



Greater Manchester Live Well Spring Festival

together
we are

**GREATER
MANCHESTER**

Two Weeks – One City Region – Bringing Live Well to Life
#GMLiveWell #SpringFestival

Get ready for a two-week, city-region-wide celebration of the people, places, and partnerships growing and bringing Live Well to life across Greater Manchester!

Rooted locally and led by communities, the festival will unfold through pop-up activities, events, spaces and celebrations, shining a light on what it truly means to live well.

And the best part? Everyone can shape the festival, be part of the line-up and join the celebration.



Spring Festival Lingo

Pop-Up Curator:

The person, group or team leading the pop-up. They bring the idea to life, take responsibility for making it happen, and set the tone and experience for everyone involved.

Pop-Up:

A unique activity, event, or space that brings the festival to life locally. Each pop-up stands on its own, while being part of the Spring Festival line-up.

The Big Four Festival Stages:

Not physical stages, but metaphorical, these are the four big themes guiding the Spring festival. Every festival pop-up connects to at least one of them: Spaces of Hope and Connection, Great Everyday Support, Building Bridges and Weaving Trust & Participation and Community Power.

Festival Vibes:

The shared values shaping how festival pop-ups are designed and feel. Pop-ups should be accessible, creative, representative, empowering, trusted, connected, and energising.

Festival Essentials

Festival Dates: Monday 9th March – Monday 23rd March 2026

The festival period coincides with the holy month of Ramadan and Lent, as well as Eid al-Fitr (expected 19th-20th March) and International Women's Day (8th March).

Spring festival pop-ups should all be planned with care and consideration for religious observations and equality events, including awareness of fasting, prayer times and respectful ways to acknowledge communities of identity.



A Festival that Pops-up Everywhere

The Live Well Spring Festival has no fixed site and no barriers – it pops up everywhere in unexpected places, right on your doorstep!

Across the two weeks, festival pop-ups will be happening at the same time in different places, turning corners of Greater Manchester into vibrant festival venues - from neighbourhoods and parks to community halls and digital spaces.

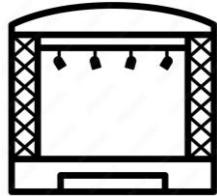
Each pop-up is unique and tells its own story. Not just in where it happens, but in how it reflects the strengths, creativity, energy and identity of local neighbourhoods and communities.

Together, these pop-up moments create a diverse festival line-up telling a bigger story, reflecting the many community-led and system-enabled ways Live Well shows up across Greater Manchester.

The Big Four Festival Stages: What the festival is celebrating

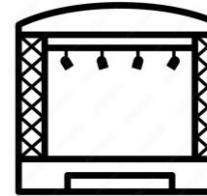
Every pop-up in the Live Well Spring Festival is rooted in one or more of the Big Four Festival Stages. These are not physical stages; think of them as metaphorical foundations supporting each local pop-up to shine, while weaving a shared thread across the festival.

Together, they celebrate the people, places, and alliances that support people to live well across Greater Manchester.



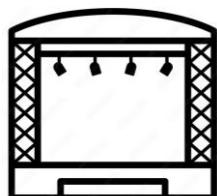
Spaces of Hope and Connection:

Celebrating the trusted, community-rooted places that bring people together - where belonging grows, relationships deepen, and support flows.

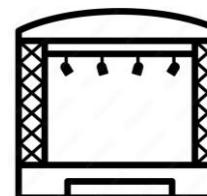


Building Bridges and Weaving Trust:

Bringing people, places, and experiences together - strengthening trust, connection, and belonging between communities, and with public services.



