

MANCHESTER SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE



GORTON GREENWAYS

A group of enthusiastic students are teaming up with the community-led initiative "Healthy Me Healthy Communities CIC based a Gorton Central, Gorton Community Centre" to revamp a charming green space along Gorton's historic yellow brick road. We are all set to brainstorm some exciting design ideas and work closely with key stakeholders and community groups to bring our vision to life.

Visit msa.ac.uk for more information



**MSA
LIVE 24**

Team

Elena Popescu (MArch1)

Harry Nicholson (MArch1)

Isha Torne (MArch1)

Yung Yu Wu (MArch1)

Tran Binh Nguyen (MA AR)

Aylin Rzayeva (BA1)

Jose Ward (BA1)

Kristen Tricia Leung (BA1)

Xinyuan Huang (BA1)

Zhangfeier Ma (BA1)

Chi Fun Kwan (BA2)

Christian Brooker (BA2)

Ines Sacramento Aizcorbe (BA2)

Intouch Arunepunlop (BA2)

Megan Padron (BA2)

Jingcan Liu (MLA1)

Qinyi Wang (MLA1)

Partners

Healthy Me Healthy Communities (HMHC) is a pivotal force in transforming the historic Gorton Community Centre in Manchester. Originally a derelict paint factory, this pre-loved community asset is being revitalized into a modern hub for learning, growth, and community wealth building. With its rich history of conversion from an industrial site to a thriving community space, the centre now offers a blend of valued services, reaching beyond its immediate neighbourhood to address food insecurity, co-production, and partnership working.

HMHC's vision for the community centre has been supported by crucial partnerships with local organizations and authorities. Growing Manchester, Groundwork Manchester, and Manchester City Council contribute their respective expertise in sustainable urban agriculture, community landscaping, and infrastructure support. These collaborations are enhancing the community garden and developing the Yellow Brick Road, creating inclusive and accessible spaces for a diverse population.

With recent support from national funding and local investments, HMHC continues to lead the centre into a future where it remains a cornerstone of community life, fostering inclusive and sustainable practices that benefit a diverse demographic. HMHC is particularly committed to expanding the community garden, recognizing the profound impact that growing food can have on community health and cohesion. This emphasis on gardening enriches the community centre's role as a space for nurturing both people and nature, making it a pivotal element in HMHC's vision for a thriving community.

