



CASTLEFIELD

Preserving, Improving, Living –
in the heart of our city



Action Group reports Castlefield Forum 24 April 2017

Events, Marketing and Media

Andy Parkinson writes:

The group has been recently brought back in to action after several months in the dark following the departure a several action group members who have left Castlefield for pastures new. Andy Parkinson will be convenor of the group going forward with Carol Middleton, James Bowers and Ian Edmondson also working in the group. Andy invites members of the main forum group to consider joining if they have an interest in events, marketing or media.

Initial priorities identified for the group include: supporting the upcoming Castlefield Food Festival (Thursday 11 to Sunday 14 May), including staffing a public-facing Forum stand at the event; monitoring Sounds of the City (Friday 30 June to Saturday 8 July); reworking the current Castlefield Forum website with assistance from The Manchester College; and on-going discussions concerning the strategy for the Forum's social media channels. A longer-term priority identified involves researching and exploring the capacity and desirability for a new autumn event in Castlefield that the action group can work towards delivering, possibly dovetailing with the Spirit of Place narrative.

Spirit of Place

Calum McGowan writes:

After facilitating two brilliantly-executed stakeholder and resident-led workshops, the National Trust have synthesised all the information to produce a first draft 'Spirit of Place' statement. The workshops, which dug deep into what Castlefield means to people, generated lots of ideas and themes. There was plenty of common ground between the workshops.

The draft Spirit of Place has been commented on by the Action Group and is now with the National Trust for updating.

We will share the updated version, for public comment, at the Castlefield Food Festival in May and will make it available on the Forum website.

Once the Spirit of Place is agreed, we will start to pull together supporting documents and produce the full Spirit of Place document. We will then reflect on whether the current Forum action plan requires any reprioritising.

Roman Gardens

Carol Middleton writes:

At the time of writing the final outstanding piece of information required by the Planning Dept was being negotiated with the owners of the White Lion with regard to changes to their beer garden. Whilst agreed in principle, specific documentation has been requested by the Conservation Officer.

The £35k previously approved from MCC Clean & Green fund has been carried forward to the new financial year and will be released to carry out agreed works as soon as Planning is approved.

The Forum were also awarded £2,024 from the 2016/17 Neighbourhood Investment Fund (NIF) which will go towards new up-lighters for the North Gate, making a great impact in the evening and night time. We will also be actively seeking other appropriate funding sources going forward as we work towards delivering the ultimate Masterplan.

In the meantime the Friends of the Roman Gardens continue to work alongside the Council's Public Realm team to maintain the existing gardens. A recent tidy-up involved Friends and staff from Olliers Solicitors & Amey and support in the way of refreshments provided by The Oxnoble.

We are always looking for new groups to come and help, so if you work for a company which is looking for social responsibility activities, please get in touch.

Gardening

Beth Rose Hopper writes:

Since the last update in January, lots of green space/plant based activity has taken place in Castlefield. In March staff from 18 branches of Costa Coffee and several forum members spent several hours tidying up and planting new shrubs, flowers and herbs in the Roman Gardens and the Granary. This was carried out as part of Keep Britain Tidy's #bigtidyup campaign and Costa very generously donated £250 to the forum which was spent on plants, compost and gardening equipment.

The staff from Ollier's also spent an afternoon tidying up in the Roman Gardens and this is something they have now done on several occasions. Along with Costa Coffee and the many other businesses that volunteer their staff, we are very very grateful that we live alongside such community minded commercial organisations.

Many of you will have noticed that we now have six palm trees – two outside the visitor's centre on Liverpool Road and four adjacent to The Granary. These trees were originally in the square (with no name) on Bridge Street (next to Crazy Pedro's) and were donated to us by the Council whilst in the process of replacing them. The containers that they sit in are in need of some TLC and we plan to address this shortly.

Due to essential maintenance work that needed to be carried out on lighting columns; the three large brick planters that are centrally placed within the steps leading down to the arena from Liverpool Rd, have had to be emptied. The council have agreed to replace all the removed plants and we are in the process of deciding exactly what will work best in these

spaces. (It is probably worth mentioning here that the Council are in the process of planning work that needs to be carried out in the arena as a whole – we have engaged with this process and Carol Middleton and Ian Christie have met with Council staff to ensure we are kept in the loop).

APPLE TREES....VISITOR'S CENTRE.....STILL ALIVE!!

Plot G

Ian Christie writes:

The brief of this Group was “to ensure that Plot G...is not developed but is retained and landscaped as open space so as to maintain the open parkland character of this part of the Castlefield Conservation Area.” In March this year the Council gave planning permission for 24 apartments on Plot G, so we did not succeed in our aim.

Our Committee decided earlier this month that the Forum should now seek to work with the owners/developers of Plot G, the Council & Peel Holdings to link, visually and physically, the open space which will remain on the front third of Plot G with the semi-circular granite sett area by the canal. This was an idea we first raised with the developer's representatives in April last year. And two weeks ago, on walkabout around the canal basin with Forum representatives, Peter Parkinson from Peel Holdings which owns the Bridgewater Canal and parts of the Castlefield basin, agreed he would be happy to do this.

As a result, the Action Group has agreed to 'park' itself for the time being with a view to reviving itself when discussions about the sett area seem appropriate.

ENDS