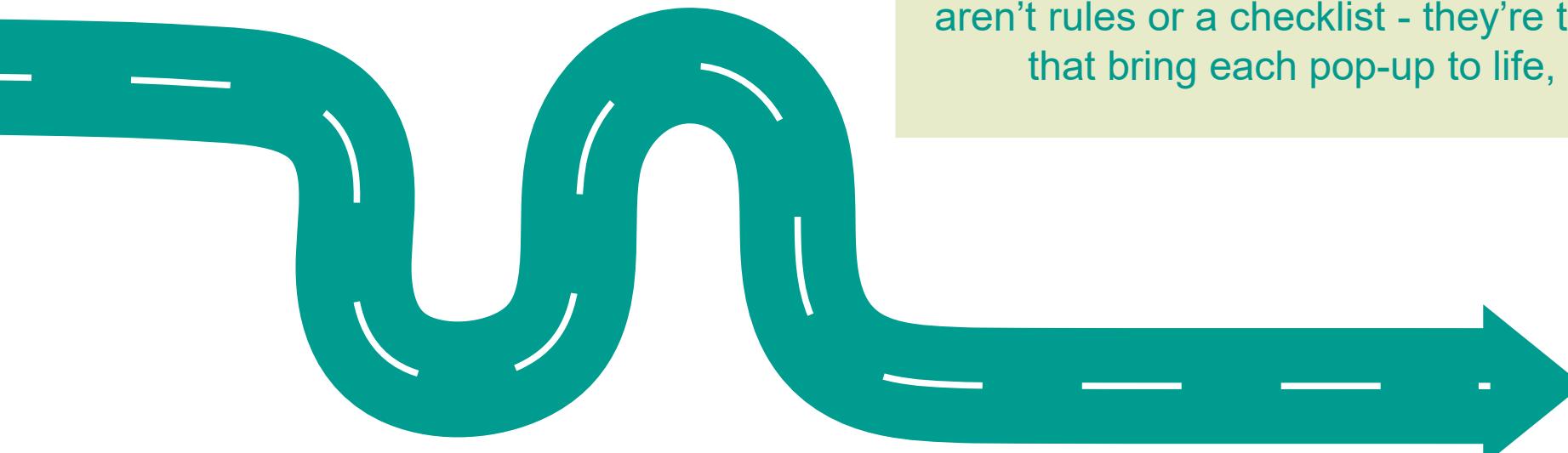
Great Everyday Support: Showcasing inspiring examples of relational and inclusive support in communities that support people to live well.



Participation and Community Power:

Celebrating the ways communities shape the places they live and the decisions that affect their lives - shifting power, driving change, and growing collective action.

Festival Vibes: How a pop-up should be designed and feel



Every pop-up will be shaped by the 'festival vibes' that follow. Co-designed with communities over the past two years through GM Live Well movement-building events, these vibes aren't rules or a checklist - they're the spark, energy, and spirit that bring each pop-up to life, in true Live Well style.

Click to the next slide to explore the 'festival vibes'

Design Principles for Live Well Events



Accessible



Pay attention to physical, social and emotional accessibility to ensure everyone can contribute in the way they want

Creative



Create opportunities for doing and thinking in non-traditional ways that make space for sharing and learning together

Representative of Communities



Genuinely model power shifting and elevate the breadth and realities of communities

Want to see these vibes in action?

Explore past GM Live Well movement-building events to see how they come to life.

Empowering



Leave participants with a call to action and equipped with new relationships, skills and knowledge to act

Trusted



Value all knowledge and experiences and make space for active listening, relationship building and honest conversations

Connected & Collaborative



Create opportunities that inspire equal alliances, networks, and action between individuals, organisations and sectors

Energising



Create a vibrant atmosphere that inspires hope and joy, and connects participants with a collective mission

[Launch of Live Well in February 2024](#)

[Live Well: Growing great everyday support in every neighbourhood.](#)

[Community wealth, opportunity and ownership event in May 2024](#)

[Community power and decision making in October 2024](#)



What Could Pop-up?



The Spring Festival is full of moments ready to pop up across Greater Manchester. Each pop-up will be shaped by its local place and communities, guided by the festival vibes, and connected to one (or more!) of the Big Four Festival Stages.



Pop-ups can take many forms – bringing neighbours together in everyday spaces, sharing stories, taking action, celebrating creativity, or simply exploring what it means to live well.



Need a spark of inspiration? On the next slide are some ideas for pop-ups that could burst to life across the city-region.



Ideas to get you started...



Community pop-ups and street socials, bringing neighbours together in everyday spaces

Storytelling corners and listening circles where local voices are heard and valued



Wellbeing walks or walking audits through parks, canals and green spaces

Community reporters sharing what Live Well looks like where they live in their own way



Participation parties that feel joyful, shaping neighbourhoods and local decision-making



Roving public living rooms and food shares that bring neighbours and communities together



Podcast clubs sparking big conversations around what it means to live well



Local exhibitions and creative installations that share local impact and inspire others



Visits to community spaces and centres where Live Well is being brought to life

How the GM Live Well Team Can Help Bring Pop-ups to Life

Every pop-up curator has the freedom to shape their pop-up and make it happen in a way that works for their community and local context.

Where needed, the GM Live Well team is here to walk alongside curators - supporting ideas to take shape, connecting you with others, or supporting with resources and guidance.

You can share your support needs when [sharing your pop-up idea](#), and if there's anything else you need to make your pop-up happen, email gmlivewell@greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk. The team will support where possible.

Here are some of the ways the team can support, creating the enabling conditions for your pop-up to thrive...

A small grant, some funding to help cover lived experience costs, venue hire, equipment or other costs

Help thinking it through, a friendly chat to shape your idea and plan what you'll need

Help getting the word out, sharing your event through social media, newsletters and local partners

Help connecting with others, introductions to community centres, libraries, parks, facilitators or groups who could join in or support your ideas

A platform to share your story, capturing photos, audio or a short write-up to share your event with the city-region

Or nothing at all, we're happy to be guided by your expertise and local community!



