



Applications by the Mellor, Marple Bridge, Mill Brow and Compstall Prospective Neighbourhood Forum to Stockport MBC for Designation of their Neighbourhood Plan Area and Neighbourhood Forum.

October 2018

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## 1 Introduction

1.1. As the communities of Mellor, Marple Bridge, Mill Brow and Compstall have no Parish Council, our applications are submitted to Stockport MBC by our prospective Neighbourhood Forum Management Committee, in accordance with the provisions of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations (8) 2012.

1.2. Should our application be successful, the titles of the Plan Area and the Forum will be:

“The Mellor, Marple Bridge, Mill Brow and Compstall Neighbourhood Plan Area”

And

“The Mellor, Marple Bridge, Mill Brow and Compstall Neighbourhood Forum.”

1.3. The objective and principles of our prospective Forum are set out in the accompanying Constitution and the four enclosed statements explain the process of defining our boundary; the relevance of our group to carry out that process; how we meet the legal requirements to be designated as a Neighbourhood Forum; and what activities we have carried out to publicise our intentions and engage with our community.

1.4. A full list of our current members is enclosed and our main points of contact are:

Mr Greg Pike (Acting Chair)

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Dr Kathryn Davies (Committee Member)

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## 2 Constitution

### 2.1 Background

The Forum is defined by the 2011 Localism Act which is an amendment to the 1990 Town and Country Planning Act.

### 2.2 Name and Area

The name of the group is **Mellor, Marple Bridge, Mill Brow and Compstall Neighbourhood Forum**, henceforth referred to as the 'Forum'.

The Area covered by the Forum is shown on the map in Appendix A, namely Compstall, Ludworth, Marple Bridge, Mellor, Mill Brow, Moor End and Strines (part). To be referred to as the 'Area'.

### 2.1 Objectives

1. To promote the sustainable development of our communities, enhancing their social, economic and environmental well-being for the benefit of current and future residents and the wider community within which we exist.
2. To provide a forum for the discussion of local issues such as land use, housing, transport planning, public services, local business, community facilities and open spaces.
3. To prepare a Neighbourhood Plan in partnership with Stockport Council.
4. To maximise the involvement of all individuals, businesses and organisations within the communities, in the preparation of our plan and the pursuit of its objectives.
5. To exercise the powers which attach to the Forum in respect of Neighbourhood Development Orders, Community Rights to Build Orders, the identification of Assets of Community Value and the implementation of planning policy within our communities.

### 2.2 Principles

1. To ensure that the Forum is representative of the population of the Area.
2. To seek the views of, and consult as reasonably practicable with, those living within the Area.
3. To work with other Neighbourhood Forums that adjoin the Area's boundary.
4. To support and promote local people, services, housing, leisure, transport, energy, education and the local economy.

5. To act on the basis of equality and an acceptance of diversity and respect towards all persons irrespective of gender, sexual orientation, age, ethnicity, religious beliefs, physical or mental impairment, or any other attribute which may cause discrimination to arise. To abide by the Good Governance code of conduct (see [www.goodgovernance.org.uk/good-governance-code](http://www.goodgovernance.org.uk/good-governance-code)).

## 2.3 Members

- a) A Forum must have at least 21 members.
- b) Membership is open to anyone who lives, studies or works in the Area and supports the Forum's Objectives and Principles; and to local councillors and the MP covering all or part of the Area.
- c) Members may join by contacting the Secretary, signing up to the Forum's Objectives and Principles and attending at least one meeting each year.
- d) The Management Committee will maintain an up-to-date list of Members, monitor membership and actively encourage members from all sections of the community.
- e) Members may resign by writing to the secretary; the Management Committee may refuse, suspend or terminate membership by resolution.
- f) Members can vote at AGMs and other full meetings of the Forum and are encouraged to stand for the Management Committee and become involved in Working Groups.
- g) Members will be invited to at least two meeting a year, one of which is the AGM.

