



National
Trust

From Padlocked Wasteland to Oasis in the Sky



“Manchester is the place where people do things. Don’t talk about what you are going to do, do it. That is the Manchester habit.”

Judge Edward Abbott Parry, 1912

Join us and unlock the
potential of Castlefield Viaduct
for the benefit of millions

nationaltrust.org.uk/castlefield-viaduct

Grey and forgotten to green and vibrant

Once a vital artery pumping life into Manchester's centre, the majestic Castlefield Viaduct has, for the past 50 years, stood unloved and unused. We know that without a clear sense of purpose the future of this Grade II listed sleeping beauty is in jeopardy.

But today we have a unique opportunity to transform it into a life source again – an iconic park in the sky, high above the city, offering people, wildlife and culture a spectacular new green space in which to flourish.

This vision benefits us all, by providing an exciting blueprint for how industrial heritage structures can be reimagined as vibrant community assets, pumping life into cities once again.

Why we know this city oasis is needed

During the pandemic we instinctively sought out green spaces. We know they lift, revive and ground us. They're critical to our wellbeing and to the wellbeing of our planet. And yet, not everyone has equal access to them:

- One in five people in England struggle to access quality green spaces (Friends of the Earth)
- Manchester Council area is within the top 10 most green space deprived in the country

Insects buzzing. Friends chatting. Plants flourishing. Children laughing. Manchester's park in the sky, which will be free to all, will be an iconic landmark and much loved community asset. A place to pause, to connect, and to play.

From neglected to cherished: a vision people are passionate about realising

"We have often stared up longingly at the viaduct thinking 'what if?'. We have always had it in our sights to bring the space back to life."
Calum McGowan, Chair of Castlefield Forum

For decades, visionary local people have seen the huge potential in the viaduct and have longed to transform it into the community, city and nationwide asset they knew it could be.

The National Trust is now using its years of expertise in heritage conservation of buildings, gardens and parklands to work alongside partners and the people of Manchester to turn this dream into a reality.

Images:
Above – Castlefield Viaduct before
Below – Castlefield Viaduct reimagined

'This scheme could provide an extra lung for the city, in line with Greater Manchester's green air proposals. It has potential for outdoor education, arts, cultural and emotional wellbeing.'
ANON, public consultation respondent

"This is a once in a lifetime opportunity. Let's go for it!"
ANON, public consultation respondent

The opportunity to transform this urban wasteland into an elevated oasis is one that has captured imaginations. When we went out to local consultation last Summer:

