

ISSUE 1

AUTUMN/WINTER 2018

A PUBLICATION BY GENR8 DEVELOPMENTS

Genr8

Turning Possibilities into Places

FEATURING:

ROCHDALE RIVERSIDE
SMITHFIELD, STOKE-ON-TRENT



Genr8 specialises in development that creates aspirational, stimulating and sustainable environments where people spend time and communities will grow and flourish.

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GENR8DEVELOPMENTS.COM

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Hello from Genr8

The first issue of our new magazine focusses on the great work the team have been part of over recent years.



RICHARD INGHAM
Partner

Our business was 10 years young in February of this year. From a standing start, we have achieved much of what we set out to do and hopefully done it with smiles on our faces. The industry has undergone considerable change during that period and our business has adapted to meet these changes.

We are Developers, but our business now encompasses a full range of development services. We are also Development Managers, Asset Managers and Investors. And this year, we brought Project Management



MIKE SMITH
Partner

Services in house. All of this to provide our partners and clients with a first class service across the complete development spectrum.

Our mixed-use development experience has seen our award-winning Smithfield Stoke-on-Trent project already gain recognition (p.8) and our Halifax scheme nearing completion (p.26). In this issue we hope you'll find plenty of ideas and inspiration, including a Q&A with Genr8 partner Richard Ingham (p.24). Dig in and discover more about life at Genr8.



Development that delivers results

We believe in the impact of regeneration. Our developments transform neglected areas into thriving aspirational environments with a focus on community and sustainability. We aim to create homes, workplaces, leisure and retail districts with a difference.

Our experience is matched by a dedication to creating quality developments that exceed expectation. Follow us as we turn possibilities into places.



JOHN EARLY
Partner

Thoughts from John Early: Smart Cities

One of Genr8’s founding partners John Early led the Amec team that delivered Incheon Bridge, Seoul. With a total project cost of \$1.2 bn it is one of the longest fixed-link sea crossings in the world. In June, he was invited back to chair a session at the international Smart Cities Symposium in Korea. Here are his thoughts...

The future’s looking smart.

With cities consuming over 70% of the world’s energy and by 2050 expected to house 70% of the world’s forecast population of 6.5bn, the continued development of smart technology and systems is vital to enhance the overall quality of life for the residents who populate those cities.

Holding a conference on this subject in Korea was totally appropriate, as Korea has made it a key goal to become a world leader in smart cities by recognising its vital importance and leading pilot projects to progress the future of smart city development. Its Songdo new city development just outside Seoul is recognised as one of the top smart city developments in the world. It already has completed 22m sq ft of space with all its major buildings on or beyond LEED requirements. When I finished working in Korea, 10 years ago, it was just reclaimed seafront land!

The focus of the event, which was partly sponsored by the Korean Government, was the future of smart cities, with experts from across the world sharing their case studies and expertise to help establish trends and develop industry standards.

With around 250 professionals in attendance, the symposium was just big enough to provide an exciting buzz but intimate enough to really get to grips with some of the fascinating topics being discussed.

The contrast between creating smart cities from scratch and adapting infrastructure in existing cities was a recurring theme in discussions and presentations. Songdo is a good practical example of what can be achieved with a blank piece of paper.

The most futuristic was a presentation by Keith Martin, the project director of the NEOM project in Saudi Arabia. NEOM is a proposed \$500bn megacity in the north west of the country. Amongst other features it will contain a network of underground common service tunnels dealing with utilities, waste and security services. Will it be built? Well, a lot of preliminary work has already been completed but it was conceived at a time when oil prices were considerably higher than they are today!

Dr. Dae Yeon Cho, Head of IPMA’s Special Interest Group for Smart Cities, discussed the smart cities that have been in development in Korea since 2004. The ‘ubiquitous cities’ concept is defined as cities where citizens’ lives are improved by technologies used consistently throughout the whole city infrastructure. The concept relies on high utilisation of services by citizens – so the natural conclusion is that citizens should actively participate in the key stages of development. Experts need to ensure the services provided by the smart city are actually useful to the people who live within it!

A presentation from Alibaba showcased the use of big data within smart cities. Where countries in Asia focus on monitoring traffic control, the focus in Europe is on optimising current infrastructure such as reducing emissions, cost and travelling time. Services currently in development include smart parking solutions though, again, the main question returned to how the solutions on offer could improve the lives of actual citizens in practice rather than simply in theory.