## 2.4 Structure

There are four levels at which residents can become involved in the Forum:

- a) 'Members' - consulted regularly, voting rights, sent minutes, limited involvement; at least 21 people.
- b) 'Management Committee' - more active involvement; elected by members.
- c) 'Working Groups' - members or specialists with an interest in or knowledge of a particular topic.
- d) Affiliated membership (non-voting) - open to groups, organisations and businesses within the area, such as residents' associations, schools, churches, local shops and companies

## 2.5 Management Committee

- a) At each AGM a Management Committee of between 10 and 16 members will be elected by Members.
- b) Any Forum Members may be nominated, but names (and consent) should be received by the Secretary two weeks in advance of the AGM or at the discretion of the Chairperson.
- c) The Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer and other posts will be chosen by the new Management Committee at its first meeting after the AGM, will serve for one year and be subject to unlimited annual reselection.
- d) The Committee should meet at least five times each year with minutes and notices circulated a week in advance. A quorum for voting is 51% of the members present.
- e) When consensus is not reached then decisions will be made by a simple majority on a show of hands with the Chairperson having a casting vote.
- f) Up to four voting Members may be co-opted onto the Committee between AGMs.
- g) The Management Committee's responsibilities are to:
  - i. Progress the Objectives and ensure the Forum's Principles are followed, as stated above.
  - ii. Monitor and encourage broad representative membership and maintain a list of Members and their contact details.
  - iii. Liaise with Local and other Authorities as required; prepare and submit all necessary documentation.
  - iv. Keep minutes for meetings to record all decisions and transactions; approve minutes to be circulated to all Members and affiliated organisations.
  - v. Open Bank account/s for the Forum, apply for grants and monitor expenditure.
  - vi. Organise meetings, courses and seminars as appropriate.
  - vii. Ensure compliance with all aspects of the law relating to the operation and management of the Forum.
  - viii. Communicate regularly with the Members and Supporters by appropriate methods.
  - ix. Insure any assets and arrange Indemnity for Members undertaking legitimate work for the Forum.
  - x. Members should declare any conflict of interest and, if material, members must not vote on related items
  - xi. Liaise with bordering Forums and other groups/organisations within the Area to share information, expertise and experiences.

- xii. Facilitate Working Groups as required to fulfil the Forum's Objectives, ensure these work within the Forum's Principles and encourage Members to become involved in Working Groups.
- xiii. Consult as reasonably practicable within the Area's community and take all opinions and views into account when making decisions.
- xiv. Compile annual reports of work to present at AGMs and a review of achievements after five years.

## 2.6 Working Groups

- a) Working Groups may be set up on an *ad hoc* basis as deemed necessary by the Committee.
- b) Working Groups will be tasked to research, investigate and seek advice on a specific topic with the aim of advising on policy.
- c) All efforts should be taken to seek the views of the Community.
- d) Money to finance the Groups' work can be requested from the Committee.
- e) Each Working Group should have a representative on the Committee to report on progress at each Committee meeting.
- f) A Working Group should produce a report of their finding and recommendations; this should be presented, first, to the Committee and then to an Open Meeting or AGM.
- g) The Working Group can choose to continue to monitor the progress of its recommendations or to disband.
- h) The Working Group is answerable to the Management Committee for its actions, but not its recommendations.
- i) A Working Group should comprise a least three individuals who are Forum Members; experts in the topic field who are not Members may also be involved.
- j) Working Groups must adhere to the Objectives and Principles of the Forum.

## 2.7 Finance

- a) Any two of four appointed Committee Members (including Chairperson and Treasurer) may sign cheques, etc; they may not sign cheques to themselves.
- b) Expenditures in excess of £50.00 should be agreed at a Committee meeting.
- c) All income and expenditure relating to the Forum should pass through the Forum's account/s.
- d) Receipts must be provided showing expenses on behalf of the Forum before payments are made.

- e) The Treasurer should report on the Forum's current finances at each Committee meeting and provide annual independently audited accounts at the AGM.

