



GREEN AND GETTING GREENER:

A three-year review of progress through
Manchester's Great Outdoors:
A Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy
for Manchester

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1.

INTRODUCTION

Manchester's Great Outdoors – the Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy for Manchester 2015–25 – is one of the most ambitious policy documents developed and delivered by a local authority in recent years.

From partnership projects to research papers, Manchester's Great Outdoors is massively helping Manchester to become a better place for people and nature. Over £77million has been committed to green infrastructure projects over the past three years. Nearly two million people have attended events and activities in our parks and green spaces, from community walks and talks, to major music festivals. Twenty-nine and a half new jobs have been created, with nearly 90,000 volunteer hours committed; 12km of waterways have been improved, and over 12,500 new trees have been planted.

Manchester's Great Outdoors is now nationally recognised as a best-practice exemplar, winning the 2018 UK Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) Award's 'Knowledge Exchange' category.

Over the past few decades, Manchester has worked hard to achieve a dramatic transformation in much of its environment. High-quality neighbourhoods, parks and tree-filled river valley sites are now found where once there were the remains of former industrial use and poor-quality housing. Drawing on all this energy and in line with commitments made within Manchester's Local Plan (Core Strategy 2012–27) and the city's ambitious climate change action plan, Manchester: A Certain Future (MACF), the Strategy and accompanying Implementation Plan were approved by the Council in July 2015. It is an integral part of delivering key elements of Our Manchester Strategy: a city recognised for its high quality of life, where all residents can live well.



The creation of and delivery of the Strategy and Implementation Plan has involved the Council working in partnership with an independent stakeholder group. This provides a forum for sharing best practice, supporting and encouraging GI innovation and practical action, and acts as a catalyst for encouraging new partnerships for delivering activity in line with the objectives of the Strategy.

This review looks at what has been achieved in terms of Manchester's green and blue infrastructure during the first three years of the Strategy. It sets out the context within which the Strategy was written and continues to be delivered. It acknowledges that the Strategy has been an accelerator in a continuing spectrum of collaborative work to improve Manchester's environment. It provides a picture of Manchester's key green assets as well as what has and is being done to make Manchester greener. It identifies the key headlines from the past three years, how the Strategy has made a difference, and finally points to how the Implementation Plan will be refreshed over the next year.



2. POLICY CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND

The Strategy sits under a set of high-level national and regional policy drivers, including the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act, DEFRA's 25 year Environment Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework (see Appendix 1). It also sits under the local policy drivers of Our Manchester, the Manchester Local Plan and Manchester Climate Change Action Plan as shown in the diagram below.

These policy drivers demonstrate the role that green and blue infrastructure has to play in delivering an improved quality of life within the city and reinforce the link between green infrastructure and other key themes, such as health and wellbeing, mitigating climate change, sustainable transport and economic growth – all things identified in the evidence base for Manchester's Great Outdoors.

Policy Context



2.1 THE STRATEGY IN BRIEF

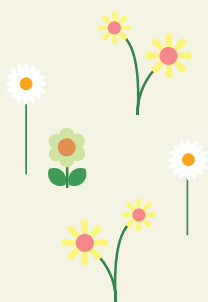
The Strategy contains an overarching vision for the future of Manchester's green spaces and waterways: *By 2025, high-quality, well-maintained green and blue spaces will be an integral part of all Manchester's neighbourhoods. The city's communities will be living healthy, fulfilled lives, enjoying access to parks and green spaces, and there will be safe green routes for walking, cycling and exercise throughout the city. Green and blue infrastructure will be supporting Manchester's growth. Businesses will be investing in areas with a high environmental quality and attractive surroundings, enjoying access to a healthy, talented workforce. New funding models will be in place, ensuring progress achieved by 2025 can be sustained and provide the platform for ongoing investment in the years to follow.*

The delivery of the Strategy is focused around four objectives:

1. Improving the quality and function of green and blue infrastructure to maximise the benefits it delivers.
2. Using appropriate green and blue infrastructure as a key component of new developments to help create successful neighbourhoods and support the city's growth.
3. Improving connectivity and accessibility to green and blue infrastructure within the city and beyond.
4. Improving and promoting a wider understanding and awareness of the benefits that green and blue infrastructure provides for residents, the economy and the local environment.

Each of these objectives has a series of headline actions around which the activity of both the Council and external stakeholders are grouped.

Manchester's Great Outdoors: A green and blue infrastructure strategy for Manchester 2015-25 together with the accompanying Implementation Plan can be found at <https://www.manchester.gov.uk/greenandblue>



2.2

BACKGROUND CONTEXT

Manchester's Great Outdoors leads the way in terms of highlighting the importance of green and blue infrastructure for cities, and completely repositions the G&BI agenda in line with other city-specific thematic priorities, for example health and wellbeing and economic growth. It makes a strong and compelling case that G&BI is the life support system for the modern city, and is a key driver in realising the Our Manchester liveability ambitions.

Its aim is to inform decision-making and act as a catalyst for change. Manchester's Great Outdoors provides the strategic backdrop for a range of interventions, including the capturing and monitoring of G&BI activity across the city, celebrating best practice through Manchester-specific case studies, positively influencing master planning, and supporting funding bids. Its audience is broad, but its language is accessible. It is truly a Strategy made for the city by the city, with 32 partner organisations having helped shape and deliver the Strategy and Implementation Plan.

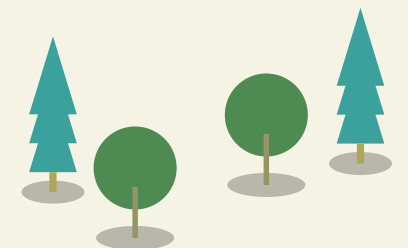
Manchester's Great Outdoors is being used as a catalyst for successfully delivering key elements of the city's long-term Our Manchester vision, and highlights the importance that the landscape plays in delivering this.

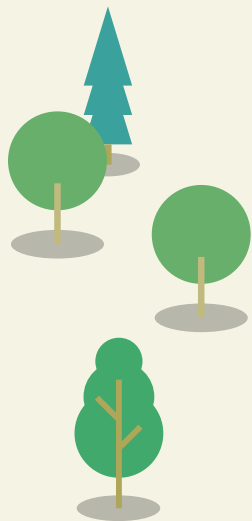
The Strategy is made up of three distinct but complementary elements appealing to a broad audience of relevant partners:

- An overarching strategy with clearly articulated vision and strategic objectives.
- A detailed technical report focused on the assessment, valuation and validation of a number of key G&BI benefits (or Ecosystem Services) deemed to be priorities. This piece of work, an assessment of G&BI functionality, had *never been undertaken in the city before*, and has informed and helped prioritise interventions earmarked in the Strategy and supporting Implementation Plan. It has helped to reposition G&BI in line with other key thematic drivers, such as health and wellbeing, climate change and the economy. The technical report also acts as a strong evidence base. It was developed by systematically appraising relevant datasets and information by a highly qualified consortium – all leaders in their fields – consisting of BDP, Efttec and Countryscape.
- A long-term implementation plan – key in relation to capturing and galvanising existing GBI activity in the city, but providing the mandate to do much more. The implementation plan continues to grow dynamically, as projects evolve and align with the objectives.

2.3 KEY LINKS BETWEEN MANCHESTER'S GREAT OUTDOORS AND OUR MANCHESTER

The Our Manchester Strategy sets out the vision for a world-class city with a dynamic economy, where residents from all backgrounds can live well. Attractive, multifunctional GBI is a key component of shaping and delivering the quality of life people expect and enhancing the city's global image as a place to live, work, play and invest. The vision of Our Manchester is being delivered through 64 identified actions or We Wills. The table below lists the We Wills that are specifically relevant to the G&BI Strategy and demonstrates the practical ways in which G&BI can help to deliver these aims.





OUR MANCHESTER WE WILLS:

HOW G&BI CONTRIBUTES:

Be on a path to being a zero-carbon city by 2050

Ensure that our communities are protected from climate change

Helps neighbourhoods to adapt to the impact of climate change

Stores carbon

Helps to control flooding through sustainable urban drainage

Helps improve air and water quality

Have a strong sense of citizenship and pride in the city

Improve the quality of parks, green spaces, rivers and canals, and incorporate more into new developments where appropriate

Helps to create a sense of place

Mature trees can become landmarks within neighbourhoods, along streets and in parks and gardens

Appropriate planting can increase the attractiveness of high streets

Be a city recognised for its high quality of life, with improved green spaces and access to world-class sports, leisure and cultural facilities

An attractive environment can increase tourism

Contributes to soil formation, habitat provision and biodiversity

Be a beacon for sustainable design

Tackle fuel poverty by improving the energy-efficiency of our existing homes

Trees assist with energy-saving and help to provide shade in the summer and protect from winds in the winter

Improve the resource efficiency, and the carbon and environmental performance of all businesses

Collectively improve our health and wellbeing and be more active as adults and children

Radically improve health outcomes and support people to make healthier choices

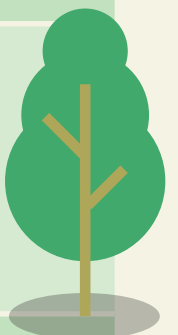
Appropriate planting can enhance the walkability of the city

Planting can also contribute to the creation of attractive parks that encourage sport and recreation

Encourage walking, cycling and public transport, and continue to invest in the infrastructure this requires

Appropriate planting can reduce the impact of noise and air pollution

Fruiting trees and bushes can produce edible fruits



2.4

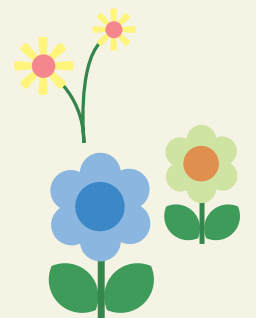
BUILDING ON SUCCESS

It's important to note that we are not starting from scratch. Through delivering its four objectives, the G&BI Strategy is building on significant success and momentum, and a strong commitment from the city in relation to the G&BI agenda over the past three decades.

Considerable resource has been committed to the city's River Valley projects for many years. The Mersey Valley is one of the city's finest conservation and biodiversity assets, whereas the Medlock Valley, and Clayton Vale in particular, has benefited from investment of over £3million following the Commonwealth Games in 2006. Alexandra Park, Heaton Park and Hulme Park have been at the heart of neighbourhood investment strategies and have had millions of pounds' worth of major capital investment. Within the city centre, significant areas of underused and sometimes derelict sites have seen the development of vibrant new neighbourhoods, with jobs and homes provided in a high-quality public realm, such as at Castlefield, Angel Meadows and Spinningfields.

This has been a vital part of a bigger agenda to transform and revitalise Manchester, which has resulted in the population of Manchester growing to 567,600 by 2018.¹ Manchester is projected to grow further, so it is important to make the most of the city's green assets, in terms of both their quality and function, to ensure its continued success as a place to live and work, and so it can compete with other cities at an international level.

1. Manchester City Council Forecasting Model W2018



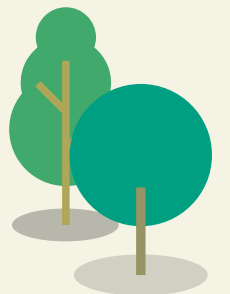
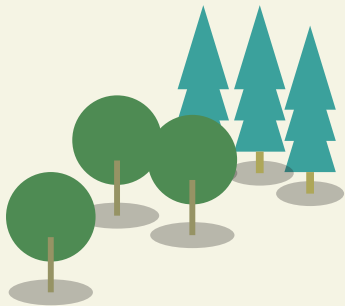
2.5

GREEN AND GETTING GREENER: THE BENEFITS OF G&BI – NEIGHBOURHOOD BREAKDOWN

THE EXTENT OF OUR GREEN AND BLUE ASSETS

When Manchester's Great Outdoors was produced in 2015, an assessment of the extent of G&BI coverage in the city was prepared. This has been refined and updated using improved data. Work with Manchester Metropolitan University² has given a better understanding of the level of green infrastructure coverage within private gardens. Changes to ward boundaries have also been taken into account. This more detailed and focused data helps us to have a better understanding of the function and benefits that G&BI provides, which in turn helps to identify where actions and funding could be used most effectively.

