

P I C C A D I L L Y  
G A R D E N S



# A bright new chapter for Piccadilly Gardens

## The beating heart of Manchester since the 1930s

Piccadilly Gardens is one of Manchester city centre’s busiest public spaces. It’s an arrival point for visitors, a place for residents, workers and shoppers of all ages to enjoy, and a major transport interchange.

Piccadilly Gardens is getting a fresh new look. This is the first step in a bigger plan to make the area a world-class space. These improvements will help make Piccadilly Gardens more colourful, fun, accessible and safer for families, visitors and people who live nearby.

As well as a brand-new design, we are also working on a completely new approach to managing Piccadilly Gardens. Working in partnership with Transport for Greater Manchester and Greater Manchester Police – as well as city centre businesses and residents – the new management plan will ensure Piccadilly Gardens is a safe, clean and well-maintained space, addressing community concerns about antisocial behaviour with a proactive, problem-solving approach.

We have already hoarded off half of Piccadilly Gardens to undertake surveys and prepare the site for the work to come. Before we submit a planning application, we want to share our designs for your feedback.



Manchester city centre is busy day and night, so cleaning takes place every day from early morning to evening, with extra work at nights, weekends and during major events.

We’ve recently increased investment in cleaning, with more staff, vehicles and improved methods such as jet washing. This helps keep the city clean, safe and welcoming throughout the day.

↓ We've already transformed some of Manchester's busiest public spaces,



Albert Square



Glade of Light, Medieval Quarter



St Peter's Square

## We've been listening...

**There has been lots of previous consultation and engagement about Piccadilly Gardens, so we already have a clear idea of what improvements people would like to see and how they would like to use the space. We now want to move forward practically and get on site.**

**2021:**  
"Help reshape Piccadilly" consultation, with over 1,700 responses

**2022-25:**  
Key partners discuss and establish multi-agency steering group for Piccadilly Gardens

**March 2026:**  
Galliford Try, Planit and Civic appointed to deliver the design transformation

**June - July 2026:**  
Community engagement to help shape detailed design proposals

# Why do we need to redesign Piccadilly Gardens?

A renewed Piccadilly Gardens needs to reflect who we are as a city – diverse, welcoming, creative and full of life.

The overall approach is a two-part journey to transform the Piccadilly Gardens area and make it an attractive, well-managed and welcoming space.

The first part of this journey sees Manchester City Council lead on a transformation of the design of the Gardens, making it a more vibrant and colourful space which functions better. Funding has been secured to deliver these improvements over the next year.

The second part of the plan will see a transformation of the wider area in the coming years, including a multi-million pound investment by Transport for Greater Manchester to create a new, modern transport interchange.

**Key elements of the brief for the redesign:**


- Nature | Accessibility and safety
- | Activation and events | Ease of movement |
- Perception and local pride



# The concept

Our aim is to create a renewed Piccadilly Gardens – a better designed, high quality and resilient public space centred on a generous lawn, year round planting and a varied tree canopy.

The project will replace the outdated layout with a safer, more accessible and welcoming design.

-  Better walking routes and connections
-  A greener and more climate resilient environment
-  Improved lighting and materials
-  Opportunities for small scale activities and events

The renewed layout will strengthen Piccadilly Gardens' role as both a civic destination and a key transport interchange, creating a modern, flexible and more attractive space at the heart of Manchester.




**Lawn**

A large central lawn to create an open and welcoming space for people to spend time in.






**Colour**

Bring back the gardens with colourful planting and year-round bloom.




**Security**

Improve safety with enhanced lighting, CCTV and more proactive management.

**Canopy**

Mature trees with high canopies to provide much-needed shade.




**Nature in the City**

A variety of different spaces to enjoy with high quality seating, open lawns, shaded areas and improved children's play.




**Heritage**

Integrate existing monuments to protect and celebrate the area's heritage.

