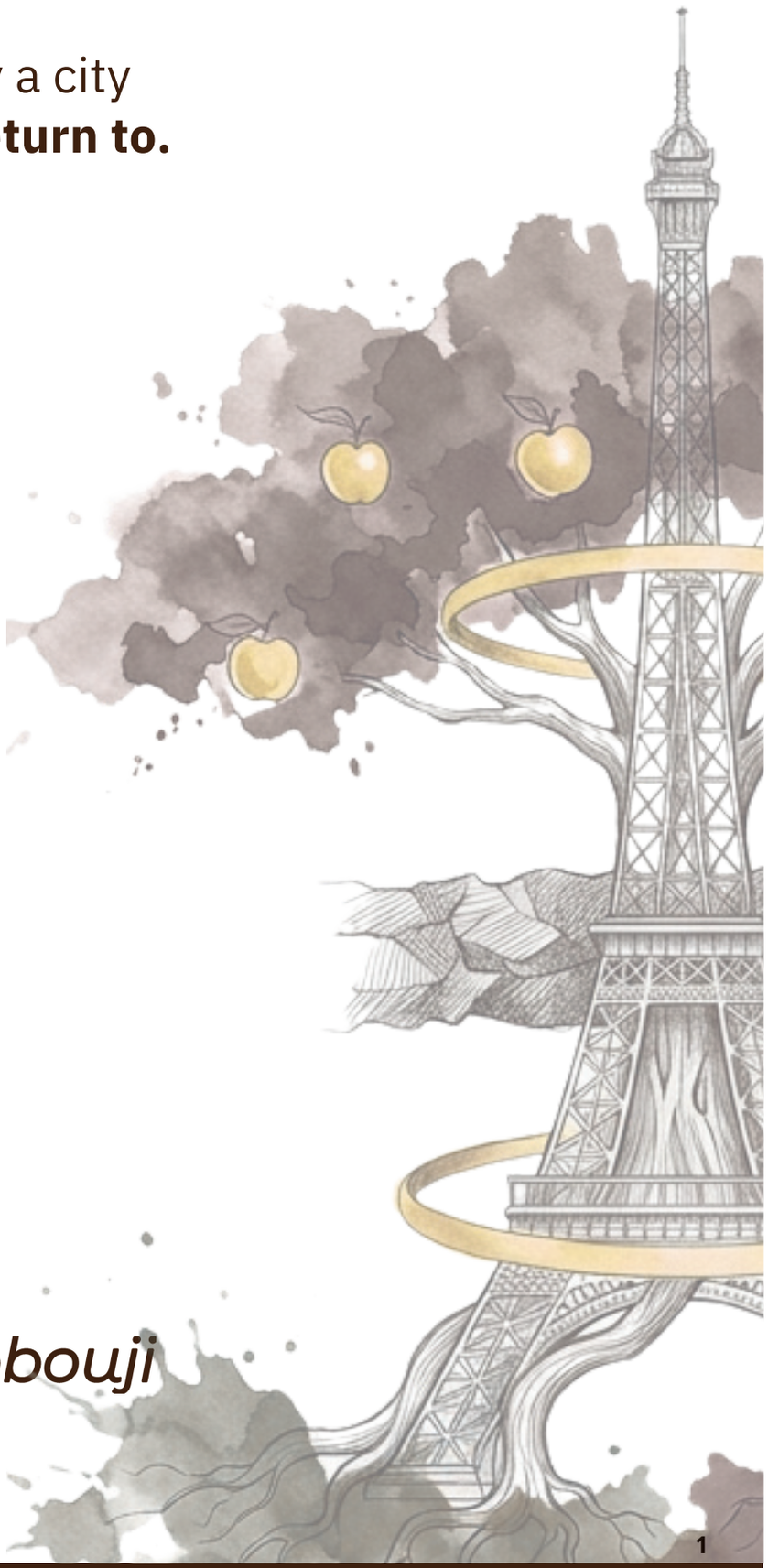
Revitalising Derby

Six Ideas to make Derby a city **people visit, use and return to.**



Citrey CIC

In partnership with:

Adaptiv. Mojobouji

Introduction

Derby as a Living City
A living city needs both the excitement that draws visitors and the everyday places that bring people back. These six ideas explore that balance: distinctive experiences alongside opportunities to learn, meet, get support and contribute throughout the week and across the year.