One visit that was close to my own heart was the visit to the Incheon Bridge control centre where delegates were given a presentation on some very impressive traffic control technology, including systems currently under development to predict potential accident occurrences.

One common theme occurred throughout the symposium – no ‘one size fits all’. Each city poses its own specific challenges, and solutions across different countries cannot be globally streamlined. Governmental and economical challenges, for starters, mean each city must be considered individually, but sharing best practice and system developments will speed up progress and reduce cost.

Will we ever be able to create a fully sustainable smart city that is a hub for all things futuristic? As an industry, we’ll certainly try, but always remembering it’s not what software does, it’s what the user does.



↑
Seoul, Korea



1 Smithfield, Stoke-on-Trent

Creating a community: Smithfield Stoke-on-Trent

As a key ingredient of its regeneration agenda, Stoke-on-Trent City Council had an ambition to deliver a transformational new business quarter for the city. They selected Genr8 to deliver this vision and Smithfield was born: a £200m mixed-use quarter for Stoke-on-Trent. The name pays homage to the original Smithfield bottle works on the site, giving a nod to the site's past but demonstrating dedication to its future.

The city's distinctive new mixed-use district incorporates residential and office space, hotel and restaurants as well as a public realm for all to enjoy.

smithfieldstoke.com



A new Stoke-on-Trent.

Stoke-on-Trent is at the centre of the north-south, east-west gateway. Located between Manchester and Birmingham, the city provides excellent connectivity by road, rail or air travel (you can reach Manchester, Birmingham, and East Midlands airport all within an hour). With London just an hour and a half away by train, it's no wonder global brands such as Bet 365 and Vodafone operate from here.

Whilst there were many fantastic attributes it was time for a city centre refresh.

↑
Smithfield,
Stoke-on-Trent

The Smithfield development needed to focus on bringing the city together and using its advantageous location in the heart of Stoke-on-Trent to provide a link between both new and existing areas of the city centre.

The office buildings and residential apartment blocks have been designed alongside an exciting new public realm, which includes a central public square and a new pedestrian boulevard. This new communal space has been designed to connect the site to the surrounding city centre, providing a seamless link to the wider area.

Designed to be different.

The development's fresh look and feel has been developed to appeal to the modern occupier. Smithfield features the highest architectural and urban design quality from leading designers. We have also incorporated innovative techniques to minimise energy use.

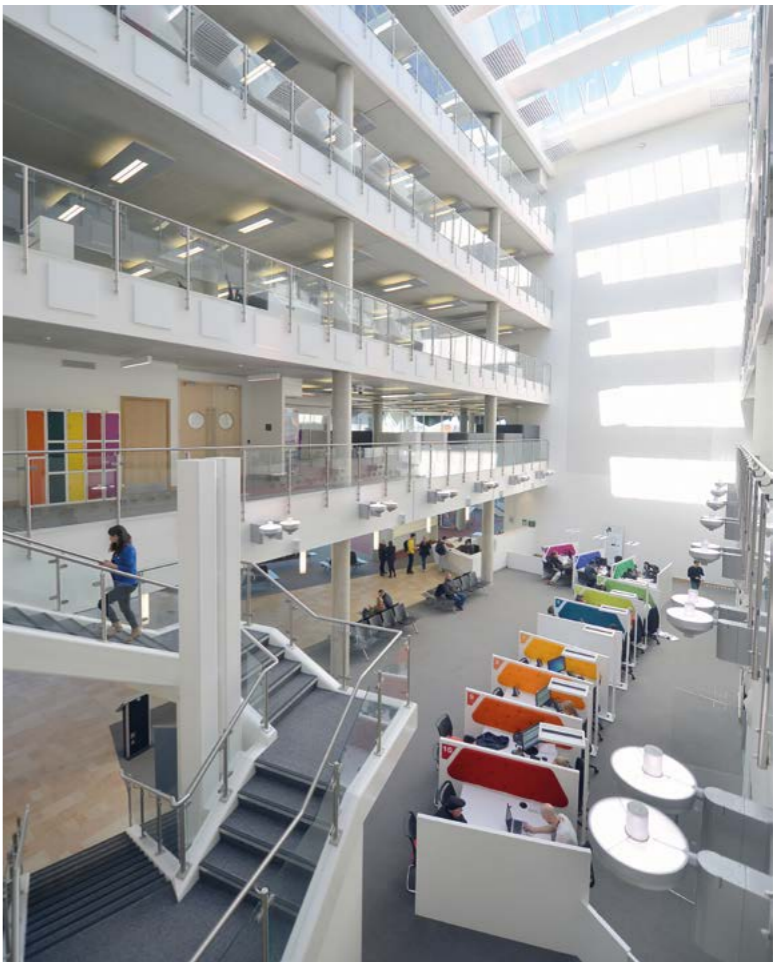


A workplace paradise.

