



Annual Report and Accounts

1 April 2023 –
31 March 2024



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Glossary

CLASS: Community Led Action and Savings Support

Executive Member: The key decision makers at Manchester City Council who also determine council policy and strategic direction are called the Executive Committee. They are ward councillors who have been appointed to be the lead politician working on a particular area such as Housing or Education. Each of these committee members is called an Executive Member e.g. 'Executive Member for Housing'

Age Friendly Neighbourhoods Board: The Manchester Age-Friendly Neighbourhoods (MAFN) programme ran from 2016-2018 and aimed to provide older people with opportunities to become increasingly active members of their communities by removing barriers that people face in their daily lives and providing more ways for people to get involved. The Miles Plating Board merged with Miles Plating Community Network in 2021.

MPCAN: Miles Plating Community and Age-friendly Network.

MPCAN Leader: A member of MPCAN who is representing a local community group, street, or accommodation block within the network.

Private Finance Initiative or PFI: A Private Finance Initiative (PFI) is a long-term contract between a private party and a government entity where the private sector designs, builds, finances, and operates a public asset and related services in return for remuneration and profit.

Social homes / social housing: Social rent homes are for people living on a low income. Rent is set through the national rent regime in England at about 50% of market rent. Most social rented accommodation is now provided by Registered Providers (housing associations) and they are regulated by the Social Housing Regulator.

This City: a new house-building vehicle run by Manchester City Council that aims to build approximately 500 homes each year going forwards including low-carbon high quality homes.

URBED: An urban design cooperative that has sadly now dissolved but was actively involved in supporting communities and local authorities and public agencies develop innovative initiatives and projects in Greater Manchester and beyond for many years.



1. Introduction

Miles Platting Community and Age-friendly Network (MPCAN) is an action-focused network made up of residents and community groups who are passionate about Miles Platting past, present, and future. We want to make Miles Platting and the surrounding area an even better place to live, age, and bring up children. We hope you enjoy our annual report about our activities and progress in 2023-24.

MPCAN leaders conducted a 'reflection on progress and learning' as part of their quarterly network meeting in January 2024. This has formed the basis for some of the background, findings, and proposals in this report. In March



2024, MPCAN Leaders participated in impact evaluation and reflective interviews with members of the CLASS staff team. These interviews focused on reflections around:

- progress in developing MPCAN
- the changes that they have seen take place as a direct result of MPCAN community action
- the benefits to themselves as local leaders and to their groups

CLASS staff collated this data and co-created this report with the MPCAN Committee. As MPCAN is affiliated to the wider Community Savers movement; Community Savers & CLASS have also drawn on some of this data for their 2023 impact evaluation.

"I feel inspired by MPCAN because it's taught me that I can do things I never thought I could do. It's given me courage to do things I never thought I could do. It's opening my mind. And I think if I can do it and pass it onto someone, they can do the same- you're helping others and yourself. I just want to thank MPCAN for helping me to see and learn new things."

MPCAN Leader



2. History and context

“MPCAN at the beginning had a formal purpose to facilitate and promote community action. The meshing of older and newer populations, lack of facilities, swimming pool and library- there was a sense that this was a bit bleak, so we needed to cooperate.”

MPCAN Leader

The Miles Platting Community Network formed following discussions across community groups about how residents did not fully understand the local developments taking place and were anxious about what might happen next. A meeting held in September 2019 saw the formation of a community network where representatives from different community groups in the area could come together, share ideas, and make collective plans. This garnered significant interest and local people were consulted to determine MPCN’s objectives and priorities for Miles Platting and surrounding areas (particularly Ancoats and Collyhurst) which were agreed to be:

- protecting and enhancing green spaces.
- ensuring communal spaces for social interaction amongst local people.
- provision of adequate levels of housing for social rent.
- promotion of activities to build positive social relations in the community.
- good communication about local developments and inclusion of residents in decision-making.