Our Crisis Beneath Success papers ask how Derby's considerable strengths can improve everyday life for more people. The projects connect local talent with opportunity, community ideas with practical support, and busy destinations with thriving neighbouring streets.

Some proposals are further along than others. Early activity can test demand and build participation while larger funding develops. Capital would provide spaces and equipment; people, programming and affordable access would keep them useful and alive.

Help us shape the ideas, choose where to focus and build the support to take them forward.

Who we are

Lauren Thompson: Citrey founder and founder of Roots & Futures, bringing place development and championing deliberative democracy and direct engagement with people using the high street.

Amit Zala: founder of Adaptiv, bringing organisational and systemic advisory experience, The Living City framework and the Ghost Town Paradox paper.

Devon Daley: founder of Mojobouji and Destination Derbados, bringing decades of experience in media, cultural programming, events and audience building across Derby and the UK.



1 The Possibility Works:
A City to Try

Discover possibilities through role-play.



1) The Possibility Works: A City to Try

Run a café. Present a radio show. Design something that flies. Imagine a miniature city where children step into different roles, make decisions and learn through hands-on role-play. Derby's engineering, creative and caring professions could become adventures children try for themselves.

Inspired by KidZania's role-play model, the proposal brings career discovery into a shared, physical experience. Platforms such as MyLucidus offer a digital parallel through virtual career simulations. Children could follow their interests, work together and return to try something new.

Why it matters: Makes Derby's opportunities more visible to children and gives schools and families a regular reason to use the centre. Affordable access would help widen participation.

What investment could unlock: Premises, miniature workplaces, props and interactive equipment, with changing activities that encourage repeat visits and time spent in neighbouring businesses.

Help take it forward: Employers, educators and experience designers to shape the activities and funding case. Age range, location, scale and ticket prices remain open for development.

Annual visits to explore: 45,000-60,000.



2 The Generations House:

A place to belong, share and return to.



2) The Generations House

A welcoming place on or near Sadler Gate where older residents, students and families can meet, share skills and find company. With older people's experience at its heart, a lounge and regular programme could make companionship and contribution part of the everyday high street.