The first phase of development comprised 210,000 sq ft of Grade A office space, with complementary leisure accommodation at ground floor. At 1 Smithfield we have created a public sector hub from which Stoke-on-Trent City Council delivers front line services. The second building, 2 Smithfield is now fully let to private sector businesses. In total both buildings are home to 1,700 workers. Designed by leading architects RHWL to a high specification these two office buildings set a new benchmark for quality in the city.

The development was also awarded an "Excellent" BREEAM rating, a first for the city and putting Smithfield Stoke-on-Trent within the top 10% of new non-domestic buildings in the UK. Further office accommodation is in the pipeline and will cater for demand that has now been proven. We secured planning permission for the next two office buildings totally 180,000 sq ft in December in 2018.

The design hints at the site's industrial heritage through 2 Smithfield's use of two varieties of the local Staffordshire Blue brick while 1 Smithfield takes inspiration from iconic local ceramics designer Clarice Cliff.



↗
1 Smithfield,
Stoke-on-Trent



→
1 & 2 Smithfield,
Stoke-on-Trent



Transforming city living.

But Smithfield is not just all about work, it is a mixed-use community. 277 contemporary, Build-to-Rent apartments are being delivered to provide quality city centre living. Construction of the first block began earlier this year and the first homes will be available to rent from Q3 2019 - so watch this space.

The two 11-storey apartment blocks are the first development of their kind in Stoke-on-Trent. These new apartments will improve the city living offer by providing concierged community-focussed rental options. Community will be at the heart of these living spaces, with an entrance lobby, postal room, cycle storage, co-working library, bookable function rooms with kitchen spaces, roof terrace with BBQ facilities and a private, well-landscaped courtyard.

Commercial units at ground floor and lower ground levels will engage with the public but could also provide additional facilities on site to the residential tenants. The apartments are being built with style and practicality in mind. They have high-quality, modern and robust finishes and are also designed with energy efficiency and low running costs in mind.

↑
Build-to-Rent residential
at Smithfield



Hilton Garden Inn

Also coming out of the ground is Genr8's 140 bed Hilton Garden Inn which is set to revolutionise the hospitality offer in the city. Currently only a Premier Inn leads the way in the city and the addition of one of Hilton's premier brands will offer facilities of a higher quality than ever before.

Funding hotel development is one of the most challenging areas possible. Genr8 has taken an innovative approach to delivery here, by becoming both the developer, investor and long term owner of the hotel. Though this carried more risk, we were prepared to take it as we believed so strongly in the project. We do think such an approach gives us an edge over our competitors and having now forged a partnership with Hilton Hotels this is an investment model we can bring to other opportunities. In Stoke-on-Trent we are in no doubt it will be a success and a catalyst for further growth. Hilton Garden Inn, Stoke-on-Trent will welcome its first visitors in late 2019.

In addition to the hotel, the Smithfield development has the potential to deliver up to 60,000 sq ft of ground floor retail and leisure space. With over 1,000 car parking spaces available within a two-minute walk, the development is a perfect investment opportunity for retailers and businesses.

←
Hilton Garden Inn,
Smithfield

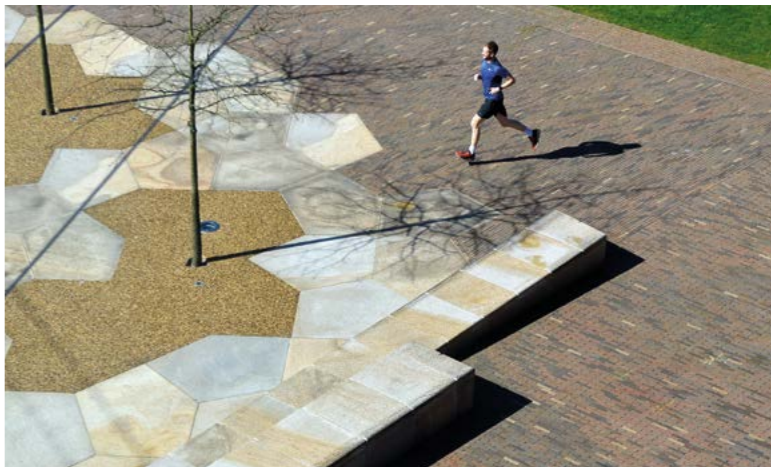
A retail and leisure offering will benefit both the business and residential community, attracting additional footfall and encouraging a more vibrant atmosphere in the evenings and weekends. We're excited to see Stoke-On-Trent's new community develop to become an all-purpose hub for residents, professionals and visitors.