These priorities were identified in the context of the Miles Platting Private Finance Initiative (PFI) regeneration. This deal was justified to residents on the basis that there would be a Joint Services Centre providing a suite of NHS services and a Community Hub built at the intersection of Oldham Road and Varley Street (behind the current location of Jigsaw Homes offices).

The Joint Services Centre was to include three GP practices; a pharmacy; chronic disease management, maternity and children’s health services; drugs misuse and sexual health services; counselling and therapy services; and breast screening and minor surgery. The Community Hub was supposed to incorporate: a new library; new sports facilities; advice and information; services for young people; spaces for community, recreation; and leisure use; and community outreach services.

There was also supposed to be retail facilities and a replacement swimming pool. These facilities were never developed, and the community have experienced a net loss of 502 social homes following the regeneration (with 240 homes lost to demolition and others through right to buy). Meanwhile, the neighbourhood has been transformed into a landscape of private housing for sale and rent.

Miles Platting Community Network merged with the Age-Friendly Partnership Board in June 2021 to form the Miles Platting Community and Age-Friendly Network. MPCAN currently represents 10 local community groups and groups of residents living within the regeneration area of the Miles Platting PFI.

“MPCAN is endeavouring to bring local issues into the spotlight for residents in the Miles Platting and surrounding areas. It also makes use of the local knowledge of long-standing residents to help bring to the forefront important matters of the day e.g. affordable housing, green spaces, need for more community rooms for older people to enjoy get-togethers which have been lost to recent housing developments in the area.”

MPCAN Leader



3. MPCAN Community Action in 2023

Network meetings and Age-friendly Miles Platting

MPCAN comes together as a full network to share information and update members and partners/associates on projects and progress. The following community and age-friendly groups and projects from the adjoining neighbourhoods of Ancoats, Collyhurst, and Miles Platting send representatives to quarterly network meetings:

- Ged's Disco
- Holland Street Community Gardens
- Many Hands Craft Collective
- Miles Platting Neighbourhood Watch
- Miles Platting Savers & Friday Coffee Morning
- Monday Movers
- Play Readers
- Ridgway Street Community Gardens
- Social Super Market
- Theatre Trippers
- Tuesday Wellness Walkers

We are also working on developing a network of street representatives.

Topics covered at network meetings in the 2023-24 year included - the launch of a new community newspaper, planning a joint funding bid, planning a family fun day, consultation about the redevelopment of St Cuthberts site and the need for increased social housing.

MPCAN's age-friendly groups are going from strength to strength and received further funding to support their regular activities from Forever Manchester in 2023. MPCAN network meetings were originally held on a bi-monthly basis. However, due to ample ongoing community action between meetings, it was decided that the frequency should change to quarterly to ensure efficient use of community leaders' time.



MPCAN currently has three action groups that are also represented at network meetings (see below for more info); Climate Action, St Cuthbert's Action/Cuthbert's Communities Together, and Social Homes for Miles Platting. Other regular attendees include MPCAN partners, local councillors, neighbourhood officers and representatives from local faith organisations.

MPCAN Climate Action

The Climate Action group is focused on achieving MPCAN's priority for improved and sustainable green spaces. Under the PFI regeneration, there has been a net loss of green spaces to new housing developments, which further highlighted the need for action around this issue. The action group's main objective is to protect and create pleasant, high quality green spaces, which provide habitats for wildlife and a lively communal environment.

Over a 12-month process from 2019-2020, MPCAN members (working closely with URBED and CLASS) invested their time and local expertise into mapping out the ownership, purpose, and current use of sites across Miles Platting. They identified sites that were not yet earmarked for development and began working with Ash Farrah (then Climate Change Officer at Manchester City Council), Dr Jenna Ashton from the University of Manchester, and Jigsaw Homes, to develop a climate action plan.

2023 was an exciting year for the Climate Action group. "Our Green and Pleasant Land" Climate Resilience Pageant was held in July and members worked hard with partners throughout the year to secure funding for the group's work. MPCAN were delighted to be one of the Round 3 grantees for the Greater Manchester Green Spaces Fund, to develop a wildlife corridor in Miles Platting with support from Jenna Ashton. Four key green spaces were identified to improve biodiversity and local ecosystems: Victoria Mill Park, Bollington Road Green, Holland Street Community Gardens and Ridgway Street Community Gardens.

