

ISSUE 2

A PUBLICATION BY GENR8 DEVELOPMENTS

Genr8

# We're about Delivering Change

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FEATURING:  
ROCHDALE RIVERSIDE  
SMITHFIELD, STOKE-ON-TRENT

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FAMOUS  
WHEN  
DEAD

Genr8 brings regeneration, investment and development to towns and cities across the country. Our goal is to create the best places through an entrepreneurial and innovative approach to what we do.

ISSUE 2

A PUBLICATION BY  
GENR8 DEVELOPMENTS  
GENR8DEVELOPMENTS.COM

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Location: 2 Parliament Row, Hanley

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# A snapshot of the year

BY MIKE SMITH & RICHARD INGHAM



Understatement being a staple of traditional English culture I will merely say that the last eighteen months or so have been something of a roller coaster. On the business front we have faced contractor insolvency and a dramatically declining retail and leisure sector that has meant we have had to rethink what our town centres can and should be. We have met both of these challenges head on and emerged the stronger.

And at the time of writing we remain in the grip of a global pandemic that has been life-changing for most, sadly more so for some than others. We have learned to adapt our business practices and also had much time to reflect. As the groundbreaking vaccines are rolled out more widely we can hopefully begin to think and plan for a return to some kind of 'normality' and it will be very interesting to see which of the good bits of home working we have clung on to. Perhaps that is something for the next issue.

**“We have met both of these challenges head on and emerged the stronger.”**

MIKE SMITH



Amongst all of this we have successfully delivered further phases of two flagship projects:

In late Summer 2019 our main contractor at Smithfield Stoke-on-Trent went into liquidation. Every developer's nightmare. However, we made the immediate decision to take control and were back on site within 48 hours. A measured risk in terms of taking on the construction management role, and in 2020 despite the challenges of the pandemic we successfully delivered 151 Build-to-Rent apartments of the highest quality and a 140 bed Hilton Garden Inn.

Lockdown (the first one) came two weeks before we were due to complete Rochdale Riverside. Somehow, and with the help of our contractor partner Willmott Dixon we got it over the line, the latest phase of Rochdale's regeneration.

And Genr8 has continued to grow. A number of new additions to the team to keep us on our toes.

More of all this to follow...

# Say hello to the new team

**LAUREN GAVAGHAN**  
Development Manager

Lauren joined Genr8 in early 2019 following roles with JLL and Peel Land & Property where she was responsible for retail and leisure provision in key mixed-use schemes. Since joining Genr8, she has been focused on the delivery of Rochdale Riverside, with the first phase delivered in Easter 2020 and future phases to follow.

**MATTHEW BRENNAN**  
Project Manager

Matt joined Genr8 in July 2019 to join an expanding Project Management team and gain experience "Client Side". Previously working with a range of Clients on various high-profile schemes at Walker Sime, Matt continues to be involved in Genr8's Smithfield and Rochdale Developments including the delivery of the Smithfield Hilton Garden Inn and MSCP and Rochdale Riverside Phase 2.

**JOEL CHANDLER**  
Development Manager

Joel joined Genr8 from McCarthy & Stone where he sourced development opportunities throughout the North West. Prior to this he worked for The Canals & Rivers Trust on its UK regeneration portfolio. He is leading on the delivery of Smithfield Stoke-on-Trent, a new mixed-use quarter extending to approximately 1m sq ft.

**ALAN HALL**  
Projects Director

Alan joined Genr8 at the beginning of 2019 to support the company in the management and delivery of its existing and future development portfolio and to build its Project Management Services offer for external clients and partners.

He joined from Turner & Townsend where he had been responsible for the delivery of a number of high rise residential projects in Manchester and Salford.

**KEV LE VOI**  
Senior Projects Manager

Kev has 15 years experience delivering new build and refurbishment projects. Kev is leading the technical team for our Rochdale Riverside Phase 2 development programme and joined from Zerum where he led on the delivery of University Academy 92 – the joint venture between Lancaster University & Class of 92. From 2010 to 2016 Kev was with Deloitte Real Estate working with clients including Chetham's School of Music, Heriot Watt University, University of Warwick and Travel Counsellors.





# Genr8 Management Services



↑  
St Anns, Cheadle  
←  
The GMSL Team

Established in 2017, Genr8 Management Services Ltd is Genr8's in-house consultancy delivering Construction and Project Management services to Genr8's own projects and also to external clients.