Agenda

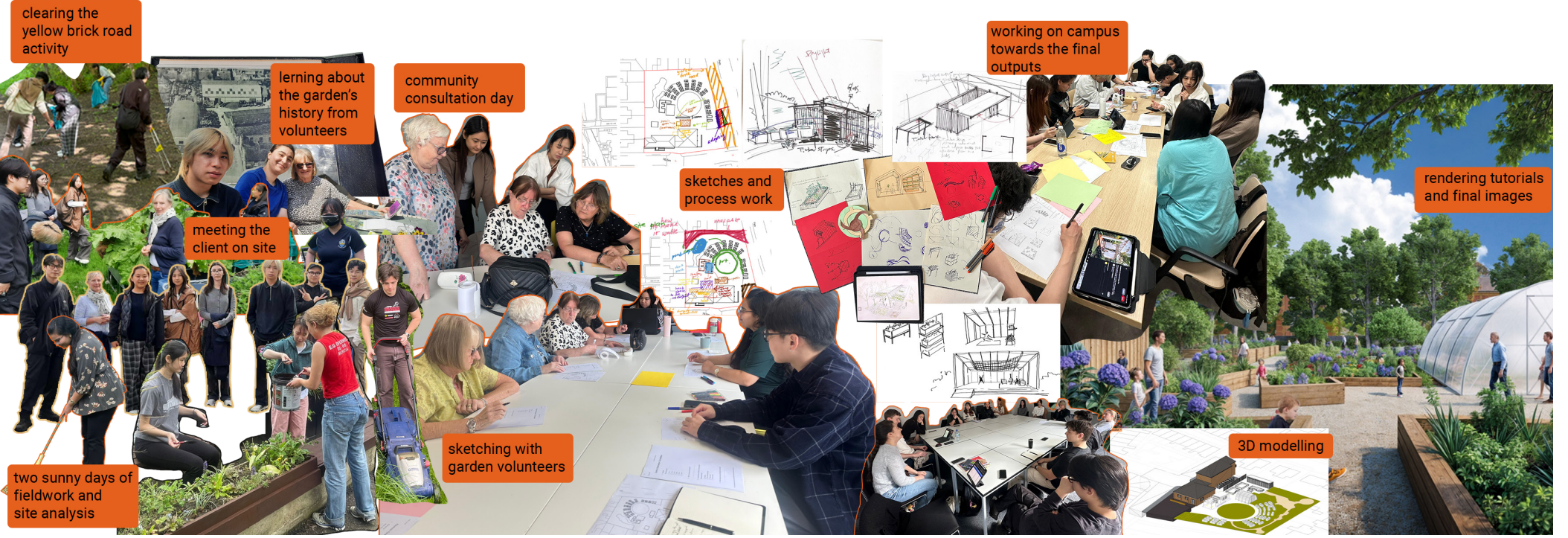
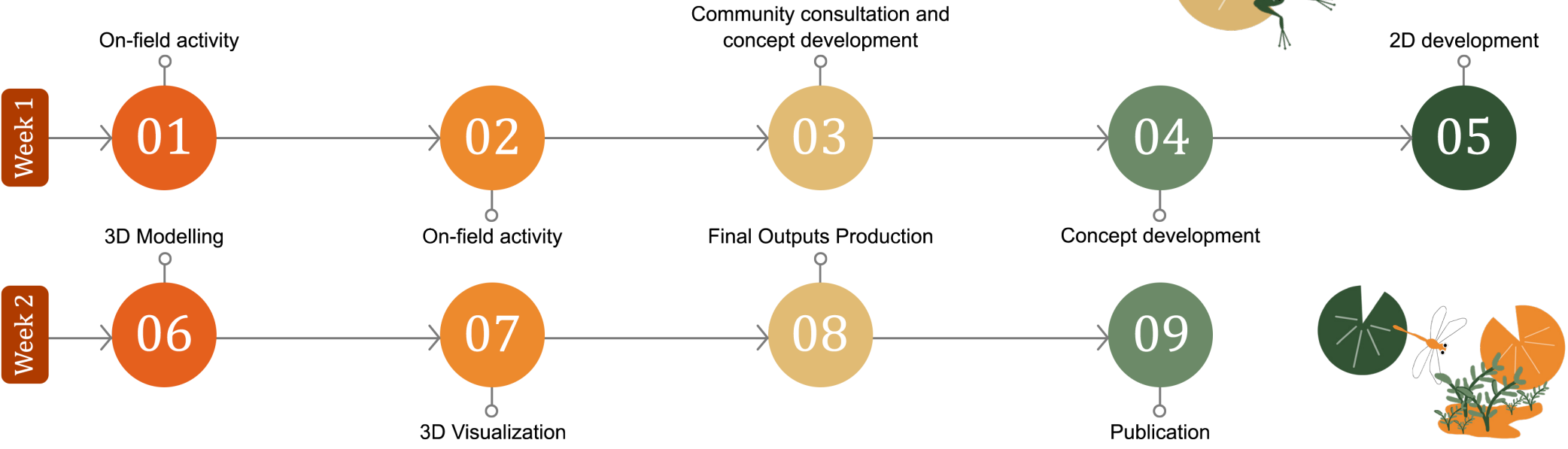


Gorton Greenways

In this upcoming live project, we will collaborate with Amanda Aitken from Healthy Me Healthy Communities. The project involves conducting fieldwork, working closely with the local community to revitalize the green space, and proposing ideas to enhance the center's built environment to make the garden more inviting as well as work on the Yellow brick road which runs parallel to the site. Additionally, we will be designing a versatile space that the community can utilize for various events and gatherings. Activities for the project include sketching, planning, modelling and community consultations. This initiative not only offers the chance to contribute to garden development and landscaping knowledge but also serves as a valuable opportunity to connect with and engage the local community.



Progression Journey

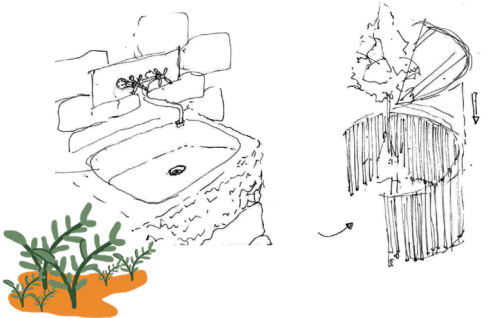
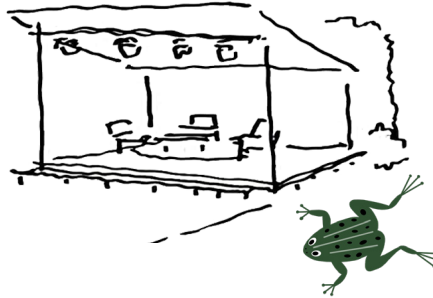
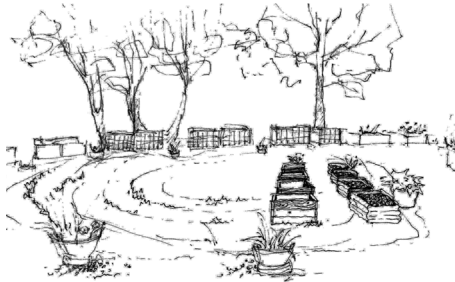


Icebreaker

The day before the start of the MSA live week, we held an online meeting to introduce ourselves and provide a brief overview of the site and project objectives to the entire team. Following an icebreaker session, the group divided into two teams. One team ventured to the site while the other team began brainstorming design ideas.