Following the group's funding success, plans for the wildlife corridor are well underway. Project lead Suzanne Walton from Groundwork is carrying out ongoing consultations with residents around the four key sites to determine what kinds of additions they would like to see, from trees to wildflowers to hedging. Ten new trees were planted at Bollington Road Green in February, including two types of birch.

Alongside this, MPCAN Climate Action recently received funding through City of Trees which paid for 30 new trees along Ridgway Street, which were planted in April 2024.

St Cuthberts Communities Together

As well as the loss of green spaces, new housing developments under the PFI have resulted in a loss of social homes and much needed community facilities. The original neighbourhood plan contained proposals for a Joint Services Centre which aimed to provide NHS services, a library, sports facilities, advice and information, services for young people, spaces for community and leisure use, and community-focused outreach work. As these facilities were never developed, MPCAN members have organised to try and bring investment to redevelop that site through a partnership with the Parochial Church Council of St Cuthberts church. A key priority is the development of a multi-purpose social club and worship space.

Maintaining and increasing access to social homes for future generations is also a key MPCAN objective, underpinning our overarching aim to make Miles Platting a better place to live, age, and bring up children. If we can find the right housing association to work with us, there is the potential to include a small amount of social housing as part of this development (if this remains a priority for the local community as the consultation process continues).

With support from Participate Projects and Locality the St Cuthbert's Action group are currently in the process of setting up a new Charitable Incorporated Organisation with the working name of "St Cuthberts Communities Together". The proposed name transpired following a collective recognition that this project will be a joint initiative aimed at bringing together the three adjoining communities of Ancoats, Collyhurst and Miles Platting. Situated at the crossroads between these areas at St Cuthbert's church, members wish for this to be a space for everyone in the community to come together, socialise, and enjoy life while having increased access to the information and services that we all need.

Social Homes for Miles Platting

This exciting new action group formed to identify sites across the neighbourhood that were still in public ownership, not part of the PFI contract and could potentially be earmarked for new build homes for social rent.

MPCAN Leaders also joined forces with community leaders in Wythenshawe and support agency CLASS to catalyse a new city-wide campaign coalition for social homes (www.socialhomes4mcr.org.uk), which is going from strength to strength. Coalition members include Community Savers/CLASS, GM Community Led Homes Hub, GM Tenants Union, Greater Together Manchester, Mustard Tree, Shelter, and Steady State Manchester. More than 15,000 households are on the waiting list for social housing in the city.

Together with the city-wide campaign, Social Homes for Miles Platting launched a campaign for new build social homes at a Family Fun Day event on Saturday 28 October 2023. The campaign focussed on the plot of land behind Jigsaw Homes; the site where the joint services centre was supposed to be built under the original PFI contract. Alongside being a fun-packed day with free pizza and a disco, residents staged a march over to the intersection of Oldham Road and Varley Street behind Jigsaw Homes offices. Holding signs reading “Housing for All!” and “Beds not Profit!”. MPCAN are looking forward to a meeting with Executive Member for Housing, Cllr Gavin White; Ward Councillor June Hitchen; and Jason Hingley, Director of Manchester City Council’s new house building vehicle “This City” in May 2024 following the local elections. They plan to discuss building more social homes in the neighbourhood.



4. Outcomes we have achieved

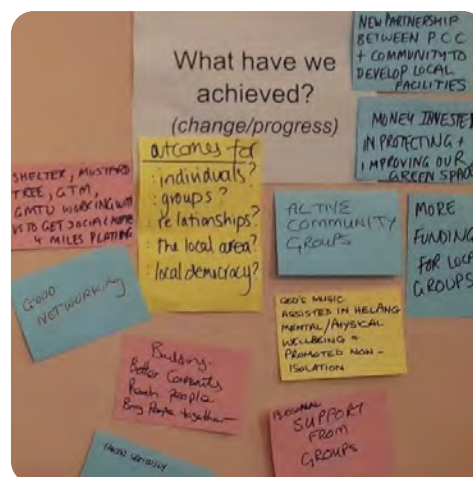
Reflections on progress from members and partners

“The enthusiasm, the skill set that is being brought to meetings, the funding that has been attracted to the wildlife project and now for St Cuthbert’s. We have built up now into being a serious project that people are willing to fund.”

