

Manchester Green City

Manchester City Council is at the forefront of an ambitious campaign to make Manchester the greenest city in Britain; a place where residents have a better quality of life and where businesses flourish in a new low carbon economy.

The Green City programme, established in 2005, is much more than just planting trees and laying lawns: it involves reducing energy use, reducing people's impact on climate change; reducing waste and contaminated land. It will mean improving the quality of Manchester's air and water, increasing the area's biodiversity and making sustainable development and procurement choices. In recognition of this, Manchester City Council and its partners have committed to Manchester becoming a 'Green City' in the Community Strategy and the Local Area Agreement.

There are substantial benefits associated with living and working in a green city:

- Energy and water efficient buildings help to reduce utility bills and reduce the associated environmental impact
- Accessible and efficient public transport improves journey times and cuts costs
- Adapting the city to climate change, making it resilient to extreme weather such as higher summer temperatures or increased flood risk in the future
- Improved air quality can increase life expectancy
- Enhanced parks and green spaces, providing more, better recreation areas for people and better habitats for wildlife.

A greener Manchester will be a more attractive place in which to live and work, and encourage innovative, socially conscious businesses to establish an edge over their competitors.

Low carbon economy

Manchester was the birthplace of the Industrial Revolution during which internationally significant innovations and successes were fuelled by carbon-based technologies and businesses. Mancunians were pioneers, capitalising on opportunities for growth using fossil fuels. From coal powered steam trains to coal heated houses, the city's innovation boomed, but left a legacy of environmental degradation in its wake.

Today, fossil fuels are no longer cheap and plentiful, and inefficient business practices mean a loss of competitive edge. Customers demand socially responsible product and service providers so there is a need to create a new, low carbon economy based upon resource efficiency and environmental technologies.

The Mini-Stern review for Greater Manchester was commissioned to look at the economic impact that EU climate change legislation will have on Greater Manchester and the Northwest. The review calculated that failure to act now on the forthcoming legislative drivers means a failure to capitalise on £21bn of business for Greater Manchester's economy.

Substantive green successes

Since 2005 environmental performance has improved substantially and successes to date include:

- Over 1,200 Manchester businesses are signed up to the Environmental Business Pledge, meaning a