

# CASTLEFIELD

*Britain's first  
Urban Heritage Park*

For further information about  
Castlefield contact:  
Castlefield Visitors' Centre  
330 Deansgate, Castlefield,  
Manchester, 061-832 4244

For further information about  
City Centre Manchester contact:  
The Tourist Information Centre  
Town Hall Extension  
St. Peter's Square,  
Manchester 081 234 3157/8



## Granada TV

Castlefield's most famous residents. The Victoria and Albert warehouses contain the set for the *Albion Market Series*. The Coronation Street and Baker Street sets are visible from the Greater Manchester Museum of Science and Industry. These sets are not open at present to the public.



## Air and Space Gallery

Part of the Greater Manchester Museum of Science and Industry. History of flight from earliest times to the present day. Large collection of space material on loan from NASA. Souvenir shop. Open seven days a week, small admission charge.



## The Mark Addy

Named after a famous nineteenth century boatman famed for his lifesaving on the River Irwell, the Mark Addy provides an opportunity to eat and drink and look out on Manchester's river. Landing stage and terrace.



## Greater Manchester Museum of Science and Industry

The fastest growing museum in Europe and already one of the largest. Currently open are the 1830 station buildings of the world's first passenger railway station, the Power Hall telling story of industrial power from earliest times to the present day, the Lower Byrom Street Warehouse with displays of textiles, printing and papermaking, The National Electricity Gallery, a museum shop and "Chuffers" restaurant in a railway carriage. Still to come are the Greater Manchester story and the Manchester Underground exhibitions (1987) and a Science Centre (1988). Open seven days a week, admission free.



## The Roman Fort

The North Gateway of the Roman Fort has been imaginatively reconstructed on its original site. Within the fort the guardroom has been furnished as it might have been in Roman times. Information about visits to the guardroom may be obtained from the Castlefield Visitors' Centre. Excavations of Manchester's Roman past are still continuing and tours can also be arranged through the Visitors' Centre. Adjoining the Fort is a mural illustrating the history of Castlefield from Roman times to the present day.

## Salford Quays

Linked to Castlefield by the river Irwell and the Manchester Ship Canal, Salford docks and the Ship Canal were opened in 1894. In recent years traffic has declined and work is in hand to convert the area to other uses including a marina, an international hotel and a nine-studio cinema.



## Castlefield Visitors' Centre

The Centre provides an introduction to the whole of Castlefield. It includes displays and exhibitions about the area and also temporary exhibitions about the City and its development. Open Monday to Saturday 10.00 am to 5.00 pm and on Sundays from April to September.



## The Canals

The Bridgewater canal was built between 1759 and 1761 to bring coal from the mines at Worsley to the growing town of Manchester. It was the first to be cut across open country rather than following the course of an existing river. This was the beginning of the network of canals that spread throughout England. Today commercial traffic has ceased and the canal is used for leisure traffic. In the next few years the canal basin where the Bridgewater meets the Rochdale Canal and the River Medlock will be made more attractive as a leisure and recreation area.



## Urban Studies Centre

Situated above the Visitors' Centre and operated by Manchester Education Committee. Exhibitions and displays about the urban environment many with particular reference to Castlefield.



## G-MEX

Manchester's new international exhibition centre built in the train hall of the former Central Railway station. Provides more than 100,000 sq. ft. of uninterrupted exhibition space together with bars restaurants etc. G-MEX is the first phase of the redevelopment of the whole Central Station site.



## Castlefield Gallery

Manchester's contemporary art gallery. Open Tuesday to Saturday 10.30 am to 5.00 pm, Sunday 12.00 to 4.30 pm. Talks, videos and workshops accompany every exhibition.



Disabled access available.

# 1986

## *Castlefield: urban heritage*

Castlefield can claim to be Manchester's most historic site. It encapsulates the site of the original Roman fort of Mamucium, the canal basin where the Bridgewater Canal and Rochdale Canal meet in an elaborate series of canal arms, Liverpool Road Station, the world's first rail passenger terminus and railway warehouse, and four massive viaducts of later railways that march majestically across the area. Few sites anywhere in the world can boast a complex of iconic buildings spanning such pioneering examples of the early canal and railway ages.

However, in the 1960s, the area was largely derelict and its historic importance overlooked. St Matthew's Church, designed by Charles Barry and built on Liverpool Road, had been demolished in 1951, although its Sunday school was saved (and renovated as an office). The canals were effectively disused; most were silted up and some canal arms had been filled in. The closure of Central Station in 1969 meant that most of the rail viaducts were abandoned. The canal basin,

hidden behind buildings on Liverpool Road, was a dilapidated and neglected part of the city.