Mike Smith explains: "We had become frustrated by the service, or lack of it as we saw it, being provided by external agencies. Originally we had sought out smaller niche practices which were very client focussed and this worked really well. We could depend on dedicated Director level engagement, and we can be quite demanding apparently! Unfortunately these types of successful businesses were being swallowed up by global corporates and increasingly we felt that we became a number, it was all about fee targets. It wasn't working.

Stuart Dick had been a supporter of our business from the beginning, having opened Christal Management's Manchester Office. After the Christal business was sold, Stuart was contemplating a life in semi-retirement

in the west of Scotland where we could no longer harass him. So we took him to Chester Races and persuaded him that setting up GMSL with us was what he had always wanted to do!

We haven't looked back. Stuart's standing in his field is second to none and we now have a very talented team of Project Managers delivering PM and Employers Agent services to the business"

**"GMSL is a stand-alone business also providing services to external clients"**

The GMSL team has delivered practical completion at Rochdale Riverside, and Clayworks and the Hilton Garden Inn in Stoke-on-Trent. Stoke has been particularly challenging given the insolvency of main contractor Pochin in July 2019 when the buildings were only two thirds complete. The team, under Alan Hall's leadership, recovered the projects through a Construction Management process and successfully delivered them for the business."

**"We are very keen to expand this side of the business and are actively looking for new opportunities where owners and developers require a delivery capability"**

STUART DICK

→  
Stuart Dick  
Development Director



GMSL is a standalone business also providing services to external clients. In Cheadle, Cheshire, GMSL has supported St Ann's Hospice (celebrating its 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary) as it submitted a Planning Application for a new world class 24 bed Hospice at its Heald Green site.

# Smithfield update

Over the last 18 months we've faced some huge challenges at Smithfield, none more so than the insolvency of our main contractor on the Hilton Garden Inn and Clayworks schemes, in August 2019. At the time, both schemes were well on their way towards completion. Following the insolvency we took the immediate decision to appoint Willmott Dixon as our Construction Manager and were back on site on both projects within 48 hours. The fact that we were able to successfully complete both projects in 2020 despite this, and the pandemic, is a huge testament to both teams, which were led tirelessly by our Project Director Alan Hall – who I think aged at least 5 years in the process!

With the addition of the Hilton Hotel and Clayworks Build-to-Rent apartments, Smithfield has continued to evolve as the city's new thriving mixed-use quarter. We also welcomed more new office occupiers to 1 & 2 Smithfield joining Davis Group and Water Plus, SoTCC and North Staffs Police.

Putting people first was a fundamental guiding principle of the Smithfield masterplan we developed with leading Scandinavian urban design practice Gehl Architects. We've invested hugely to create an attractive and flexible public realm for the use of workers, residents and visitors. Pre pandemic we hosted a programme of events and activities for residents, neighbours and the people

of Stoke, from the Beats & Eats music and food festival to Christmas markets, carols and even reindeers.

The estate management has been handed over to specialist property and estate managers, Crowd UK, who have overseen a programme to continuously improve the quality, use and management of the public realm.

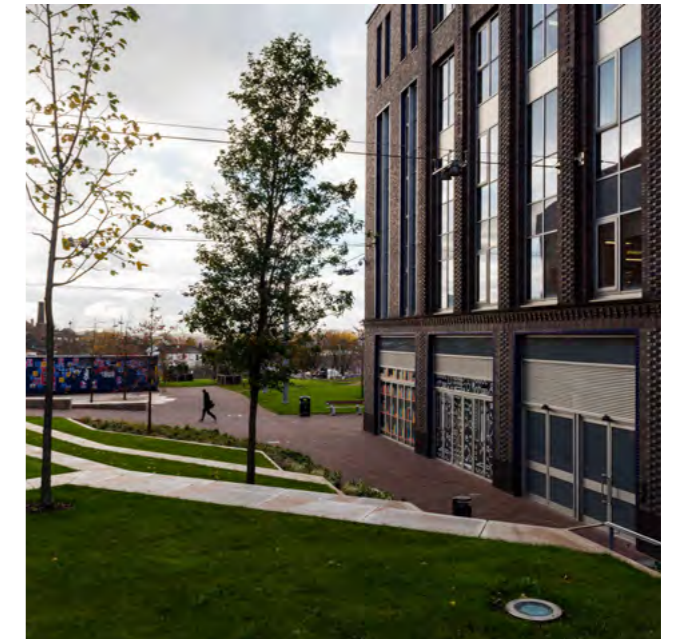
Immediately adjacent to Smithfield, the fantastic new extension of The Potteries Museum will display the RW388 Spitfire. Opening in Spring 2021 and featuring glass walls, it enables the public to see the plane 24 hours a day, and all perfectly visible from Smithfield.



