



2025 Seminar Sponsorship

Engage Liverpool's
Annual Seminar Series

Executive summary

Engage Liverpool CIC is a social enterprise, run by volunteers, with a mission to improve the quality of life for people living in Liverpool City Centre and Waterfront neighbourhoods by empowering residents through aspirational engagement and action, to bring about positive transformation and progress. As part of this mission, we have run public seminars in Liverpool since 2010, covering a wide variety of important topics relevant to our urban situation, and bringing some incredibly significant speakers from across the world to aid our reflections.

Engage Liverpool has made a huge contribution in a non-political, non-partisan, and non-confrontational approach to urgent questions around topics including designing apartments for a sustainable city; a progressive movement strategy for the city centre; Liverpool's UNESCO World Heritage Site status; tourism and its impact on residents; cycling and walking, homelessness and rough-sleeping in the city centre.

Last year was perhaps one of our most impressive series, where we brought to our city 3 European Green Capital Cities (Tallinn, Valencia and Bristol) to help us reflect on our aspiration to be Sustainable Liverpool. And this year 2025 we are deepening that theme by exploring food sustainability in **Liverpool's Food Culture – have we got one?**

We are regularly cited as an example of a citizen-led, voluntary organisation “punching above its weight”, and we strive to bring together significant speakers and panellists, so that members of the public can add value to the debate and conversation already taking place in the city.

Each year we are incredibly fortunate to be supported in this mission by a select number of sponsors, who share our values, and who want to support the work we do. In this document, we hope to demonstrate why we need your support this year, and how your sponsorship can help us enrich not only the lives of Liverpool city residents, but also how we can play our part in sustaining our planet.



Gerry Proctor, MBE
Chair, Engage Liverpool CIC

Seminar Series 2025:

Liverpool's Food Culture – have we got one?

Residents are often heard commenting about the lack of a good food market in the city centre where local growers in the very fertile arable lands around the city region can bring their produce to the public, alongside the many food makers who should also have a place to sell their well-prepared and locally-produced products. So, as Engage follows-up on the theme of sustainability from last year's seminar series, we are focussing on food sustainability to influence citizens and stakeholders alike.

The three seminars this year will take us on a journey from the national picture so we get some context, then the growing and producing of food in the region, and finally exploring the choices we make at home for our meals and at the places we choose to eat outside.

Seminar 1:

The Food System in the UK – how good is it?

Thursday 2nd October 2025

We are thrilled to be able to announce that our opening speaker for the series is the hugely-admired national figure and presenter from BBC Radio 4 The Food Programme and BBC Food and Farming Awards, renowned journalist and broadcaster **Sheila Dillon**. There is no-one better placed to give us a clear and expert picture of the reality of the UK's food culture. No-one has done more to promote a better and more sustainable food system than Sheila.

Seminar 2:

Farm to Fork – is our food journey sustainable?

Thursday 16th October 2025

Much of what is grown and produced in the fields of the city region is sent outside the area to supermarkets for distribution all over the country. We want to learn from a couple of young farmers who are determined to try and change that story. Coming from their crowd-funded Kindling Farm near Prescot are **Chris Walsh** and **Helen Woodcock**. These are not academics or theorists but 2 people committed to creating a more sustainable future for farming in Merseyside.

Seminar 3:

Food, Home and Away - are we making the best decisions?

Thursday 30th October 2025

In this seminar we focus on our own choices for eating at home and having meals out. What is our food culture like? Residents will get the chance to reflect and make informed decisions that can have an impact on the wider food culture of Liverpool. Our speaker is the formidable award-winning local food pioneer **Lucy Antal**, who won the prestigious BBC Food and Farming Awards: Community Food Champion, in 2021. She will help us explore what we can do as citizens and as a city to improve everyone's nutrition and make choices that will benefit the planet and our region.

At each seminar we are inviting 3 local producers of food to showcase their work and we are also inviting one of them per seminar to bring a 'taster' of the food they are making. This series looks to be particularly informative regarding the vitally important subject of nutrition and food security. We would like Liverpool councillors and council officers to listen to the voices of residents and find in them support and encouragement to work towards Liverpool taking more seriously, as other cities have already done, our responsibility to facilitate for all our citizens a far better food offer that is more sustainable and fairer for everyone.

Why we need your support

Engage brings together significant speakers, experts, and local voices so that members of the public can be exposed to the very best ideas and add value to the debate and conversation already taking place in the city. We have no income or financial resources to put on these seminars and so we rely completely upon sponsorship from organisations in the city. Every year it is a challenge, but a worthwhile one – and we feel that there is no other organisation that brings such informed international and national speakers to engage with residents and citizens in the way Engage does.



Each year Engage benefits from in-kind support from the Engage board members and other volunteers, who donate significant time before and during the events, to make our seminars a success. However, in-kind support can only go so far, and each year we also seek financial support for costs including venue hire, filming, and speaker travel.