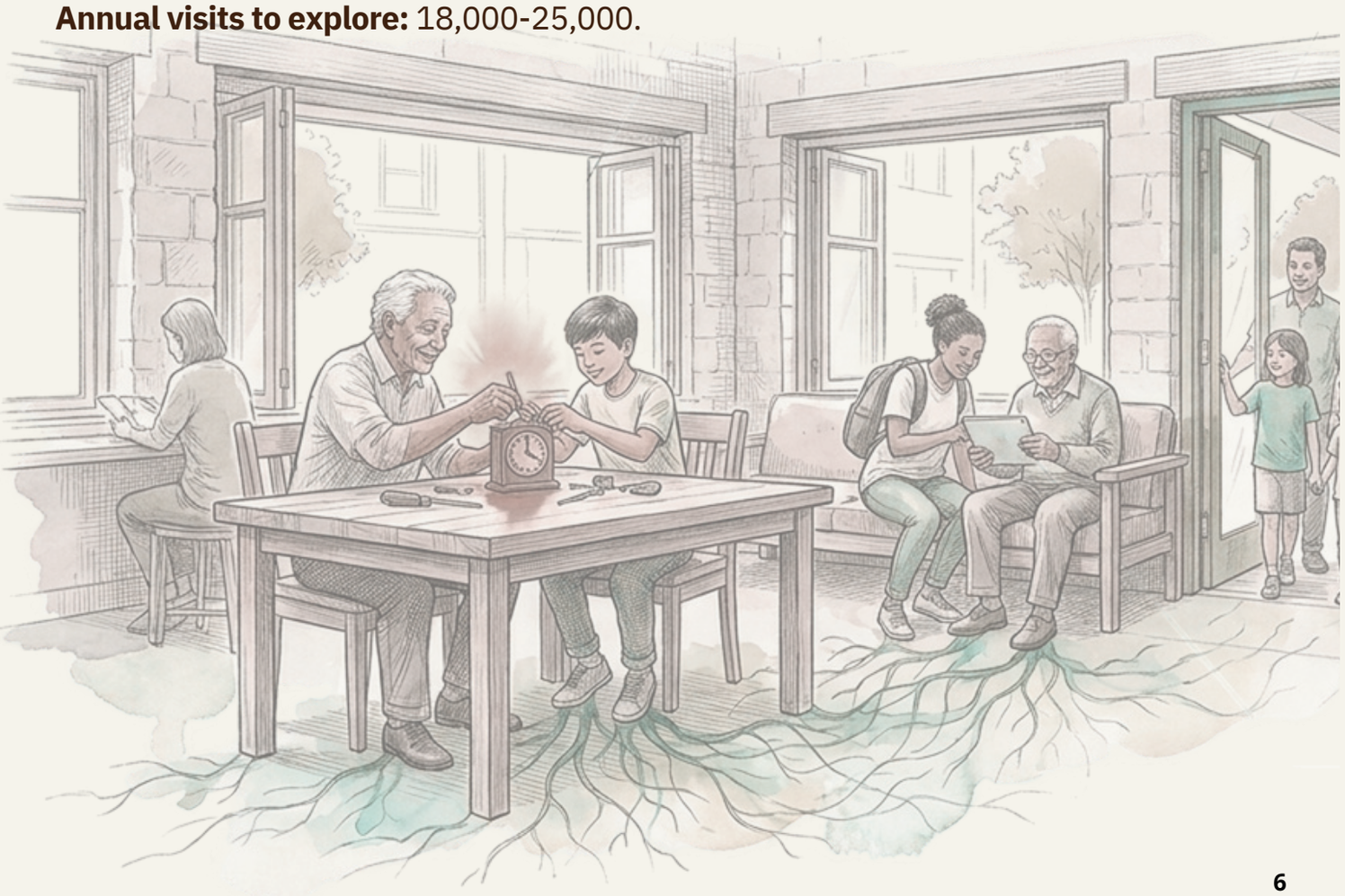
The ambition includes helping older residents comfortably reach and use this part of town, while exploring connections with students and staff at the University of Derby's Cavendish Building, home to its Business School.

Why it matters: Builds relationships across generations and gives people reasons to return throughout the week. Easier access and a welcoming base could help older residents enjoy surrounding shops, cafés and cultural places.

What investment could unlock: An accessible ground-floor space, comfortable seating, suitable facilities and equipment for shared activities. Clear routes and connections with arrival points would be part of planning access.

Help take it forward: Older residents, community groups and university representatives to shape the offer, alongside premises, access and operating expertise.

Annual visits to explore: 18,000-25,000.



3 Botanical Cultural Programme

Culture, greenery & reasons to return.





3) Botanical Cultural Programme

Imagine a cultural programme connecting the Market Hall with Derby Arboretum, the gardens and landscapes of Derbyshire and the Peaks, and botanical expertise further afield. Planting, performance, food, art and storytelling could bring these places into a shared experience, with different reasons to explore and return across the seasons.

The ambition includes developing connections with Birmingham Botanical Gardens and an Irish partner, alongside possibilities for outdoor performance. The programme's central theme and purpose would be shaped together.

Why it matters: Combines a distinctive visitor offer with regular opportunities for residents to participate, linking city-centre activity with the wider region. The ambition is a multi-year programme from 2028.

What investment could unlock: Planting installations, adaptable performance and exhibition facilities, and ways to connect the experience across locations, supported by programme and maintenance funding.

Help take it forward: Cultural producers, horticultural specialists, venue teams, traders and communities to agree the theme, shape the partnerships and develop bids.