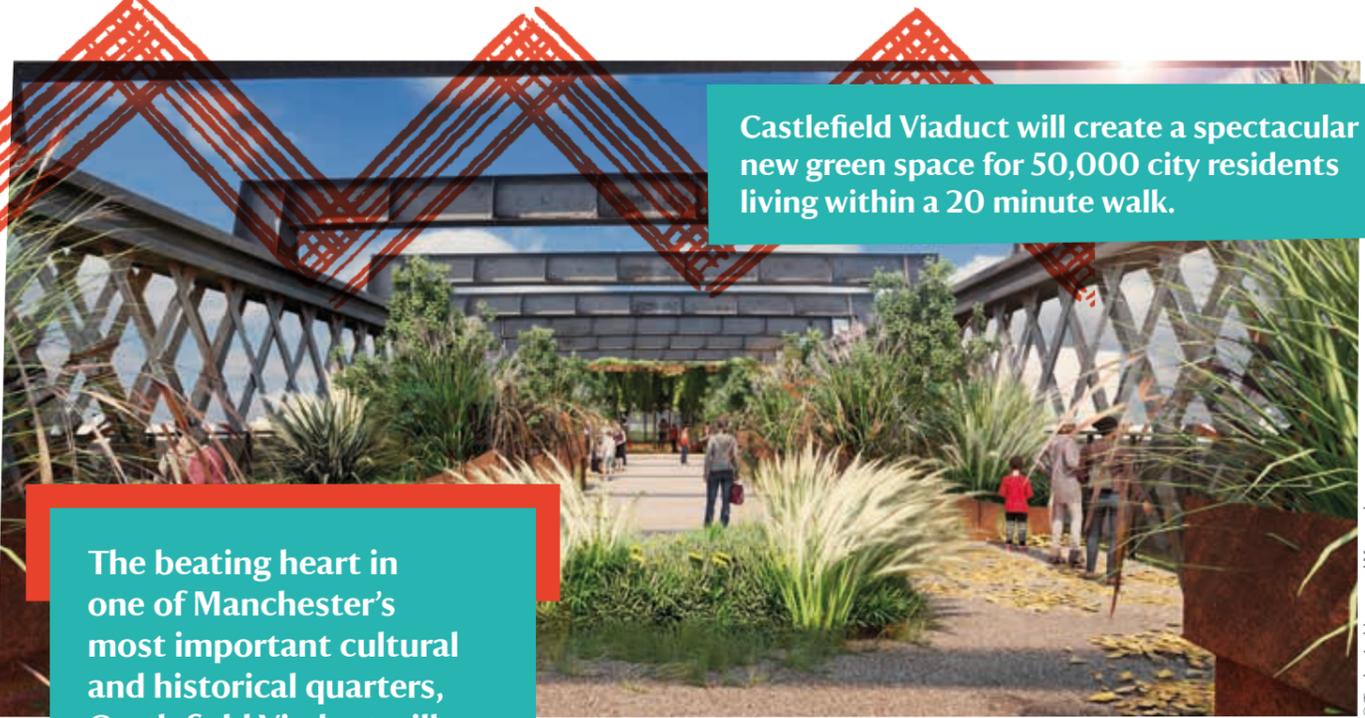
- 99% of the public were supportive of the new vision for the viaduct
- 100% said they would visit the 'park in the sky'
- 87% said it would positively impact their life



We cannot achieve this exciting vision alone. We need people with creativity, imagination and ambition to join us. Be one of them. Help us transform this monument to Manchester's past into a vibrant green space that is free to all and benefits millions.



Along this linear stroll through the sky, with its borders bursting with life, residents will momentarily leave the pace of city life behind and be lost in a magical secret garden.



Castlefield Viaduct will create a spectacular new green space for 50,000 city residents living within a 20 minute walk.

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The beating heart in one of Manchester's most important cultural and historical quarters, Castlefield Viaduct will take its place alongside city landmarks including The Science and Industry Museum and The Factory, in the heart of one of Manchester's most important cultural and historic quarters.



Here it will enrich city life by offering a unique space in which nature, beauty, history and culture thrive:

- A tranquil 'pause space' bringing city residents closer to nature
- A thriving oasis of biodiversity
- A valued venue for community groups, hands-on volunteering and learning
- A place to showcase and enjoy local creativity

Experience this vibrant space today! Take a fly through:

www.nationaltrust.org.uk/features/our-vision-for-castlefield-viaduct

The National Trust's Urban Places strategy: bringing the nation closer to nature

127 years ago we were founded to improve everyone's access to nature, beauty and history. And we're continuing that legacy today. Increasingly we're working in urban areas with local communities and leading organisations to create a future in which everyone can easily reach green places with wide open skies.

At the National Trust, we believe in the power of the natural world to transform lives, enhance communities and boost economies. We believe there is no better place to realise its transformative impact than here in Manchester on this iconic but disused structure.

"We need to give parks a reboot and start thinking about them as essential elements of our communities in the same way we think about housing or transport."

National Trust:
Hilary McGrady



Built in 1892, by the engineers who designed the famous Blackpool Tower, Castlefield Viaduct played a central role in the industrial revolution and its important story deserves to be celebrated.

From its elevated deck you can survey over 2000 years of history, from Manchester's Roman origins, to the world's first passenger railway and the terminus of the world's first industrial canal, the Bridgewater.

