

# Chapeltown

Chapeltown Cultural Quarter Community Consultation

July 2023

A summary of key findings prepared by Armstrong Cameron LLP

On behalf of: RJC Dance | Northern School of Contemporary Dance | Unity Homes and Enterprise



**Thank you for completing the Chapeltown Cultural Quarter Partnership Group (CCQPG) community consultation survey.**

**When you completed the survey, you indicated that you would like to be kept informed of progress. This short paper summarises the key findings of the consultation to date.**



# 1 What is the Chapeltown Cultural Quarter Partnership Group?

The CCQPG comprises three community partners together with Leeds City Council. The community partners are all black-led and each has been based in Chapeltown for at least 30 years. Their roles are as follows:

## RJC Dance

Based in the Mandela Centre in Chapeltown, RJC Dance is an award-winning cultural dance organisation in Leeds, empowering children & young people (CYP) and communities through dance & creative activity. We provide culturally diverse creative opportunities irrespective of social, economic or cultural barriers leading to improvements in mental health & physical well-being, making dance accessible to all. RJC Dance was founded in 1993 by Edward Lynch. Original members are Donald Edwards, David (Leo) Hamilton, Martin Robinson, Joe Williams, De-Napoli Clarke and Kathy Williams.

## Northern School of Contemporary Dance

Founded in 1985, Northern School of Contemporary Dance (NSCD) is a leading centre for contemporary dance in the UK, and one of six world-leading schools forming the Conservatoire for Dance & Drama (CDD). NSCD is currently the only institution to offer conservatoire-level professional dance training in the north of England.

In addition to delivering programmes at Undergraduate and Postgraduate levels, NSCD offers a regular programme of dance classes for children and adults along with bespoke projects for schools and communities in Leeds and across the north of England.

## Unity Homes and Enterprise

Unity Housing Association has served black and minority ethnic communities since 1987 and is committed to building strong sustainable communities through the delivery of the very best housing, social and employment opportunities.

Based on Chapeltown Road, its original focus was on responding to the housing needs of the area's black Caribbean community.

As it grew and developed, it broadened its focus to tackle the full range of housing needs of black and minority ethnic communities across Leeds.

In 2000 the association established a subsidiary company, now known as Unity Enterprise. As a result, Unity owns and manages three centres which accommodate 100 units of lettable space to approximately 80 local businesses. Unity has also supported over 2500 people into employment and training.

By 2021 Unity had added over 1300 affordable homes to local housing stock and continues to be involved in regeneration and to encourage enterprise to fuel the local economy.

# 2

## What are the aims of the CCQPG and of the community consultation?

Each of the community partners has a demonstrable commitment to the physical, cultural, social and enterprise development of the area. Working with Leeds City Council, the Partnership has come together to consider how and whether it might be possible to redevelop the site on which the Mandela Centre is currently located so that it meets current and future community needs and aspirations.

The first part of this process has been to carry out a community consultation exercise in order to:

- Assess the appetite for change;
- Find out the types of provision that people might be interested in;
- Gain an idea of the type of operating model which might be employed were there to be a new development.

In order to do this, the Partnership commissioned locally-based arts and cultural consultants, Armstrong Cameron LLP, to carry out an initial community consultation. Armstrong Cameron has carried out similar consultation exercises in communities across England and worked with the Partnership to design a set of enquires which formed the basis of the community consultation.

# 3

## What did the consultation involve?

The consultation was multi-faceted and included:

- A community consultation survey which was circulated by community partners through their networks and was available from organisations and businesses across Chapeltown
- Three focus groups, each held at the premises of a community partner
- Individual and group conversations with interested parties
- A conversation with local elected members
- Responses to ongoing individual enquiries about the process
- Conversations with current and former trustees of Leeds West Indian Centre



# 4

## A summary of outcomes

4.1

### Numbers

A total of **338** people directly participated in the consultation. Of these, **261** completed the community consultation survey.

4.2

### The survey

Did respondents live and/or work in Chapeltown?

Half of all survey respondents lived in Chapeltown and **80%** had LS7 or LS8 postcodes.

**21%** of all respondents worked in Chapeltown

**55%** of black Caribbean respondents lived in Chapeltown

**44%** of white respondents lived in Chapeltown

4.3

### Demographics

Most respondents – **72%** – were women

**16%** were disabled

**13%** defined as LGBTQ+

Respondents were asked to self-define their ethnicity. The groups most frequently cited were:

**31%** White British

**27%** Black Caribbean

**12%** Black/Black British

**9%** Mixed

Age and respondents: Almost half of all respondents were aged between 45 and 64.

This figure increases when we look at the age profile of black Caribbean respondents, **65%** of whom fell into the 45-64 age band.

4.4

### If there were a new development, what sort of facilities/provision would people like it to provide?

The themes of arts, creativity, learning and wellbeing were particularly popular. Sports provision was also popular with **42%** of Chapeltown residents stating that they would be interested in sports facilities.

Turning to the type of provision in which respondents showed less interest, **28%** of non-Chapeltown residents expressed no interest in events space, compared to **22%** of Chapeltown residents.

4.5

### What do people value in a space?

Over half of all respondents felt that inclusivity and welcome was a critical factor in their decision to use an event space. Family friendliness and accessibility were felt to be of critical importance for **37%** of respondents.

4.6

### What would people like to see in a new development?

The facilities that people were most interested in were arts and creative classes with **59%** stating that they were very interested. Looking solely at residents of Chapeltown, fewer (**48%**) were interested in arts and creative classes.

**55%** of respondents were very interested in wellbeing provision. For residents of Chapeltown, that figure dropped slightly to **51%**.