Annual visits to explore: The initial 180,000-240,000 range needs reviewing against the wider programme, separating existing attendance from additional visits.





4 Fair Start: Community Finance

Opening doors to financial confidence and opportunity.



4) Fair Start: Community Finance

Bring a vacant bank back to life as a welcoming place to understand money, explore fair finance and find support for the next step. Residents could build financial confidence, understand relevant government schemes and explore options for housing, learning or starting a business.

The hub would also connect philanthropists with local ideas and help people whose ambitions lack the backing of a “Bank of Mum and Dad”. Co-operative principles would guide an approach centred on mutual help and community benefit.

Why it matters: Makes financial knowledge and useful connections more accessible, while returning an everyday service and regular footfall to the high street.

What investment could unlock: The adaptation of a suitable former bank, with accessible learning space, private advice rooms and equipment. Former Lloyds or NatWest premises are possibilities to explore, subject to availability and suitability.

Help take it forward: Financial education and fair-finance providers, community organisations, philanthropists and property partners to shape the service and develop its funding and operating arrangements.

Annual visits to explore: 30,000-40,000 as an initial ambition, to be tested against the agreed service.



5 Flamsteed: Derby Looks to the Stars

Discover Derby's past.
Explore new possibilities.



5) Flamsteed: Derby Looks to the Stars

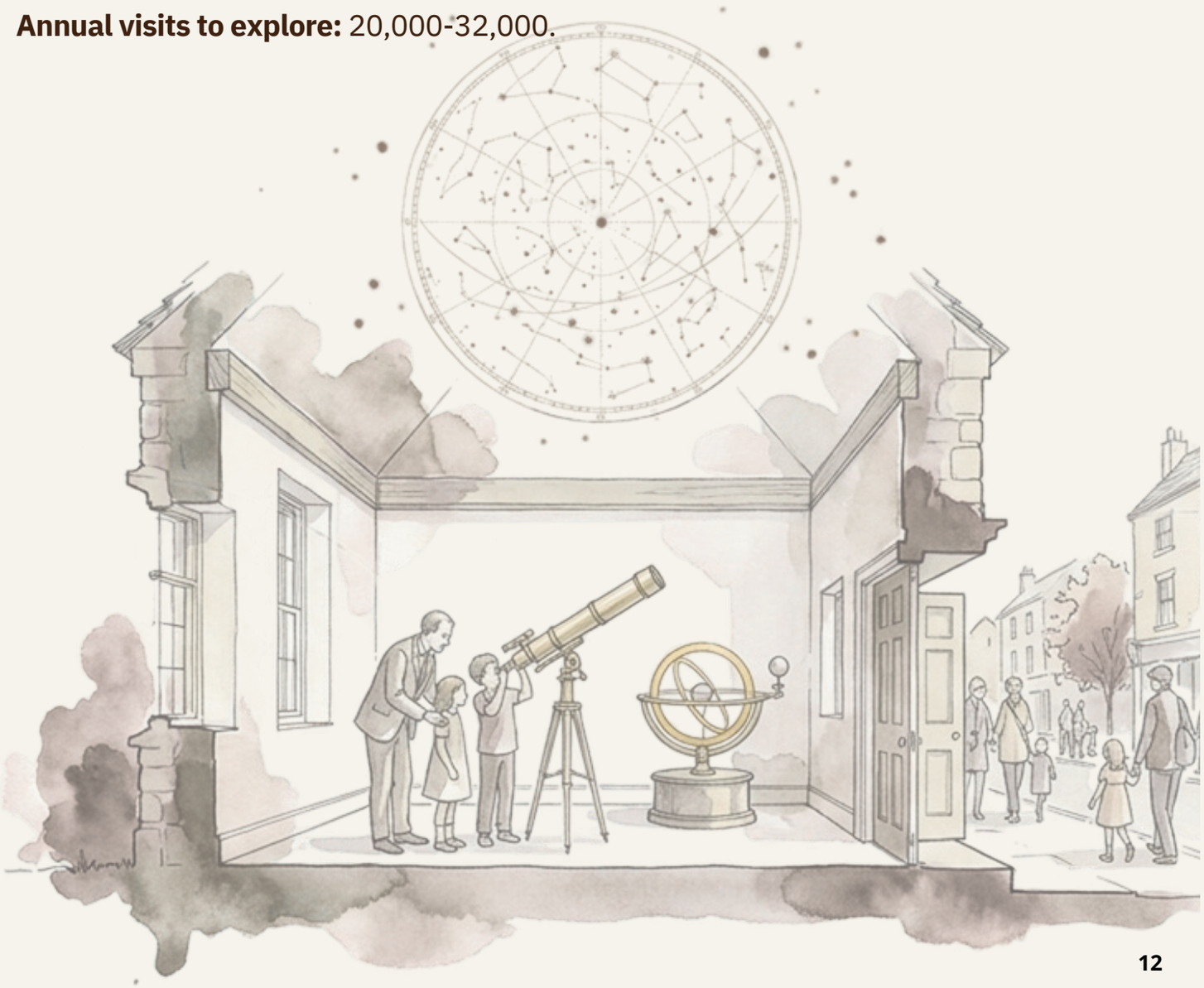
A place to explore the night sky, experiment and discover Derby's part in the story of science. The Queen Street building associated with John Flamsteed could become a home for exhibitions and hands-on learning, connecting astronomy and navigation with today's engineering and space industries.