←  
Beats & Eats festival  
at Smithfield



Christmas market  
at Smithfield



With over 1,500 people working in 1 & 2 Smithfield, 151 apartments in Clayworks and 140 bedroom Hilton Garden Inn Hotel, the community here is growing and there is a real sense of belonging and stewardship of the place that gives it its distinctive feel. The placemaking strategy being implemented integrates connectivity, community, technology and tenure and will build upon what is already being achieved and ensure Smithfield remains an exemplar mixed-use community.



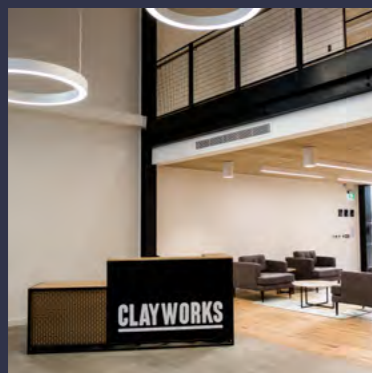
"The success and future success of Smithfield is built around wellbeing, sustainability, technology, community and place animation. Smithfield delivers all of these through its well designed masterplan and the quality of the on-site management and the strong relationship they have with tenants and residents."

Flexibility is also fundamental, even before Covid this was true, but this has become even more relevant as work patterns are changing quicker than ever. Agility and flexibility will be important to all businesses moving forwards. Predicting growth can be difficult, but through the managed workspace offer, Smithfield Works, the opportunity to provide occupiers with a full range of workspace solutions from smaller private offices up to larger floor plates exists here."

Will Lewis, OBI



CGI aerial of  
Smithfield



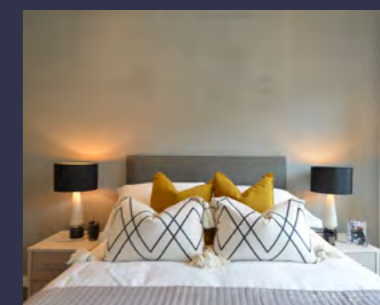
# CLAYWORKS

## APARTMENTS

This eleven storey Build-to-Rent apartment scheme is the first development of its kind for Stoke-on-Trent and has transformed rental living in the city.



The Clayworks community is at the heart of these living spaces, with a large, welcoming lobby, postal room, cycle storage, co-working space, bookable function rooms with kitchen spaces, roof terrace with BBQ facilities and a private, green landscaped courtyard. The studios and one and two bedroom apartments have been designed to maximise space and light, and with the two-bedroom apartments having equally generous size bedrooms, these have been designed to appeal to those co-living as well as to couples. The bespoke furniture packs complement the apartment design and make it very easy for the residents to create stylish new homes effortlessly.



The 151 apartments that have been created so far are now home to existing, and new, Stoke-on-Trent residents, and is the first of two residential blocks that together will provide 277 Build-to-Rent homes at Smithfield.

Delivered in partnership with Fortior Homes, Clayworks has had a significant impact on the mixed-use nature of Smithfield, bringing a real sense of community and ownership. It's great to see people commuting to and from Smithfield and the scheme having transformed from a plan to a place inhabited by residents, workers and hotel guests, as well as the wider community.



**GRAHAM DODD**  
Managing Director of Development at Hilton

# An interview with Graham Dodd: The future of hospitality

"We were very much in a golden age of travel and there was a clear shift particularly in the younger generations to consume experiences as opposed to accumulating assets."

**Why Stoke, what was it that drew you to this opportunity?**

Firstly there was a gap in our UK distribution and intuitively, for a city with a population of 250,000, Hilton needed to be there. Secondly and most importantly, the drive and ambition shown by the local authority and Genr8 was fantastic.

**What is your favourite part aspect of the HGI Stoke project?**

People and companies have huge choice when choosing where to live, work, play and crucially invest. The regeneration story behind HGI Stoke and the wider Smithfield project is inspiring. Stoke is part of our increasing list of regeneration projects with innovative public sector stakeholders recognising the need for them to remain competitive, especially in a post Covid environment.

**What are the big changes that have occurred in hospitality in recent years? (Covid aside).**

We were very much in a golden age of travel and there was a clear shift particularly in the younger generations to consume experiences as opposed to accumulating assets. Hilton has been at the forefront of the industry to drive a seamless customer journey on a global scale for hotel guests through mobile technology advances such as digital key and choose your room. Recognising and rewarding customer loyalty and capturing that guest spend has been critical. Hard work behind the scenes particularly in the field of data analytics matched with the hard work of our Team Members delivering great customer service have been the key to our market-leading growth.

