

The logo for Fabric District Liverpool. It features a red square containing the text 'Fabric District' in a bold, black, sans-serif font. To the left of the word 'Fabric' is a small icon consisting of a 3x3 grid of squares, with the top-right square missing. The background of the entire page is a black and white checkerboard pattern.

# Fabric District

LIVERPOOL

PROSPECTUS 2024

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An aerial photograph of Liverpool City Centre, showing a dense urban landscape with a mix of historic and modern architecture. The River Mersey is visible in the background. A red outline highlights a specific area in the center of the city, identified as the Fabric District. The text is overlaid on the left side of the image.

“The Fabric District will regain its status as a vibrant part of Liverpool City Centre”

Michael Birkett, Chair of the Fabric District CIC



HOPE  
UNIVERSITY

PROPOSED EXTENDED BOUNDARY

EXISTING BOUNDARY (LOCAL PLAN)

STAFFORD STREET

KEMPSTON STREET

NORTON STREET

LONDON ROAD

LONDON ROAD

MONUMENT  
PLACE

PEMBROKE PLACE

LIME STREET STATION

Bare Water Productions put on 'All the Little Lights' at Scale in the Fabric District



Air cap, manufactured at Try & Lilly Ltd. in the Fabric District



## WHAT IS THE FABRIC DISTRICT?

The Fabric District, part of Liverpool's Knowledge Quarter, is an important city centre commercial district of about 25 hectares (60 acres) and home to around 200 businesses which include a good mix of retail outlets centred on London Road & Monument Place. The area contains many old established and new businesses, often in the fashion & creative industries sector, who wish to grow and/or establish themselves locally.

The Fabric District both serves and forms a critical link to the city centre for local residential communities at West Everton and the St Andrew's Gardens/Brownlow Hill area. It is also home to over 3,000 university students who live here. Approximately 1,000 student rooms are under construction.

The district has around 650 private residential units with another 650 or so under construction or in the pipeline.

The Fabric District is one of the main routes in and out of the city centre and the link between Lime Street Station / St George's Quarter and the huge recent investments in the Knowledge Quarter, notably at the Universities, the Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine, the Royal Liverpool Hospital and the Paddington Village development at the top of London Road and Pembroke Place.



Historic Image of Monument Place,  
London Road

## WHAT IS THE HISTORY OF THE FABRIC DISTRICT?

Liverpool's rapid growth as a major industrial city and international port in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries saw the city boundary expand into newly created districts including Islington.

Islington, now known as the Fabric District, was one of the most densely populated areas of the city with a population as diverse as the industry it housed. The 1881 census shows roughly half of the residents were not born locally with large numbers of Welsh, Scots & Irish moving to Liverpool for work. At the start of the twentieth century, there was an influx of migrants from Russia, Poland, Italy and Germany and a Jewish Quarter formed on the eastside of the district. Many in the fabric and fashion industry made this their home.

This thriving district with its famous and distinctive London Road (with TJ Hughes being one of the UK's first department stores) was set to decline from the mid twentieth century but, as other city centre districts have seen major regeneration and renewal over the last 30 years, the Fabric District has been largely overlooked.

Sometimes seen as a low priority, the Fabric District is in fact one of Liverpool's best located central districts with huge untapped potential. The Fabric District Community Interest Company (CIC), backed by its local community, knows that the Fabric District is a major city resource and opportunity..... and the next chapter in its illustrious history has started.

## WHAT IS FABRIC DISTRICT CIC?

The Fabric District CIC was set up in 2017 and has developed a vision, associated strategic priorities and an operational plan. It has achieved much, established a clear role and continues to evolve. It is viewed incredibly positively within the local community and works in partnership with the City Council to drive forward the regeneration of the Fabric District. Importantly, being part of Liverpool's Knowledge Quarter, the CIC has been working closely with the Knowledge Quarter team to support the long-term regeneration strategy.

The CIC Board is committed to the vision for the Fabric District and comprises highly skilled and experienced people who understand the opportunity that exists and are committed to achieving sustainable regeneration.