MPCAN Leader

“Like most of the other groups, Social Supermarket is meeting a locally defined need. Theatre trippers and Many Hands meet different kinds of needs, where people come together to make their lives more interesting and enjoyable - the Social Supermarket definitely fits into that. One of the big values of MPCAN is that these things all exist independently, doing their own thing, but MPCAN brings everyone together and people can share what they’re doing and find out what’s going on. There is crossover into other groups.”

MPCAN Leader



Outcomes for member groups and community leaders

Increased funding for health and wellbeing groups and for households in crisis

As well as accessing small grants fundraising and support from CLASS to raise money for member groups directly, MPCAN are now linked into One World Together (www.oneworldtogether.org.uk) through their affiliation with Community Savers:

“We are part of a new fundraising movement called One World Together who are going to channel unrestricted funding to grassroots initiatives and movements – and this is going to be really helpful because it gives us flexibility to address crisis or urgent challenges.”

MPCAN Leader

Increased social interaction and building a stronger social network.

“I’ve benefitted by getting to meet nice and interesting people and being involved in something that is worthwhile, feels exciting, and has the potential to do some good. I’d be staying at home watching TV if I wasn’t doing something like this.”

MPCAN Leader

Increased knowledge and skills

“Our [group] committee members have benefitted from training and skills development. We’ve done financial management and accounting training. We’ve definitely got stronger and more determined.”

MPCAN Leader

Confidence and a feeling that change is possible.

“I think I’ve benefited 1,000 per cent. It’s opening my mind to what I can do. Before I didn’t think I was worth anything but now I want to go back to college and write. MPCAN has opened my eyes to think I can do anything. It’s definitely improved my confidence to ask questions and help.”

MPCAN Leader

“Years ago, I thought I wasn’t good enough to say my point of view, I feel like people listen now and I’m more confident to talk. I just like helping everyone. What I learn, and if I hear anything, I like to pass it on.”

MPCAN Leader

Improved mental health and sense of self-worth.

“I think it’s helped my mental health because it gives you things to think about and it gets you out... and we look out for each other - if someone is poorly or down, we make sure they are ok. I like to have a sense of achievement – but that we’ve achieved together. It feels good when we get these small wins, and now we are going for much bigger ones! Twenty years ago, we wouldn’t have dared, we just fought for people to get their repairs done. Now, we are aiming high. And it’s good and it feels good. And to be honest, sometimes it goes over my head, but if I don’t understand stuff I say so, and I can also look on the internet now.”

MPCAN Leader

Outcomes for the neighbourhood

There is now a **collective voice** for residents in the local area which has convening power – MPCAN is able to mobilise large numbers of residents to gather their views, build collective voice and bring people together to advocate and demonstrate for the needs of the local community.

There has been an increase in **confidence** among local groups and leaders, what one leader described as a “can-do” attitude. Before MPCAN existed, people felt disillusioned and without any **agency to achieve change**. This is still there among many people – but not those involved in the MPCAN process, and participation is growing all the time.

“When I first started with MPCAN, I didn’t understand at first, but you can approach people and they can give you ideas and training which opens up different ways for people to learn. I’ve benefited from first aid training, fundraising, computer skills ... As local residents we are professional, but we don’t realise - we have life skills, but we don’t realise. It’s helped me loads coming to Apostles over the past couple of years.”

MPCAN Leader

There has been a **change in relationship between public agencies, the local authority, and residents and community groups**. This includes with ward councillors. The community are now **able to organise around the issues they care about** and advocate for those priorities, initiatives, and projects with key local stakeholders, **and get the response that they need**. This is a significant change. During the early days of MPCAN formation, residents were clear that they did not have any power to do this or even to bring councillors to meetings.