The following maps present an assessment of the extent of G&BI in the city. Each map illustrates the key G&BI in each of the three neighbourhood areas and the city centre.



2. MMU My Back Yard 2017

KEY GREEN AND BLUE INFRASTRUCTURE SITES

KEY

Open semi-natural

Parks and playing fields

Allotments

Cemetery

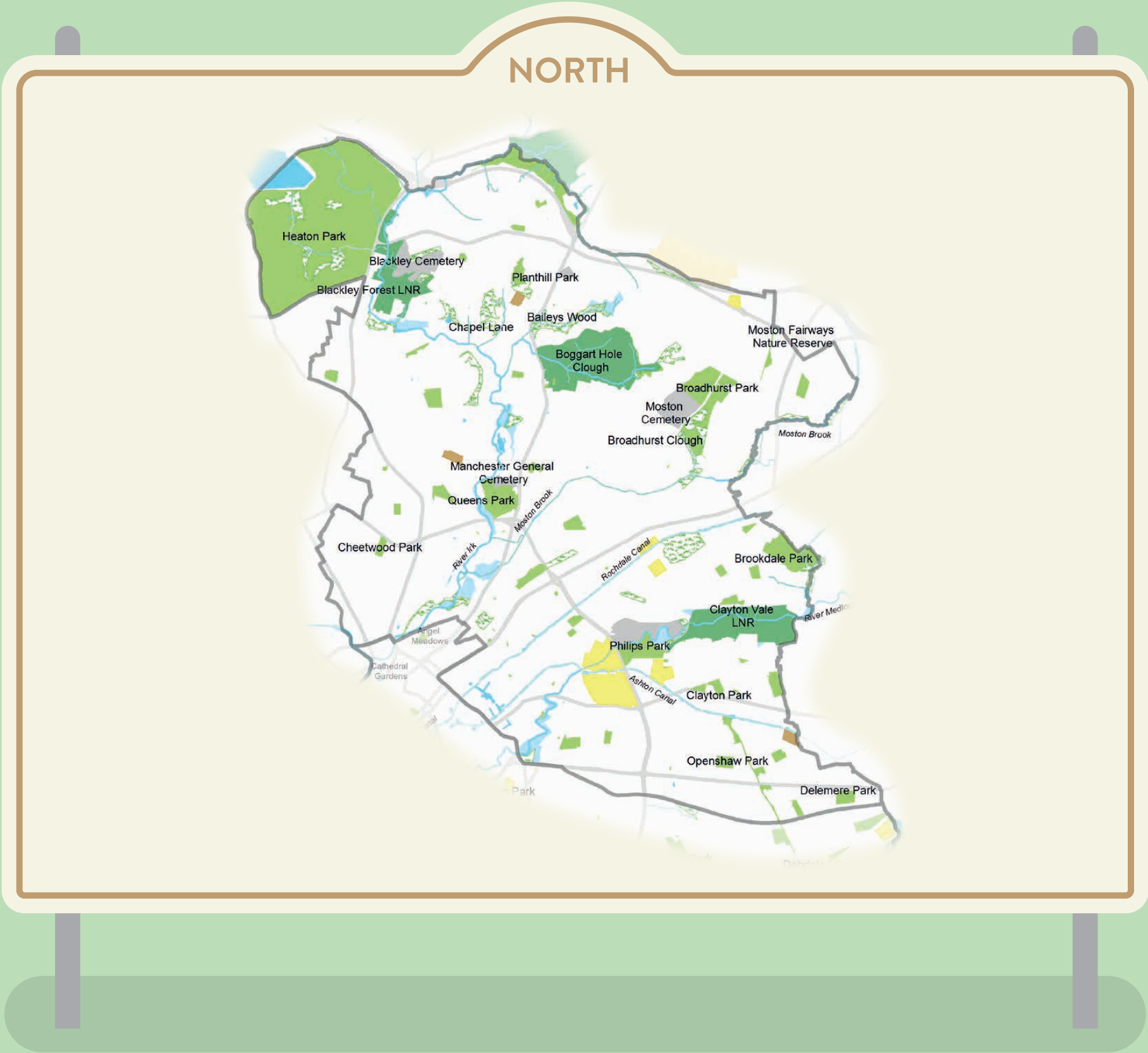
Bowling green

Golf course

Other sports facility

Tennis court

River valleys



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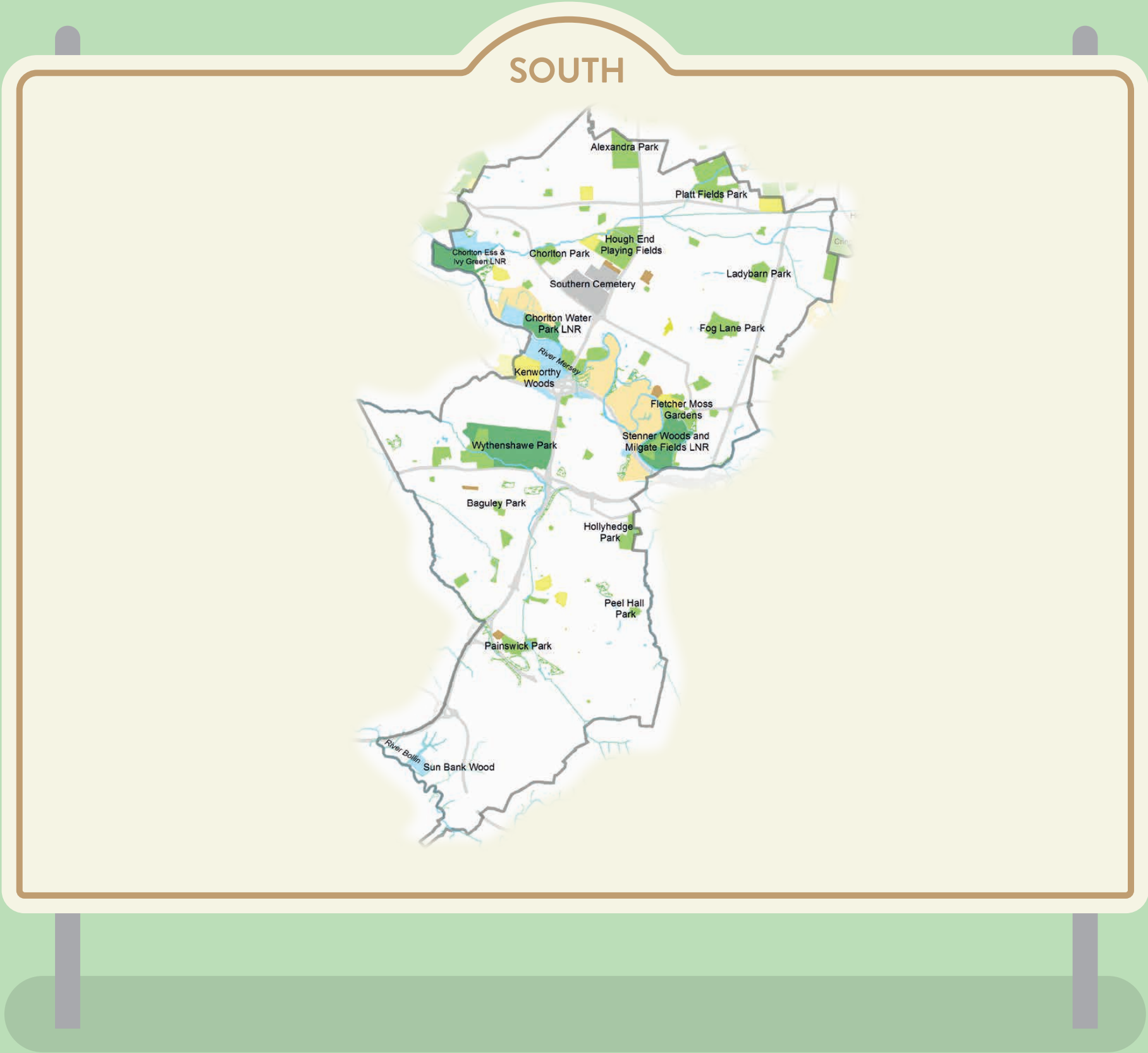
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Open semi-natural