### Board members:

Michael Birkett (Chair) – Group CEO of The Regenda Group

Jason Abbott – Owner of Tapestry (a mixed-use creative community hub in the Fabric District)

Matthew Ashton – Practising Liverpool Chartered Architect, urban designer & University Lecturer

Chris Clayton – Practising Liverpool Chartered Surveyor & urban regeneration specialist

Matthew Clough – Director of Campus Services at the University of Liverpool

Diane Cunningham – founder of 'The Assembly Line' place-based consultancy & adviser to the High Street Task Force

Richard Jennions – From Try & Lilly Ltd (major headwear manufacturer in the Fabric District)

Nanette Mellor – Formerly CEO of The Brain Charity, headquartered in the Fabric District, and now CEO of Drake Music



“Once the heart of our region’s rag trade, today the Fabric District is home to one of the most creative corners of our economy – playing host to a diverse community of people, trades and cultures.

It’s those individuals, who live and work in the area, who’ve transformed it into the vibrant and dynamic place we know it as today. Yet, even with their imagination and ingenuity, it’s clear that this is a part of our community that has been crying out for ambitious investment for decades.

We know that, when done properly, community-led regeneration can bring a myriad of social and economic benefits. This area has played a massive part in our region’s long and storied history – and I can’t wait to see what this next chapter has in store for it.”

Steve Rotheram, Metro Mayor,  
Liverpool City Region

Image from Alena Kudera’s show at  
the Fabric District Festival 2019





Construction of Home Group's residential scheme opposite Audley House, an historically important department store on London Road in the Fabric District

## FABRIC DISTRICT'S STRENGTHS

Our regular and ongoing engagement and 'conversation' with our community has brought focus to some key strengths and challenges:

- ◆ Important part of Liverpool's Knowledge Quarter with three Universities and the Royal Liverpool Hospital represented or close by
- ◆ Fantastic accessible location close to city centre and Lime Street Station
- ◆ Excellent public transport serving the district
- ◆ Home to a growing number of creative businesses
- ◆ Great opportunities for business and living
- ◆ Good value property and services
- ◆ Strong community of businesses and residents in the heart of Liverpool's culture offer

“Small scale feel, and creative community”

“Local community spirit in a small area”

“Proximity to everything”

“Largely independent”

“Great spaces for creative businesses”

“Multicultural! Great food!”

“Space to grow and add public places”

*Public meeting June 2023*

# FABRIC DISTRICT'S CHALLENGES

- ◆ Public perception of the area is sometimes poor and does not reflect the significant recent improvements
- ◆ Some 'eyesores' – some neglected buildings and sites
- ◆ Litter and anti-social behaviour
- ◆ Traffic congestion & pollution (notably Norton Street & Islington)
- ◆ Poor connectivity with West Everton, mainly due to the 6-laned Islington
- ◆ Poor public realm
- ◆ Lack of green infrastructure

"Very central but feels disconnected"

"Poor landscape and pedestrian/bike connections"

"Poor lighting, limited green space, fear of crime"

"Growth could be better supported"

"Litter & lack of maintenance in streetscape"

*Public meeting June 2023*

The challenges for the Fabric District are common issues in many cities and towns. Fortunately, none are intractable and many are already improving. However, additional investment, strong and focussed neighbourhood management and community 'buy-in' will ensure that further progress is made.

Derelict buildings on London Road in sight of St George's Hall, one of the finest buildings of its era in Europe, and part of one of the most important clusters of civic buildings in the UK.



“As a key area within Knowledge Quarter Liverpool (KQ Liverpool), the Fabric District will play a crucial part in the ongoing economic growth and prosperity within our innovation district. Attracting additional public and private sector investment to help regenerate the area will provide further stimulus to support the great progress made to date.”