“At end of the day, we are just local residents who are trying to make our area better. Council tend to think we are all thick and try and fob us off and I think now they are realising they can’t. I’ve been at this sort of thing for 25 years and it is what we are doing now that is meaning that this is changing. They take us a bit more seriously now.”

MPCAN Leader

There has been **increased funding for neighbourhood initiatives** that can promote better outcomes for all of the community. The £40,000 grant from GM Green Spaces and tree-planting through City of Trees, includes critical outcomes :

- More trees to absorb CO2 emissions from the city centre
- More biodiversity and connectivity between our green spaces
- Uplifting small areas to improve our mental health and increase our use and enjoyment of informal green spaces

Several leaders mentioned the importance of having **increased connectivity to external “professionals”** with knowledge and skills; and that MPCAN members needed this to make ideas and priorities a reality.

We have **new partnerships** in our neighbourhood, more people are working together to bring back things we have lost over time.

- St Cuthberts redevelopment has happened through a partnership between the Parochial Church Council and MPCAN Leaders, and has gained momentum through partnership with Participate and Locality.
- This has become a platform for bringing residents and groups together across Ancoats, Collyhurst and Miles Plating, to develop a vision for the site that can address our needs.
- These collective priorities include a social club where we can socialise in an affordable environment, hold social events and community events through a multi-purpose community hub, maintain the worship space for future generations, and hopefully, develop partnerships with the NHS and Housing Providers for a joint services centre and additional social homes.



Outcomes for the city

MPCAN's Social Homes for Miles Platting Leaders launched a new city-wide campaign coalition on 28 October 2023 called Social Homes for Manchester! This is a different type of city-wide campaign that has been driven from the beginning by local resident groups and communities. Focussed on their own local priorities for more social housing and an end to unregulated rent increases and poor-quality housing in the private sector.

“Another thing we are trying to establish, we have all these people coming in knocking social housing down, not building any social homes to replace them, they are just using the land up to build private housing to sell and then what they are calling affordable housing which does not apply to anyone on a minimum wage. So now we are trying to fight so that when they build new housing 30% of it has to be for social rent. Because people that have lived here all their lives are being squeezed out. And these developers are coming in and making millions and what are they putting back into our communities? Section 106 is supposed to give something back, but nothing has been put back into our community.”

MPCAN Leader

MPCAN are beginning to share their learning and achievements more widely with other community leaders in sister neighbourhoods in Manchester and Sheffield. Other groups want to learn what MPCAN has achieved and catalyse similar neighbourhood networks in their own local areas; to build community, change local power relations, and attract investment into neglected communities. In 2023-24, MPCAN Leaders shared their learning with leaders in Hulme and Wythenshawe (Manchester) and in Arbourthorne (Sheffield). Both areas are now looking to develop ward-based community action networks.

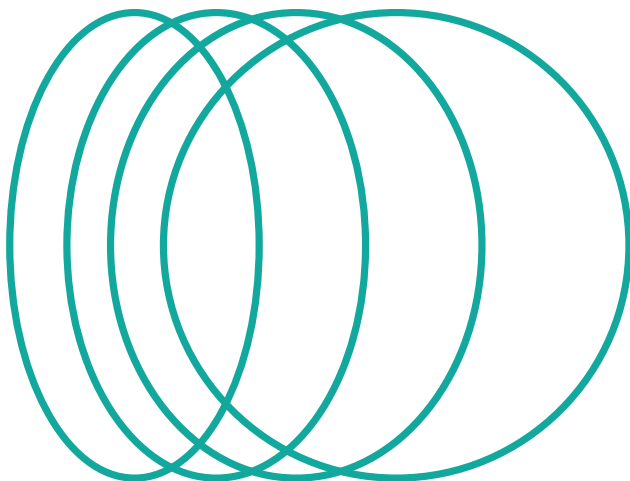


Image: MPCAN Leaders Dot Lomax and Ellie Trimble share MPCAN's history and achievements with residents and community groups in Woodhouse Park, Wythenshawe, in March 2024.