However, from 1972, the then Greater Manchester Council (GMC) sponsored a number of archaeological digs, which led to the recognition of the significance not only of the Roman fort, but especially of Liverpool Road Station and its 1830s' warehouse, both of which now have listed status. In 1979, the area was declared a conservation area, within which the large number of listed buildings include the dramatic sweeps of the mostly disused railway viaducts. In 1982, Castlefield was designated an urban heritage park. Following the excavations, the north gate and part of the wall of the Roman fort were reconstructed. Most significantly, the Liverpool Road Station complex was converted into the Museum of Science and Industry and was soon followed by the conversion of the Lower Campfield Market building into the museum's Air and Space Gallery. Together, the two museum buildings have housed

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OPPOSITE. Castlefield Urban Heritage Park, *Castlefield* (c.1986) [AUTH]



## MANCHESTER: MAPPING THE CITY

railway engines and rolling stock, aircraft, and steam, water, electric and gas engines. Among the highlights are historic stationary steam engines, an Avro Shackleton aircraft and other Avro aircraft built locally at Chadderton and Woodford. The revitalisation of the area was driven not only by GMC but also by the Civic Trust, the Georgian Group, the Victorian Society and the Manchester Region Industrial Archaeology Society.

The overall aim of the makeover of Castlefield was to create a new tourist and visitor attraction, capitalising on this wealth of historic sites and buildings. The fact that Granada Television's Studios' Tour was adjacent to the area – with its *Coronation Street* set and House of Commons reconstruction among a variety of other attractions – added hugely to the tourist and visitor potential of Castlefield. Central Station – which had become increasingly dilapidated, damaged by fire and used as a car park – acquired by GMC and opened in 1986 as the Greater Manchester Exhibition and Conference Centre or G-Mex (later renamed 'Manchester Central' to reflect its railway history).

GMC was abolished in 1986, but in 1988 the government set up a 'mini-Urban Development Corporation' – Central Manchester Development Corporation (CMDC) – covering the crescent of land wrapped around the southern part of the city centre. This included Castlefield, so CMDC was able to build on the earlier work of GMC in the area. CMDC was controversial since it was essentially a creature of central government not the local authority; it could act as its own planning authority and reported directly to the Department of Environment, thereby bypassing the Council's decision-making processes. Government and the private sector dominated the Board. It was chaired by James Grigor, seconded from Ciba-Geigy, and its Chief Executive was John Glester, a senior civil servant from the Government Office for the North West. This was all a far cry from the later government regeneration strategies, which started with City Challenge in Hulme in 1992, in which the local authority was centrally involved as the key player in the process. Nevertheless, by a process of *legerdemain*, the City Council played a significant role in Castlefield. The MP David Trippier, who had been the Conservative leader of

Rochdale Council, became Minister for Inner Cities after the 1987 election reshuffle and had the task of establishing CMDC. He and the then Labour leader of Manchester, Graham Stringer, formed an alliance in which both were committed to Manchester's betterment and were conscious that nothing would happen without giving the private sector confidence to invest. Despite the hostility of the City Council, Stringer sat on the UDC Board and achieved a *modus vivendi* in which the city's Planning Department played a powerful 'consultancy' role, in effect working collaboratively with the UDC in steering the course of developments. The key private-sector members of the Board subsequently played key roles in the regeneration of the city – for example, John Whittaker, Chief Executive of Peel Holdings, which owned the Manchester Ship Canal; Alan Cockshaw of AMEC; and Bob Scott, the theatre impresario who was influential in persuading the Board to support the city's 1996 Olympic bid.

CMDC's strategy built directly on GMC's earlier aim of strengthening the tourism and leisure base of Castlefield. Its initial work focused on improving the environment of the area – excavating filled-in canal arms and dredging and clearing debris and rubbish from others. By 1993, the Inland Waterways Association was able to hold a boat festival on the newly restored canals, which attracted over 300,000 spectators. Major developments included the budget Castlefield Hotel with a spa, health centre and indoor running track; the Outdoor Events arena with covered seating for 450 spectators; the Victoria and Albert Hotel, converted from an 1844 warehouse and opened by Granada Television. The Corporation gave particular emphasis to the quality of its refurbishment, using cobbles and York stone rather than concrete and tarmac, high-quality street furniture and cast-iron bridge work to complement the neighbouring Victorian buildings. The Castlefield Management Company was created in 1992 to provide services, run events and maintain the environmental quality of the area; and an Urban Ranger service was set up to help visitors and oversee the whole area.

At its outset, CMDC had been expected to promote industrial development and generate income from land sales, but its

timing coincided with the recession of the early 1990s and the collapse of land values. In response, it gave much greater emphasis to housing. Across the whole CMDC area, 2,583 housing units were built (as against an initially expected target of only 471). This was effectively the start of repopulating the city centre, which has seen a huge number of apartments spring up in central sites across the city. Castlefield played an important role in this since, under CMDC, many of the handsome historic warehouses were converted into upmarket apartments, and new housing was built aimed both at retirees and young households, capitalising on the allure of waterside sites. Other warehouses were converted into design studios and offices. One of the most successful of the local entrepreneurs was Jim Ramsbottom whose Castlefield Estates company developed several significant projects: workspaces in Eastgate, a converted rag mop factory; the 1825 Merchants Warehouse, which had suffered fire damage but was converted for creative media and technology companies; and Dukes 92, a popular pub whose name was taken from its location adjacent to the final lock on the Rochdale Canal.

Manchester City Council, *Castlefield* (c.1980) [AUTH]. The dashed red line outlines the Conservation Area. The solid red square is the site of the Roman fort. The Medlock is on the left-hand side.

1986