The future of Smithfield.

Smithfield continues to go from strength to strength. A shared vision for change created a partnership with Stoke-on-Trent City Council that delivered the first phase of development. This has been the catalyst and demand creator for further transformation that is repositioning the city.

Midlands Planning & Placemaking Awards Winner 2016

Public realm Smithfield
↓



City of Spires in the Spotlight



Cities that
inspire us:
Copenhagen

It's important for us to understand, appreciate and take inspiration from architecture across the world.

Copenhagen, Denmark's capital, is well known for its stunning architecture and pride in impressive craftsmanship. The city, voted Wallpaper*'s Best City in 2016, is well and truly ahead of the design curve, with a number of developments and initiatives providing plenty of design inspiration.

Copenhagen was one of the first cities the Genr8 team visited when the business was initially established. We travelled to many places gaining an understanding of successful cities, and what makes them so special – and Copenhagen certainly stood out.



A shopper's paradise.

Did you know Strøget is one of the world's longest pedestrian-only shopping avenues? Retail districts with a strong history are always particularly attractive to tourists, and this particular shopping district is a hub for big brands and tourist shops. The street is also brought to life by events and street entertainers. It's interesting that the pedestrianisation of the street sparked protest and controversy, but its innovation has now inspired similar streets and districts all over the world.

All about the green.

Copenhagen is also known for its eco-friendly focus. From electric buses to organic bamboo clothing, the drive for sustainability is huge and the city looks to be on track to become the world's first carbon-neutral capital by 2025.

Copenhagen residents and visitors have plenty of access to green space, thanks to the development of a number of "pocket parks". Small spaces of unused land are being converted to provide tranquil parks. Not only do these parks carry aesthetic and community benefits a they also provide flood prevention as they are developed to serve as small reservoirs.

Urban open space, Superkilen park, is another key outdoor area for residents. The park incorporates picnic areas, cafés, fountains and sports and sculptures.

A place to remember.

Tivoli Gardens is loved by visitors all over the world, and is even said to have inspired Walt Disney's famous theme parks. The location provides something for everyone: rides, entertainment, a regular live music program, stunning architecture and gardens. The coloured lights that come alive at night help to add an element of magic, too, and the Gardens are transformed for seasonal events such as Halloween. This well developed location is a wonderful example of how to create a varied and inspiring destination.

↑
Perspective of urban
design in Copenhagen

Designs that shape the city.

Named the world's best residential house in 2011, 8TALLET is a leading housing development designed by Bjarke Ingels Group (BIG Group). The focus is on exceptional design that bring the community together – residents have access to common rooms, a café and an intranet to encourage them to create community groups and connect with one another. 8TALLET (aka 8House) is so impressive, visitors can even book a guided tour to immerse themselves in the day-to-day life of the residents.

The BIG Group also designed the VM Houses and the VM Mountain, stunning award-winning residential developments.

The Silo is a former grain silo turned residential neighbourhood. COBE architects' design brings a modern, refreshed look to an industrious setting. As well as providing stunning housing options, visitors are invited to the Restaurant Silo on the 17th floor or to peruse an exhibition on the ground floor.

Architects to admire.

Many of Arne Jacobsen's designs can be found in Copenhagen, including the Radisson Blu Royal Hotel. You'll also spot architect firm Lundgaard & Tranberg Arkitekter's mixed-use development, Axel Towers, in most popular travel guides.

Henning Larsen designed one of the most famous locations in Copenhagen, the Royal Danish Opera House. For those with a greater interest in sport than art, visit Nord Architects' Ørestad Street Hall. The sports centre can be used for both inside and outside activities, with impressive windows all round the building.