Group 1 undertook fieldwork to clear the yellow brick road and garden areas, equipped with necessary tools provided by our collaborators. Meanwhile, Group 2 convened in the studio to discuss the desired aesthetics and functional aspects of the garden space, as well as the expectations and constraints outlined by our collaborators. The preceding online meeting and icebreaker session proved invaluable, facilitating team interaction and the exchange of ideas and sketches. Furthermore, Group 2 deliberated on questions and activities for engaging with the local community during consultations. On the following day, roles were reversed: Group 2 took to the field while Group 1 had the opportunity to explore and develop design concepts.

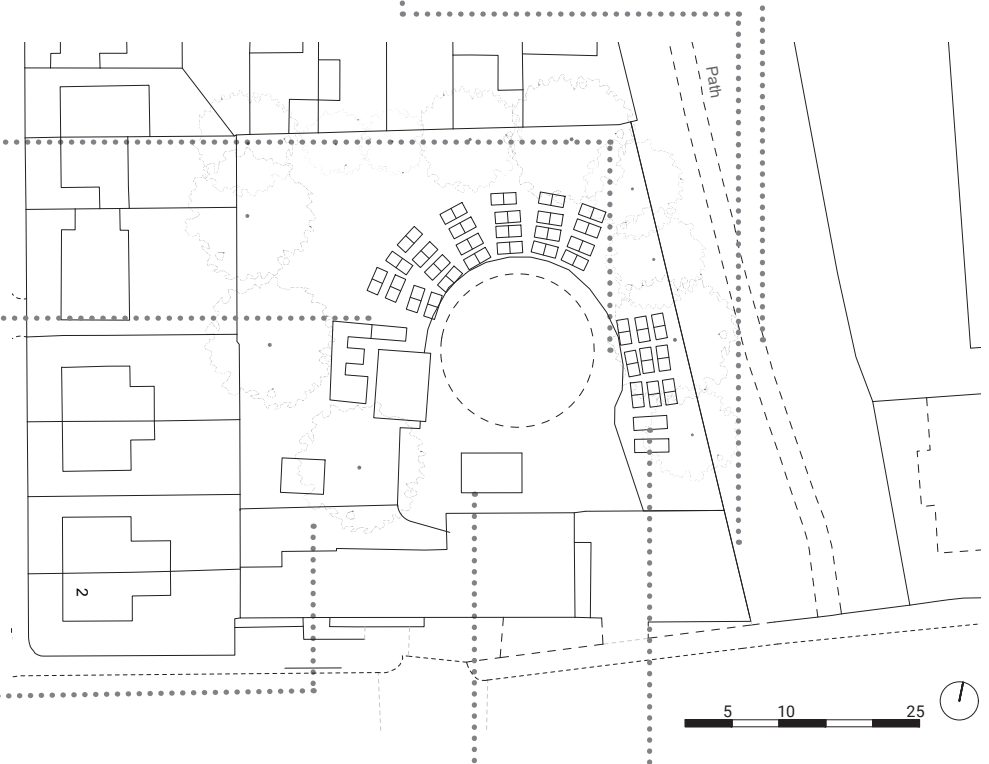
On the third day, a group of five students who were eager to engage with the community visited the site. Equipped with printed plans and a set of questions about their vision for the garden and multifunctional space, we encouraged them to sketch and articulate their ideas. This process greatly facilitated our brainstorming efforts and offered a clear direction for our work. During a brief tour of the site, the community members shared their concerns and suggestions regarding the space. Upon returning to the studio, we shared the insights gathered with the rest of the team and began incorporating them into the master plan through initial sketches.



Site

Nestled in the heart of Gorton and Abbey Hey, East Manchester, Gorton Central serves as a vital community centre focused on fostering better health outcomes and social engagement in a highly deprived area. The centre boasts an award-winning community garden, currently underutilized and primarily accessed by a few locals for personal cultivation of fruits and vegetables. Plans are underway to transform this enclosed space into a more accessible and vibrant oasis of calm, enhancing its use for a wider array of community well-being activities.