As well as developing new and innovative partnerships with local organisations and ‘professionals’, MPCAN Leaders are also training the professionals of the future by engaging in teaching programmes in urban inequality at the Universities of Manchester and Sheffield. Since 2022, they have hosted postgraduate students for neighbourhood walkabouts and given lectures teaching people studying urban development and community action about their own experiences of and responses to regeneration and the privatisation of public space and amenities and services. These engagements have been incredibly popular with students and leaders have been invited to deliver lectures and visits for a third year in 2024.



Image: Anne Worthington, an MPCAN Leader, explaining to students how MPCAN attempted to prevent the removal of 24 mature trees which are critical to carbon capture on the edge of Manchester City Centre on Sandal Green. Despite Manchester City Council's stated target of being a zero-carbon city by 2038, the planning department and planning committee gave this development the green light. MPCAN was only able to save 9 of the trees in the end.



5. What we have learned

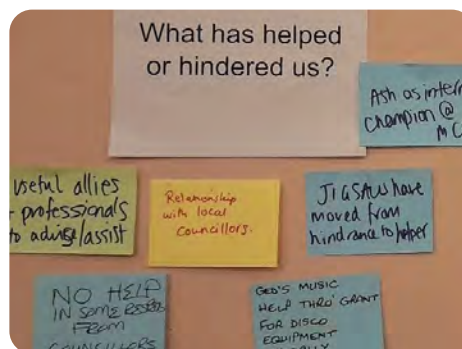
What has helped our progress to date?

Parish Church of the Apostles and St Cuthberts

These two churches and church councils have been critical to the ability of MPCAN to thrive. They provide accessible community spaces that are familiar and welcoming. The spaces have multiple projects and initiatives taking place inside, meaning there is cross-fertilisation of people, ideas and outcomes. This has been fundamentally important to the change that has been possible in the area.

“Someone thought there’s nothing happening, but I told them to go to Apostles and that there is loads going on. Ellie does a lot in Miles Platting- before her there was nothing, or if there was, we wouldn’t know about it. It’s the roots of Apostles is a big part of it that helps MPCAN do its work.”

MPCAN Leader



Affiliation with Community Savers & CLASS

MPCAN is affiliated with Community Savers (www.communitysavers.net) - a movement of low-income communities who take action on poverty and inequality within their own neighbourhoods; while also joining forces across neighbourhood borders and across town and city boundaries to share ideas and build power for change. It is inspired by Shack/Slum Dwellers International, a 30-year mature international social movement, and supported by a dedicated support agency called Community Led Action and Savings Support (CLASS).

“All of the change we have fought for has been supported by CLASS through administration support, training, and grant applications.”

MPCAN Leader

“The relationship with CLASS is central to it. Without [it] there probably wouldn’t be an MPCAN or it would be completely different... That support is central.”

MPCAN Leader

Partnerships with professional agencies and professionals

The partnerships with council officers such as Ash Farrah and Jenna Ashton from Manchester University have really helped us to achieve the changes we needed to see as a community, they both offered support to secure a large pot of funding for the wildlife corridor development.

“Having the support of CLASS, Participate and Locality has been amazing, and I really do believe that we can actually deliver this project together so that our community can eventually get some justice.”

MPCAN Leader

“MPCAN brings together a knowledge of who to go to-that kind of intelligence is important.. We know the people to go to, we’re getting a checklist of where is useful to go to.”

MPCAN Leader

“We have had people coming in from universities and students and different partner organisations who come and bring useful information, support, guidance and help.”

MPCAN Leader

“We have a good relationship with our neighbourhood officers and local housing association provider, this has helped us to achieve our goals.”