## 2.8 Annual General Meeting

- a) The initial AGM to be held within two months of the registration of the Forum by Stockport Council, and henceforth annually.
- b) The AGM is an open meeting and should be widely advertised four weeks in advance.
- c) While all attendees may address the AGM, only full Members may vote, be nominated for the Committee or submit a resolution. Resolutions should be received by the Secretary at least two weeks before the AGM.
- d) Reports should be presented by the Secretary, Treasurer and Working Groups with time allowed for questions and comments.
- e) Committee members are elected for one year but may be re-nominated at the following AGM.
- f) Anyone wishing to raise an issue not on the agenda may notify the Chairperson prior to the meeting commencing; inclusion of the issue will be at the Chairperson's discretion.
- g) Voting is normally a simple majority on a show of hands; a change of Constitution (including suggesting changes to the Area's boundary) requires a two-thirds majority. The Chairperson has a casting vote.
- h) Forum members must declare any conflict of interest and abstain prior to a vote taking place
- i) A quorum for the AGM is either 21 voting Members or one third of the registered voting members, whichever is higher.
- j) Extraordinary General Meeting: this may be called by the Management Committee or by a quorum of Members (as defined above) applying to the Secretary. In either case the reason for the EGM must be stated. The same rules apply to an EGM as to an AGM.

## 2.9 Forum Dissolution, Duration and Review

- a) The Forum may dissolve itself by a majority vote at an AGM/EGM, or by the Management Committee if membership falls below 21 members or the committee has not met for more than 12 months.

- b) The Forum runs for five years from registration with the Council (see 2011 Localism Act) after which a Formal Review is written, members consulted and a decision taken either to dissolve the Forum or to reapply for designation.
- c) After dissolution and the repayment of outstanding debts, the remaining funds should be returned to the providers or transferred to local charities at the discretion of the Management Committee.

This Constitution was approved by the provisional Management Committee of the Mellor, Marple Bridge, Mill Brow and Compstall Neighbourhood Forum on ..... and, following approval by Stockport MBC, will be submitted to the Forum’s first AGM for agreement.

Signed: ..... (Chairperson) Date: .....

..... (Secretary) Date: .....