Colin Sinclair, Chief Executive,  
Knowledge Quarter Liverpool



# THE FABRIC DISTRICT'S POTENTIAL

## WHAT IS HAPPENING NOW?

- ▶ Parr Street Studios (the UK's largest music recording studio outside London) have recently relocated to the Fabric District
- ▶ A new Radisson Red hotel has opened at Lime Street Station
- ▶ A major new retail and residential development is under construction on Monument Place, funded by Columbia Threadneedle
- ▶ Various Knowledge Quarter projects completed: new Royal Liverpool Hospital; University of Liverpool; Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine; The Spine; Novotel; and more
- ▶ Two new student housing blocks under construction on Norton Street
- ▶ Eurovision opened at St George's Hall



Grammy Award Winning music studios relocates to Fabric District, image by Ewan Ogden

The Fabric District connects the cultural heart of the city with the University campuses and the 'centre of knowledge'. The Fabric District has the absolute potential to reverse its fortunes. Many 'green shoots' have already appeared.

The Board of the CIC has been working hard to raise the profile of the area with local and central government. A CIC-led 'Community Development Plan' will soon be published. The City Council and others are beginning to realise that a healthy Fabric District (social, physical, economic) will have benefits far and wide.

The City Council's support and financial investment in the Knowledge Quarter, notably at its Paddington Village development, has allowed Liverpool to maintain its rightful place at the very top in the field of medical sciences and research.

The Fabric District is playing an increasingly important role in supporting not only its own business and residential communities but also those very major institutions already mentioned. Our numerous small businesses in the Fabric District, many in the tech and creative sectors, are the life-support for our illustrious neighbours. Organisations, large and small, creating local jobs and wealth with the knock-on betterment of the district.

And just across Islington, that 'urban motorway' which isolates Everton from the city centre, is a community which faces ongoing challenges whilst hoping that the Fabric District can provide improved local services, job opportunities and a better future.

# OUR VISION FOR THE FUTURE

- ◆ Community-led regeneration, to re-energise the Fabric District as a vital resource for Liverpool
- ◆ Improve physical & safe connections to neighbouring districts and residential areas
- ◆ Recognise the Fabric District's rich heritage in its culture, buildings and places and bring about restoration wherever possible
- ◆ Improve the public realm & streets, prioritising the needs of pedestrians & cyclists over motorised vehicles
- ◆ Bring into use vacant sites and buildings, especially at street level, encouraging vibrant street activity and appropriate new development
- ◆ Encourage new residential development and conversions in appropriate locations, including affordable accommodation
- ◆ Support our residents & businesses, both existing and new, encourage start-ups and create employment opportunities
- ◆ Manage and maintain safe streets and deal with litter and street crime
- ◆ Encourage sustainable living and working through 'green initiatives'. Work towards the Fabric District becoming self-sufficient and a 'walkable' destination
- ◆ Work hard to promote and manage the Fabric District and to improve the lives and life-chances of our community