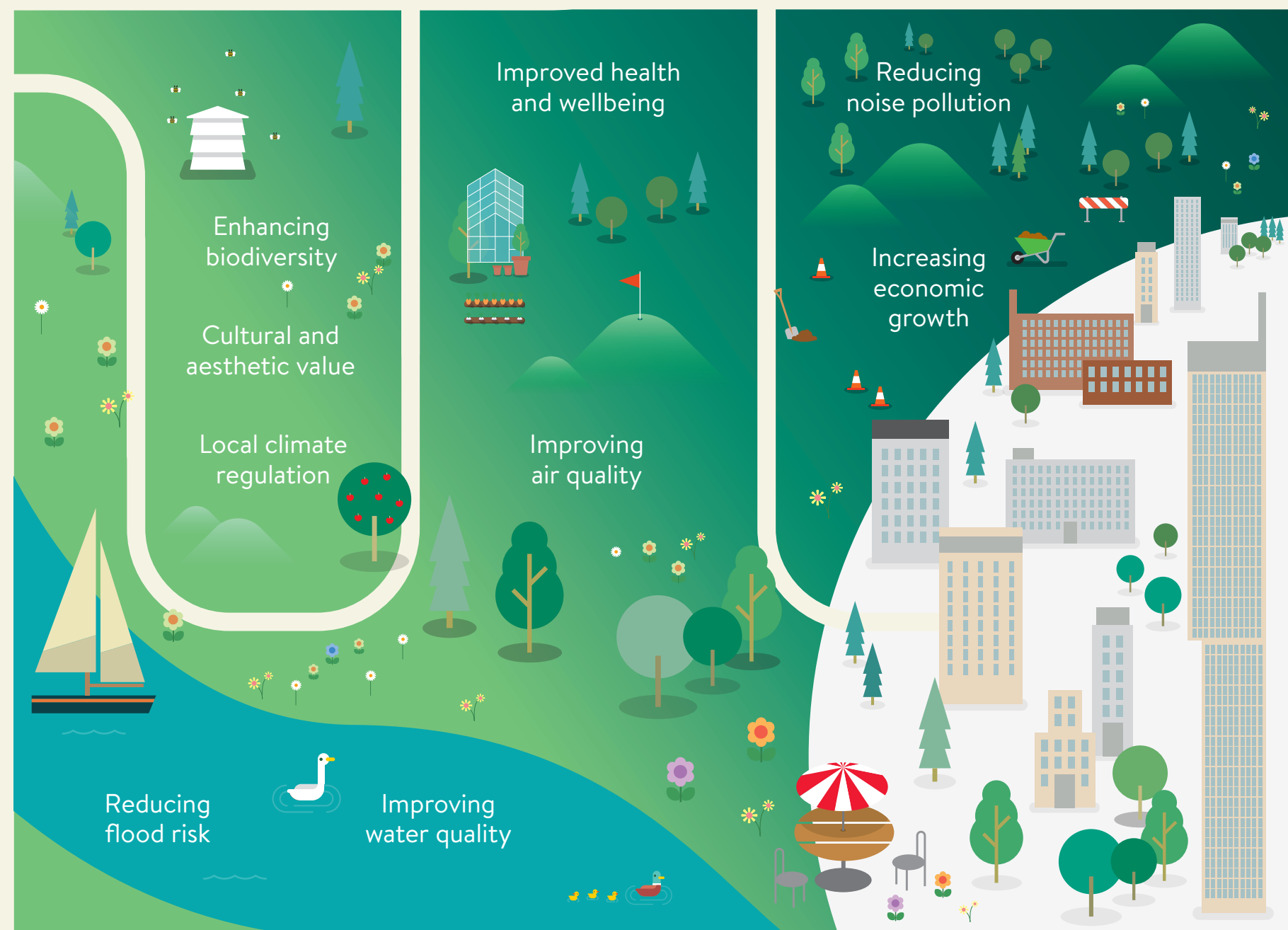
Parks and public realm

River valleys and canals

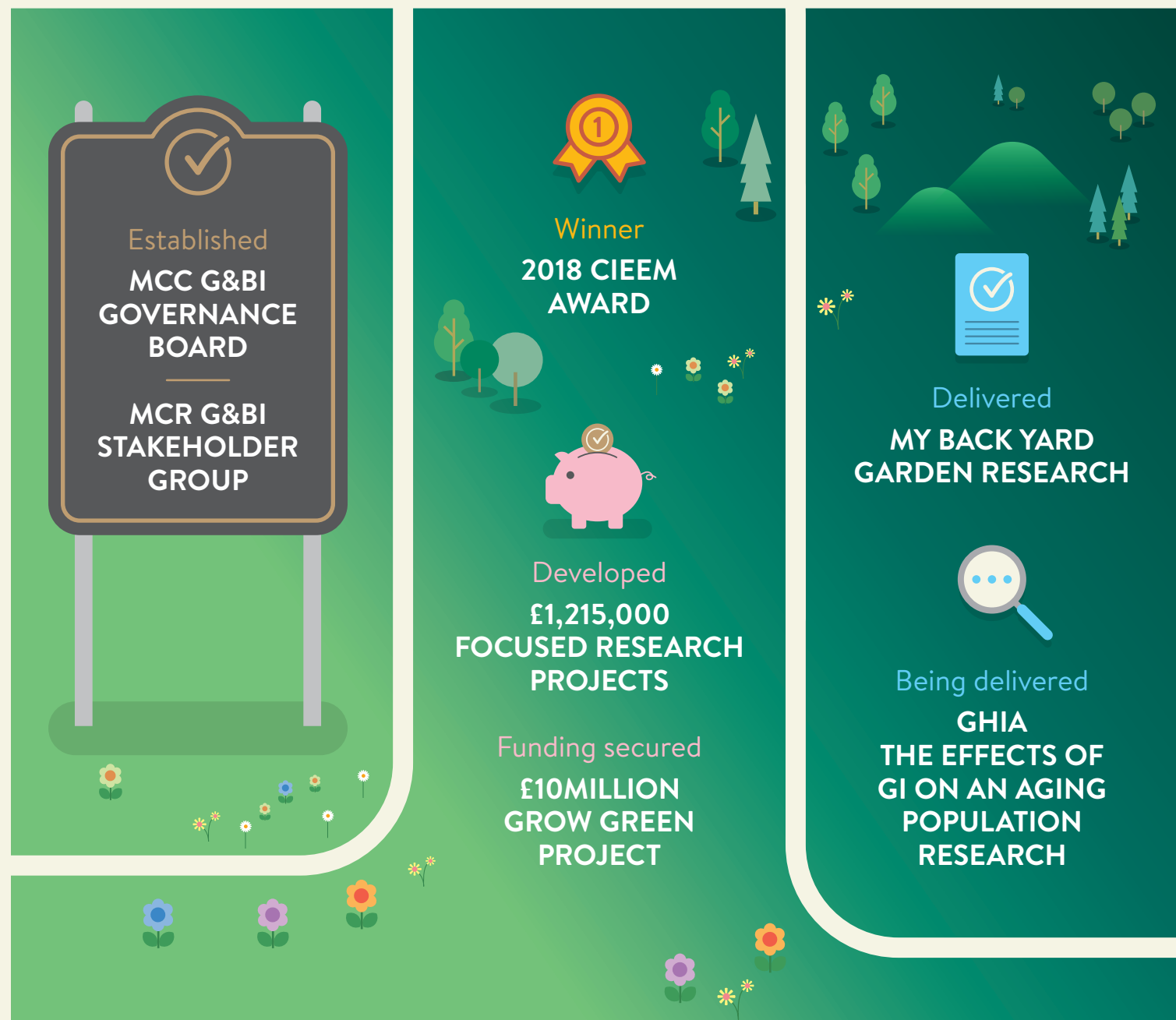


UNDERSTANDING THE BENEFITS OF OUR GREEN AND BLUE ASSETS

The city has significant and varied G&BI coverage, including trees, grassland, rivers, lakes and canals, all of which provide us with a range of benefits, called ecosystem services, including:



3. DELIVERING THE VISION



3.1 MAKING THINGS HAPPEN

Since its publication, strong collaborative partnerships have been established, with millions of pounds' worth of resource secured on the back of the G&BI Strategy. Innovative projects are being delivered. Cutting-edge research is being undertaken, strong evidence gathered, and recognition is being received.

The Strategy has provided a strong policy backdrop to shape and develop more focused partnership working and has led to a number of successful high-profile funding bids, with the Strategy being directly referenced.

We recognise that the city has always had a strong commitment to G&BI, with many partner organisations working tirelessly and independently over many years to improve the city's environment. The Council also has many ongoing commitments to environmental improvements, including park management, neighbourhood regeneration, cycleway improvements, operational grounds maintenance, and specialist arboricultural support. The review has also tried to capture these existing commitments in order to demonstrate that Manchester has always had a positive track record in terms of its appreciation and investment in GBI.

The following chart demonstrates that in addition to council funding, Manchester’s Great Outdoors has directly influenced external funding bids. This has enabled additional resources to be committed by partners on initiatives, from Forest Schools and woodland management, to access improvements and food-growing projects.

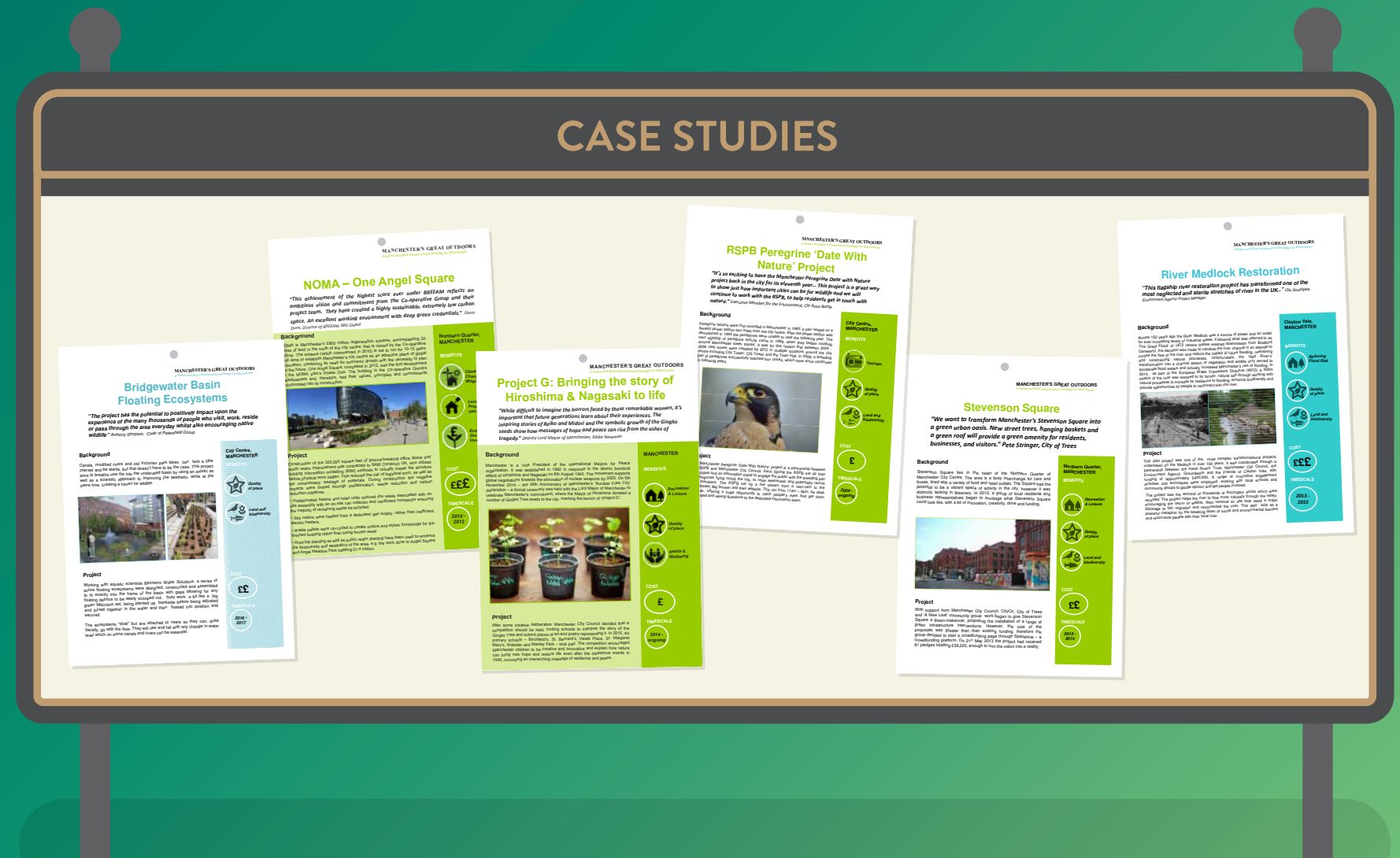


G&BI EXPENDITURE	MANCHESTER CITY COUNCIL SECURED FUNDING (£)	ADDITIONAL EXTERNAL FUNDING DIRECTLY INFLUENCED BY THE STRATEGY (£)
Parks and river valleys	15,000,000	20,000,000
Tree and woodland management	2,500,000	180,000
GrowGreen project		11,000,000
Focused research		1,215,000
Community food-growing	1,000,000	
Schools outreach	250,000	400,000
Trans Pennine Trail	150,000	
Green connections access improvements		50,000

CASE STUDIES

The headlines don't show the whole of the picture. As mentioned above, the G&BI Strategy has provided the means to both influence and capture the breadth of work on improving green and blue infrastructure across the city.

A series of case studies has been produced by partners to help bring to life the projects that ultimately realise the Implementation Plan. The case studies provide useful snapshots of individual projects and help to demonstrate the replicability of successful GI interventions.