↑
Maximising the waterfront
in Copenhagen

“We like to push boundaries and we always look beyond the ‘red line’. Innovators such as Jan Gehl bring a freshness and a new perspective to urban design”

MIKE SMITH

Having worked with him previously, we were already familiar with the work of Jan Gehl, founder of Gehl Architecture, global leaders in people centred urban design and advisors on developments such as Carlsberg City District in Copenhagen. Gehl's unique focus is designing people first cities and developments where enjoyable and exciting urban life is the priority.

Our visit convinced us that Jan and his talented team could add huge value to our Smithfield scheme in Stoke-on-Trent and we appointed the practice to work on the urban design and public realm concept. We have not been disappointed.

From England's Midland's to Denmark's capital you can find plenty of inspiration from Danish design. You are sure to find stunning architecture and developments from world leading innovators wherever you turn in Copenhagen.



Rochdale Rejuvenates

Rochdale Riverside will be at the heart of Rochdale's impressive new town centre. The 200,000 sq ft town centre retail and leisure destination is just part of a £400 million investment in Rochdale's town centre, which includes a Metrolink extension to Manchester and new transport interchange.

The overarching aim is to establish Rochdale as 'the best place for business' in Greater Manchester. Rochdale's town centre regeneration has already seen significant developments, including the award-winning Number One Riverside library and Council offices building.

The leisure centre, Rochdale Pioneers Museum and Rochdale Sixth Form College have also been key projects in developing the town and its facilities.

Major brands are investing in the town centre too, such as the Tetrosyl Group converting Newgate House into their corporate headquarters.

The next step will be the completion of a new retail and leisure destination to create a welcoming hub at the heart of Rochdale.

rochdaleriverside.com

Rochdale Riverside



These are challenging times for the retail and leisure sector. So much so that new schemes are very few and far between. But we felt that Rochdale was different. A town with such a rich cultural heritage and the birthplace of the co-operative movement, its retail offering fell short and leisure facilities were virtually non-existent.

But for us that meant one thing – opportunity. We were incredibly impressed with the Council's 'can do' attitude and steadfast commitment to a £400m investment plan, a plan that had already seen delivery of No 1 Riverside, the Metrolink terminus and transport interchange, a new leisure centre, and public realm improvements amongst many more initiatives.

What we saw was a lack of representation by brands who ought to have been here but weren't. A significant factor was a lack of large footprint accommodation, in part

a consequence of Rochdale's topography. So we set about changing that and in partnership with the Council, assembled a significant and, importantly, level site at the heart of the town which had previously housed the old bus station and Council offices. T.P.Bennett then designed us a 200,000 sq ft scheme that would transform Rochdale's retail and leisure offer.

We needed pre-lets, and following a huge marketing effort we secured a Marks & Spencer flagship, Reel Cinemas, Next, River Island, Boots and JD Sports. And now we had something.

None of this happened overnight and we have been admirably supported throughout by our trusted funding partner Kajima, who shares our vision and whose commitment has never wavered.

And still we weren't quite there. Viability was a huge challenge. So in conjunction with Rochdale Council we assembled a funding package which saw the Council taking an investment position that created enough value to make the scheme happen. Once M&G Investments bought into this the scheme was finally ready to go, and Willmott Dixon Construction commenced work in February this year.

Rochdale Riverside will open its doors to customers in Easter 2020.

Genr8 partner Mike Smith is incredibly proud of the team's achievements. "People said to us – 'A retail scheme in Rochdale, are you sure?' But we believed in it and never gave up. We are pretty much 70% let now and it will be one of only a very few schemes to open in 2020. It's testament to everyone's hard work and can do approach. And a rock solid partnership with Rochdale Council. We don't like easy, we like difficult!"

Creating better places for people



Rochdale's Retail Footprint Score & Class has improved from number 30 (out of 456) to number 11 (out of 457) regionally and from number 227 (out of 4,308) to number 97 (out of 4,324) in the national ranking thanks to the significant investment in the town's development. Genr8 is extremely proud to be part of the next big step in the journey: the Rochdale Riverside.

The benefits of the development are particularly prominent for Rochdale residents – Rochdale Riverside will aim to bring at least 1,000 full-time jobs to the area and boost the economy by £17 million a year.



[Rochdale Riverside](#)



Innovation in design and delivery

←
Rochdale Riverside





Q&A with Richard Ingham

Genr8 partner Richard Ingham has been an essential talent within the business from the beginning. We know him well... but do you?

What does a week in the life of Richard Ingham look like?

The beauty (and challenge) of what we do is that every day is different so there is no 'typical' week.

