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MIPIM 2016: All eyes on Manchester vision

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The world has had its eyes on Manchester as its city leaders demonstrated a clear vision for leading the way in creating a world class place to live, work and play at this year's MIPIM.

The annual gathering of the world's property sector has been the biggest since the financial crash of 2008, and it was easy to see why.

With confidence returning to the marketplace, investors are hungry and ready to seek out golden opportunities, and where better to do that than in Cannes, France for the global showcase of cities across the UK, Europe and the rest of the world.

This year, the Manchester partnership has been the largest to date with 99 organisations forming art of the city's delegation, and it was easy to see why Manchester's presence stood out.

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Manchester is in transformation, and we heard about a number of innovative schemes that will be part of this journey.

This includes [Circle Square](#), a joint venture partnership between Bruntwood and Select Property Group.

The development, which is based on the former BBC site on Oxford Road and is in the heart of Corridor Manchester, will include homes, office, shops, bars, and restaurants.

At the heart of this development and if plans are approved, will sit a green space, with an underground events space which will be able to hold up to 3,000 people.

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Internationally renowned urban expert Bruce Katz described Circle Square as 'phenomenal.'

Delegates were updated about other major projects in the city including St Michael's, a 1.43-acre £200m scheme to transform the Jackson's Row area which is being led by Gary Neville and Ryan Giggs' Strategic Planning Framework and is being funded by Rowsley.

KK Ho, managing director at Rowsley, quietly announced his further support for investing in the city and said it was very likely that "Rowsley will continue to invest in big way in Manchester."

Transport for Greater Manchester spoke of three new districts which will form part of the wider regeneration of the Mayfield Quarter in Piccadilly.

Mike Ingall, CEO of Allied London, and in many people's opinion, a true 'visionary' for the city, delighted delegates with news of his latest development in the heart of St John's, Spinningfield's latest neighbourhood.

He announced plans for Central Village, a 250,000 sq ft development, which will link St John's to the XYZ building, creating an exciting new 'enterprise zone.' Plans will be submitted this summer, and if approved, construction will begin next March.

A number of sessions looked at investing in Manchester, designing neighbourhoods, future living for 'generation z,' how the city can compete with other gateway cities in Europe to be the investment destination of choice as well as transport and infrastructure.



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And of course no MIPIM event would be complete without the appearance of a footballer.

Former Manchester United player Rio Ferdinand made an appearance at the Manchester Stand alongside the Housing Minister Brandon Lewis, who he joined for a separate non Manchester related session to talk about a JV initiative called the Legacy, which is working with local authorities to regenerate existing estates.

The three day programme ended with an overview about the work of Manchester Life, the residential property development company owned by Manchester City Council and Manchester City FC owners, Abu Dhabi United Group.

Marty Edelman, executive chairman of *Manchester Life*, told the delegation of how the company was raising the aspirations of renting.

Manchester life is set to build more than 6,000 new homes in parts of east Manchester, with schemes on New Union Street, Murrays' Mills, Jersey Street site, and Hood Street site.

He said: "We are trying to raise the aspirations of renters and potential renters through exceptional customer service and attention to detail in our homes to encourage people to stay longer.

"We will have higher ceilings, larger spaces, nothing will be lower than 500 sq ft, with proper storage including walk in wardrobes, utility cupboards, in an energy efficient building that will help tenants keep costs down, and full time staff at the front and back who work for us and not a third party, and shared spaces to meet neighbors.

"We aim to make renting a smart and positive lifestyle choice .

"Phase 1 is just the start of east Manchester's emergence as a separate but connected community for Manchester and I think that sums up Manchester Life's demonstration of our confidence in the long term future of this great city.

"Manchester has the political leadership, it has the education infrastructure, it has the business and industrial companies wanting to locate their businesses here, it supports two major sports clubs, and it has great canal networks and diverse communities.

"Manchester can be viewed as a continuum of connected villages each offering a style of life and individual lifestyle.

"Manchester doesn't need to change, it needs to exploit its inherent resources and that is what we at Manchester Life seek to do. Our goal is to create a modern living in a vibrant environment allowing for social transformation in comfortable spaces."



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Sir Howard, whose leadership has enabled the transformation of the city over the last five years, was praised by many number of people.

He told me this year's MIPIM was able to capture three things.

"The Manchester partnership has been able to see how the cities strategic vision is really influencing a whole range of investment opportunities," he said.

"I don't think anyone can fail to be anything other than impressed about the scale and breadth of what we communicated this week in terms of investment opportunities.

"Secondly, unprecedented to my time here, we are speaking to a global audience everyday.

"Everyday Chinese investors, Singaporean and Malaysian investors, have been here eagerly looking to see what we are doing and I think we have been able to support the partnership in selling their own goods and services, which is important for the city.

"Finally, and this was exemplified in the Northern Powerhouse conference, we have started to communicate a clear and consistent vision about the northern powerhouse strategy.

"More people in Manchester get it, and I think everyone recognises, while it is not exclusively about Manchester, we are at the heart of this."

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