**What does the hospitality industry look like post Covid? (appreciate no crystal ball, but your opinion would be great).**

Every business faces the challenge of managing the day-to-day whilst trying to forecast the pace of recovery. Whilst the visibility around this is challenging and there may be subtle behavioural changes, I am confident about the future of this industry because the desire to travel and meet people is never going to go away. The importance of generating economic activity going forward is going to be a key building block for government and travel, tourism and hospitality is going to be front and centre of that. In real estate terms, we are now seeing significant opportunity to bring hotels to central locations more usually the preserve of retail occupiers. Those hotels best placed to meet the challenges going forward are those that are well located, future-proofed, fit-for purpose and efficient to operate and HGI Stoke-on-Trent is well placed in all of those categories.

**What (if?) have you enjoyed about partnering with Genr8 on this project?**

Genr8 is an extremely collaborative partner, not just for Hilton but for all stakeholders in this project. Richard, Mike and their team have demonstrated honesty, openness, creativity and a steely determination to solve problems and deliver. They are also great fun to work with!

**How are partnerships like the one with Genr8 and SoTCC important for the Hilton?**

Something like 65% of all new deals that Hilton signs globally, are with existing partners and they sign repeat deals with us because we deliver for them, allowing them to deliver for hotel guests. We are often their first choice hotel brand, without going through competitive tenders and we get to where we want to go more quickly, because we're not reinventing the wheel every time we sign a new deal.

**If you could go on holiday to any resort/hotel where would it be?**

If travelling overseas, it would have to be the Conrad Maldives Rangali Island. Absolute paradise and just the friendliest and most authentic service I have ever experienced.

In the UK and thinking more city break than leisure, I would have to pick Hilton London Bankside which again has incredible service. Tucked behind the Tate Modern, south of the river, it has great facilities and the Distillery Bar is a great place to kick back and chill out. It is a perfect base from which to explore the south bank and further afield in London.

**"Hilton has been at the forefront of the industry to drive a seamless customer journey on a global scale..."**



Images (clockwise) Hilton Garden Inn  
Reception, Room & Gym

Images (clockwise) Hilton Garden Inn  
Room & Public Realm





Public Realm and Hilton Garden Inn  
Restaurant and Bar



Hilton Garden  
Inn Restaurant  
and Bar



# What's next?



“The success and future success of Smithfield is built around wellbeing, sustainability, technology, community and place animation...”

WILL LEWIS, OBI

CGI of the MSCP  
↓

We will begin work early in 2021 on the new 730 space Smithfield multi-storey car park, another eye-catching exemplar building, which will be a significant further addition to the scheme and will replace sub-standard surface parking and serve Smithfield and the surrounding area.

The success of 1 & 2 Smithfield has continued to demonstrate the demand for city centre Grade A office accommodation. The pandemic has accelerated occupier trends as businesses continue to favour mixed-use environments, with a range of amenities, which benefit from high quality public realm. Environments that can support social interaction and promote health & well-being as part of their working life.



↑  
CGI of 3 Smithfield

Interior of 3 Smithfield  
↓



In Summer 2020 planning permission was granted for 3 Smithfield – our next stunning office building at Smithfield. Designed by Cartwright Pickard, 3 Smithfield will provide a further 62,000 sq ft of modern flexible space featuring state of the art facilities and building technology.

Smithfield Works is Genr8’s managed workspace concept which will provide a mix of shared office spaces, hot desking, private workspaces and open space which offers occupiers speed and ease of access to workspace accommodation, transparency of occupational costs and flexibility in lease terms.

Smithfield Works will create a flexible business eco system at Smithfield that can support each stage of an occupiers business development within the scheme. We want to attract freelancers, start-ups and SME’s to Smithfield Works with a mix of professional, creative and digital occupiers to create a collaborative and diverse community of people that will add an extra dimension to Smithfield.

Flexibility has become a key requirement in an occupiers workspace requirements as they require the ability to expand and contract to meet the changing needs of their business.

Smithfield Works and 3 Smithfield are designed to create a flexible working environment that lends itself to modern working patterns.

The scale of Smithfield also presents an opportunity to adopt a leasing strategy that will be valued by occupiers allowing them to have a longer-term commitment on core space at 3, 4 or 5 Smithfield with an element of space on more flexible lease terms at Smithfield Works.





# In the spotlight: placemaking

Art and culture are a fundamental part of successful placemaking, something Stoke-on-Trent is embracing.