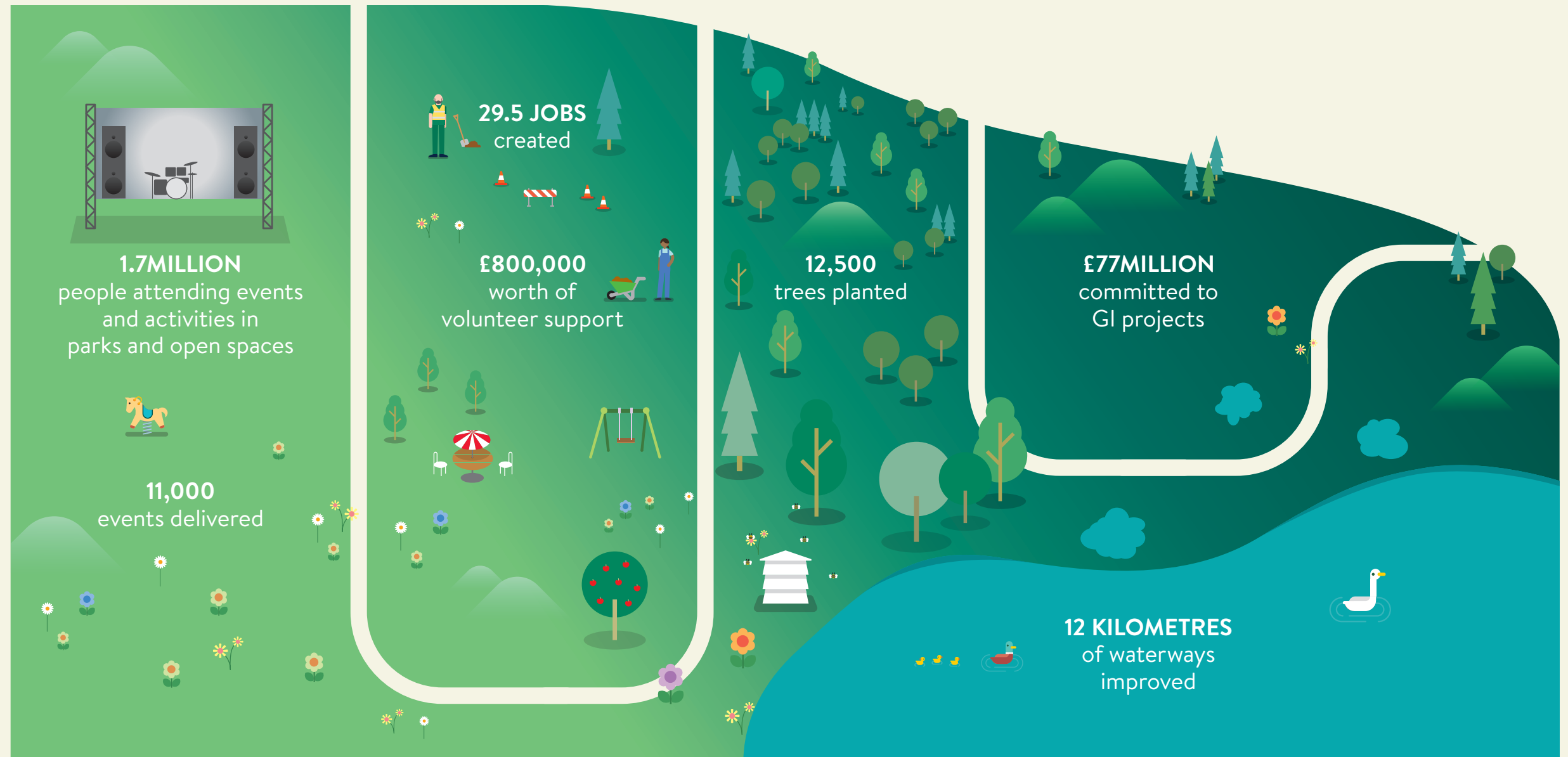


3.2

WHAT HAS BEEN DELIVERED?

The following section takes each objective heading and shares some of the headline actions that have been delivered within the Stakeholder Implementation Plan over the past three years. A complete appraisal of all the headline actions is provided in Appendix 2 – Are We on Track?

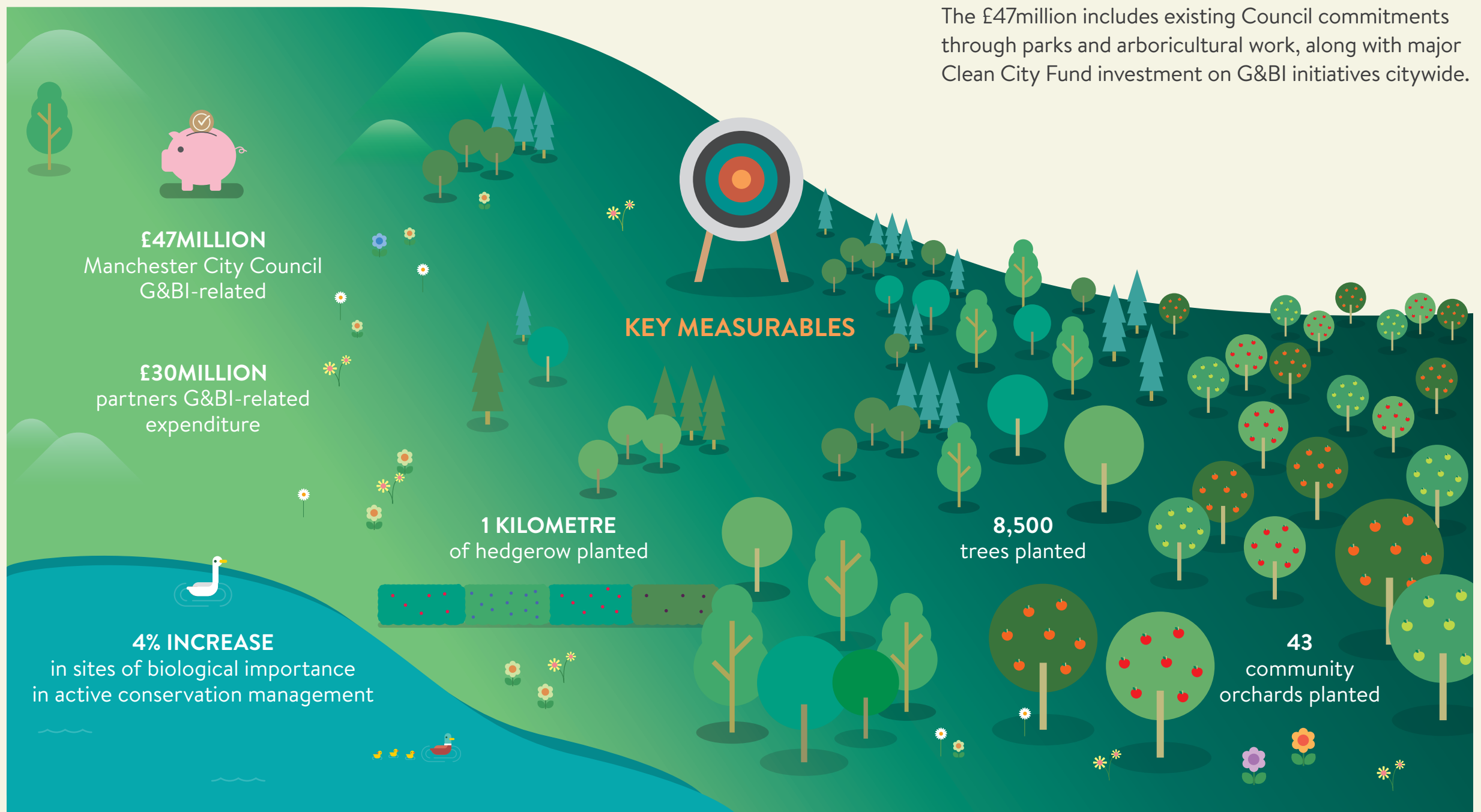
Manchester's Great Outdoors – in numbers



OBJECTIVE 1: IMPROVING QUALITY AND FUNCTIONALITY

Manchester already has a significant G&BI resource, but increasing its usefulness and multifunctionality is the key driver behind this objective.

The £47million includes existing Council commitments through parks and arboricultural work, along with major Clean City Fund investment on G&BI initiatives citywide.



Projects directly influenced by the Strategy include Natural Course and GrowGreen:

Natural Course

The G&BI strategy has been a fundamental component of this major regional water quality improvement project and underpinned the successful European bid by the Environment Agency. The project has given significant focus to the Irwell, with Manchester featuring prominently in the first phase of this ten-year, €20million project. Three new jobs have been created as a result, and specialist research delivered, including a River Medlock-focused Ecosystem Services appraisal, which benefits Manchester directly.

GrowGreen

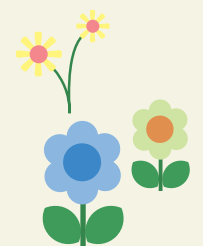
Manchester became one of only four out of 35 cities to successfully bid for EU Horizon 2020, funding cities for G&BI. The G&BI Strategy provided the foundation for the bid, enabling the direct alignment with the Horizon 2020 priorities. Launched in 2017, Manchester is managing the entire five-year, **€11.2million GrowGreen programme**, working with 23 partners across Europe and China. Part of the project involves working with Brest in France to develop a refreshed G&BI Implementation Plan for Manchester and a new G&BI Strategy for Brest. Manchester, as a lead city, will also deliver a local park in West Gorton, which will demonstrate how green infrastructure in urban neighbourhoods can improve flood resilience. This will act as a replicable GrowGreen Demonstrator worth **£3million** and the messages learned during this process will be shared and showcased internationally.

“The Strategy allowed us to demonstrate to Europe, the Government and partners that Manchester has a clear focus and commitment around this agenda.”

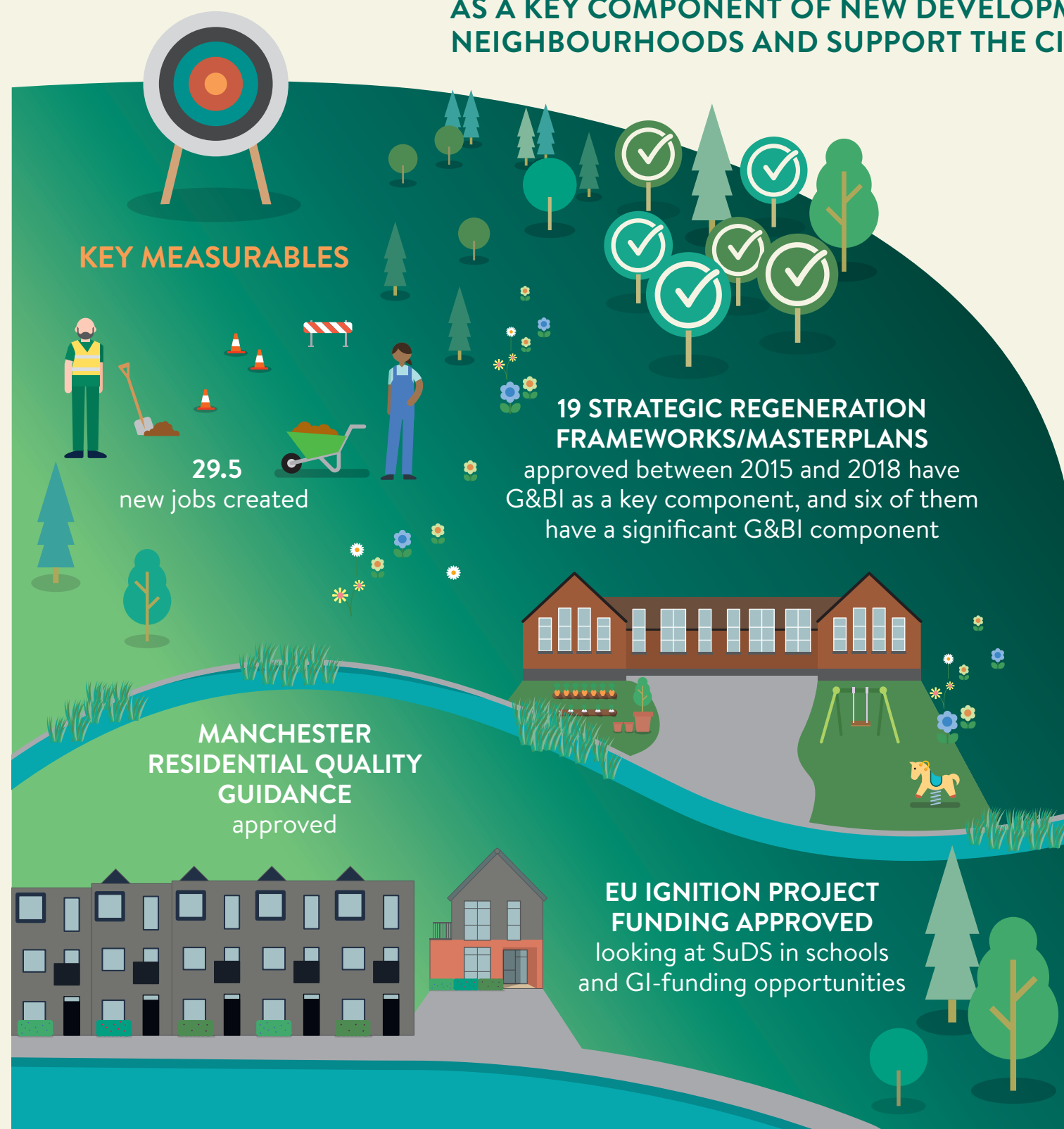
MATT ELLIS, CLIMATE CHANGE LEAD, ENVIRONMENT AGENCY

“Without a clear policy and strategy for GI in Manchester, the GrowGreen project, and the other funding bids currently in development, simply would not have been possible.”