# The plan



Key:

- ① The lawn
- ② Queen Victoria statue
- ③ Play
- ④ Gardens
- ⑤ Spill out seating
- ⑥ Robert Peel Statue
- ⑦ Pavilion
- ⑧ Existing pavilions

# Access and movement

The renewed layout will enhance the pedestrian journey through Piccadilly Gardens, making routes clearer to navigate with a better layout and less clutter. There's acknowledgement that the space is a busy connection point with many people moving through the area. Entrance points have taken consideration of this and footpaths follow key journeys to ensure users have a positive experience.

Seating along these circulation routes allow for regular rest points, ensuring the comfort of those travelling through Piccadilly Gardens.

- 
**Wide and clear walking routes**
- 
**Seating at regular intervals with back and arm rests**
- 
**Clear sight lines**
- 
**Key movement routes embedded in design**
- 
**A range of spaces to cater for variety of users including quieter zones**



# A place for everyone



Our ambition is for Piccadilly Gardens to support a wide range of positive everyday use, as well as a regular stream of family-friendly activity and smaller seasonal events to bring people of all ages to the Gardens. Tell us what kind of events and activity you'd like to see.

## 1. Play and Family



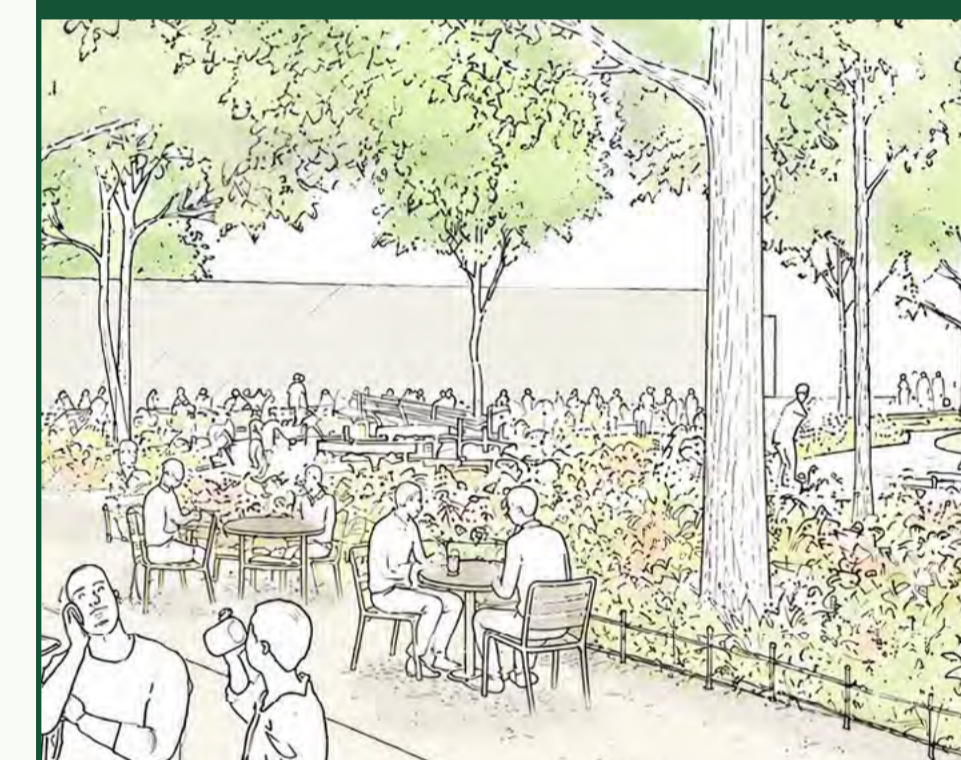
A safe and engaging play space for families to relax while passing through or grabbing a bite to eat.

## 4. Pavilion and Square



A focal point for meeting, small events, workshops, and everyday social interaction.

## 2. Retail Active Edge



Spaces for cafes and restaurants with outdoor seating to bring life and activity throughout the day.

## 5. Lawn



From morning yoga to summer picnics, the lawn provides an open and relaxed focal point throughout the day.

## 3. Gardens



For people to come together in a beautiful seasonal setting, under a canopy of trees with places to meet, stroll and relax.

## 6. Art and Culture



Bringing people together through public art, exhibitions, performances and cultural events.

# We're putting the Gardens back

In Piccadilly Gardens



The planting will play a key role in the redesign of Piccadilly Gardens, with a real focus on bringing back colour, flowers and vibrancy to the space.