Adjacent to Gorton Central is the Yellow Brick Road, a pedestrian and cycling-friendly path that links the Fallowfield Loop to the Ashton Canal. In collaboration with Manchester City Council, HMHC is dedicated to adopting and revitalizing the nearest section of this path. The initiative aims to improve safety, accessibility, and the overall aesthetic of the route, ensuring it remains a cherished community asset that respects its historical significance as a former canal.



Concept

Healthy Me Healthy Communities partners with local residents to cultivate the Gorton community center garden. Their aim is to engage a broad spectrum of participants, fostering community growth and introducing gardening to younger generations. Due to limited access to financial resources, the garden's design must be mindful of these constraints, informed by extensive consultation with community members. Additionally, the community center has adopted a section of the adjacent road and seeks to enhance it, creating a safer environment for regular users.

The property spans 2000 square meters and includes two deteriorated polytunnels, a damaged patio area, garden space and several utilities. Originally utilized as a paint factory, the soil on the site is contaminated, leading the community to employ private vegetation pods scattered throughout. This has inspired the community's aim to introduce accessible pods for all. A small, underused pond is situated in the far northwest corner, while the northern portion of the property is densely populated with large trees, imparting a forest-like ambiance. There is lack of outdoor seating in the garden and there is a shortage of volunteers for maintaining the space. Some pathways lack demarcation and have poorly laid concrete. Additionally, the community center is currently undertaking the development of a public toilet and shower area.

The service facilities comprise a sizable green shed adjacent to the patio, which cannot be relocated due to a high cost of £5000. Additionally, there are 7 water tanks intended for storing rainwater. The community is committed to reusing the items on site but remains open to exploring design ideas for future development.



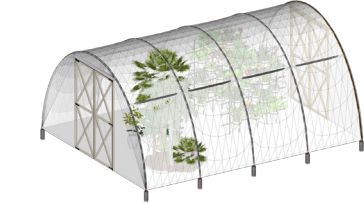
Proposal

We divided the master plan into segments and crafted designs for each necessary area. These spaces were envisioned to embody the collage concept ideas we had brainstormed in preceding days. Throughout the design and planning process, we remained mindful of the limitations outlined by our collaborators. Their directive was to maximize reuse and retention while also creating a versatile space, including the revamp of the polytunnel and garden area.

Our proposal for the multifunctional space involves the use of sustainable materials, predominantly timber, while repurposing existing steel components. The enclosed facade would feature green walls, with the remaining space serving as an open patio.



Proposed Multifunctional space



Refurbished Polytunnel



- 1 Lawn
- 2 Proposed Multifunctional space
- 3 Garden
- 4 Pond
- 5 Refurbished Polytunnel
- 6 Proposed Herb garden
- 7 Proposed Storage and Pottign shed
- 8 Therapeutic garden
- 9 Proposed garden seating

3D Visuals



Render 1 View of garden and polytunnel



Render 3 View of garden



Render 2 View of therapeutic garden



Render 4 View of multifunctional space

ABOUT

Each year the MSA LIVE programme unites Masters Architecture year 1 and Masters of Architecture & Adaptive Resuse students with those in BA foundation, year 1 and year 2 and Masters Landscape Architecture 1 in mixed-year teams to undertake live projects with external partners to create social impact.

LIVE PROJECTS

All MSA LIVE projects are live. A live project is where an educational organisation and an external partner develop a brief, timescale, and outcome for their mutual benefit.

SOCIAL IMPACT

All MSA LIVE projects are for community benefit or have social impact. Social impact is the effect an organization's actions have on the well-being of a community. Our agendas are set by our external collaborators.

EXTERNAL PARTNERS

MSA LIVE projects work with many organisations: charities, community groups, social enterprises, community interest companies, researchers, practitioners and educators.

STUDENT-LED

Our MSA masters students take the lead in the project conception, brief development, delivery and co-ordination of a small project. Other cohorts joined for an eventful 2 weeks of activities at the end of the academic year.

KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER

Working in teams within and across year groups and courses; MSA students participate in peer to peer learning. In addition, collaborators, participants and students engage in the transfer of tangible and intellectual property, expertise, learning and skills.

LARGE SCALE

This year approximately 600 students from 6 cohorts in MSA have worked on 40 projects with partners.

QUESTIONS

For questions about MSA LIVE please contact the MSA LIVE team:

msalive@mmu.ac.uk

BLOG

live.msa.ac.uk/2024

SOCIAL

#MSALive24

@msa.live.24

@TheMSArch

@MLA_TheMSArch

WEBSITE

www.msa.ac.uk