MPCAN Leader

Support from MCC Climate Change Officer and Councillor June Hitchen

“The Climate Action group has proved itself with obvious action on the ground. It started off with scepticism from the council and Jigsaw – they didn’t seem very keen on MPCAN forming. Including the PFI as a point of criticism didn’t please any of those parties and we had to overcome that slight problem and we did. MPCAN has a momentum to it. The relationship to the council has changed. I think we are still getting there. We have more contact with people, neighbours, and councillor June Hitchen. An example is delivering the leaflets about the Co-Op Arena licensing as an MPCAN member and talking to residents.”

MPCAN Leader

“MPCAN has more things to do! Forty years ago we had loads of stuff but since 2010 we didn’t have anything. But now MPCAN is bringing more people together, stuff to bring more people into the community. It’s bringing people and their minds together to think.”

MPCAN Leader

Crisis context

In some ways the crisis context is also a driver for success on some of the areas that MPCAN have prioritised. Wider recognition internationally, nationally and locally about the climate crisis, the housing crisis and the cost of living crisis are all providing us with levers at different levels which we can hook on our grassroots bottom up pressure from our own local neighbourhood. As one of our leaders recognised in relation to housing:

“I think it’s about 2 million houses now that have been lost through right to buy... the children of middle-class parents can’t even afford to buy or to rent. In a way, I think that helps us because at some point there will have to be a proper response to that. The housing crisis is getting to that stage... so if we’re established as a local community group with a plan and we want to build x amount of houses. If we’ve got the proposals, here are these sites, here are these plans...”

MPCAN Leader

What makes change more difficult to achieve?

Interviews with leaders suggested that MPCAN is at its best when everyone is coming together with shared values focused on achieving better quality and fairer access to community facilities, housing, and services. Some leaders highlighted the **importance of focusing on** addressing the needs of households living on low incomes and experiencing **socio-economic and health inequalities**.

“Solidarity has been important to me, likeminded people working together for a common goal has given me energy and hope”

MPCAN Leader

One leader highlighted how sometimes people are **fearful of change and doing things differently** but the only way to address this is just *“to keep trying...explain to them...you need some fresh thoughts to be brought in”*

MPCAN Leader

Several people highlighted how **non-response or delays and misinformation from public agencies and authorities** can be draining and disheartening but there is a strong culture of peer support and encouragement that has enabled network leaders to keep on going.

“I know at times I have wanted to give up the fight and that’s when we rely on each other for encouragement.”

MPCAN Leader

Having **limited time and capacity** and having the same people doing lots of community roles are commonly cited challenges. MPCAN are trying to address this by involving more people over time (including a younger generation) and membership of the action groups and MPCAN is growing steadily, but this is an ongoing challenge.

Leaders have highlighted the importance of **self-care and shared roles** which is why MPCAN has Co-Chairs for example who can share the load with one another.

“...getting other local residents involved, and trying to aim for younger people because – sometimes we’re the same people doing it all, but it’s a good job its voluntary because if you are not well you don’t have to go.”

MPCAN Leader

What have we learned about community action?

Having a **clear and collaborative vision** for the neighbourhood and then **organising around that vision** has created a strong collective resident voice on the issues that are affecting us as a community.

How **power to make change** is created when large numbers of residents come together around the same goals and the same vision.

“For me personally, I believe you can’t stop you’ve got to keep at them, but also as we’ve grown and got more people involved, I can see that more people means more power. We’re not pushed aside so easily.”

MPCAN Leader

Getting better at **monitoring the planning system** and not assuming that what you are being told by council officers or public providers is ‘truth’ or ‘fact’ – always getting **independent guidance** and information.

“I have also learnt a lot from some mistakes we have made e.g. don’t go to planning meetings and trust that Manchester City Council is going to work with us with the openness that we offer them. I have learnt a lot about relationships, building tolerance, and staying calm when frustrated with the bad behaviour of others.”

MPCAN Leader

“There’s also...funding, I didn’t quite appreciate how big the community’s action could be. There is a lot of support out there for valid viable objectives. Being aware of the stuff [Participate] talk about, the way the charity sector works. I think I’ve also learned about the way the council operates as well: both the politicians and the officers.”