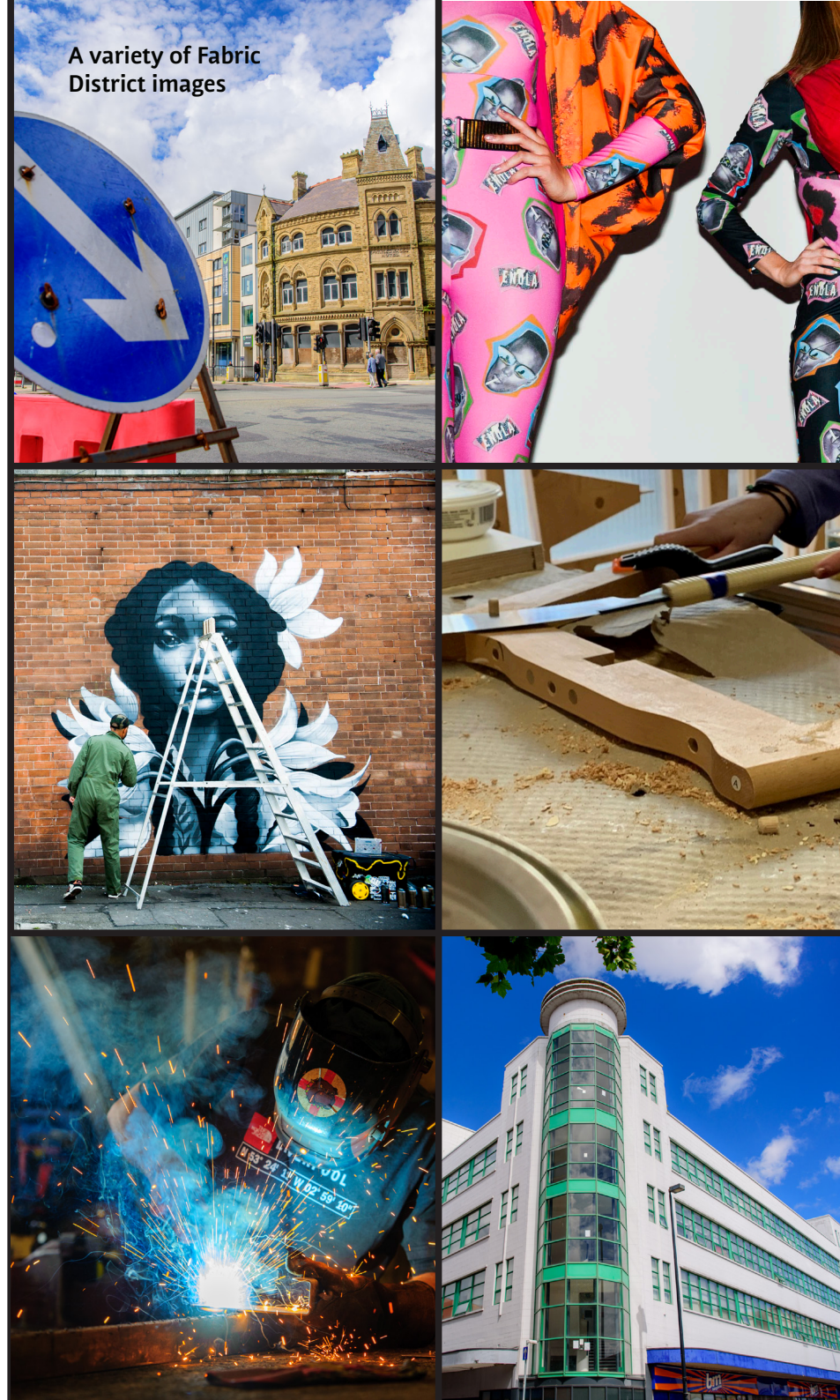
“Needs to stay edgy” “We would like “quirky and unique””

“Integrate with West Everton community”

*Public meeting June 2023*

The Fabric District CIC seeks to bring about the long-term change and improvement which the area deserves.

A variety of Fabric District images



# ACHIEVING THE VISION

- ✦ Fabric District CIC established and Vision document published (2017/18)
- ✦ The CIC Board strengthened with relevant skills, experience & local knowledge (2021/2)
- ✦ Regular engagement with local community and neighbours
- ✦ Publicising and promoting the vision
- ✦ Issuing a Fabric District Prospectus to gather support from local and central government
- ✦ Drafting a Fabric District 'Community Development Plan' in close liaison with Liverpool City Council & The Knowledge Quarter Board
- ✦ Ensuring the Community Development Plan informs the Local Plan review and is given planning status
- ✦ Raising the profile of the Fabric District and making it a priority for local & central government
- ✦ Encouraging our community to get involved