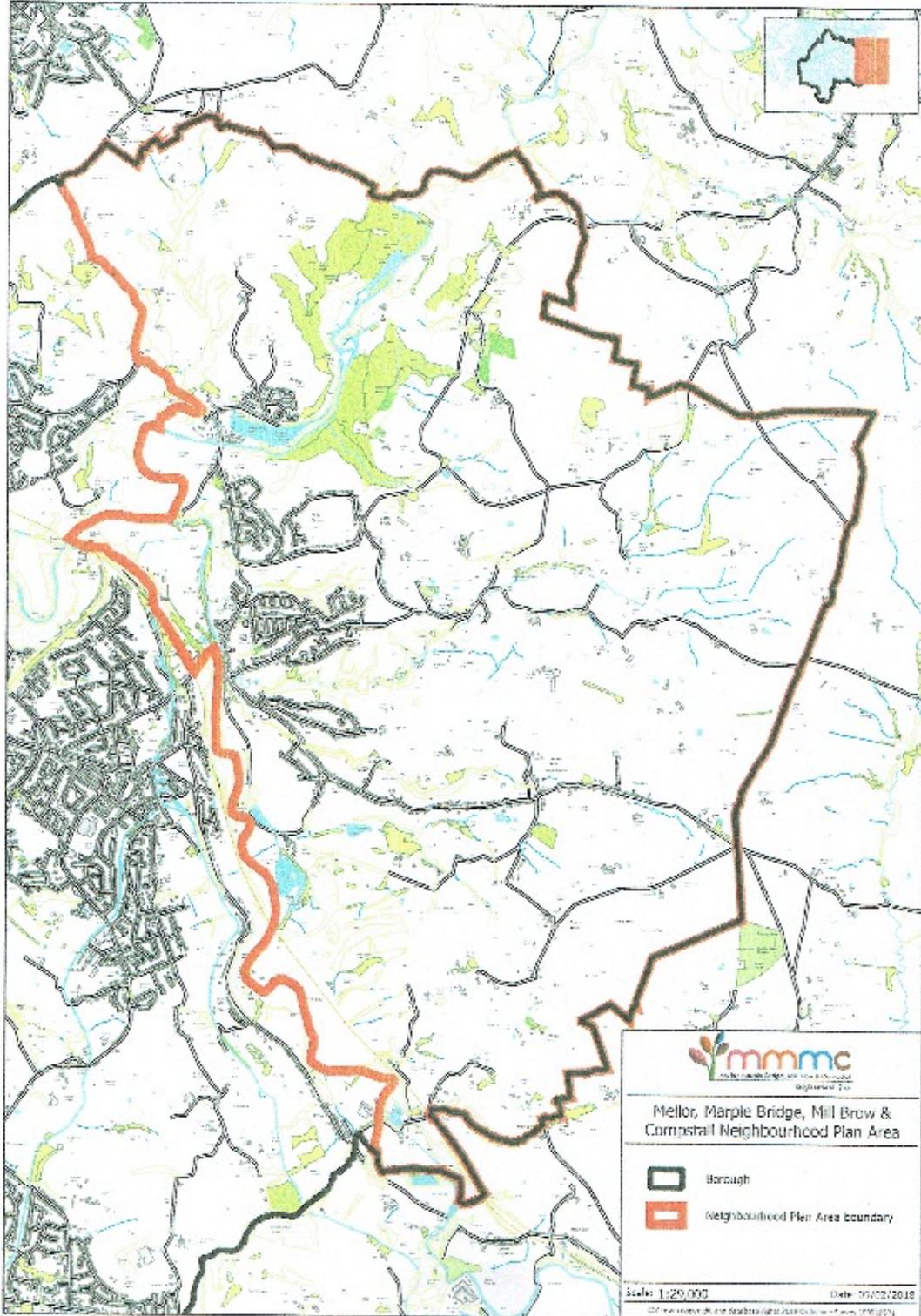
## 2.10 Amendments to Constitution

Date	Change	Reason
30/08/2018	16b) deleted 'aged 16 or over'	Recommended by SMBC as potentially discriminatory
30/08/2018	16g) inserted: ' <i>and other full meetings of the Forum</i> '	SMBC requested clarification on voting
30/08/2018	New point inserted: ' <i>16h) Members will be invited to at least two meeting a year, one of which is the AGM</i> '	SMBC sought clarity on how often the whole forum met.
30/08/2018	New point added: ' <i>17e) When consensus is not reached then decisions will be made by a simple majority on a show of hands with the Chairperson having a casting vote</i> '. Subsequent point re-numbered	SMBC sought clarity on how decisions would be made
30/08/2018	17g) x. Delete: ' <i>Record any conflict of interest by Members</i> ' and replace with: ' <i>Members should declare any conflict of interest and, if material, members must not vote on related items</i> '	Clarification on decision making
30/08/2018	Add to point 20f) ' <i>; inclusion of the issue will be at the Chairperson's discretion</i> '	Clarification
05/10/2018	16 c) expanded to include ' <i>and businesses</i> ' after ' <i>groups</i> ' and ' <i>local shops and companies</i> ' added to the examples.	Clarification of the organisations who can affiliate to include local businesses.

12/10/2018	2.3 omit 'affiliated membership ' from the section	Clarification following review
12/10/2018	Removal of discrete section on Supporters (formerly Section 2.4)	Clarification following review
12/10/2018	Section 2.5 Management Committee , clarification of point d "a quorum for voting is 51% of members present" and revision of point g vii "ensure compliance with all aspects of the law relating to the operation and management of the Forum"	Clarification following review
12/10/2018	2.6 – insertion of Working as clarification to type of group throughout the section	Clarification following review
12/10/2018	Section 2.7 b clarification of expenditure requiring committee meeting approval as £50.00	Clarification following review
12/10/2018	Section 2.8 AGM C – rewording to 'while all attendees may address the AGM, only full members may vote, be nominated etc' G – insertion of 'suggesting' for clarification H – Forum members must declare any conflict of interest and abstain prior to a vote taking place I – clarification to 21 voting members or 1/3 of registered voting members	Clarification following review
12/10/2018	Section 2.9a clarification to ' if membership falls below 21 members or the committee has not met for more than 12 months.	Clarification following review

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### 3 Area Map



## 4 Statement in support of our designation as a Neighbourhood Plan Area

### 4.1 Background

When in 2016, Marple took its first steps towards the preparation of a Neighbourhood Plan, some residents in the villages immediately to the East of Marple, recognising that they shared common concerns with the issues Marple hoped to address, decided to embark on a similar course of action.

Discussions were initiated in Mellor and Mill Brow by the Mellor Society, but following contact with community groups in Marple Bridge and Compstall, it became clear that the inclusion of those communities would create a much more effective Neighbourhood Plan Area in physical, social and economic terms.