Much of my week is spent developing our schemes with the project teams. Working with the best designers and other professionals is a key driver for us – it's fundamental to delivering great schemes and having some fun whilst we do it.

I also manage our relationships with our public sector and JV partners, making sure everyone is involved at every stage of the project.

The rest of my time is spent leading the Genr8 business. I'm lucky I enjoy what I do, because I spend such a lot of time doing it!

What was your very first role in the industry, and how has your career progressed?

I left school at 15 in 1989 and started work as a trainee quantity surveyor, working for a developer/contractor. To say I was thrown in at the deep end would be a massive understatement! My first employer went into administration during the recession of the early 1990s – this taught me a lot about the challenges of expanding a business in the good times, but also the importance of having a plan for when the music stops.

For the past 20 years my career has very much been focussed on urban regeneration. In the early years this had a particular emphasis on housing-led regeneration, such as my involvement with the groundbreaking regeneration work around the area where the Etihad Complex is now situated.

During my time at AMEC Developments I was responsible for a number of high profile mixed-use regeneration schemes including the now hugely successful Salford Central New Bailey project.

You left school at 15, but was the door to education still open to you?

I studied part-time at university for the first seven-eight years while I was working. Whilst it's not for everyone, from a personal perspective the experience I gained from starting work straight from school and also studying part time stood me in great stead.

Tell us about a development project that really stands out and why.

Our Smithfield development in Stoke-on-Trent ticks all of the boxes for me.

It's a comprehensive city centre regeneration scheme that is truly mixed-use. We've already delivered 200,00 sq ft of (now fully occupied) Grade A office space, and some fantastic public realm. We're also currently on site delivering a Hilton Garden Inn Hotel (which Genr8 will own) and Build-to-Rent residential accommodation with a good mix of ground floor leisure.

This offer will genuinely transform the city and bring the community together, and I'm incredibly proud that Genr8 is leading this project.

What's the secret to making a mixed-use development successful?

Developing a great public realm is particularly important. There also needs to be real focus on getting the ground floor spaces active and animated by the right kinds of occupiers.

Of course, projects don't happen by magic. Good estate management and bringing together the highest possible quality professional team is key.

What trends can we expect to see in the development industry in the next 5 years?

I think we'll see local authorities increasingly taking a lead in regeneration and development both from a funding and delivery perspective. The borrowing /funding abilities that local authorities have can unlock many regeneration schemes, which would otherwise be unviable.

This provides a changing landscape for the development industry in terms of the role of the 'traditional' developer and Genr8 are already very active in this space.

When you're not working, what do you like to get up to?

I have a young family and this takes up much of my time outside of Genr8 and provides the perfect 'switch off' from work life the minute the door opens at home!

I love getting out into the outdoors be that on my mountain bike or climbing the fells in the Lake District – we're so lucky to have such fantastic landscapes right on our doorstep.

I've also been a season ticket holder at Manchester's only premier league team (they play in blue for those of you that aren't sure) since the mid 80's – so you'll find me with a smile on my face most Saturday afternoons!

Where is your favourite city, and what's next on your travel to-do list?

Manchester, of course! Joking aside, there are far too many to single out. Florence, Sydney and Bangkok would all be in my top ten, though. I'm a last-minute adventurer so I'm not sure where's next but Vietnam and Cambodia are definitely on the list.



An exciting new chapter: Halifax

Our vision.

The former brownfield site in Halifax is being developed as part of Genr8’s £50m transformational regeneration scheme. The mixed-use project will provide new employment space, high quality family housing and a new community nature reserve providing exciting new opportunities for the local area.

As one of the few remaining flat sites of scale in the Calder Valley, Calderdale Council had identified the former sewage works and industrial site as the key opportunity to deliver desperately needed new employment space and family housing in the borough. Having established a vision for the site, Genr8 were selected as the Council’s development partner and set about establishing a strategy for the delivery of this complex scheme.

Working with Urban Initiatives, we developed a masterplan and infrastructure strategy focussed on opening up this fabulous canal and riverside site and connecting it back to the town centre.

The site presented just about every technical and planning challenge you could imagine from historic contamination, complex flood plain issues, the need for new highway bridges across canal and river, and constructing a new 1.5km highway immediately adjacent to the railway line.

Genr8 partner Richard Ingham believes the scheme is a great example of Genr8’s ability to deliver schemes others would shy away from.