We asked people to make their own suggestions about the types of activity that they would welcome. Here's a representative sample of suggestions

- Maybe local drama groups. Maybe a space where young playwrights can meet regularly to write and discuss their work. Maybe a space to rehearse those plays.
- My ideal would be to see a film club set up too where we could have screenings of little-known films from Africa and the Caribbean.
- Intimate and stylish social area with bar facilities
- Historic and futuristic artefacts displayed throughout the site's buildings (indicating the community's journey past and future, old and new).
- In the cafe area, local food businesses can provide their services, but it also gives the chance to new food businesses to showcase what they are doing.
- Opportunities for activities for young people and also for the netball and basketball teams to be able to train and have matches there.
- A well-lit safe area which promotes sense of belongingness especially for youth. To protect the space for the use of community services maintaining a not-for-profit ethos.
- Good kitchen facilities for cooking classes or community cook-ins.
- Something to include people with disabilities.
- There currently isn't an LGBT hub in Leeds, unlike pretty much every other city in the UK. It would be fantastic if one could be set up, where space could be used by local LGBT charities.
- Small outdoor area for garden activity and green view for passers by, even if not using the facility directly.
- Keep the charges reasonable. The Black community of African descent have contributed to the area and Leeds city wide for over 70+ years. The community has been strategically hoodwinked by the council and only responded mainly to protests about funding. We serve all communities and need to be valued in plans fit for the future and costed to be sustainable.

4.7

## Would people use a new space?

We asked respondents to rate the extent to which they agreed with a number of statements, where **1** = completely disagree and **5** = completely agree.

Below, responses are analysed by area of residence: Chapeltown, LS7 and LS8.

**Chapeltown would benefit from a new development catering for a range of community interests.**

Average scores:

Chapeltown residents scored **4.3**

LS7 residents scored **4.4**

LS8 residents scored **4.3**

**If a development included activities that interested me, I would use it.**

Average scores:

Chapeltown residents scored **4.5**

LS7 residents scored **4.5**

LS8 residents scored **4.6**

**A multi-purpose development should include both paid and free activities.**

Average scores:

Chapeltown residents scored **4.4**

LS7 residents scored **4.5**

LS8 residents scored **4.2**



# 5

## Key outcomes from focus groups and conversations

### 5.1 If there were to be a new multi-purpose development in Chapeltown, which communities should it serve?

#### Key findings

- Many focus group attendees mentioned specific ethnic and community groups. Though a number of people felt that African Caribbean communities' needs should be taken account of (given the history of the space in question), more people felt that the space should cater for and be inclusive of all communities.
- Both young people and older people were mentioned as groups whose needs the space should serve.
- A few people felt that the space should be community-led and that it should particularly meet the needs and interests of those living in and in close proximity to Chapeltown. Meanwood, Chapel Allerton, Scott Hall and Little London were specifically mentioned.
- Though there was broad support for the idea of a development which demonstrably meets community needs and interests, for some this was contingent on it being informed by the history and heritage of the Chapeltown community. In particular, some consultees were concerned that the voice of the area's black Caribbean communities is acknowledged and recognised.
- Similarly, two of the people we spoke to who have been associated in recent years with Leeds West Indian Centre (LWIC) were very clear that LWIC should retain its own identity and determine its own future separate to that of any new development.

5.2

## What makes a project community-led?

### Key findings

- Diversity of community representation: there was some feeling that community leadership can mean that ‘the usual suspects’ are always seen to take the lead. This, in the view of many focus group attendees, should be avoided.
- A common theme in all focus groups was the need to ensure that community leadership is inclusive, transparent and representative of people from all backgrounds.

5.3

## What would persuade you to use a new multi-purpose development?

### Key findings

- Again, representation and inclusivity were recurring themes.
- Similarly, many people felt that a new space should be driven by an imperative to serve its community and should have a strong community engagement ethos.
- A number of attendees felt that the space should have a focus on meeting the needs and interests of young people.
- Many people felt that they would be likely to use a space which had a broad offer.

5.4

## What would put you off?

### Key findings

- A number of people were concerned about the over-involvement of commercial companies. Others spoke about the distinction between profit and surplus. The latter, it was felt, should be ploughed back into the development.
- Whilst the theme of inclusivity and welcome ran through the discussions, some people felt that preference should be given to local people.
- Poor customer service and staff attitude were mentioned by a number of people as factors which would deter them from using the space.

5.5

## If a new space were to be developed, what might it look and feel like?

**Rehearsal/performance studio:** Dance, open mic, music, workshops, poetry

**Useable, attractive outdoor space.** A couple of groups talked about having a rooftop space. Green spaces.

**Café bar with outside seating area;** licenced bar – mobile bar units

**Learning:** Wellbeing sessions, learning opportunities

**Strong creative/cultural theme:** artist studio space, exhibition space, performances, films, exhibitions, accommodation for artists, sewing and crochet groups

**Mixed economy:** A mix of fee-paying and non fee-paying spaces. Not purely commercial.

**The feel and ethos:** People from the community run the space: to have continuous dialogue with the community and continue to look at the building to assess whether it remains fit for purpose. Succession planning.

# 6

## What next?

**We are encouraged by this first early consultation.**

**However, this is only the first step in an ongoing consultation process.**

**Immediate priorities are as follows:**

- We want to hear the voices of young people and children
- We want to consult with groups which were under-represented in this first stage of the consultation. This will include south Asian and African communities.

**Our intention as the Partnership progresses is to widen its membership.**

**We welcome comments on the consultation so far.**