### 4.2 Why the villages of Mellor, Marple Bridge, Mill Brow and Compstall are appropriate for designation as a Neighbourhood Plan Area.

Historically, our communities shared a similar pattern of development. Originally agricultural, they expanded from the later part of the 18<sup>th</sup> Century with the advent of cotton spinning and coal mining in the area. The arrival of the railways then prompted further expansion as desirable residential locations which continued into the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. These expansions created a built environment in which the developed footprint of the four villages is virtually contiguous. Marple Bridge lies at the centre of our area and contains the majority of retail and commercial activity, plus two of the area's 3 primary schools and a G.P practice, whilst its pubs and restaurants have generated a thriving night time economy.

There is however, considerable overlap in the catchment area of the primary schools and the GP practice serves all four communities. There is a similar pattern of cross community participation in the activities of our numerous sport, recreation, social and religious organisations, which contributes to a strong sense of social cohesion. Significantly our public engagement to date, continues to highlight a common range of concerns across the whole area. When asked to consider the issues that would be important to us over the next 15-20 years the same topics constantly appear: Affordable Housing, Getting around, developing the local economy and services, Health wellbeing, recreation and the protection and stewardship of our green spaces and countryside. It seems clear at this early stage that the Neighbourhood Plan process will further unify our area, as discussions of these issues continues.

### 4.3 Defining our Neighbourhood Area Boundary

Administratively our villages occupy the extreme Eastern corner of Stockport Metropolitan Borough, the boundary of which is, for the most part, shared the parish boundary of St

Thomas Church, Mellor. The Western boundary of our area is mainly defined by the line of the River Goyt, which also marks our boundary with the Marple Neighbourhood plan Area; and further North, Compstall residents considered that Cowlshaw Road and Compstall Brow formed their boundary with neighbouring Romiley.

A plan based on these features was discussed within the communities over several months and was submitted for comment to S.M.B.C. Following some minor amendments our proposed Neighbourhood Area Boundary Plan was adopted by the Group in January 2018 and has featured in our subsequent publicity and community engagement activities.

#### 4.4 Publicity and Community Engagement

Please see Section 7: Mellor, Marple Bridge, Mill Brow and Compstall Prospective Neighbourhood Forum Publicity and Community Engagement Activities.

#### 4.5 Conclusions

We believe that the enclosed Area Map is a sensible assessment of the geographical extent of our Neighbourhood Area and we would request that it be designated as such by Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council.

## 5 Statement to explain why we are a relevant body to apply for Neighbourhood Plan Area designation.

### 5.1 Background

Following discussions between representatives of the Mellor Society, Friends of Mill Brow, The Marple Bridge Association and Compstall Community Council, a meeting was held in July 2017 to which other individuals who play an active role in our communities were invited.

It was clear that there was much support for pursuing the preparation of a Neighbourhood Plan and 21 residents drawn from across the 4 communities volunteered to form a prospective Neighbourhood Forum.

### 5.2 Our Prospective Neighbourhood Forum

The current membership contains 28 residents of the 4 communities and includes 2 local ward councillors, residents who have experience in Architecture, Town planning, Urban Design, Sustainability, project management, education, media, sport, community activism, as well as representatives of our business community. We have a fairly even gender balance, which we will seek to maintain as our membership increases.

Since our public launch event in March 2018 we have identified other prospective Forum members and people who would be prepared to assist with working groups once the Neighbourhood Forum is Designated. An additional 75 residents have returned questionnaires and have requested email updates on our activities.

### 5.3 Publicity and Community Engagement

Please see Section 7: Mellor, Marple Bridge, Mill Brow and Compstall Prospective Neighbourhood Forum Publicity and Community Engagement Activities.

### 5.4 Conclusion

Given our current stage of development we consider that our prospective Neighbourhood Forum Group fulfils the legal requirement necessary to submit our application for the designation of our Neighbourhood Plan area.

## 6 Statement to demonstrate that we meet the legal requirements for designation as a Neighbourhood Forum

### 6.1 Our Objectives

Our enclosed constitution (please see Section 2) states that our objectives are:

“To promote the sustainable development of our communities, enhancing their social, economic and environmental well-being for the benefit of current and future residents of our Area and the wider community within which we exist.”

“To provide a forum for the discussion of local issues such as land use, housing, transport planning Public services, local business, community facilities and open spaces.”