J SADLER, MANCHESTER CLIMATE CHANGE AGENCY



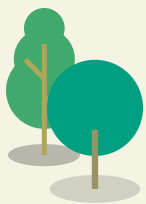
OBJECTIVE 2: TO USE APPROPRIATE GREEN AND BLUE INFRASTRUCTURE AS A KEY COMPONENT OF NEW DEVELOPMENTS TO HELP CREATE SUCCESSFUL NEIGHBOURHOODS AND SUPPORT THE CITY'S GROWTH.



The success of Objective 2 relies very much on the ambition set out in the **Manchester Residential Quality Guidance**. This guidance sets out considerations for high-quality residential development within sustainable neighbourhoods, which developers will need to satisfy or exceed, and a chapter is dedicated to the need to 'make it (development) work with the landscape'. This confirms the importance of the city's green and blue infrastructure and sets out the key actions developers must consider that link strongly to the objectives of the G&BI Strategy. These are to:

- Incorporate landscape
- Interact with the city's waterways
- Protect and enhance biodiversity
- Introduce street trees
- Appreciate the microclimate
- Incorporate SuDS.

The Residential Design Quality Guidance (RDQG) has been approved as interim planning guidance within the context of the Core Strategy (Manchester Local Plan). The Local Plan is to be reviewed and the RDQG will be reflected in the new Local Plan and so become part of the statutory planning policy, further demonstrating the Council's commitment to this area of work.



The integration of green and blue infrastructure early in the development process is essential to delivering this objective. This is supported by large-scale master planning proposals around Mayfield in the city centre

“The Strategy is shaping the Strategic growth of the city.

“The city’s new Residential Quality Guidance specifically references the importance of G&BI in terms of place-making.

“G&BI has been built in as a component of multimillion-pound developments, including Mayfield in the heart of the city, where over thirteen acres of new public realm will be created, including riverside improvements.

“There are ambitious G&BI proposals around the exciting and challenging £3billion Northern Gateway project, which will link the city centre to Collyhurst and beyond. 15,000 new homes will benefit from access to high-quality green space, riverside walks and cycleways, with new habitat improvement and creation schemes along the River Irk.”

TOM FENTON, PROJECT DIRECTOR, FEC –
LEADING ON NORTHERN GATEWAY

and the Northern Gateway, which runs from the city centre to Collyhurst. It is hoped the schemes will rejuvenate underused and neglected rivers to create accessible, functional, high-quality G&BI to act as a catalyst for investment and deliver a greener, healthier vision that people can see and buy into from the outset.

In relation to the above, the Planning Team, working with landowners, developers and construction experts, continue to deliver sustainable developments that fully integrate and embed some of the key G&BI principles and interventions featured in the Strategy. These include:

- SuDS-enabled tree pits (St Peter’s Square)
- Climate-resilient sustainable public realm (NOMA, 1 Angel Square)
- Green walls (Second City Crossing, Deansgate tram stop, Town Hall Extension roof)
- Zero-carbon campus, integrated landscape design (MMU Birley Campus, Hulme)
- River renaturalisation (River Medlock, Clayton, Clean Streams – citywide)
- Floating ecosystems (Boggart Hole Clough, Bridgewater Basin, Rochdale Canal).



NOMA, 1 Angel Square



St Peter's Square



Deansgate tram stop

These numerous individual schemes act to showcase and exemplify what can and will be achieved over the next ten years, providing replicable demonstrators that can be applied elsewhere, scaled up or down as appropriate. However, the biggest achievements will be through integrating G&BI into Strategic Masterplans from the outset.

Several key city developments have embedded into their vision the principles and learning set out in the Strategy, with G&BI seen as integral to the success of large-scale, high-quality place-making.

Several initiatives hope to rejuvenate underused and neglected rivers to create accessible, functional, high-quality G&BI to act as a catalyst for investment and deliver a greener, healthier vision that people can see and buy into from the outset. Masterplans that demonstrate a clear commitment to G&BI include:

- Northern Gateway River Irk improvements, habitat creation and public realm
- Mayfield Medlock Riverside Park and public realm
- Medieval Quarter public realm
- St Johns Regeneration

OBJECTIVE 3: IMPROVING CONNECTIVITY AND ACCESSIBILITY TO G&BI WITHIN THE CITY AND BEYOND

This strategic objective aims to improve links to the G&BI network within the city, the wider city region and beyond. It also aims to improve the interconnectedness of our local green and blue assets, which enhances their effectiveness in terms of biodiversity as well as increasing opportunities for walking and cycling throughout the urban area.

KEY MEASURABLES

7 KILOMETRES

– Oxford Road cycle scheme delivered

CITYWIDE
green-trail walking route being refined and developed

1.5 KILOMETRES
of riverside access improved

4.5 KILOMETRES
of brooks and streams improved

7.5 KILOMETRES
of canal towpaths improved

Manchester's Great Outdoors has supported the delivery of the Green Connections partnership project with TfGM, City of Trees and the Ramblers Association. One of the first key outputs of this promotional project is to revisit, amend, improve and publicise all 14 walking routes of the Manchester Citywide Green Corridor circular walking trail.

Major infrastructure work that has improved access to G&BI within and beyond the city includes:

- £8million Cycle City to help improve cycling infrastructure through Didsbury into the city centre and along the Oxford Road Corridor
- £1.2million improvements to 7.5km of Rochdale Canal towpath from Newton Heath into the city centre Rochdale Canal access as part of the VeloCity programme
- £160,000 Trans Pennine Trail improvements along the River Mersey in south Manchester.

The connectivity of our open spaces, including their links into adjacent districts, has led to the Natural Course water-quality improvement project, a €20million, large-scale, multipartner project that used the G&BI Strategy directly to support the bid. This has helped position Manchester and the city region as first-phase beneficiaries of this ambitious ten-year programme.



Tree lined city centre street



Fishing on the Medlock

The project recognises the importance of joining up work across local authority boundary areas. Key outputs so far include the production of an Ecosystem Services opportunity map, a set of Natural Capital accounts for the River Irwell catchment, and a detailed understanding of the diffuse pollution pressures on the Rivers Irk and Medlock. This will help to inform decision-making while planning for growth around the city’s river systems. A long-term aim is to improve connectivity and water quality along these river systems, for example by breaking down old weirs, which act as barriers to fish migration and restrict ecological processes. The project also works directly with the Environment Agency to develop a strategic vision for the whole of the River Irk.



Cycle route along Oxford Road Corridor

OBJECTIVE 4: IMPROVE AND PROMOTE A WIDER UNDERSTANDING AND AWARENESS OF THE BENEFITS THAT G&BI PROVIDES FOR RESIDENTS, THE ECONOMY AND THE LOCAL ENVIRONMENT

KEY MEASURABLES

£1.2MILLION
NERC funding
bids successful

59,000
volunteers engaged

90,000
volunteer hours committed

£800,000
worth of volunteer time

11,000
events delivered

1.7MILLION
visits to events/activities
in city parks
and green spaces

There has been a significant drive towards realising key headline actions relating to this objective, with the universities being particularly effective in delivering successful outcomes. This demonstrates the ability of Manchester's Great Outdoors and its resultant networks to influence research and policy agendas to deliver best practice, while at the same time acting as a catalyst for practical projects.

Manchester's Great Outdoors has provided a unique focus that has successfully brought together many partner organisations and both of the city's universities – Manchester Metropolitan University and The University of Manchester. Both are now active participants in the Manchester G&BI Group. The Strategy has provided the spotlight and detailed data needed to influence key research into G&BI.

The collaborative development of the Strategy has led to a number of Natural Environment Research Council bids from our academic partners, which are helping to improve our understanding of the role that G&BI plays in a modern city.

“...you can see Manchester is a hotbed of NERC GI research.”

ALISTER SCOTT, SPEAKING AT THE TCPA
CONFERENCE, 11 OCTOBER 2017

NERC Green Infrastructure Knowledge Exchange Fellow, Professor of Environmental Geography and Planning, Northumbria University

“The Strategy has helped radically change the way we as a university engage with the Council within this agenda and develop focused GBI research. Without the Strategy and the Manchester GBI Group, we would not have been as successful as we have been in developing the partnerships so vital for developing and delivering Natural Environment Research Council (NERC) and other research bids that we have been awarded.

“Manchester’s Great Outdoors has been revolutionary in helping to create, enhance and deliver research, particularly through partnership and project development.

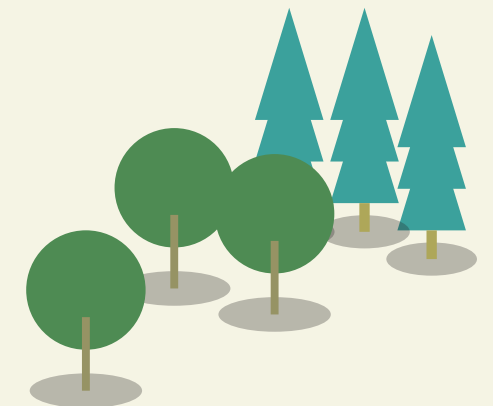
“The partnerships created through the GBI Group have also massively supported the development of the University’s Conservation Society, the Tree Musketeers. Positive, practical activity across a range of projects with a variety of stakeholders has created important networking opportunities for undergraduates and led to the creation of organisational placements, which will provide invaluable experience and contacts when entering the workplace.”

DR ANNA GILCHRIST, THE UNIVERSITY OF MANCHESTER

The interdisciplinary projects listed below are worth over £1.2million over 1–3 years, and are providing detailed study, evidence and tools to help inform decision-making in Manchester. These include:

- Green Infrastructure and the health and wellbeing influences on an ageing population (GHIA)
- Domestic gardens and their value in terms of ecosystem services
- Green Growth: Increasing resilience in cities through green-infrastructure-based solutions.

The Strategy has also promoted opportunities for training, knowledge exchange and education to improve understanding and awareness-raising. It has also helped facilitate numerous bespoke GBI seminars and training events across Manchester, with GBI activity having a growing social-media presence through a wide range of partner activity.



4. GAUGING SUCCESS, MOVING FORWARD

4.1

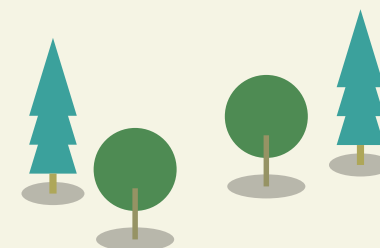
HOW HAS THE STRATEGY HELPED TO DELIVER SUCCESS?