“From both a technical and viability perspective, at various stages this scheme was arguably completely undevelopable. However, through our vision and tenacity and the strength of our partnership with Calderdale Council we made the undeliverable deliverable!”

RICHARD INGHAM



Halifax Infrastructure

Overcoming the infrastructure challenge.

The former sewage and mill works presented an initial challenge. We delivered £15m of infrastructure to facilitate development of the site.

This included innovative on site treatment of contaminated material to provide a remediated development platform for the subsequent development.

We also delivered significant flood infrastructure and remodelling of the River Calder.

The new nature reserve and green corridor is not only vital to the local environmental biodiversity, but also provides residents and tenants with a stunning green open space to enjoy and connect with nature. Transport across the site and connection to the wider area also presented an issue. To overcome this, we developed new highway bridges over the river and canal, and a new 1.5km link road and offsite junction to ensure safety and connectivity.

Homes at Halifax



↑
Halifax development

Employment at Halifax
↓

An inspiring working environment.

Following extensive remediation of the area, we delivered an employment scheme in partnership with CDP Marshall, to encourage entrepreneurs and organisations to house their business at the development.

The 100,000 sq ft of high quality employment space on offer provided much needed business space for the Calder Valley and wider West Yorkshire region. To date, all of the units are now fully occupied, with staff members enjoying the exciting and enriching working environment.



A new community nature reserve.

Working with the Yorkshire Wildlife Trust we've delivered a fabulous new community nature reserve including wetlands and woodland trails. We're really proud of what will be a great legacy for the local area.

→
Halifax nature reserve



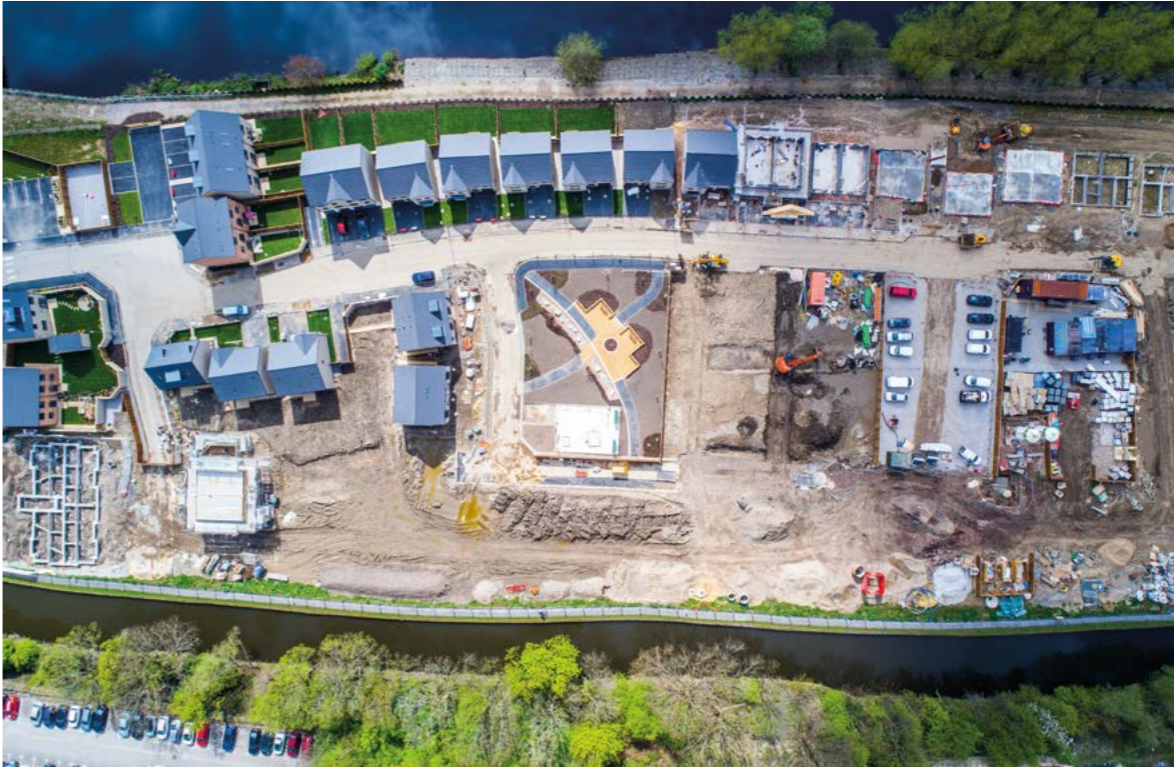
A home by the riverside.