“To prepare a Neighbourhood Plan in Partnership with SMBC.”

“To maximise the involvement of all individuals, businesses and organisations within the communities in the preparation of our plan, and the pursuit of its objectives.”

“To exercise the powers which attach to the Forum in respect of Neighbourhood Development Orders, Communities Rights to Build Orders, The identification of Assets of Community Value and the implementation of planning policy within our communities.”

It is likely that the pursuit of our objectives will be played out against a background of changes to National Planning Policy Frame work and the implementation of national, regional and local policy initiatives that will seek to reconcile the conflicting goals of economic growth, energy security, infrastructure requirements, climate change obligations, a housing crisis and fundamental changes to employment patterns and the nature of work. Our key objective, therefore, must be to put a genuinely sustainable future for current and future residents at the heart of our neighbourhood plan and trust that a policy framework emerges that supports our objective. Working closely in Partnership with our colleagues at SMBC will be essential to the achievement of our goals.

### 6.2 Our Prospective Neighbourhood Forum

The current membership contains 28 residents of the 4 communities and includes 2 local ward councillors, residents who have experience in Architecture, Town planning, Urban Design, Sustainability, project management, education, media, sport, community activism, as well as representatives of our business community. We have a fairly even gender balance, which we will seek to maintain as our membership increases.

Since our public launch event in March 2018 we have identified other prospective Forum members and people who would be prepared to assist with working groups once the Neighbourhood Forum is Designated. An additional 75 residents have returned questionnaires and have requested email updates on our activities.

### 6.3 Publicity and Community Engagement

Please see Section 7: Mellor, Marple Bridge, Mill Brow and Compstall Prospective Neighbourhood Forum Publicity and Community Engagement Activities.

#### *Note*

Contact details for our members are enclosed with this application.

### 6.4 Conclusion

We believe that the above statement sets out the objectives and ambitions of our prospective Neighbourhood Forum and describes a current membership which is representative of our area and meets the legal requirements necessary for us to submit this application for the designation of our Forum by SMBC.

## 7 Statement describing our publicity and community engagement activities to date

Prior to July 2017 publicity for the prospect of creating a Neighbourhood Forum was led by the Mellor Society whose newsletter is distributed to 700 homes throughout Mellor and Mill Brow. Information regarding the progress of the Forum has featured in 7 consecutive newsletters, from summer 2016 – summer 2018.

Since the incorporation of Marple Bridge and Compstall into the Plan area, both the Marple Bridge Association and Compstall Community Council have given publicity to the prospective Forum using their Facebook pages which have respectively 1690 and 495 followers each. We now have our own Facebook Page and provide a monthly newsletter to our followers.

Articles have appeared in the Mellor Church Magazine which covers 800 homes throughout the whole Plan Area and in the spring 2018 edition of the Marple Review, which is distributed to every home in our Area.

In preparation for our initial Public meeting on 24<sup>th</sup> March 2018, as well as using the above platforms, posters were displayed in shops, pubs and on Notice Boards throughout the area and a 3-metre-long banner was displayed in the centre of Marple Bridge. The Meeting was attended by 65 local residents which was considered exceptional by our colleagues in the Marple Neighbourhood Forum.

Since then we have continued our process of Community Engagement, running stalls at the Compstall Community Fete and the Mellor Church Fete, during which we distributed brochures, questionnaires and engaged in discussion with hundreds of local residents.

We have recently produced a hit list of some 40 local organisations that we would like to become affiliated to the Forum and to date over 50% have agreed to do so. We are now planning a similar exercise with local businesses.

We are concerned about a current difficulty in engaging with the 18-40 age group and are working with the Primary Schools' PTA groups to try to address this.

Given that we are not yet designated and have no access to funding we believe that we have made a serious endeavour to communicate our intentions within our proposed Plan Area. The process of community engagement will continue over the coming months and we anticipate that achieving designation of the Forum, will give this process a significant boost.

## 8 Public Points of Contact

Mr. Greg Pike. ( Acting Chairman )  
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Stockport,  
SK6 5DH  
Email: [heritageandplanning@gmail.com](mailto:heritageandplanning@gmail.com)

## Confidential Annex – Other Members

[data redacted]