MPCAN Leader

The importance of **grassroots learning exchange** – learning from other communities like us who have made change and have interesting or innovative ideas for the future. We can learn from each other we don’t have to be told or taught top-down.

“We went to Liverpool and learned about what they’ve been doing [Homebaked CLT] which is impressive. I think I’ve learned that people put an immense amount of work in to achieve those changes. It’s very much the domain of very dedicated individuals.”

MPCAN Leader

At the same time, leaders have reflected on the importance of building **connections into the right people and organisations** – knowing where to go to get what kinds of information or support for the initiative you are trying to develop (or prevent from developing).

Developing these **relationships and partnerships on our own terms** according to the priorities we have set ourselves based on our expert local knowledge about our own neighbourhood.

“Community action brings people together, it can result in real change that is actually needed. Its powerful as it comes from within our communities as we are the experts we know what will work and what is needed. It feels really good when change happens from within our communities - it can bring pride and improve wellbeing and confidence. Community action can also be really uplifting and fun e.g. the march over to the site of the joint services centre that never was.”

MPCAN Leader

6. Aspirations for the future

Leaders' aspirations for the future focused particularly on three main areas: (i) the growth and sustainability of MPCAN as an umbrella for community groups in the area; (ii) the achievement of key objectives for climate change mitigation, social homes; and the creation of a new social centre for the area; (iii) the importance of that social centre having a democratic representative structure.

"We had a big gathering of the local community; people were able to share their thoughts and views about the St Cuthbert's site and the plot of land behind Jigsaw. In that march, there was proper solidarity there, people were brought together to express their hopes, views, concerns and wishes. The trick is to build on it and ensure something happens. People will have felt their voice is heard and valued and taken account of. The things we are trying to do are all things that are definitely the expressed views of those people."

"Member groups will be thriving and less dependent on MPCAN for support."

"St Cuthberts site will have been redeveloped and opened as a multi-purpose community hub and worship space with at least some social housing and run/led by local people."

"Ideally it would become a democratically elected body that is responsible for the activities that take place there, and ultimately the management of the building. It would need to be looked after, and the activities that take place. It would need to be a local body making sure that the things that happen are what the local people want and that are of benefit to the local community."

"I would want MPCAN to carry on the fantastic job that they are doing, bringing different ideas. The main achievement would be having finished the final project at St Cuthbert's: there would be a place of workshop, a medical centre for appointments, activities to suit the community. After we go, the building will still be there for those that come after us, and they can carry on what we started for many years."



7. Annual accounts (1 April 2023 – 31 March 2024)

Balances on 1 April 2023	
Balance held at bank	997.88
Balance held in cash	
Total balance	997.88
Breakdown of funds held on 1 April 2023	
Restricted funds	697.88
Unrestricted funds	300.00
INCOME	
RESTRICTED	
Balance carried forward	697.88
Grant income	21885.00
Consultancy income	
Other income	
Total restricted income	22,582.88
UNRESTRICTED	
Balance carried forward	300.00
Unrestricted income	873.75
<i>Total unrestricted income</i>	<i>1,173.75</i>
TOTAL INCOME	23,756.63
EXPENDITURE	
Catering/refreshments	
Events (e.g. materials, equipment, entertainment)	765.00
Crisis goods/grants (e.g. food/fuel/white goods)	20000.00
ICT Hardware	
Miscellaneous	50.00
Printing	
Room hire	
Stationery	
Subscriptions	
Telephone/data	
Volunteer childcare	
Volunteer transport	
Total restricted fund expenditure	20000.00
Total unrestricted funds expenditure	815.00
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	20815.00
Balances on 1 April 2024	
Balance held at bank	2941.63
Balance held in cash	0.00
Total balance	2941.63
<i>Balance of restricted funds</i>	<i>1,300.00</i>
<i>Balance of unrestricted funds</i>	<i>1,641.63</i>

The MPCAN Committee for 2023/24 would like to thank our partners for all their support over the past 12 months:

