

# Member Bulletin - January 2025

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Dear \${UD:FIRST\_NAME||},

## **An Introduction by Cathy Parker MBE SFIPM, Chair of IPM and Professor of Retail at Manchester Metropolitan University**

2025 is already shaping up to be a pivotal year for place management. To start, I am thrilled to officially welcome Ian Harvey, who has joined us full-time as Head of the Institute of Place Management Professional Network. Many of you will already know Ian as Joint-Founder of Civic Voice and a Senior Fellow of IPM. He has already begun engaging with members, and you can follow [Ian's updates on LinkedIn](#). Ian is eager to connect with as many of you as possible, and to kickstart this dialogue, we've launched a survey to gather your thoughts on IPM's future. [Respond to the survey here](#).

One of the key challenges facing our sector is the need for greater capacity and skills, so I am delighted to write to you just a few days after hosting our [2025 Cohort for the Place Management and Leadership postgraduate qualification](#). If you're interested in joining the 2026 cohort you'll find additional details on The [Manchester Metropolitan University](#) website. In parallel with supporting mid-career professionals looking to deepen their expertise, we are also excited to be developing a programme of work to develop a [Place Management Degree Apprenticeship](#). This initiative is designed for individuals at the early stages of their careers, providing an accessible pathway into the field while complementing our existing postgraduate offering. Together they support our long-term commitment to building the capacity and skills of the place managers and leaders to drive meaningful progress across the sector.

This year, we want to shine a spotlight on place management as an exciting and impactful career. Through our website, case studies, and events, we'll celebrate the achievements of those working tirelessly to transform communities. On this note, I am proud to share that my colleague, [Dr Chloe Steadman](#), has been appointed editor of a new book series on place marketing and management. She is eager to hear from IPM members with ideas for contributions. Also, my colleague Dr Nikos Ntounis is the editor of the *Journal of Place Management and Development*. The latest edition is now available and features a brilliant article by IPM Senior Fellows Bill Grimsey and Dr Kim Cassidy, exploring a new model for independent retailers. You can access the Journal as part of your IPM membership.

Finally, I kindly ask you to take a moment to [complete our survey](#). Your input will be invaluable in shaping our work and ensuring we continue to meet the needs of the sector. I look forward to engaging with you throughout what promises to be an exciting year for place management.



Professor Cathy Parker MBE SFIPM

## Forthcoming events

We're now planning our next series of events, looking ahead as we move through 2025.

And, as ever, if you have an idea for an event topic, do please let us know via [ipm@mmu.ac.uk](mailto:ipm@mmu.ac.uk).



[Read more details about our events](#)



## New Members Welcome Webinar

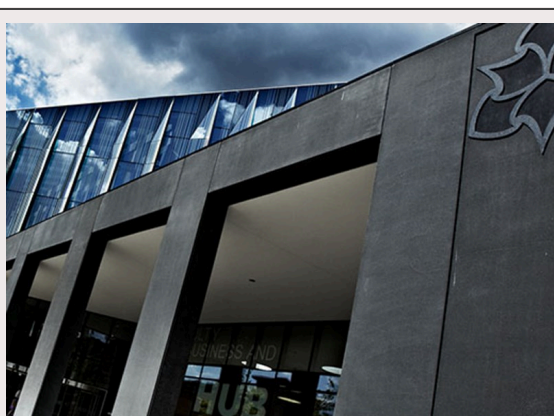
Are you a new member wanting to know more how you can make the most of being part of IPM?

Come and join us at the Institute of Place Management's New Members Webinar.

The aim of the session is to help you realise that you are not alone! We will connect you to others, introduce you to our research and share with you specific examples as to how taking a place-first management approach can improve people's lives.

- **Date:** Tuesday 28th January
- **Time:** 11:00 - 12:00pm
- **Attendance:** Online

[Register your place today](#)



## IPM Webinar: Effective Place Partnerships

Drawing on insights from the **Annual Research Study on Place Partnerships 2024**, this session will delve into how collaboration between local authorities, businesses, and community groups drives regeneration and strengthens resilience in our towns and cities.

Gain first-hand insights from representatives of three successful partnerships that have revitalised their local areas through collaboration, adaptability, and a shared vision.

- **Date:** Thursday 27th February
- **Time:** 14:00 - 15:30
- **Attendance:** online

[Register for the event](#)

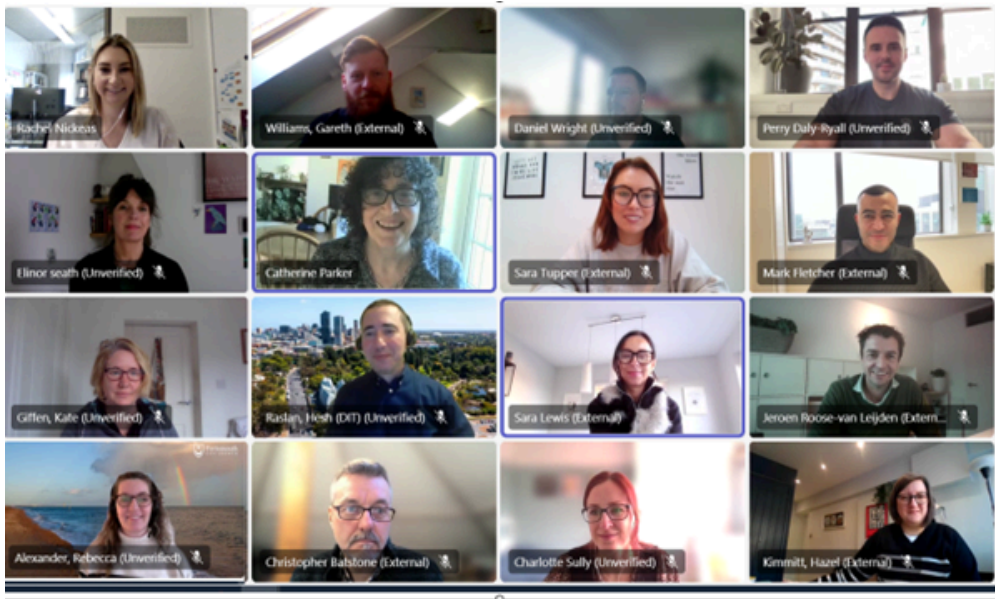
## Shaping Tomorrow's Place Leaders: New Apprenticeship Study to Begin

As we begin 2025 and look to the future, we are delighted to announce that, in collaboration with Manchester Metropolitan University, we are exploring the development of a Place Management Apprenticeship Programme. This initiative aims to address the skills and talent gap identified through the High Streets Task Force programme, which highlighted the limited capacity of place management expertise across the sector.

Led by Professors Cathy Parker and Steve Millington, the programme will provide a structured pathway that combines academic learning with hands-on experience. Building on the successful Chartered Management Degree Apprenticeship framework, the programme will equip professionals with the skills and confidence to coordinate vital actions, such as repositioning and activating town centres. It aims to attract and retain talent—particularly young professionals—while supporting career progression in roles within Local Authorities, BIDs, Destination Management Organisations, and other key institutions such as universities and social housing providers.

For more information on this initiative, please visit the [IPM website to learn more about the place management apprenticeship programme](#) and how you can get involved

## Shaping Today's Place Leaders for the World of Tomorrow



We are delighted to introduce the new 2025 cohort of students embarking on their journey towards postgraduate qualifications in Place Management and Leadership at Manchester Metropolitan University this year. From independent consultants to local government economic and event managers, and participants from the UK, the Netherlands, and Australia, as well as individuals from the business improvement district sector, we have thoroughly enjoyed meeting them all this week.

The **Place Management and Leadership Postgraduate Course** marks the start of an exciting journey for participants looking to advance their skills in this dynamic field. Developed in partnership with the Institute of Place Management, this part-time course equips students with practical expertise to become confident and reflective place leaders.

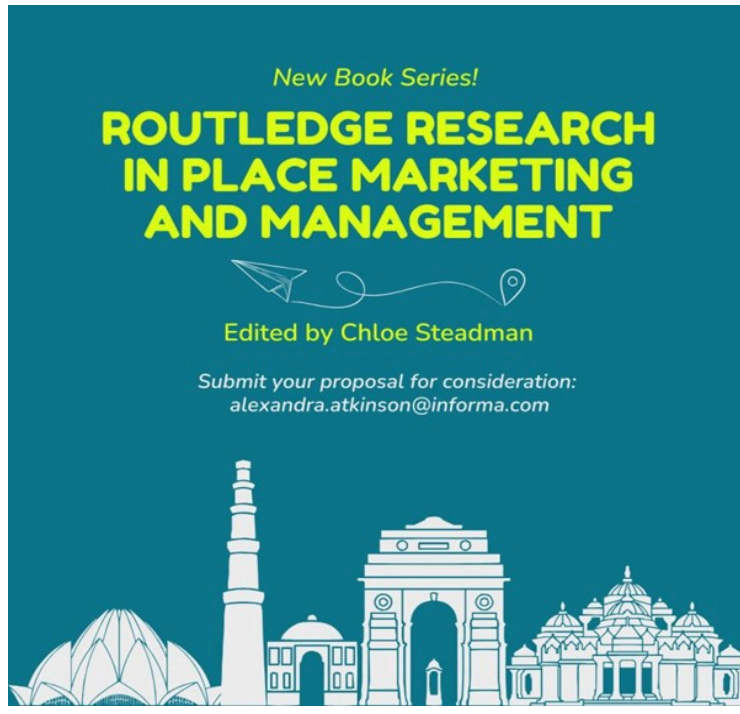
The course explores the principles of place management and leadership, delving into the role of modern place marketing and branding in co-creating places and shaping place identity. Participants also enhance their leadership abilities through modules on place governance, building effective partnerships, and navigating diverse cultural contexts. For those pursuing a PgDip or MSc, the curriculum extends to include strategies for local economic development, inclusive place-making, and developing the research skills needed for place-based data collection and analysis.

Are you a former student of the Manchester Metropolitan University Place Management postgraduate programmes? We want to hear from you! We're creating profiles to showcase your incredible work and to highlight leadership in place management across the world.

Finally, this programme attracts professionals dedicated to shaping and revitalising the places where we live, work, and thrive. If you're interested in joining our 2026 cohort, get in touch, and we can start the discussion now!

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## New Book Series: Routledge Research in Place Marketing and Management



Dr Chloe Steadman, Senior Lecturer, has been appointed as the academic editor for a brand-new book series: **Routledge Research in Place Marketing and Management**.

This series aims to become an essential resource for academics, students, and researchers interested in understanding how places can be marketed, managed, and designed effectively. It will explore both theoretical and practical aspects of place, with a focus on advancing knowledge and practice across the sector. By addressing themes such as place branding, sustainable development, and digital technologies, the series aligns closely with IPM's commitment to supporting innovation and professional development in place management.

The scope of the series reflects the multidisciplinary nature of place management, covering topics such as place branding across spatial scales, place experience, placemaking and design, leadership, and the use of digital technologies. Other areas of focus include place attachment, sustainable place development, and innovative research methods. These themes resonate with IPM's broader work in supporting places and professionals to adapt to challenges such as climate resilience, economic regeneration, and community engagement.

This series will also provide a valuable platform to disseminate best practices and case studies from around the globe.

If you have a book idea, now is the perfect time to share it. Whether your work focuses on cutting-edge research or offers practical insights into managing and transforming places, this series offers an exciting opportunity to contribute to the field.

For more information or to discuss your ideas, contact Dr Chloe Steadman: [c.steadman@mmu.ac.uk](mailto:c.steadman@mmu.ac.uk)

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## Changing the Narrative: A Positive Outlook for UK and Irish High Streets



As we step into a new year, it's the perfect moment for fresh perspectives and renewed energy—and that's exactly what the **HighStreetPositives** campaign is trying to do. Led by Laura Harris, this initiative is reimagining how high streets are perceived, celebrated, and supported.

The **HighStreetPositives** campaign is determined to counter negative narratives by amplifying the success stories of our high streets. From thriving independent businesses and creative pop-ups to retail expansions, town regeneration projects, and innovative placemaking efforts, the campaign highlights what's working and why it matters.

Over the past few months, **HighStreetPositives** has evolved into a vibrant community of over 3,000 subscribers, uniting stakeholders from retail, hospitality, councils, BIDs, real estate, and grassroots organisations. By showcasing inspiring examples, the campaign aims to attract investment, boost footfall, and spark fresh ideas for high street revitalisation.

As **HighStreetPositives** gathers momentum in 2025, the campaign is inviting the place management community to shape its focus and future direction. Whether you're a place manager, business owner, or a passionate advocate for your local high street, your insights are invaluable.

Take a moment to complete the campaign's survey for a chance to win **£200** (terms apply). Your feedback will ensure that **HighStreetPositives** continues to spotlight the best of our high streets, inspiring others to see their potential in a whole new light.

[Click here to complete the survey and share your thoughts.](#)

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## Dr. Michael Sewell speaks at conference hosted by the National Trust

In December, Dr. Michael Sewell represented the Institute of Place Management at an online event attended by over 100 practitioners from the National Trust. The event focused on place-based partnerships in urban contexts, highlighting the National Trust's growing interest in urban projects and collaborative work, exemplified by their efforts in places like Castlefield, Manchester.

Building on earlier research into effective partnerships, Dr. Sewell's presentation explored the key elements that contribute to partnership success. He shared valuable insights from IPM's research, highlighting four essential themes:

1. **Organic Development:** Partnerships flourish when they evolve naturally, adapting to the unique needs of a place.
2. **Place Anchors:** Local organisations and institutions deeply embedded in a community are crucial for grounding partnerships.
3. **Trust:** Building and maintaining trust between partners is fundamental to sustainable collaboration.
4. **Visible Performance:** Tangible results and accountability strengthen partnerships and ensure continued engagement.

Dr. Sewell also introduced the concept of the 'Partnership Story', stressing the importance of considering the beginning, middle, and end of a partnership before embarking on collaborative work. A strong narrative connects a partnership's past (why it was formed), present (current activities), and future (the legacy or outcomes). When partnerships lack this narrative, their ability to evolve organically and adapt to changing place-based needs can be hindered.

Place partnerships have been crucial to the success of regeneration in many of our high streets, so building on his talk to the National Trust, Dr. Sewell will be speaking at our event on partnerships in February. If you would like to learn more about our research on partnerships, you can [read it here](#), or you can for the our event in February [here](#).

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## Professor Steven Millington delivered Keynote Speech at conference in Turku, Finland



In his first external engagement of 2025, **Professor of Place Management Steve Millington** visited Turku, Finland, on 15th January 2025 to deliver a keynote speech on place management and share findings from Manchester Metropolitan University and the Institute of Place Management's world-class research.

During the event, Professor Millington engaged with local stakeholders to discuss the challenges facing town and city centres and shared insights from his work with the High Streets Task Force for England. Highlighting lessons learned from this innovative programme, he referenced a description by Georgetown University, which called the Task Force:

*"One of the few global experiments in national-level policymaking which targets the capacity development of local place management organisations."*

The event also explored how Turku and other places can apply these insights locally to support sustainable growth. Turku is one of the locations selected as part of a new study investigating the benefits of a circular society. From repair cafés to recycling initiatives, the study aims to uncover how places can become more equitable, inclusive, and sustainable. This research has been made possible by a £1.1m grant awarded to Manchester Metropolitan University.

The project, titled **Place-based Circular Society Innovations** focuses on local initiatives in Greater Manchester and beyond that not only provide environmental benefits but also integrate social justice and well-being into their operations. A circular economy is commonly understood as a system designed to reduce waste and pollution, extend the life of materials, and regenerate natural environments. This project expands this concept to include the social and community dimensions of a circular society.

For those interested in connecting with Professor Steve Millington, he can be reached via LinkedIn [here](#). To learn more about the Place-Based Circular Society Innovations project, please access the Manchester Metropolitan University website [here](#).

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## Your thoughts on current place management and leadership issues

Your thoughts on current place management and leadership issues Could you contribute an 800-word think piece on a topic of interest to place managers and leaders? Perhaps something based on a project you're running, or the challenges faced by our places.

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We're always keen to know your thoughts on current issues directly via [email](#) and in comments on our LinkedIn social media posts. Thank you for taking the time to read this bulletin, our next issue will be issued in February.

### The IPM Team



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