Why it matters: Brings local heritage to life for schools, families and visitors. Regular learning sessions and changing activities could encourage return visits, alongside time spent in the Cathedral Quarter's museums, shops and hospitality.

What investment could unlock: Restoration, accessible exhibition space and learning equipment, subject to confirming the building's availability, suitability and heritage requirements.

Help take it forward: Property and heritage specialists, science educators and a potential operator to establish a workable scale and support feasibility funding. Its relationship with other Queen Street proposals needs clarifying.

Annual visits to explore: 20,000-32,000.



6 Beneath Our Feet: Hidden Derby

Hidden heritage, distinctive experiences and independent discovery.



6) Beneath Our Feet: Hidden Derby

Discover a different side of Derby through atmospheric underground experiences, storytelling, performance and specialist independent shopping. Historic cellars could become settings for encounters with the city's past, connected to a distinctive offer in the streets above.

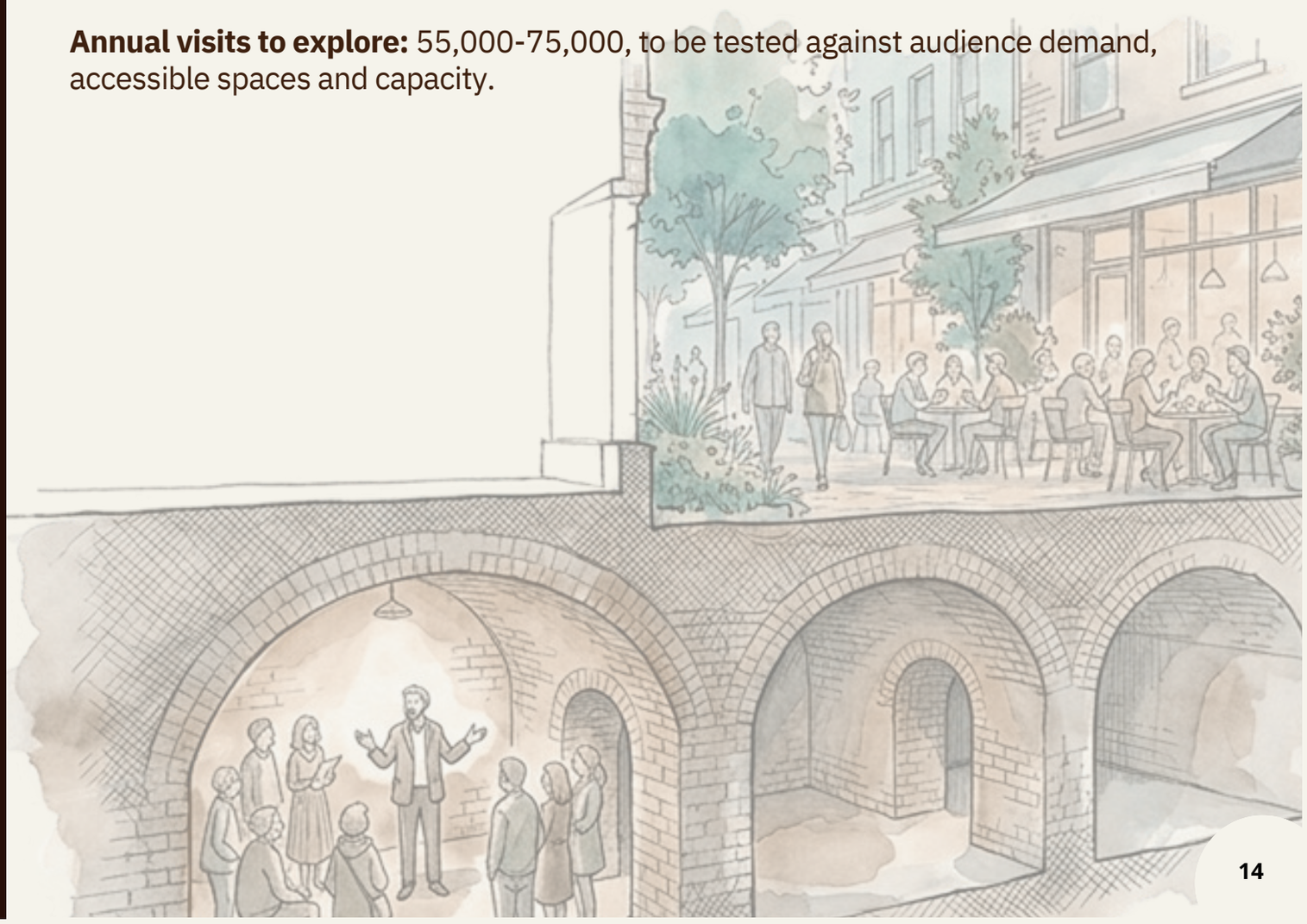
The ambition is to attract people who travel for heritage, gothic and alternative culture, costume and exceptional craft. Alongside special events, year-round experiences could create opportunities for independent fashion, fragrance, candles, makers, food and hospitality.

Why it matters: Gives Derby a distinctive reason to visit, stay longer and return, with opportunities for specialist businesses and local creatives to benefit.

What investment could unlock: Conservation, lighting, safe access and visitor facilities in suitable spaces, alongside opportunities to bring vacant shops into use. Surveys and ownership checks would establish what is practical.

Help take it forward: Owners, historians, experience producers, specialist retailers and audience experts to shape an offer rooted in Derby's own stories and develop feasibility bids.

Annual visits to explore: 55,000-75,000, to be tested against audience demand, accessible spaces and capacity.



Which ideas would you help bring to life?

Which ideas would you help bring to life?

Which proposals could become part of your regular life in Derby? Which could attract people from further afield? Where could the two reinforce each other?

Your experience could strengthen these ideas, change their shape or reveal a better approach. Help us identify what to build on, what needs testing and where to focus the next round of effort and funding bids.