Big Ticket Festival Headliners

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Want to become a pop-up curator but don't want to start from scratch? The Spring Festival's ready-made headliners are here to help.

Each one can be adapted to your local place or community, giving you a starting point while leaving plenty of room for you to add your creativity, energy and local expertise to bring the pop-up to life.



It's an easy, fun way to be part of the Spring Festival, and the GM Live Well team will be on hand with all the resources, guidance, and support you need to make your pop-up shine.

1. Host a Participation Party

- #PressPlay on participation! A Participation Party is a fun, interactive way to bring people together, exploring participatory methods and how communities can shape the places they live and the decisions that affect them.
- Participation Parties are perfect for anyone who wants to grow a movement where Greater Manchester's communities don't just have a voice, but also the resources and power to shape their local spaces and decisions.
- Getting started couldn't be easier, the GM Live Well team has run a Participation Party already, so you can pick up a ready-to-go plan, including an agenda and slides. You will also have access to physical copies of the participation playbook and participation party bags for attendees, as well as connections to experienced practitioners who can help run workshops and breakout sessions.



2. Pop-up a Live Well Centre or Space

- What would a Live Well Centre/Space look like if it were shaped by the people who use it every day? A Pop-Up Live Well Centre/Space brings that question to life by creating a temporary space where people with different experiences come together to imagine, explore and co-design what 'live well' could mean in practice.
- Pop-Ups are perfect for anyone who wants to innovate and influence how Live Well shows up locally, rooted in community voice. It's about centring community voice and creativity into solutions that influence local and strategic decision-making.
- Getting started is simple. The GM Live Well team can provide a ready-made pop-up space, conversation prompts, and insights already shared by communities across Greater Manchester. This includes Live Well hallmarks, community reporting videos and learning documents to connect your pop-up into a wider movement.



3. Host a Live Well Podcast Club

- A Live Well Podcast Club is a relaxed, welcoming way for pop-up curators to bring people together to hear real voices from across Greater Manchester. By picking an episode from the Live Well podcast series, you'll create space for people to reflect, connect across different perspectives, and have honest conversations about community-led and system-enabled action, power, and wealth.
- A Live Well Podcast Club is perfect if you want to connect people across communities, roles, and experiences - whether that's a neighbourhood group, staff team, network or partnership.
- To get started, the GM Live Well team will support you with podcast episodes, transcripts, and discussion ideas. You can also be supported to invite voices featured in the podcast to join your pop-up. If you want to go one step further, the team can provide equipment to record stories and reflections from the group, turning your discussion into a podcast created together, for your community.



4. Community Reporting

- Community Reporting is a creative way to capture and share what live well really looks like across communities, organisations, and neighbourhoods. By hosting a Community Reporting pop-up, you'll bring people together to go out into communities, have conversations, and document the often-unseen work of those supporting people to live well.
- Community Reporting is a creative pop-up great for those wanting to amplify underrepresented voices, spotlight great practice, and influence decisions grounded in lived experience.
- The GM Live Well team will support your pop-up by connecting you with experienced community reporters, capacity building, equipment, examples and conversation prompts, helping you bring people together to capture strengths-based stories.



5. Host a STUCK Workshop

- What would support feel like if there were no wrong doors, only welcoming spaces designed to empower and support people? A STUCK workshop uses immersive headphone audio to bring real-life stories directly to people. As you listen, together, you'll build a shared understanding and co-design practical ideas that remove barriers and empower people with truly inclusive, person-centred support.
- STUCK is great for anyone who wants a pop-up to bring communities, organisations, and systems together to better understand the realities of people accessing support and centring lived experience into practical change.
- The GM Live Well team will connect you with Made by Mortals, who co-designed STUCK with citizens in Tameside. They'll support facilitating the pop-up alongside curators and provide the equipment needed.





Ready to join the Festival Lineup?

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Now's your chance to make it happen!

Share your pop-up idea, however works best for you - a short video, a quick online form or friendly chat.

There's no wrong door, use this link or email gmlivewell@greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk if there's another way that works for you.

To be part of the festival programme, please share your pop-up idea by **Friday 30 January 2026**.

Staying Connected...



More informal drop-in sessions will be running where you can connect with others, share ideas, and help shape the festival programme together. **Save the dates and join:**

**Tues 20th
Jan 26**

10-11am: [Microsoft Teams meeting](#) (Meeting ID: 397 624 291 665
46. Passcode: Qi9GH688)

**Tues 17th
Feb 26**

11.30-12.30pm: [Teams meeting](#) (Meeting ID: 371 023 002 541
15. Passcode: mK6Uy37r)

Sign up to the GM Live Well newsletter for all festival updates: GMLiveWell@greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk



Festival FAQs

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1. Who can become a pop-up curator?

