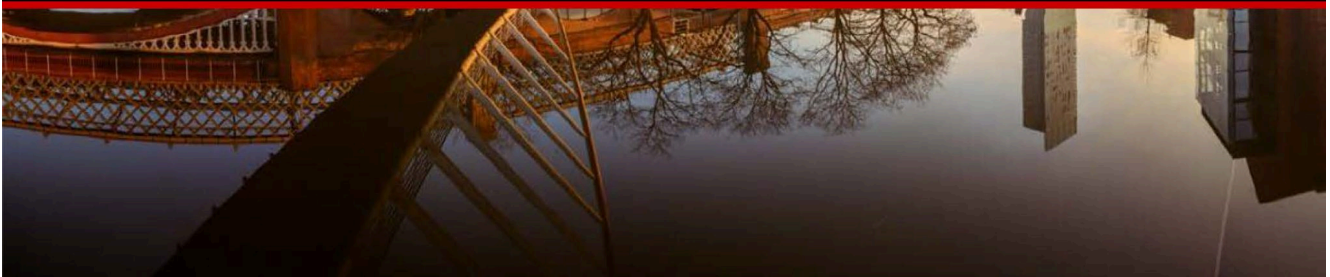
Next steps

- Castlefield pop up 7th July for feeding into action list - More planned for August
- Reviewing feedback from 2nd stakeholder workshop last week
- Compile draft action plan
- Hold session for stakeholders and residents to review draft action plan, and agree governance in September

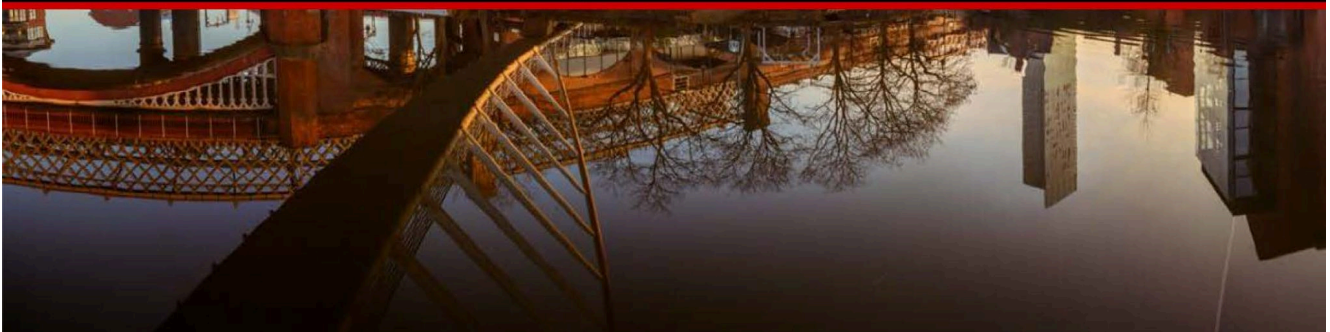


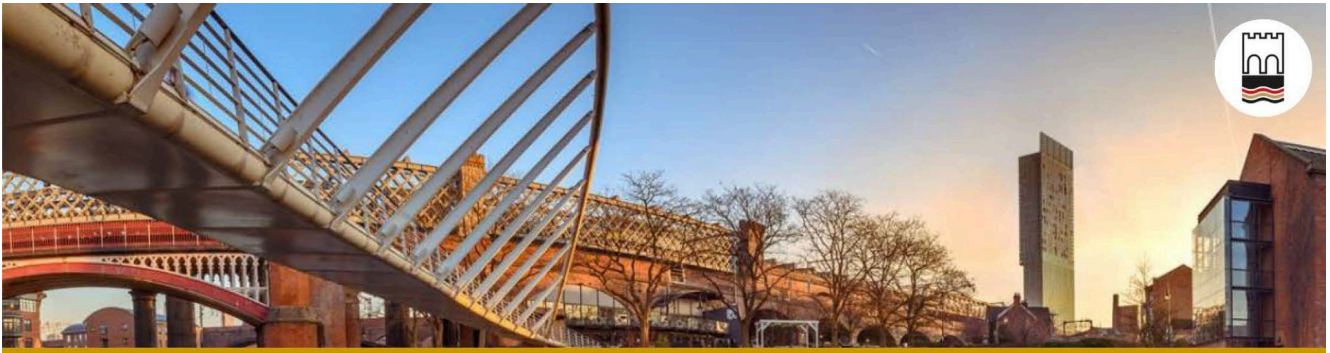


Recent Successes and Current Focus for Castlefield Forum – Lou Pullan



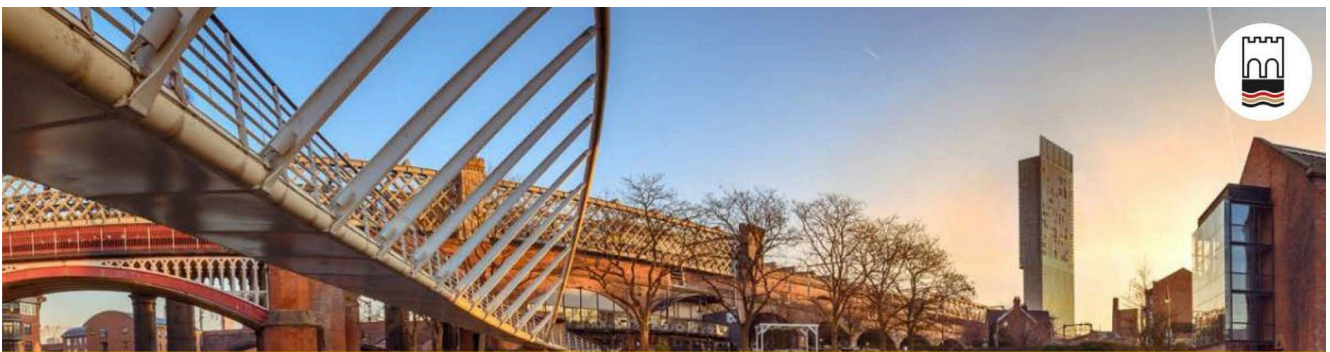
Any other business – Debbie Hubbard





Date of next public meeting – Debbie Hubbard

**Tuesday 10 November 2026
Venue to be advised**



Closing remarks – Calum McGowan



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