**“Great plans. Important to keep the community involved!”**

**“Local businesses to build communities”**

**“Good job! Great opportunities, we need to work for it”**

**“Not to price local/existing users/occupiers out of the area”**

**“Pop-up events, creative market”**

**“Narrow the roads and plant trees”**

*Public meeting June 2023*



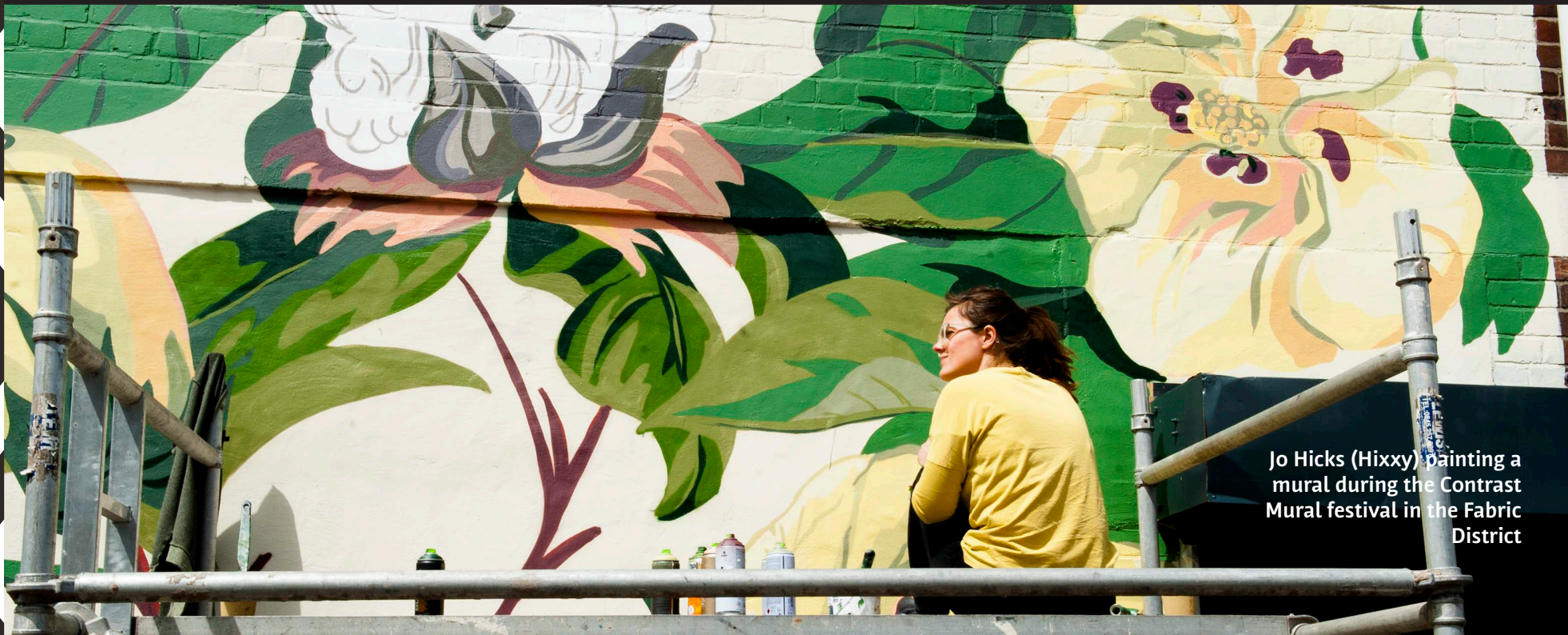
## CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

Liverpool successfully re-invented itself in the early 2000s and is a vibrant City known across the world. Several city districts have been re-populated and seen very successful regeneration initiatives. Developments including the Knowledge Quarter's Paddington Village development have "shone the light" on the Fabric District and the urgent need for the vision and regeneration plan which this prospectus describes.

