



Why now?

The Portico is creaking and leaking from old age and needs critical repairs before it degrades further. Our entrance is hard to find, and our facilities aren't accessible to all.

Our ground floor and basement were leased out 100 years ago.

We lack enough space to meet visitor demand, drive income needed to thrive as a charity, provide a free library and care for our Grade II* listed building in increasingly tough times.

Now, we have a once in a generation chance to reclaim the whole building for the library, make the Portico shine again, and protect it for the future. We'll be able to welcome and inspire many more visitors for decades to come.

We're reuniting the Portico to write Manchester's next chapter, and we need your help.



Join our adventure

You can help us breathe new life into the Portico and write Manchester's next chapter.

We need individuals, businesses, and other supporters like you to help us provide a 21st century welcome for everyone - in a beautifully refurbished heritage space. You can help ensure the Portico is here for future generations to enjoy our inspirational collections and connect with others, as part of a true legacy for Manchester.



We are well on our way to securing the funding for this £11m project. But we need your help now to raise £3m by 2026, to unlock £8m from National Lottery Heritage Fund and other funders, so Portico Reunited goes ahead.

As early Portico Library user, and one of Manchester's greatest writers Elizabeth Gaskell, said,

"The world is full of wonders – never stop exploring and learning."

To find out more, and how you can help, please get in touch:

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0161 236 6785
theportico.org.uk/reuniting

Registered Charity No. 1143639



Portico Reunited



Portico Reunited



Help write Manchester's next chapter

Every day, hundreds of people from all walks of life visit the beautiful, free Portico Library and Newsroom, one of the most important buildings in the city. They trace the stories of some of the most influential people of the last 200 years, from poets to scientists, activists to colonial traders, and even Prime Ministers. Our unique collections of 25,000+ books and archives spanning 450 years are filled with exciting stories of Manchester and the world, many still to be discovered.

Within these walls, issues were debated and decisions made which changed all our lives – issues still urgent today; from racism to globalisation, gender equality to medical ethics.

Our communities have told us how much they love this wonderful historic space and want to explore more of the unique book collections and the archives.

We want everyone to be inspired by the fascinating stories, illustrations, people and ideas found only here.

However, unless we act today, and secure your help, we simply can't keep the Portico Library running, let alone welcome all of the people who want to explore and join the adventure.

"We can't change the past, but we can shape the present and create a better future."

Lemn Sissay



Help us create a beautifully refurbished, reunited Portico for all

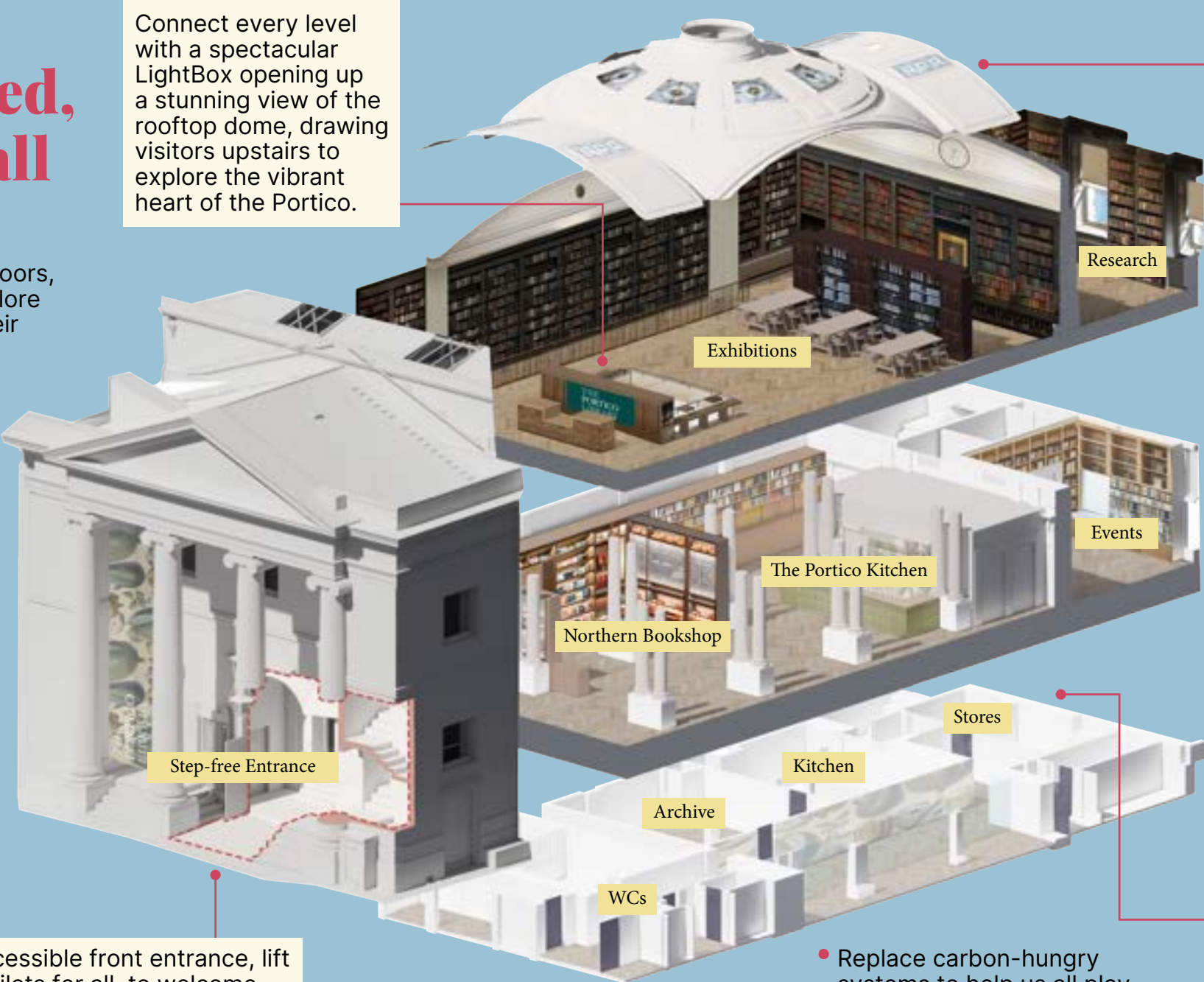


Deliver exhibitions, workshops, debates, films, school and family events. Thousands more people will discover the collections, create, collaborate, relax, celebrate, and build their skills.

- Transform all three floors, so everyone can explore collections, share their stories and discover our city’s heritage.
- Create 15-20 jobs and £5m tourism spend each year, boosting businesses, further energising the city, and achieving social and economic growth.

Connect every level with a spectacular LightBox opening up a stunning view of the rooftop dome, drawing visitors upstairs to explore the vibrant heart of the Portico.

An accessible front entrance, lift and toilets for all, to welcome 90,000+ more people each year.



- Replace carbon-hungry systems to help us all play a part in a Net Zero future.

Refurbish glass dome, stonework, roof, windows, and interiors — protecting the Grade II* building for the next century - and revealing its true splendour.



State of the art storage and research areas for books and archives, so schoolchildren to scholars can make new discoveries.



Bring heritage recipes and local flavours up to date in our famous cafe. Bring friends hungry for food, history, writing and ideas!



- Ignite new opportunities for Northern writers, readers, thinkers, and creators. You’ll nurture new talent, and stories that need to be heard.



Showcase more books, with extra reading spaces for everyone, and a dedicated Northern bookshop.