A city such as Manchester constantly changes and evolves, so the creation and management of our green and blue infrastructure needs to be seen within this context. There is no one size fits all for providing and caring for our green and blue assets across the city; for example, life within the city centre is very different to life within Manchester's outer wards. In addition, much of the city's green infrastructure – its trees and plant life – is dynamic, constantly changing and maturing, so

gauging G&BI success against this backdrop will always need to come with caveats. Also, the ward boundary changes in 2017 mean we are not comparing like for like when we discuss tree cover, and previous analysis in 2012 will have been undertaken with older methodologies using different boundaries.

“Our EnRoute project demonstrates that nature-based solutions and green infrastructure are vital components of growing cities. Manchester's G&BI Strategy has helped us illustrate this and serves as an example for many other European cities in our network.”

JOACHIM MAES, EUROPEAN COMMISSION –
INTERNATIONAL PROJECT CO-ORDINATOR, ENROUTE



What this review does show, however, is that the direction of travel is an extremely positive one. Significant focused research provides us with strong evidence to inform decision-making around this agenda. Collaborative projects, providing Manchester's G&BI with millions of pounds' worth of capital investment, are increasing the usage and functionality of our green and blue spaces, while ecologically we can see steady and continuous improvement in the conservation management of the city's Sites of Biological Importance.³

3. SBIs in active conservation management
2015/16 – 57.89%; 2018/19 – 63.15%



We are doing things differently – developing projects based on need and strong evidence provided by the Strategy. We are using the Strategy and encouraging it to be used by our stakeholders as a starting point for discussions. This has led to the development of projects that relate directly to city priorities and answer questions that the Strategy poses.

RAISING THE PROFILE, WINNING AWARDS

Manchester's Great Outdoors has provided an international spotlight for the city that continues to foster exceptional profile and knowledge-exchange opportunities.

In 2018, Manchester's Great Outdoors won the coveted Knowledge Exchange category at the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) National Awards.

CIEEM is the leading professional body representing and supporting environmental managers and ecologists in the UK, Ireland and abroad, and the flagship project-based awards recognise high standards of professionalism and ecological and environmental management practice.

The judging panel was made up of national experts from across the environmental spectrum, so recognition from acclaimed peers is deserved recognition and a strong indicator of success.



Manchester had two other G&BI case study projects highly commended by the judges as finalists: the citywide Clean Streams urban watercourse reclamation project in the stakeholder engagement category, and the Bridgewater Basin Floating Ecosystems in the small conservation project category.

In addition, Manchester's Great Outdoors and its supported research has been showcased as an exemplar of good practice by the European EnRoute project, a 22-city collective looking at delivering best practice around nature-based solutions (NBS) in cities. The Strategy is a key component of the 23-partner European Grow Green project, which looks at the benefits of deploying nature-based solutions to cope with climate change in cities. Manchester's Great Outdoors was also showcased as part of the Global Society of Ecological Restoration Conference hosted in Manchester in 2015.



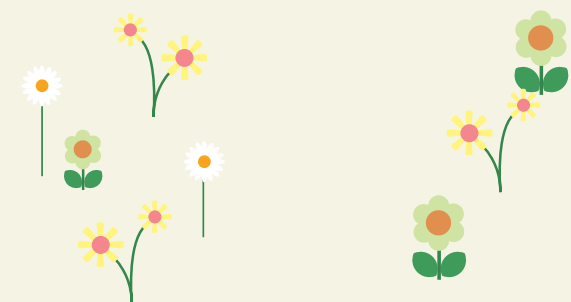
“The Strategy has provided us with an obvious focus. This in turn has helped us secure funding for projects that will have a real benefit to Manchester communities.”

MARK KNIGHT, LANDSCAPE TEAM MANAGER,
GROUNDWORK TRUST

ACCESSING FUNDING

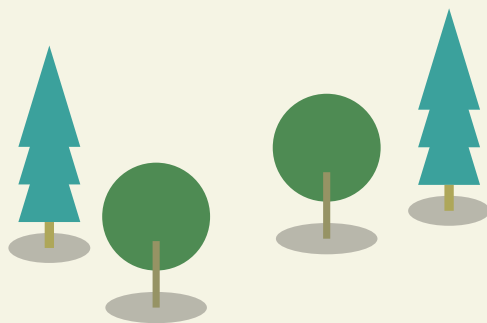
A key success of Manchester's Great Outdoors is its ability to demonstrate the important strategic value that G&BI brings to the city. It gives potential investors and funders the confidence and trust that Manchester means what it says – that it wants to deliver a greener, more productive city and has the policy commitment to back this up.

It also provides the framework to support collaborative funding bids for project development and delivery. Headline actions and data from the Strategy have been directly aligned to specialist funding opportunities, including the European Commission's Horizon 2020 funding strand, the Heritage Lottery Fund, and the Natural Environment Research Council, resulting in successful bids. The direct links between the project idea and Manchester's Great Outdoors has demonstrated the wider strategic fit of the bid to funders, which has proved vital for success.



GOVERNANCE AND DELIVERY

Key to the success of the Strategy is project sustainability and high-level buy-in. An internal Council governance board has been established, chaired by the Strategic Director and made up of key section heads. This group oversees Council delivery of Manchester's Great Outdoors. It expects G&BI to be embedded in short, medium and long-term service and business planning. It ensures that departments work collaboratively, to share knowledge, best practice and planning in order to realise the long-term goals of the Strategy. The Governance Board also ensures that the Strategy and Implementation Plan are built around the city's Our Manchester aspirations.



FRAMEWORK TO INFLUENCE AND CAPTURE PARTNER ACTIVITY

The Council worked in partnership with an independent stakeholder group during the creation of the Strategy and continues to do so. The Manchester G&BI Group is made up of a range of experienced practitioners and stakeholder organisations, including officers from the Council, Manchester Climate Change Agency, Greater Manchester Combined Authority, Registered Housing Providers, statutory bodies such as the Environment Agency and Natural England, environmental charities like Groundwork, City of Trees, the National Trust, Wildlife Trust and RSPB, as well as academics from local universities and Manchester Museum. The group provides a forum for sharing best practice, supports and encourages G&BI innovation and practical action, and acts as a catalyst for encouraging new partnerships for delivering activity in line with the objectives of the Strategy. This has led to a number of high-profile collaborative projects, such as the My Back Yard garden research project, which brought together Manchester Metropolitan University, Southways Housing Trust, City of Trees and the Council, as well as many of the case studies that are referred to below.

Through the G&BI Strategy and the Stakeholder Group we will continue to deploy and share best-practice approaches, explore opportunities, develop partnerships and deliver benefits.

4.2

REFRESHING THE ACTION PLAN

Through the international GrowGreen project we have been given a unique opportunity to refresh the Implementation Plan collaboratively with another partner city. Manchester will be working closely with the Environment and Engineers Team in Brest, France, which will be developing its own G&BI-related strategy concurrently.

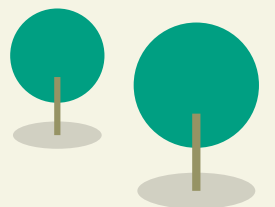
The idea is to co-develop the pieces of work, exchanging ideas and working together.

Through this collaborative process, Manchester will be able to utilise extensive specialist technical resources from a range of international experts to help refresh the G&BI Implementation Plan. We will also be able to use the increased understanding of the functionality of Manchester's G&BI gained from the EnRoute Citylab work and referred to earlier, to identify where priorities for action will be.

This innovative piece of work has been undertaken in order to look at the broad functionality of the city's green and blue assets. It is particularly useful at ward level and has been used in Hulme to gain a shared understanding of priorities and possible interventions that could increase the benefits of local G&BI.

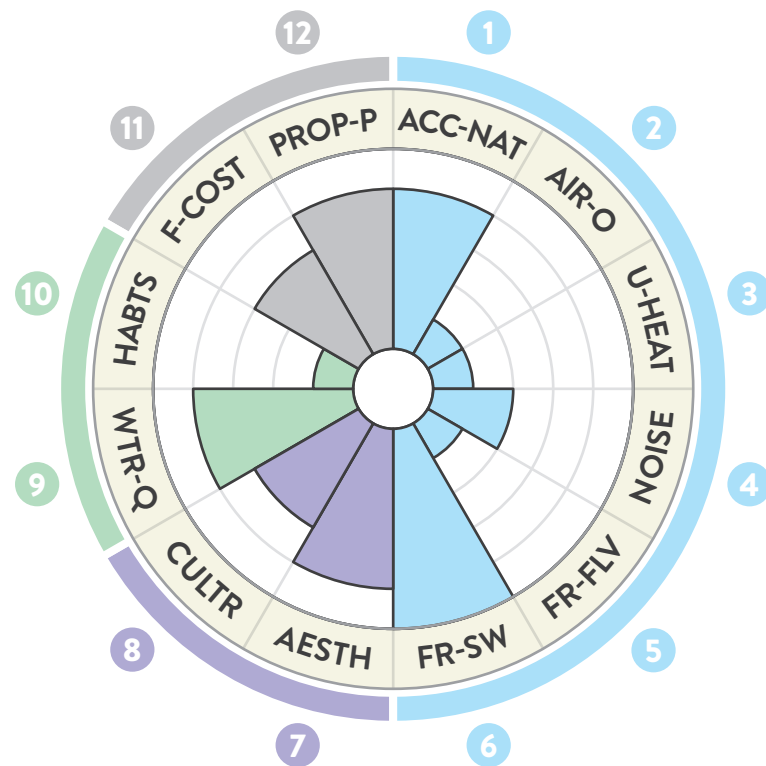
This will not be a complete rewrite of the Strategy, but will look at undertaking groundwork to establish where we can make changes that make the implementation even more productive.

The work will be undertaken in 2019/20.

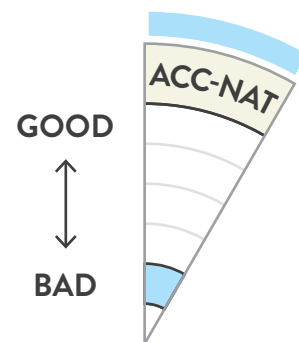


NET-BENEFITS WHEELS

Tailored to Manchester



EXPERIENCE



- 1 Access to natural space**
Percentage of people in a ward who live within 600m (10 mins) walk of an accessible greenspace.
- 2 Air pollution (PM_{2.5})**
Mean concentration of PM_{2.5} modelled for 2018, derived from emissions maps from the UK-AIR data archive.
- 3 Local climate regulation**
Urban heat island effect measured using Landsat 8 satellite thermal imaging data.
- 4 Noise pollution**
Average noise levels from traffic and rail derived from Defra Noise dataset.
- 5 Flood risk (rivers and sea)**
Number of properties that have a greater than 1-in-100-year chance of flooding from rivers and/or sea.
- 6 Flood risk (surface water)**
Number of properties that have a greater than 1-in-100-year chance of flooding from surface water.
- 7 Aesthetic value of landscape**
Number of nature-related photos taken in the area that have been uploaded to Flickr and tagged accordingly.
- 8 Cultural activity**
Number of natural environment-related cultural resources/facilities per 1,000 people, including places such as allotments and sports clubs.
- 9 Water quality**
Reasons for not achieving good Water Framework Directive status' identified for each river/water body
- 10 Habitats for wildlife**
Percentage of ward area that is described as a priority habitat in Natural England's Priority Habitats Inventory.
- 11 Flood damage cost (surface water)**
Estimated costs incurred due to flood damage from SW flooding, based in figures in the EA National Flood Risk Assessment (NaFRA).
- 12 Average house price**
Mean price paid for a terraced house in 2015.

Ward-scale analysis. Metrics represent range of values in Manchester.
White spaces represent opportunity for improvement.