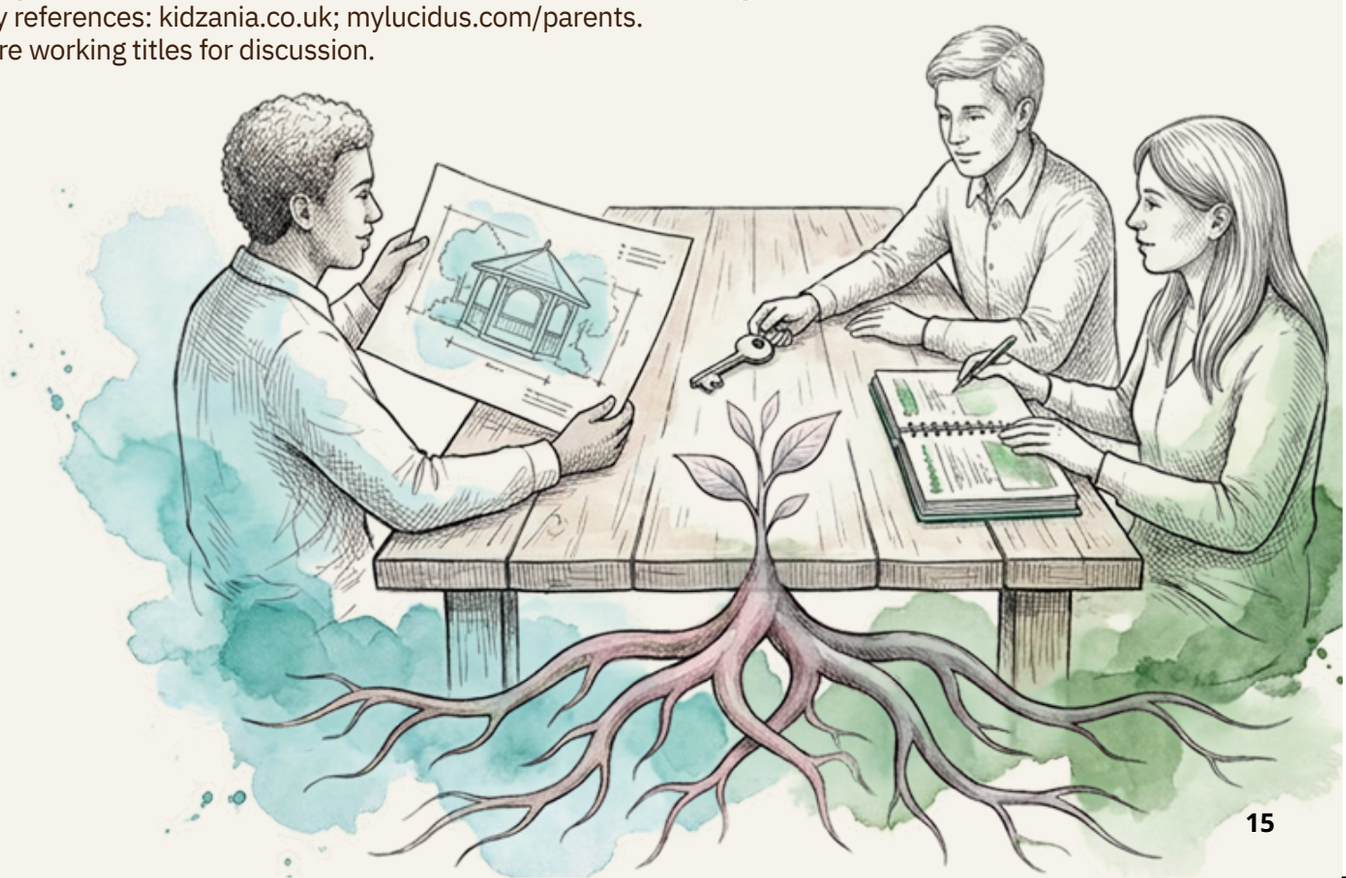
Practical support could mean helping write a bid, gathering evidence, costing a proposal, offering premises or introducing a funder or delivery partner. Tell us which idea interests you, what you could contribute and a realistic next step and date.

Success means a city that people visit, use and return to: more opportunities to participate, stronger everyday relationships and benefits reaching surrounding businesses.

A note on footfall: All ranges are early ambitions to test, based on initial assumptions and experience. They count visits, including repeat visits, and may overlap. Demand, capacity, affordability and wider benefits need testing; the ranges should not be added together.

Share your thoughts with us on Wednesday or email hello@citrey.co.uk.

Read alongside the Crisis Beneath Success Overview and Detailed Diagnosis.
Role-play references: kidzania.co.uk; mylucidus.com/parents.
Names are working titles for discussion.



From Action to a Living City

PLACES TO VISIT. REASONS TO RETURN. OPPORTUNITIES TO BELONG.



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