Lush colourful planting, selected to bloom and thrive in the local conditions, will sit beneath tall tree canopies providing much needed shade and shelter. Big, high-quality trees will be positioned to frame the outer edge of the space. Bringing nature into the city, they will complement the scale of the surrounding buildings and help create a welcome space within Piccadilly Gardens. Inspiration for this has been taken from Albert Square and St Peter's Square, where fewer but better trees create impact and structure.



# In bloom, all year long

New native trees with tall canopies will provide shade and support habitats without making the area feel too enclosed.



Some examples of the plants and flowers included in the new designs are shown here. Our aim is to ensure a mix of planting that brings colour and life to the area all year-round



Seasonally blooming plants will be chosen to ensure the gardens feel colourful and vibrant throughout the year.

## Spring



## Summer



## Autumn / Winter



# Play

We want everyone to feel welcome in Piccadilly Gardens, including young children and families. Making our public spaces child-friendly is an important part of our commitment to become a Child Friendly City.

We're proposing to relocate the play area from its current location, which is next to the Queen Victoria Statue and close to the road, to a more contained area in front of One Piccadilly Gardens.

The aim of the play space at Piccadilly Gardens is to create a high-quality, family-friendly space for younger children (under 10s). It is intended to complement, not dominate, the wider function of Piccadilly Gardens. In a bustling city centre, we want to create a location where children can come to run around and enjoy themselves for a few minutes, or to have some quieter time to recharge, in a safe and welcoming space.

Early visual to provide a look and feel for the play. Specific equipment to be selected following consultation.



As part of the current consultation, we're engaging with families and young people to help shape the way the play area is designed, experienced and managed. This will embed the needs of children, families and under-represented groups to make sure the play space meets real needs.



Physical Play



Social Play



Imaginative Play



Sensory Play



Natural Play

# Pavilion

We're proposing a new pavilion as part of the renewed Piccadilly Gardens, creating a welcoming new destination which will bring activity throughout the day.

Set within the landscape, the pavilion is designed to feel open and accessible from all sides. It will provide a café with toilets, along with outdoor seating that connects to the surrounding square and lawn. The café is also intended as a flexible space for small public events and activities.

As well as offering a place to stop, meet and spend time, the pavilion will help introduce more positive daily activity into the Gardens. Its location has been carefully considered to work with key routes, seating, planting and views, while maintaining the open character of the space.

The pavilion's emerging design is shaped by ideas of nature, openness and connectivity, with a shape that responds to the surrounding gardens, lawn and tree canopy. There will be a focus on durable, low-impact construction and the use of natural materials that sit comfortably within the garden setting.