There is no doubt that Engage has contributed significantly to the promotion of a level of debate and conversation in the city that adds enormously to the sense of citizenship and involvement which local people experience as residents and stakeholders. We have created a forum where dialogue and reflection are supported by an atmosphere of mutual respect and profound listening. It is becoming quite rare these days to find such a space.

Become a sponsor for 2025

We're keen to talk to you about ways you could support our 2025 seminar series, either with a financial lump sum, or through in-kind support. Our budget for this year's series totals £7530:

Venue hire	£1200
Venue refreshments	£600
Local food tasting	£450
Speaker travel and accommodation	£780
Speaker expenses	£150
Design and promotion	£2850
Filming and editing	£1500
Total cost	£7530

In addition to supporting us in our mission to create a more sustainable city, your sponsorship would also include:

- Your logo on printed marketing materials, including our promotional flyers, delivered to waterfront and city centre residents, and public venues across the city. (Due to print timelines, your sponsorship must be confirmed before we go to print for your logo to be included in printed materials.)
- Mentions in our social media posts before and during the seminars.
- Mentions in our Grapevine email newsletter, covering over 650 city centre and waterfront residents, with a typical open rate of more than 65%.
- Option of placing marketing materials on all seats at each event.
- Option of setting up an information table and pop-up banners at each event.
- Main sponsor logos remain on all pages of our website for a whole year.

To talk to us about sponsorship options call our chairman Gerry Proctor on 07742 804243 or email chair@engageliverpool.com

A proven track record:

World-class debate in Liverpool

In 2017, as it became increasingly clear that Liverpool's World Heritage Site status (inscribed in 2004) was under serious threat, Engage Liverpool made it the theme for our autumn seminar series. In an unprecedented move, we invited three UNESCO speakers to Liverpool, so the organisation's voice could be heard in the city for the first time: **Isabelle Anatole-Gabriel**, **Professor Michael Turner**, and **Minja Yang** who were joined by UK heritage specialists Henry Owen-John (Historic England), Adam Watkinson (Edinburgh WHS) and Chris Blandford (World Heritage UK) for a truly enlightening and inspirational set of seminars.

The seminar title was a deliberate question as Engage wanted to see what the general public and particularly residents of the city centre and waterfront thought and felt about the subject. 'Liverpool UNESCO WHS: A status worth fighting for?' - the series title certainly provoked its attendees. By the end of the third seminar the overwhelming answer from those in attendance was a definite and resounding "yes". Engage consciously chose different venues in three different parts of the WHS including St George's Hall, the Museum of Liverpool, the Town Hall.



In 2018 Engage wanted to challenge the dominant narrative in the city that development and regeneration were not consistent with our WHS status and that we were being held back by this unnecessary designation that was opposed to progress. We invited three UNESCO WHS port cities to come to Liverpool and bring an architect and WHS expert to talk about how they managed development, regeneration and progress and balanced it with the demands of maintaining the outstanding universal value of their WHS cities. And so our autumn seminar series was entitled 'WHS Cities of Inspiration' and we invited **Strasbourg**, **Bordeaux**, and **Hamburg**.

Prestigious venues in the WHS were chosen for this series to showcase the quality of the city's architecture and we were welcomed into the famous and outstanding

Three Graces on the Waterfront. The first seminar about Strasbourg was held at the Cunard Building and our international speakers were **Roland Ries** (Mayor of Strasbourg) and **Henri Bava**. The second seminar about Bordeaux was held at the Port of Liverpool Building in Rathbone Hall. Our guest speaker was Bordeaux WHS co-ordinator **Ann-Laure Moniot**. The third seminar about Hamburg was held at the Royal Liver Building and we were joined by Hamburg WHS co-ordinators **Bernd Paulowitz** and **Christoph Schwarzkopf**.

Each seminar had three local panel members that included the following: Mark Kitts (Deputy Director of Regeneration LCC), Cllr Tricia O'Brien (Chair of Planning Committee), Professor John Belchem (WHS Mayoral Task Force), Lesley Woodbridge (WHS Coordinator Liverpool City Council), Cllr Alice Bennett (Mayoral Lead for Heritage and Design), Michael Cosser (Brock Carmichael Architects), Cllr Hetty Wood (Chair of Housing and Regeneration Select Committee), Peter Jones (City Centre Development Team Leader LCC) and Pete Swift (PlanIt-IE).

Feedback from past seminar series attendees

"Very worthwhile series. Good to see how other cities embrace their Heritage Status."

"These are marvellous seminars asking truly important questions for future developers and wellbeing of the city. Thanks so much!"

"Thank you for providing such a forum / arena for discussion."

"More!! Fascinating ideas forum, perhaps more engagement with local planning authorities etc, can it be more frequent? Brilliant!"

"Have attended a few such events before, but was very impressed by the amount of info from the speakers, even though their time was short!"

"How encouraging it is to know that people are proud and determined to maintain the culture, diversity, and warmth of the city despite setbacks."

"Engage's offer seems unique and vital in the city right now. Well done!"

Past seminar sponsors

Engage Liverpool is fortunate to have been supported by a number of organisations who share our values and vision for a sustainable and inclusive city.