The LAP approach includes a simple, but consistent and robust framework for the assessment of natural capital and ecosystem services derived benefits in urban landscapes. The graphics produced have been referred to as Ecosystem Service Benefits 'Wheels'.

CASE STUDY ON HULME FROM THE NATURE OF MANCHESTER

The 'Nature of Hulme' Project (run between November 2017 and June 2018) was designed to include a comprehensive, local and collaborative natural capital benefits assessment and needs/ opportunity mapping exercise for the Hulme Ward, incorporating refined and improved GI/SuDS

opportunity mapping methods. This evidence-led approach has also built on the significant work already being done by the MCC City Policy and Neighbourhood Team to deliver environmental improvements in the City Centre Wards and to take advantage of the comprehensive and detailed pre-existing GI data created by MCC and their partners, integrating it with additional local information collected through stakeholder dialogue in the community.

This combined evidence has been used to create an Evidence Review for Hulme, to facilitate a number of stakeholder/ community workshops/engagement events and will be used to create an online interactive resource to present the Nature of Hulme story. The City Centre and Central Neighbourhood Team at MCC, along with a number of key advocates for this approach within the Council and other organisations are working to disseminate the work to a wider audience both within the council and across the professional communities of practice across the city. The final key element of this community engagement process is to develop a shared vision for the future of the Hulme landscape and then to continue collating and working-up an 'action plan' (true co-creation) of ideas, next steps, actions and communications that will all contribute in one way or another the realisation of that vision. The work has been integrated into the Local Ward action plan.



4.3

A CELEBRATION OF SUCCESS, BUT WHAT ARE THE FUTURE CHALLENGES?

We have identified that we are delivering each objective, with progress being made against most headline actions, but we also know that the work towards delivering the Our Manchester vision of creating a liveable city needs to be maintained.

The city is expected to continue to grow over the next decade, and the city's population is predicted to exceed 600,000 by 2021.⁴ This is a fantastic demonstration of the successful regeneration of Manchester and its attractiveness as a place in which to live and work. This success brings with it the challenge of ensuring that Manchester's green and blue assets continue to work for the growing population, and creative approaches are required to deliver this within an increasingly dense urban environment.

There are other challenges to be considered in any refresh of the Action Plan. We know that much work is needed to improve the health of our residents. The Our Manchester Residents' survey showed that of those people who felt they had poor health, over 85% wanted to do something about it. More exercise was the most popular action, with walking being in the top five responses. When the same people were asked what support might help with this, parks, green spaces and safer environments were in the top five things listed. The value of high-quality green environments in improving both physical and mental health is well documented.⁵

The research that has been undertaken by the universities has demonstrated the value of G&BI on an ageing population. We also know that the delivery of the G&BI Strategy creates opportunities for local jobs, from entry level to highly skilled positions. In refreshing the Action Plan, further consideration will be given to how the city's green and blue infrastructure can play its full contribution to help meet these challenges and make the most of the opportunities.

Local authorities will continue to face financial challenges that require new approaches to be taken in response. It is important to note that the Green & Blue Infrastructure Strategy is neither a budget nor a project programme; rather it provides a vision for improving the city's green and blue assets in a way that the many varied stakeholders across the city have agreed and continue to engage with strongly. It is supported by the Stakeholder Implementation Plan, which brings together the actions of the Council and the partner organisations to achieve demonstrably greater benefits.

We cannot predict all outcomes, but we can all work towards this shared vision, which we are doing well, as a city and as a council.

4. Manchester City Council Forecasting Model W2018

5. Manchester Green Infrastructure Technical Report, March 2015



APPENDIX 1

POLICY CONTEXT

POLICY	STATUS	OVERVIEW	DATE
Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act	National Policy	The Council has a key role to play in the conservation of biodiversity and this is recognised within Section 40 of the NERC Act 2006, which states: “Every public body must, in exercising its functions, have regard – so far as is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions – to the purpose of conserving biodiversity.”	2006
The Natural Environment White Paper (NEWP) The Natural Choice: securing the value of nature	National Policy	The NEWP recognised that a healthy natural environment is the foundation of sustained economic growth, prospering communities and personal wellbeing. It set out 92 specific commitments for action.	2011
Biodiversity 2020: A Strategy for England’s Wildlife and Ecosystem Services	National Policy	The Strategy guides conservation efforts in England until 2020, including setting an ambition to halt overall loss of England’s biodiversity by 2020. In the longer term, the ambition is to move progressively from a position of net biodiversity loss to net gain.	2010
National Planning Policy Framework	National Policy	The recently updated NPPF continues to provide the planning framework for consideration of GI in planning policies and development decisions. LAs are required to take a strategic approach to maintaining and enhancing networks of habitats and green infrastructure; and plan for the enhancement of natural capital at a catchment or landscape scale across local authority boundaries. National Planning Policy Guidance which supports NPPF describes this strategic approach as an evidence-based assessment of current green infrastructure provision that identifies gaps in the network and the components and opportunities for improvement. Green infrastructure is described as a network of multifunctional green space, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities.	2012, updated 2018
Defra 25-Year Environment Plan	National Policy	This 25-Year Environment Plan sets out the Government action to help the natural world regain and retain good health.	2018

POLICY	STATUS	OVERVIEW	DATE
Greater Manchester Urban Pioneer	Regional Project supporting the Defra 25YEP	The GM Urban Pioneer is one of four three-year Defra Pioneer projects designed to support and inform the development of the Government's approach to the 25-Year Environment Plan (25YEP). The Urban Pioneer will explore the links between environment, society and economy, focusing on improving the natural environment through improved decision-making to support the health, wellbeing and prosperity of Greater Manchester's residents.	2017
Greater Manchester Spatial Framework	Regional Policy	The ten local authorities in Greater Manchester are working together on a joint plan called the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework (GMSF). This is being prepared to ensure that new homes and jobs are provided in the right places across the conurbation. The draft plan also considers the protection and enhancement of green infrastructure at a strategic level.	Tbc
Our Manchester	Local Policy	The Our Manchester Strategy sets out the vision for a world-class city with a dynamic economy by 2025, where residents from all backgrounds can live well. The delivery of the GI Strategy is seen as a key indicator in the success of Our Manchester.	2015
Manchester Local Plan	Local Policy	The Local Statutory Planning policy for green and blue infrastructure is set out in Manchester's Local Plan (Manchester Core Strategy 2012–27). A review of the Local Plan is shortly to commence.	2012–27
Climate Change Action Plan	Local Policy	In January 2016, Manchester published its latest commitment on climate change in the Manchester Climate Change Strategy 2017–2050: 'to be on a path to become a zero-carbon city by 2050'. Further carbon budget proposals were discussed during the 2018 Climate Change Conference to ensure that a 2°C increase in global temperature can be avoided. Research showed that Manchester must be almost fully de-carbonised by 2038. Green and blue infrastructure is one of the key thematic drivers of the Climate Change Strategy and is recognised as being a key part of the city's response to creating resilience to climate change.	2016

POLICY	STATUS	OVERVIEW	DATE
Citywide Action Plan	Local Policy (in preparation)	A draft citywide plan to make Manchester carbon neutral by 2038 is to be adopted by the Council on behalf of the city, by March 2019. The final plan will then be developed with all partners, setting out more detailed plans for implementation, to be adopted by the Council on behalf of the city by March 2020	2018–20

APPENDIX 2

ARE WE ON TRACK?

OBJECTIVE 1: IMPROVING THE QUALITY AND FUNCTION OF GBI

HEADLINE ACTIONS	GREEN – EXISTING COMMITMENTS TO GBI	GETTING GREENER – ADDED VALUE THAT MGO BRINGS	HOW DID MGO INFLUENCE THIS?	SUPPORTING QUOTES
River valleys and canals: continue to invest in the river valleys and canals to provide attractive settings for residential communities, leisure and recreation, health, and biodiversity benefits	There is an active commitment to managing land across the city’s three main river valleys: the Irk, Medlock and Mersey.	New partnerships have been forged in order to improve functionality of the river valleys. In south Manchester, RSPB are helping to develop a vision for the Mersey Valley, while in the north, FEC master planners are looking at transforming the Lower Irk Valley and providing environmental improvements over a long-term period.	MGO has helped facilitate consistent dialogue between partner organisations, for example leading to practical projects being delivered across all the city’s river valleys, and engaging with developers in the Lower Irk Valley.	
Enhance existing parks to maximise their potential in making Manchester a world-class city	There is significant ongoing investment across the city’s extensive 135-site portfolio of parks and green spaces.	It was important to make sure that the Park Strategy development was recognised as a key driver of MGO.	Delivering the park strategy was an output of the implementation plan. Working with the park strategy officer, a focused workshop was provided for MGO stakeholder groups, thereby ensuring that partner organisations could have their say on its role and development.	

HEADLINE ACTIONS	GREEN – EXISTING COMMITMENTS TO GBI	GETTING GREENER – ADDED VALUE THAT MGO BRINGS	HOW DID MGO INFLUENCE THIS?	SUPPORTING QUOTES
Enhance existing and introduce new green infrastructure within large estates and land holdings, eg. colleges, registered housing providers, cemeteries, universities and hospitals	Ongoing GI commitments through existing land-management contracts – detail needed from partner organisations.	€11million funding secured for the GrowGreen project. This includes £3million directly to West Gorton to deliver various GBI interventions. MGO will also provide the backdrop to celebrate and share best practice on this project and others.	Priorities of a strand of EU Horizon 2020 funding around GBI were directly aligned with MGO headline actions, leading to one of the most high-profile GBI projects in the country – West Gorton GrowGreen.	<i>“Without a clear policy and strategy for GI in Manchester the GrowGreen project, and the other funding bids currently in development, simply would not have been possible.”</i> J Sadler, MCCA
Schools: enhance school grounds for environmental education and biodiversity	Many of Manchester’s schools are already part of the National Ecoschools Programme, and are supported by the Manchester Environmental Education Network.	MGO has helped to support and develop collaborative partnerships that have enabled schools to undertake better environmental education locally.	MGO has provided the backdrop to supportive bids by Lancs Wildlife Trust, RSPB and Groundwork, with over £250,000 committed to Forest schools and environmental education support across Manchester. MGO directly supported Groundwork’s Protecting Playgrounds programme, which will look at using GBI creatively around three schools in AQMAs and monitoring any effect it has on air quality. The project will be worth around £190,000.	<i>“The Strategy has provided us with an obvious focus. This in turn has helped us secure funding for projects that will have a real benefit to Manchester communities.”</i> Mark Knight, Landscape Team Manager, Groundwork Trust

HEADLINE ACTIONS	GREEN – EXISTING COMMITMENTS TO GBI	GETTING GREENER – ADDED VALUE THAT MGO BRINGS	HOW DID MGO INFLUENCE THIS?	SUPPORTING QUOTES
Trees and woodlands: effective and appropriate tree and woodland management and planting	The city has planted many trees over the past ten years, with over 8,000 planted in the past three years. On average, the city has over 20% of its land area covered by tree canopy. It has the third highest canopy cover across Greater Manchester.	MGO has facilitated the development of key tree-related policies for Manchester. MGO has also helped in providing the backdrop for tree and woodland-related funding bids.	In January 2017, Manchester City Council adopted a new Tree Action Plan (TAP), and in 2018/19 it is hoped a new Principles of Tree Management policy will be approved – the first of its kind in Manchester. City of Trees have used MGO and the new TAP to secure funding for tree-related practical projects in east and south Manchester.	
Community greening and community food-growing: delivery of community-led and focused GI projects and food-growing	Numerous growing projects are undertaken across the city, with hubs in Hulme, Wythenshawe and Heaton Park. There are more than forty allotment sites across the city.	MGO has supported the development of case studies that celebrate and showcase good practice.	Case studies include the Meanwhile Growing Space in Wythenshawe. MGO directly shaped the successful My Wild City bid by the Wildlife Trusts. This four-year project will see two new jobs created to support community engagement around nature in Manchester. This project will be worth over £300,000.	