Pavilion Approx Area:  
115m<sup>2</sup>

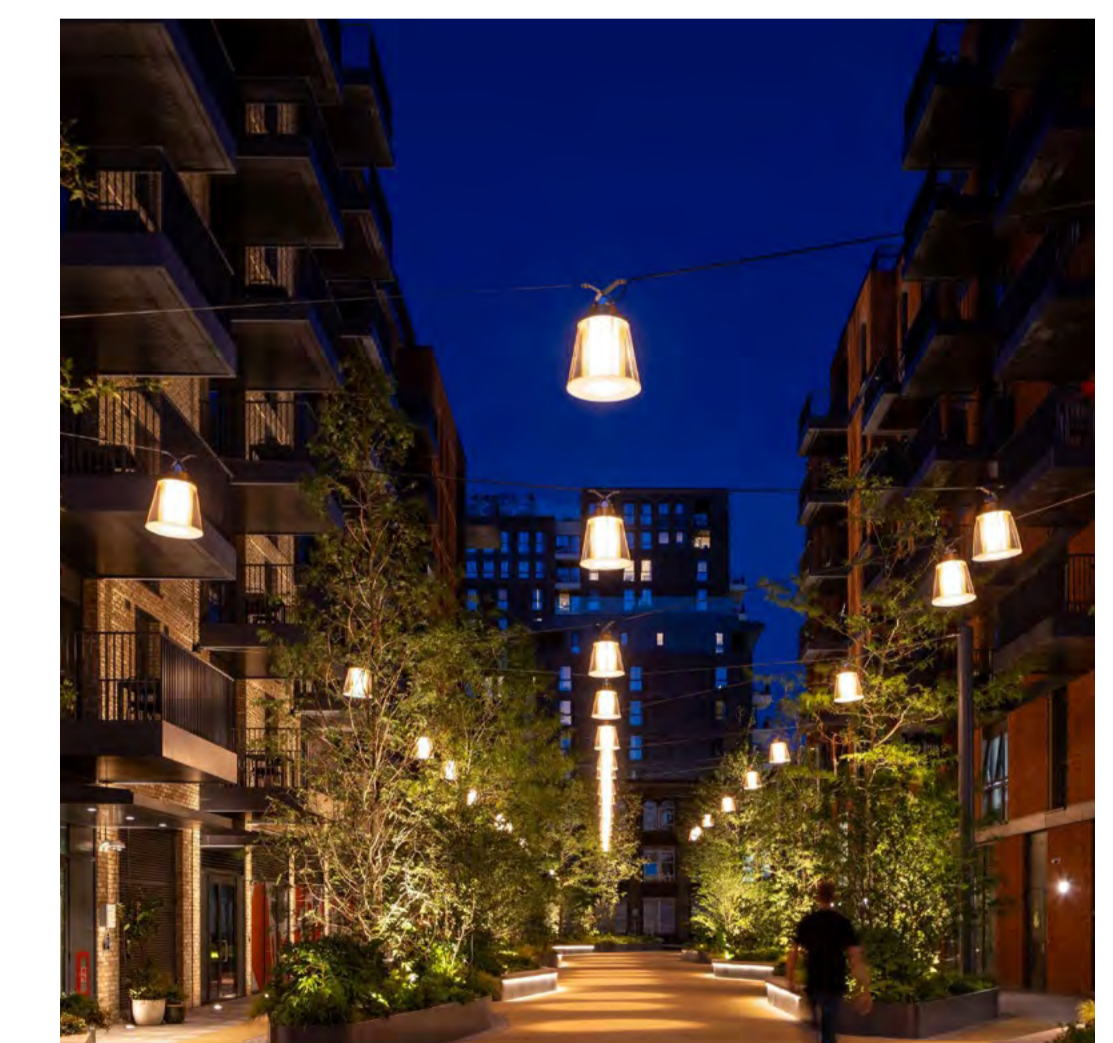
# Safe and welcoming

at all times of the day

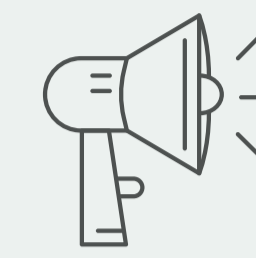


New lighting and CCTV will play a key role in shaping the evening character of Piccadilly Gardens, creating a bright, welcoming and comfortable environment for everyone. Carefully integrated lighting will enhance visibility throughout the space, highlight trees and landmarks,

and create visual interest that celebrates the unique character of the gardens. The result will be an inviting civic space that encourages activity, removes opportunities for anti-social behaviour and supports a positive experience after dark. It will reinforce Piccadilly Gardens as a vibrant destination in the heart of Manchester.



# Next steps



The consultation on our designs for Piccadilly Gardens will be open from Wednesday 17 June to Wednesday 15 July 2026.



## Tell us your views!

These proposals represent an opportunity to transform the Gardens into a more welcoming, vibrant and inclusive space for everyone – and we’re really keen to hear what you think about our plans.

Please take a few minutes to complete our questionnaire.



The quickest way is to scan this QR code or visit [manchester.gov.uk/piccadillygardens](https://manchester.gov.uk/piccadillygardens)



Or you can pick up a paper copy at one of our events.

### What happens next?

Following this consultation, we will be working to finalise the designs and submit a planning application in the next few weeks.

Subject to planning, we’ll be looking to start construction work later in the Autumn, with the new Piccadilly Gardens unveiled in 2027. Throughout construction, we’ll work closely with local businesses and key organisations to minimise disruption within this busy part of the city centre.