'Our Front Doors' is a project initiated by Stoke-on-Trent City Centre BID in partnership with Entrepreneurs Network, a gallery and print shop located on Hanley Piccadilly, and YMCA. 20 doors located in lanes, closes and alleyways throughout the city centre have been shortlisted and will be used as canvases by local artists and community groups. The eye-catching doors form a city centre trail, and maps have been printed and are available from key information points around town. Image opposite is a door located at 20 Stafford Street, Hanley by artist Richard Keeling.



Project: Our Front Doors  
Artist: Richard Keeling



## An interview with Pete Swift

Pete is one of the three founding Directors of Planit. He has over fifteen years of management experience in Private Practice, gaining particular expertise in the fields of Landscape Planning and Urban Regeneration.

### Where do you start when creating the vision for a mixed-use urban masterplan like Smithfield?

With the place, the people and the history of both. If you design for and with these, you end up with a greater chance of shaping something that looks settled; grounded; like it fits.

Never start a project with an accommodation schedule - the 'copy and paste' approach does not work and results in development that looks like it's been dropped from space - devoid of character and more often than not disconnected from the place, physically and emotionally.

Stoke has such a strong heritage; a unique character, distinctive built form, and on that heritage a community of innovation and making.

### You have been involved with Smithfield from the outset, over many years, has the reality stayed true to the original vision?

Day zero for Smithfield is difficult to define exactly, but we came on board soon after the DNA and the 'rules' had been defined by my good friend Oliver Schultze and Gehl Architects from Copenhagen.

We'd worked with Richard way back when he was with Lovell - he was the client for our first public park, in a place where many said a new park would be disaster. It wasn't, so the trust bond was already there.

Over the last couple of months some of the Urban Designers in the Planit-IE team and myself, in conjunction with

Richard and Alan from Genr8 have been looking back over the original vision, in order to give the team context to look forward. It's been a fascinating process, and despite some bumps along the way, I would say yes - we have followed the vision, delivered on the promises and kept to the plan. The strength of a good masterplan or framework is in its ability to flex and adapt to change whilst sticking to core principles

### It's been a long working relationship with Genr8, not just at Smithfield, what do you enjoy about working with them and on the projects they deliver?

They listen. If you are going to pay consultants to work alongside you, then trust what they say and work with them. Collaboration is a two-way process, so in the same vein, there is no room for

the ego or the primidone! They are keen to learn. Having a perspective beyond your own project is critical to make the current and the future endeavours better. It is the duty of the consultant to share their learning and that works best with clients who are eager to try new things or utilise new tools and practices.

They are problem solvers. Smithfield and other projects have not been plain sailing at times - delivering projects in second tier cities and large towns takes a different kind of skillset to working in major core cities. You normally have less resources available; margins are tighter and returns more longer term. So, you have to work with your team to understand what really adds value; what is unique about the place and often how to turn a problem into an opportunity.

### We have heard a story about a trip to Amsterdam (for research purposes!) and a piano bar, can you share any details?

When we started to look in detail at materials and how we would make the diverse buildings unified through the streets and spaces, we promoted the idea that as Stoke is a city of clay, so our ground plane should be clay too - more sustainable than granite; more flexible than York stone.

As a result, a group of us went to visit the Wienerberger brick factory north of Amsterdam - to familiarise ourselves with the process; set up some appropriate colour mixes and agree an overall approach that could flex and adapt with any changes to the masterplan.

Our hosts at Hardscape had a local contact - larger than life and the owner of Amsterdam's smallest bar! He became our host for the evening, which began on the canal; moved to his bar and ended up in a restaurant... where all the staff were from the College of Music and literally sang and delivered musical interludes whilst we ate.



Part way through the meal, someone said 'Is that Johan Cruyff on the next table?' 'No' said Genr8's Mike Smith (a well-known Man Utd. fan). Richard Ingham got his phone out, searched the web for a photo (not particularly difficult - Holland's greatest footballer!) and we all agreed - yes it was. After an intro from our gregarious Architect, we essentially crashed Johan's wife's birthday party, conga-d for hours and ended up with Mike and Johan serving behind the bar!!!

I think it's safe to say, a unique study trip and one that has bound the team and the project together for many years afterwards.



Image of Johan Cruyff

Image shows view of Bottle Kiln Chimney from Smithfield

Amagertorv Square Copenhagen



What are the most exciting things that are impacting now on the places we will inhabit?

Oddly I would say decarbonisation and climate adaption. The move away from the dominance of the private car (something advocated way back in the original Gehl masterplan framework for Smithfield) and the rise of nature-based solutions will see us creating softer, more friendly towns and cities, where embracing the universal challenges around climate change will result in greater collaborative place-shaping and stronger bonds between place, people and planet.