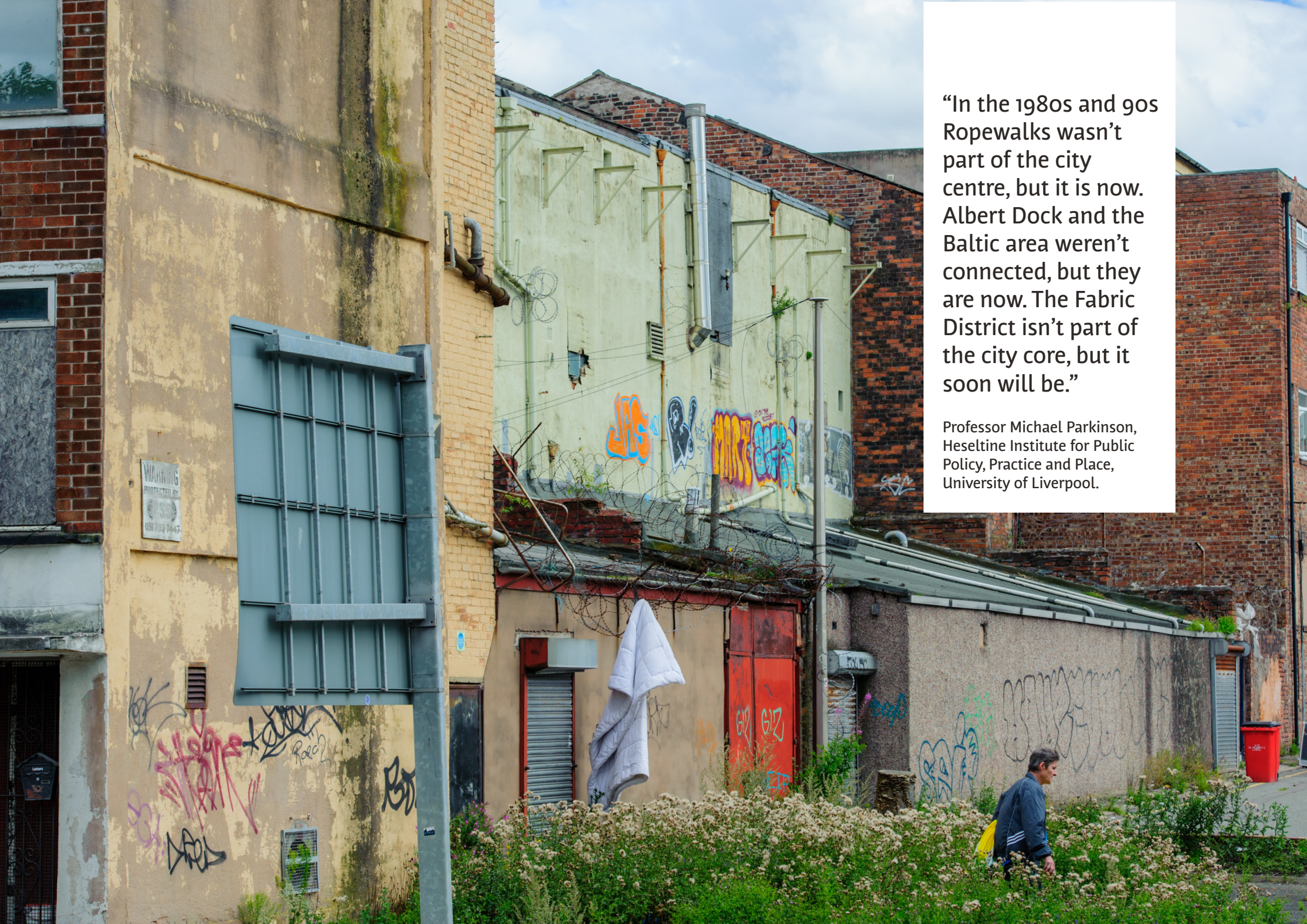
The Fabric District CIC will continue to engage constructively with Liverpool City Council, with our community and other stakeholders in progressing the regeneration strategy and our Community Development Plan.

Previous Liverpool regeneration initiatives since the days of the Merseyside Development Corporation (Albert Dock, North & South Docks, Ropewalks, Baltic Triangle) have worked successfully because they've been focussed on a specific area of the city, have been led by a well resourced team and have enjoyed support from local and central government and the local community. Area-wide initiatives have included Liverpool City Challenge, Liverpool Business Improvement District (BID) and The Knowledge Quarter Liverpool.

The Fabric District CIC wishes to lead and explore with local and central government a new bespoke regeneration model for the Fabric District, allowing this local community-led initiative to progress at pace and secure investment to deliver the long-term sustainable regeneration of the area.



Jo Hicks (Hixxy) painting a mural during the Contrast Mural festival in the Fabric District



“In the 1980s and 90s Ropewalks wasn’t part of the city centre, but it is now. Albert Dock and the Baltic area weren’t connected, but they are now. The Fabric District isn’t part of the city core, but it soon will be.”

Professor Michael Parkinson,  
Heseltine Institute for Public  
Policy, Practice and Place,  
University of Liverpool.

## COMMUNITY, NEIGHBOURS & SUPPORTERS



"The Fabric District is full of untapped potential and the City Council is pleased to be working with the CIC to maximise this incredible regeneration opportunity and help deliver its vision for the area."

Cllr. Nick Small, Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Liverpool City Council

