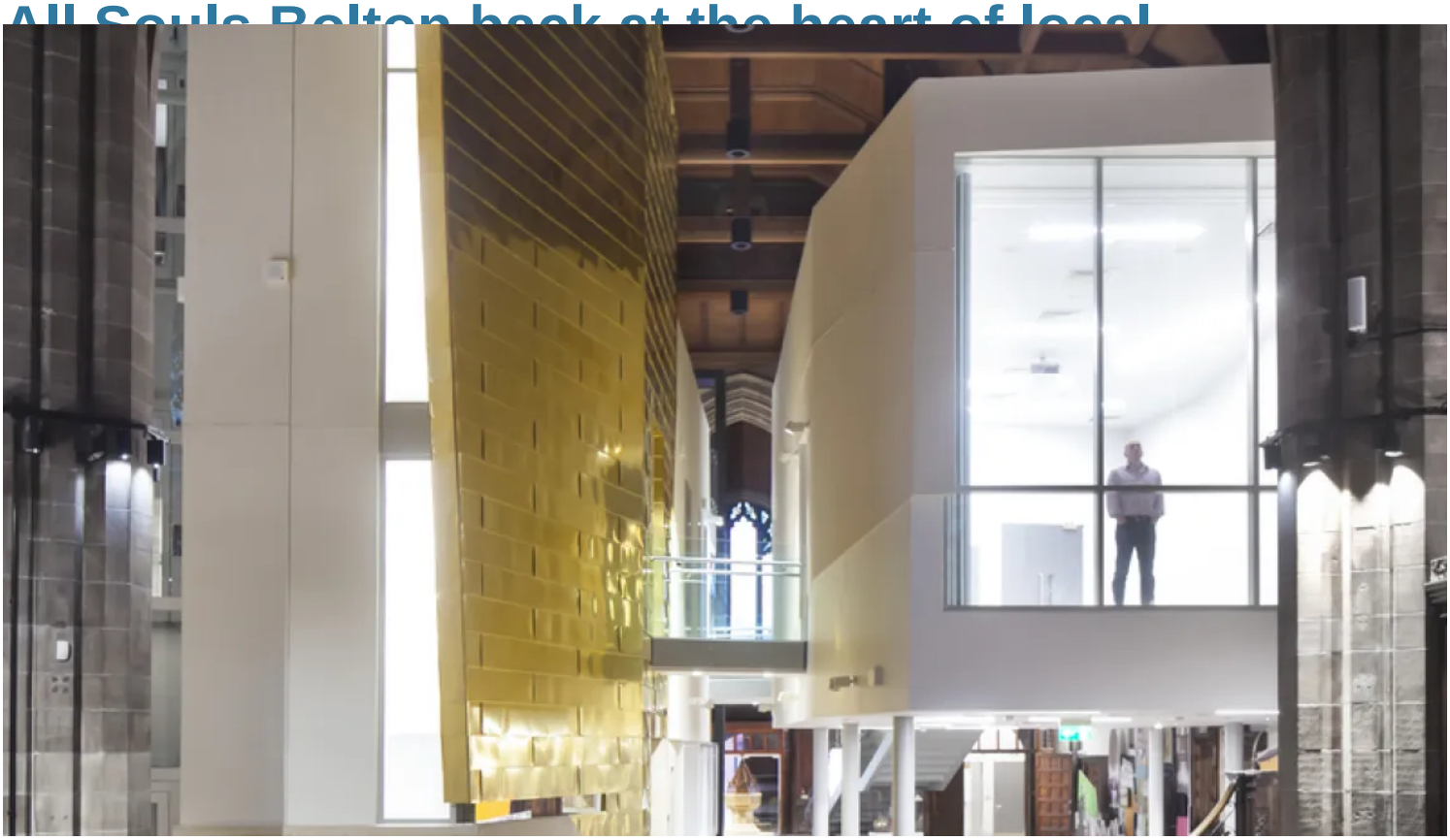
All Souls Bolton back at the heart of local



Interior of the refurbished All Souls, Bolton Andy Marshall

One of Bolton's most imposing historic buildings, All Souls Church, has reopened its doors to the public having undergone a £4.9m Churches Conservation Trust (CCT) programme of restoration.

Its dramatic new design has turned a once-neglected site into a modern community space fit for the 21st century.

Funding has come from a variety of sources, including £4.3m from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF). The original Grade II* listed Victorian architecture has been transformed thanks to the installation of two futuristic white 'pods' erected inside the church. It is open daily and has a number of facilities on offer such as a coffee shop, tenanted office space and a flexible conference room which can also be used as a dance studio or cinema.

Carole Souter, Chief Executive of HLF, said: "This is a great example of how, with creative thought and strong partnerships, a much loved historic building can be reinvigorated and turned into something that serves the needs of those who live around it."

Until the CCT took it over, All Souls Bolton faces an uncertain future with a repair bill rising each year. It was a powerful symbol of the decline of the Northern industrial town. Thankfully, local resident and All Souls Bolton Chair Inayat Omarji recognised its potential and joined forces with the CCT to change its fortune. He commented: "We wanted to make the building useful to every person in the community and sustainable in the long term."