Do you take inspiration from other cities and places, and if so where do you think has got it right?

As landscape and urban designers, it is our duty to look out to play back into our projects. We spend our breaks and holidays looking at what is beneath our feet. I answered these questions in non-sequential order, so if you skipped forward, you will see my answer is Copenhagen and the wider Scandinavian countries.

There is a closer affiliation between good design and daily life; between humans and nature; and critically (as we have glimpsed during the pandemic) a true equitable work/life balance.

Copenhagen is my favourite city in the world because they do the ordinary things well, very well. Streets, buildings, food, childcare, transport – they are all just that 10% better. Yes, they pay high taxes, but look what you get in return – the highest Quality of Life index score year upon year.

**“As landscape and urban designers, it is our duty to look out to play back into our projects...”**

There has been a lot of talk about Placemaking in recent years, although as study it originated when Jane Jacobs and William Whyte wrote about cities that catered to people, not just to cars and shopping centres in the 1960's. In reality the creation of successful places has been around for centuries. Do you feel we can learn by looking back as well as forwards?

I'm not a fan of 'Placemaking' just like I'm not enamoured by the term 'masterplanning'. Both imply control and dominance, yet we know the best places are not 'made' they are shaped and moulded, by innumerable factors and forces, and in collaboration with the communities that inhabit them. We don't 'masterplan' we create frameworks for change, that must be allowed to develop with patience and care.

Looking back is essential – whether it's to Jane Jacobs, Ian McHarg (Design with Nature), Gordon Cullen (Townscape) or a myriad of others – the past informs the future, no question. What we are seeing currently is a return to more simplistic principles, less bound up in rhetoric or technical lingo – balanced streets; healthy cities; nature-first; citizen-driven.

We are close to finishing our first book and a big section is dedicated to 12 people who we have met along the way, who have left profound impressions upon us and how we work, and who have shaped our purpose and the values by which we run the Practice.

Appreciate that every place has it's own unique characteristics but what do you feel are consistently the most important aspects of successful placemaking.

See question 1, then add:

- i. Spend as much time on the brief as the Planning process;
- ii. Listen to the people who are already there – they know more than you;
- iii. Be brave, but always be aware of your legacy first.

When we can all travel safely again in the UK or abroad where is the first place you would visit?

I'm desperate to get back to my friends and collaborators over in Copenhagen! We've been working there for nearly a decade having been part of the team that delivered the national Royal Arena – we've made some great friends both in the public and private sectors and have been working closely with Oliver Schultze and Louise Grasso who were both Directors at Gehl and set up their eponymous practice five years ago. It feels like a second home; the journey from Manchester is simple and seamless and I know the city like a near-native; the family love going to buzz around on bikes and pretend to be Danes!



Image shows  
Rochdale Riverside



# The latest updates from Rochdale Riverside

Rochdale Riverside, the town's new retail and leisure quarter, opened for business on 6<sup>th</sup> April this year. We say opened for business but of course at the time we were just two weeks into lockdown and unfortunately on opening day it was only the Marks & Spencer foodhall which was able to immediately open for trade.

Whilst it was difficult to avoid at least a sense of anti-climax, nonetheless we were incredibly proud to have completed the scheme, on time and on budget, despite the restrictions caused by the pandemic – this due in no small part to the dedication of all those involved, including our construction partners Willmott Dixon.



All images show  
Rochdale Riverside  
↓

The biggest disappointment at the time was not being able to share what is a truly transformational scheme with all of the people of Rochdale. As we have emerged from lockdown however, the response from shoppers and retailers alike has been amazing.

Twenty five new stores across 200,000 sq ft of retail and leisure and a 520 space shoppers car park have brought a host of new brands to the town including Reel Cinemas, Puttstars, Next, H&M, Nando's, Heavenly Desserts and The Works amongst many others. Equally importantly Riverside has also provided the much needed modern retailing floorspace needed to allow existing occupiers – Marks & Spencer, River Island, Boots, JD Sports – to fully invest in the town with fabulous new fit outs and retail offerings. Many of these names may otherwise have been lost to the town.



# Changing the face of Rochdale

Riverside has completed the transformation of this part of the town, complementing No.1 Riverside and the Transport Interchange. Excellence in design, investment in quality materials and attention to detail have helped to create a stunning new quarter which we believe makes Rochdale a shining example within the North West region. In addition the eye-catching cladding to the cinema and the new kinetic wall adjacent to Metrolink give the town a distinctive and unique look and feel.

All of this is complemented by the best in public realm along Riverside Walk with the area around Marks & Spencer, Next and Bean already having been adopted by the town as a focal point and meeting place, great to see so soon after opening.



# Meet the tenants

We have a stellar tenant line up with complementary offers from fashion to food and from film to indoor golf.

The Marks & Spencer food hall showcases their latest fit out with fresh food and flowers displayed alongside their latest dishes, Boots has a huge beauty and health offering and its own hydration station. And you really must treat yourself at Heavenly Desserts if you get the chance.



# Our Google reviews

4.2 ★★★★★

We have been overwhelmed by the reviews we have received from visitors and the people of Rochdale. We currently have a 4.2 out of 5 star rating on Google. Here are just some of the reviews:

- Open space between shops, new clean environment. Good selection of shops.

Like
- 1<sup>st</sup> time in the new complex, refreshingly trendy clean and a pleasure to be in.

Like
- I think it's a lovely shopping centre and a great asset to Rochdale.

Like
- Excellent a pleasure to shop and have something to eat.

Like
- Organised, clean and safe. Great shopping.

Like
- Really enjoyed it nice shops and very clean.

Like
- Does look great!!! A real win for Rochdale.

Like
- Beautifully created.

Like



# Spotlight: Puttstars

Take your pick from one of three 9-hole courses; Zig Zag, Slingshot and Pin Ball. Keep track of your points around the course on tablets situated at every hole. If you think you're going to get a hole in one, make sure you select to play your joker for extra points! And remember, if you don't use your jokers, you'll lose them!

At Puttstars, the winner is the player with the highest points at the end of the game. The fewer putts it takes, the more points you'll score!

# Q&A with Mike Smith

Our second Q&A this time a quick insight into what drives Genr8 Co-Founder Mike Smith.

What does a week in the life of Mike Smith look like?

Nothing like it's supposed to on a Monday morning. Usually around lunchtime Friday I think 'right where is that to do list?' Hectic, challenging, frustrating, fulfilling.

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

I left school after 'A' levels and started work at British Rail Property Board the following Monday. In those days what is now Railtrack was one of the biggest landowners in the country and it was a great grounding. I qualified part time which was tough, and then joined MEPC who, in the 90's, were to Manchester what Bruntwood probably are today. We had a significant retail portfolio and helped lead a consortium of objectors, including many big name retailers, against the development of the Trafford Centre. We won in the High Court but unfortunately that was overturned by the Court of Appeal. I maintain that out of town developments of its ilk have been a significant contributor to the decline of our town and city centres. I spent a number of years at AMEC Developments and when it was sold to Morgan Sindall in 2007, Chairman John Early asked me to join him in his new venture – Genr8.

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

I'm a huge fan of Argent's Kings Cross project. I think Gasholders Park and Coal Drops Yard in particular represent regeneration at its finest. The Wilkinson Eyre designed Gasholders Apartments are extraordinary. But at a cool £3 million I don't think I'll be relocating anytime soon.

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

Understanding who your customer is, and trying to be a little different and push a few boundaries. Don't settle for second best.

**“Try to be a little different... push boundaries and don't settle for second best.”**

You've recently opened a retail and leisure scheme when the high street is really struggling, and in the middle of a pandemic. Does the high street have a future?

The project you refer to, Rochdale Riverside, has succeeded because we provided the retailers and the public with what they wanted – large format stores in a town centre location. It may sound perverse but I think the pandemic will help the high street in the long run – it will accelerate the transition to a turnover based landlord and tenant relationship. It should have happened years ago but has been resisted by absentee institutional landlords. Well just maybe they've had their day. Turnover rents necessitate a partnership approach and encourage positive management. Increasingly the public sector are investing and they too are able to think more laterally and long term.

You have recruited a number of people of the last year or two, what do you look for when recruiting?

We have built a very talented team in the last couple of years. We needed to create a succession and we have done that. We look for people who are ambitious and who will challenge us. It keeps us on our toes. But mostly team players. We have a happy team and that creates loyalty. I cannot speak highly enough of them I am very proud to be a part of it.

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

I've always been a big fan of live music. I love the traditional venues – The Empress Ballroom at Blackpool, King Georges Hall Blackburn to name but two. Knees are packing up though.

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

Always Manchester obviously, but if I had to leave that out, Rome the eternal city, oh and Sydney. Both wonderful in their own very different ways.

The Ashes, 2021. I've promised myself I would one day be there to watch the first ball of an Ashes series bowled at The Gabba in Brisbane. I so hope it's Jofra Archer to David Warner at 95mph.