Anyone! Whether you're a community leader, organiser, local resident, public sector colleague, or someone with lived experience - if you want to bring people together and create a festival moment, you can be a pop-up curator.

2. How will my pop-up connect to the wider Spring Festival?

Every pop-up contributes to the festival line-up and links to one or more of the Big Four Festival Stages, helping tell the bigger story of hope, connection, support, and community power across Greater Manchester.

3. Are the Big Four Festival Stages real?

No, they're metaphorical themes that guide every pop-up:

- Spaces of Hope and Connection
- Great Everyday Support
- Building Bridges and Weaving Trust
- Participation and Community Power

4. Can the pop-up be online or just in person?

Pop-ups can happen anywhere - in local parks, community halls, streets, or digital spaces. What truly matters is creating an environment online or offline that brings people together, sparks new ideas, and celebrates the inspiring stories and achievements from across Greater Manchester.

5. Can I run my pop-up with other groups?

Absolutely! We strongly encourage pop-ups to be run in alliance with communities, local groups, networks, VCFSE organisations, and public services. Working together across sectors brings new opportunities for creativity and connection, making your pop-up a true celebration of Greater Manchester's collective energy.

[Check out the Alliance Blueprint – a practical roadmap for how communities and systems can grow partnerships](#)

6. Do I have to self-fund the pop-up?

No, you don't have to self-fund your pop-up. The festival offers a small fund to help cover your pop-up costs where possible. When you share your pop-up idea, just include details about the support you need - whether that's for lived experience costs, venue hire, equipment, or anything else.

7. What support is available from the GM Live Well team?

The team will help your pop-up thrive by providing:

- Guidance and friendly chats to shape your idea
- Small grants to cover costs
- Connections with local venues, facilitators, or groups
- Help sharing your event through newsletters and social media
- Support capturing and sharing your story with photos, audio, or write-ups

And if you need something else, just ask, we'll help wherever we can.

8. How do I share my idea to be part of the festival line-up?

Share your idea however, works best for you. Whether that's a short video, an online form, or a chat. There's no wrong door! Use the [link](#) or email gmlivewell@greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk if you want to share in another way. To be included in the programme, please share your idea by Friday 30th January 2026.

9. When should my pop-up take place?

To be part of the Spring Festival line-up, pop-ups should happen during the festival dates: Monday 9th – Monday 23rd March 2026. But the energy and ideas you create don't have to stop there – feel free to keep the momentum going after the festival.

10. How will people find out about my pop-up?

The GM Live Well team will help spread the word about your pop-up through social media, newsletters, and local partners. You're also encouraged to share details directly with your own networks to create buzz and excitement in your community.

11. How can I make my pop-up inclusive for religious and equality celebrations over the two weeks?

The festival period coincides with the holy month of Ramadan and Lent, as well as Eid al-Fitr (expected 19-20 March) and International Women's Day (8 March). To make your event inclusive, be mindful of these key dates and observances by scheduling pop-ups to avoid conflicts with iftar, providing food-free rooms or take-home food bags for those who are fasting, along with quiet spaces for prayer or reflection. For any pop-ups on International Women's Day, make a special effort to centre and celebrate women's voices and experiences through an intersectional lens, ensuring diverse representation. Above all, reach out to local people in your community and be guided by their needs and insights, so everyone feels welcome, respected, and able to participate fully in your pop-up.

12. What is GM Live Well?

Greater Manchester's commitment to great everyday support is available in every neighbourhood. Together, communities, voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise organisations, public services, and partners can tackle health, social, economic, and structural inequalities to grow opportunities for everyone to Live Well.

[Find out more](#)

13. What is Live Well Implementation, and how do Live Well Centres, Spaces, and Offers fit together?

Backed by a £10m investment from GMCA and NHS GM, each locality in Greater Manchester has received their Live Well Year 1 Implementation Fund to support the city-region's Live Well strategic ambition. This includes at least 50% of funding to go to the voluntary sector, as well as funding for one flagship Live Well Centre and a network of Live Well Spaces and Offers. All of these are guided by shared Hallmarks, which set out a shared vision for what great support looks like in Centres, Spaces, and Offers across Greater Manchester.

[Find out more about Live Well Implementation](#)

[Read Centres, Spaces and Offers Hallmarks](#)

14. How do I stay connected for festival updates?

To stay inspired and up to date as the festival comes together, sign up to the GM Live Well newsletter by emailing gmlivewell@greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk.

15. Key contact

For any questions, ideas, or support about the festival email gmlivewell@greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk and the team will be happy to help.