Protecting the past, enhancing the future



But we know that the future of this Grade II listed monument is in jeopardy.

Three times as many industrial buildings are at risk than other listed buildings. (Historic England, 2011)

By giving the viaduct a new lease of life we can protect a socially, culturally and historically significant landmark where centuries of progress and powerful urban landscapes come together.

Together we can ensure that Castlefield Viaduct reclaims its place as the beating heart of this dynamic city.

We can celebrate its important past by giving it a vibrant future.



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"These are exciting and timely proposals to bring back to life this section of the viaduct and I know it will be very popular. Not only will it bring an evocative part of the city's heritage back into use, it will make a welcome addition to the city's green spaces. This will be a project that will undoubtedly catch the imagination of Manchester people and we look forward to its fruition."

Bev Craig,
Leader of Manchester City Council



A blueprint for sustainable revival of Britain's industrial monuments

The potential to reimagine this abandoned metal megastructure as an urban oasis and valued community asset, provides us all with an important and unique opportunity to showcase how Britain's industrial monuments can enrich our lives today.

It also creates the chance to demonstrate how environmentally sustainable approaches can power these transformative projects. Environmental sustainability will be at the heart of the viaduct's reimagination:

- Rain water harvesting will support planting
- Sustainable, renewable and reusable materials will be used wherever possible
- Planting will mimic native species and support abundant insect life
- Biodiversity and air quality monitoring will be embedded throughout
- The creative reuse of the viaduct's carbon structure will negate the need to dismantle it and release carbon in the future
- Environmentally friendly travel to and from the viaduct will be encouraged with the elevated garden eventually becoming a vital link in a city-wide network of walkable, cyclable and boatable, blue (water) and green (nature) connections



Transforming a neglected grey space into a cherished green one; our timeline

Summer 2021
Public consultation receives a tidal wave of local support

Autumn 2021
Planning permission granted for a pilot park

Summer 2022
A temporary park will open for 12 months with bookable tours and events, enabling us, in partnership with local groups, to test concepts and gather feedback and ideas from visitors

Summer 2024
The viaduct will be transformed into a permanent public park, open to all to enjoy, subject to funding, support and planning permission

Together, we can transform this vision into a reality that benefits millions.

Ever since we first seeded this concept, it has flourished. Local people, organisations and businesses have come together determined to turn 'Manchester's garden in the sky' into a life enhancing reality.



"Being able to connect with nature has such a huge impact on our wellbeing, so we're delighted funding raised by our players is helping bring people closer to inspiring green places in Manchester's centre."
Laura Chow,
Head of Charities,
People's Postcode Lottery

"I've loved the viaduct for years and I absolutely love this project! I'd happily raise some money, pick up a spade, raise the profile of the project to support what you're doing. I can't believe this unique space is getting focus and development from the National Trust!"

Email received from a Manchester resident

"It's fantastic to see the National Trust's plans for breathing new life into this landmark and I look forward to working with them to make this a reality. Over the last few years, we have all been reminded of how important access to nature is, which is why I'm committed to creating greener, more liveable communities. This project could make a big contribution and help revitalise our city's heritage at the same time."

Andy Burnham, Mayor of Greater Manchester

Now, we need more people to join us. People with imagination, ideas, funds and enthusiasm. All are welcome.

Together we can keep the Manchester habit alive. We can stop talking and do this. Working as one, we can create a park in the sky that protects beauty, nature and history for everyone, for ever.

**Want to donate to bring this vision to life?
Or looking to play your part in the viaduct's future?
Call or email us today: 01793 818569 or giving@nationaltrust.org.uk**



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“The viaduct is such an iconic structure, visible to all who pass next to and under it.

When people can also walk on it, explore it and enjoy it, it will quickly become a valued part of Manchester, complementing the range of heritage, cultural and leisure attractions in the area and giving another reason for people to come to the city and spend more time here.”



Sheona Southern, Marketing Manchester