# What we are looking forward to

## Smithfield Works.

As you will have picked up from the rest of this edition, despite the unprecedented challenges of 2020, we made huge progress in driving forwards the next phases of Genr8 developments.

At Smithfield we're hugely excited to be delivering our managed work-space concept - Smithfield Works - and to see the transformative impact this, and 3 Smithfield, will have in delivering a truly holistic business eco system.

As we emerge from the pandemic, we can't wait to see how the existing Smithfield community comes together with our new residents at Clayworks, the guests at our Hilton hotel and the wider Stoke community to enjoy the fabulous environment at Smithfield. We also can't wait to be able to finally have our opening party at the hotel!



Smithfield Works CGI



At Rochdale, this year will see us start on site with the Build-to-Rent residential scheme and the new Hampton by Hilton, which will be the second hotel under Genr8 ownership. It will also be fantastic to finally see all of the retail and leisure offerings at Rochdale Riverside being enjoyed by the local community in a post pandemic environment!

Early 2021 will see some hugely exciting news coming in terms of our partnership with Kajima. On the back of the success of our 10-year partnership at Rochdale we will be launching Genr8 Kajima Regeneration Ltd. This is incredibly significant for the business and we believe the new partnership is ideally placed to respond to the levelling up agenda and the continued challenges of delivering regeneration and

development in our regional towns and cities. We've formed some great relationships with the people at Kajima over the last decade, they're great people to do business with and it's a partnership that has already stood the test of time and many challenges.

Most importantly, like everyone else we are looking forward to being back in the office with the team and all the great people we work with. Whilst undoubtedly the new norm will bring some changes to the way we all work, the dynamism and energy of being in the same room will never be replaced by a Teams call.

One thing for certain - there's plenty more to come and there's never a dull moment!

# Music is an integral part of our life and the workplace.



Arctic Monkeys

## What's on your playlist?



I have a very mixed playlist - on one side The Weeknd / J Cole / Post Malone but then a separate playlist of Noel Gallagher's High Flying Birds / Arctic Monkeys / Elbow - depends on the day! Would have to say my guilty pleasure is still early 2000's R&B, I think Destiny's Child was my first tape in my Sony Walkman.

## What's on your playlist?



Last gig I went to before lockdown was Fontaines DC at the Ritz - amazing performance and diggin' their new album - A Hero's Death. Barry Cadogan from Primal Scream fronts Little Barrie - a band I can't stop listening to, as are Sault and Manchester DJ and producer Werkha.



Fontaines DC

## What's on your playlist?



I listen to music most of the day, every day so it's a variety of music really depending on the situation! Since working from home, I've listened to a lot of Radio 1 and Smooth FM.

I like a good throwback to some 80s groove & soul classics, you can't beat a bit of Luther VD, Earth Wind and Fire and Curtains Mayfield! I've seen Craig Charles DJ a couple of times now and it was certainly a highlight of many, many good nights out at Uni!

My top 3 on Spotify are:

1. Disclosure - Tondo (which is certified to get you moving!)
2. McFadden & Whitehead - Ain't no stoppin' us now.
3. Drake - Laugh now cry later

## What's on your playlist?



We've always got music playing in the house especially when cooking and the daily dance with Sienna in the morning.

Music likes ranges from Motown (Marvin Gaye, Stevie Wonder, Barry White, Otis) soul music (Aretha Franklin, James Brown) to SKA music to Joy Division, Fugees, Queen, Drake and Kanye, Oasis, King of Leon to Outkast to Childish Gambino and 90's club dance hits. My playlist tend to lean towards RnB genre but will then turn to playing the Rat Pack, anything thing you can do the one, two step to.



Disclosure

## What's on your playlist?



Jeff Mills is always on my playlist. Detroit techno originator and founding member of the Underground Resistance collective. I first heard Jeff Mills when I was about 17 when I discovered his 'Live at the Liquid Rooms Tokyo' mix CD...recorded live in one take on 3 turntables, with all the mistakes retained, it still sounds as 'life affirming' as it did back then and still gets regular plays to this day...even my 6 year old likes it! Whilst still touring that sound in the non-COVID club and festival circuit days, Jeff Mills has numerous other projects on the go, my current favourite being Spiral Deluxe, which is an improvised electronic jazz group made up musicians from Detroit to Japan....with a sound that's a bit more smoothing and home listening than his early stuff! Go check them out.



Jeff Mills



Childish Gambino

Would you like us to be part of  
your next project? Get in touch:  
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