150 beautiful new family homes are being delivered in partnership with Taylor Wimpey. The impressive show houses set on the beautiful river and canalside island site were opened in Autumn 2016, and more than half of the 150 homes are now occupied by families living in our stunning new development.

“Our Halifax development proved to be one of the most challenging schemes we have ever delivered. We’re absolutely delighted to see the business space and the majority of the new homes now fully occupied”

RICHARD INGHAM

Halifax homes under construction
↓



Music in placemaking

We can all relate to music of some kind, a particular song or piece that connects us to a certain mood or emotional response. It's been scientifically proven that music links to our emotions – music has even been shown to decrease our levels of stress hormones, lower our blood pressure and slow down our pulse and heart rate.

Aside from it physically affecting us – humans are big music fans. Recent research shows that people consider music to be more valuable to their lives than sport, art, movies and books/newspapers.

In-tune offices.

Music in the workplace contributes a number of benefits:

- Enhanced wellbeing
- Colleague cohesion
- Better productivity
- Enjoyable office environment

A survey commissioned by PPL and PRS for Music found that 77% of respondents thought music at work increased their overall morale and boosted the office atmosphere.

LinkedIn's music program goes a step further. Five of its offices are now equipped with high-end music equipment, to encourage employees to connect with one another and create music.

Michael Oliver, Director of Engineering at LinkedIn and head of the music program (which involved 5,300 employees), wrote in 2015: "While the benefits to employees are obvious, we have uncovered many benefits to the company as well. Musicians perform, which improves the office culture. The program improves the company's marketability to potential employees, especially musicians, both as a specific perk and also as a "think different" means of demonstrating our commitment to fun."

Music positively affects us both physically and emotionally, so it makes sense to utilise this when looking for ways to create a positive working environment. You don't need to go full-scale as LinkedIn has done – why not create an office playlist everyone in the team can contribute to?

So what does this mean for placemakers?

Music's impact in the public realm is prominent, too. Campaigns such as 'Music Walk', commissioned for the 2012 BBC Proms season, gave participants the opportunity to listen to various contemporary music pieces while moving through different urban environments in London. This is a particularly innovative way of heightening visitor experience through music.

Brands should also consider using music to demonstrate brand personality. By playing music with a style, tempo and genre that suits the brand personality, consumers will experience an enhanced and appropriate shopping atmosphere. Do you want to shop for a wedding dress while listening to Eminem? Probably not. Considering the type of music that suits your brand is key.

According to the Milliman study, shoppers spent more money when slow-tempo music was played. Instead of whizzing through the shop in time to high-tempo tunes, consumers took their pace from the slower music and browsed (thus having an extra bit of time to add to their basket).

Nurturing an organic music scene could also be a smart move for placemakers. Simply encouraging local talent to share their skills in open and social spaces is not only a plus point for musicians, but music fans too.

Whether it's live music outside or a specially created auditory experience, music shouldn't be overlooked when planning your placemaking.

What's on your playlist?



It would be 1978 I think, Maxwell Hall, Salford University, when I first saw The Jam live. I was 18 and they blew me away. I've followed Paul Weller pretty much ever since really, and have been to more venues than I care to remember. Some great ones along the way – wonderful places like the Empress Ballrooms in Blackpool sticks in the memory. I even slept on Sheffield station once on the way back from a last night of a tour at Bath Pavilion!

What I admire most about Weller is that on stage he always gives 120 percent, never anything less. It's a work ethic in a way. He was 60 this year, but he's still kicking it.



↑
Paul Weller

What's your soundtrack?

Do you enjoy the office radio, shopping soundtracks or playing tunes through your headphones on your commute? Music is an integral part of our life, and part of many placemaking initiatives.

David Bowie
↓

What's on your playlist?



I'd say David Bowie, James and Groove Armada are getting the most hammer on my Spotify playlist currently. David Bowie should be on every playlist.

There's something for everyone amongst the Bowie repertoire. He's not only a musical genius – he was an adventurous, surprising, multi-talented risk-taker. If that isn't inspirational, I don't know what is.



Would you like us to be part of
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Visit us:

Genr8 Developments
5th Floor, Parsonage Chambers
3 The Parsonage, Manchester M3 2HW

Contact us:

T: 0161 833 9097
E: rachael@genr8developments.com

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