HEADLINE ACTIONS	GREEN – EXISTING COMMITMENTS TO GBI	GETTING GREENER – ADDED VALUE THAT MGO BRINGS	HOW DID MGO INFLUENCE THIS?	SUPPORTING QUOTES
Gardens: protect and enhance private gardens	The city has extensive garden coverage. MGO indicated that this figure might be as high as 30% of all the city's garden space.	MGO helped MMU develop a piece of focused research to investigate how much of Manchester's garden space was actually green space, and what impact this was having.	The two-year My Back Yard research project came directly from the questions raised by MGO in terms of garden space. This has also led to a campaign being delivered by the Wildlife Trusts called My Wild Garden, encouraging gardens to be used as active gardens once again.	
Sites of Biological Importance (SBIs): increase the number of SBIs in active management to conserve, protect and enhance biodiversity	Manchester has 38 SBIs, with over 60% in active conservation management.	MGO has an overarching commitment to deliver a new Biodiversity Action Plan for Manchester, of which SBIs are a key component.	Ensuring 1–5% of SBIs are in active conservation management is a key annual target for Manchester. MGO helps ensure that this target is met and reported to Defra annually.	
Local Nature Reserves: increase the coverage of LNRs in line with national guidance to one hectare of LNR per 1,000 residents	Manchester has eight LNRS covering 392 hectares.	MGO has an overarching commitment to deliver a new Biodiversity Action Plan for Manchester, of which LNRs are a key component.	MGO has helped facilitate dialogue with Manchester City Council's legal services in order to deliver LNR targets where possible.	

HEADLINE ACTIONS	GREEN – EXISTING COMMITMENTS TO GBI	GETTING GREENER – ADDED VALUE THAT MGO BRINGS	HOW DID MGO INFLUENCE THIS?	SUPPORTING QUOTES
Health and wellbeing: deliver GI projects with a particular focus on improving health and wellbeing		MGO helps to illustrate the importance that GI can play in terms of improved health and wellbeing and quality of life.	MGO has helped deliver a successful partnership project bid with The University of Manchester, Public Health Manchester and Manchester City Council Policy, Partnerships and Research. A three-year focused PhD project is looking at the effects GI can play in relation to health and wellbeing.	

OBJECTIVE 2: USE APPROPRIATE GREEN AND BLUE INFRASTRUCTURE AS A KEY COMPONENT OF NEW DEVELOPMENTS TO HELP CREATE SUCCESSFUL NEIGHBOURHOODS AND SUPPORT THE CITY’S GROWTH

HEADLINE ACTIONS	GREEN – EXISTING COMMITMENTS TO GBI	GETTING GREENER – ADDED VALUE THAT MGO BRINGS	HOW DID MGO INFLUENCE THIS?	SUPPORTING QUOTES
Embed new and existing GI as part of residential developments	Ongoing GI commitments through planning process.	GBI is recognised as a key component of major development opportunities, eg. Mayfield, Northern Gateway.	GI is a strong key component of new Residential Quality Guidance. MGO has been a key driver of key GI masterplans for the city, including Mayfield and Northern Gateway.	<p><i>“The Strategy has allowed us to demonstrate to Europe, the Government and partners that Manchester has a clear focus and commitment around this agenda.”</i></p> <p>Matt Ellis, Climate Change Lead, Environment Agency</p>

HEADLINE ACTIONS	GREEN – EXISTING COMMITMENTS TO GBI	GETTING GREENER – ADDED VALUE THAT MGO BRINGS	HOW DID MGO INFLUENCE THIS?	SUPPORTING QUOTES
Embed GI as part of city centre developments	Ongoing GI commitments through planning process. GI commitments made around Mayfield, Northern Gateway and St Johns.	MGO has helped to develop over thirty best-practice case studies at a range of scales.	MGO provides the strategic GBI backdrop to support investment and growth. It champions sustainable development, and is the mechanism to capture and celebrate work being undertaken on GI by partners, and will continue to do so. The GI improvements undertaken at NOMA and St Peter's Square feature as GI case studies.	<p><i>“The Strategy is shaping the strategic growth of the city. We all know that the provision of green and blue infrastructure supports healthy urban living and aligns with the Government’s health and wellbeing agenda. When we look to the world’s most liveable cities we see examples of places that have successfully integrated dense, urban ecologies with natural ecologies. There are ambitious GBI proposals around the exciting and challenging £3billion Northern Gateway project, which will link the city centre to Collyhurst and beyond. 15,000 new homes will benefit from access to high-quality green space, riverside walks and cycleways, with new habitat improvement and creation schemes along the River Irk.”</i></p> <p>Tom Fenton, Project Director FEC</p>
Embed GI as part of major employment developments	Ongoing GI commitments through planning process.			

HEADLINE ACTIONS	GREEN – EXISTING COMMITMENTS TO GBI	GETTING GREENER – ADDED VALUE THAT MGO BRINGS	HOW DID MGO INFLUENCE THIS?	SUPPORTING QUOTES
Retrofit new GI to existing buildings, particularly in the city centre	Ongoing GI commitments through planning process.	MGO has helped to provide knowledge-exchange events that encourage building retrofit.	MGO has helped facilitate numerous GI-related seminars, including seminars on GI best practice co-developed by MGO stakeholders.	
Embed GI as part of school new-build and major refurbishment	Ongoing GI commitments through planning process.	BITC, MCCA and Manchester City Council developed a bid that will lead to a pilot programme for Manchester.	MGO has provided the strategic backdrop for developing a large-scale funding bid. The GM-wide IGNITION project was approved by the European Commission in October 2018.	
Establish temporary uses on sites awaiting development	Manchester City Council continues to encourage usage where appropriate.	MGO has captured several Meanwhile projects, including the temporary growing spaces at McDonald's Wythenshawe and the temporary tree and orchard area at Stagecoach Moss Side.	The meanwhile site co-developed by City of Trees with Manchester City Council and McDonald's Wythenshawe is one of our GI case studies.	

OBJECTIVE 3: IMPROVING ACCESS AND CONNECTIVITY

HEADLINE ACTIONS	GREEN – EXISTING COMMITMENTS TO GBI	GETTING GREENER – ADDED VALUE THAT MGO BRINGS	HOW DID MGO INFLUENCE THIS?	SUPPORTING QUOTES
River valleys and canals: enhance river valleys and canal towpaths to improve accessibility and use as active transport corridors	There is an active commitment to managing land across the city's three main river valleys: the Irk, Medlock and Mersey. The Canal and River Trust are actively trying to improve Ashton and Rochdale Canal towpaths and waterways.	MGO encourages partnership working. CRT worked collaboratively with TfGM in order to deliver Velo-city improvements.	MGO provides the mechanism to include and celebrate work being undertaken on GI by partners. In this case, over £1.2million was spent to improve 7.5km of towpaths in Clayton, through Bradford into the city centre. Similarly, as part of Velo-city in south Manchester, £165,000 was spent improving Trans Pennine Trail access along the River Mersey in Burnage and Didsbury.	
Green routes: greening transport routes (eg. tramlines, footpaths, cycle routes, roads, rail corridors, including disused) to encourage walking and cycling, reduce flood risk and provide corridors for wildlife	Ongoing commitments to manage sustainable transport corridors, such as Oxford Road Corridor, £1.3million Velo-city Ashton Canal improvements, £180,000 Trans Pennine Trail investment, and the Mobike pilot.	New partnership initiatives developed include the Green Connections Project.	MGO provided the GBI backdrop to the £50,000 Green Connections and Green Corridor project being delivered with Manchester City Council, TfGM, City of Trees, and ramblers. It will see the 14 Manchester Green Corridor walking routes refreshed, rebranded and republicised by the end of 2018.	

HEADLINE ACTIONS	GREEN – EXISTING COMMITMENTS TO GBI	GETTING GREENER – ADDED VALUE THAT MGO BRINGS	HOW DID MGO INFLUENCE THIS?	SUPPORTING QUOTES
Cross-boundary working to improve access and connectivity	Manchester is committed to cross-boundary partnership working, and is a key partner of both GMCA and TfGM.	MGO encourages partnership working. CRT worked collaboratively with TfGM in order to deliver Velo-city improvements.	Both from an access point of view, as illustrated above by Green Connections, and ecologically, MGO has had positive effects. MGO was a key part of the bid that secured £20million for a ten-year project focused on improving water quality, called the Natural Course. This groundbreaking initiative will deliver catchment-wide environmental improvements that will benefit citizens across the north west.	
Use active and sustainable transport to access green infrastructure in the city and beyond	Initiatives such as Mobike and recent GM-wide commitments to walking and cycling will make it easier to access Manchester's green spaces and its river and canal networks.	MGO included the £1.2million Cycle City improvements along the Ashton Canal within its implementation plan.	MGO helps to showcase and celebrate best practice through knowledge exchange and sharing. It is hoped that MGO will continue to support and influence positive environmental changes that support active travel.	

OBJECTIVE 4: INCREASED GBI UNDERSTANDING AND AWARENESS-RAISING

HEADLINE ACTIONS	GREEN – EXISTING COMMITMENTS TO GBI	GETTING GREENER – ADDED VALUE THAT MGO BRINGS	HOW DID MGO INFLUENCE THIS?	SUPPORTING QUOTES
Objective 4: Increased GBI understanding and awareness-raising Monitor existing GI within the city	There is some autonomous monitoring of GI within the city through parks, tree management systems etc, and independently, ie. through the Greater Manchester Ecology Unit and the universities.	MGO brings some of these data sets together and adds a new detailed spatial interpretation of green space data.	For the first time as a result of MGO, the city can not only see the extent and type of GI coverage across Manchester, but also the detailed technical report that supports the strategy by using environmental economics around natural capital to monetise some of the key benefits GI can bring.	
Embed GI in key plans and policies	There are numerous existing policy commitments through the Local Plan that relate to GI.	MGO is referenced as a key measure of success in relation to delivering the city’s Our Manchester vision for the future.	MGOs inclusion as a benchmark of the success of Our Manchester, as well as its inclusion in the city’s Climate Change Action Plan, illustrates how the strategy is seen as a catalyst for change – something that will make things happen and make a positive difference.	

HEADLINE ACTIONS	GREEN – EXISTING COMMITMENTS TO GBI	GETTING GREENER – ADDED VALUE THAT MGO BRINGS	HOW DID MGO INFLUENCE THIS?	SUPPORTING QUOTES
Develop research into the benefits of GI to residents, the economy and the environment to provide the basis for new policy, projects, programmes and investment mechanisms	There is an independent approach to research development.	Better collaborative, joined-up approach to research and project development.	MGO has directly influenced £1.3million worth of focused GI Research projects, including My Back Yard – Gardens and Ecosystem Services project GHIA the benefits of green infrastructure to an ageing population Green Growth – economic benefits of GI EnRoute – 20 EU Cities GBI Collective.	<p><i>“The Strategy has helped radically change the way in which we as a university engage with Manchester City Council within this agenda and develop focused GBI research. Without MGO and the Manchester GBI Group, we would not have been as successful as we have been in developing the partnerships so vital for developing and delivering NERC and other research bids we have been awarded.”</i></p> <p>Dr Anna Gilchrist, The University of Manchester</p>

HEADLINE ACTIONS	GREEN – EXISTING COMMITMENTS TO GBI	GETTING GREENER – ADDED VALUE THAT MGO BRINGS	HOW DID MGO INFLUENCE THIS?	SUPPORTING QUOTES
Showcase local best practice and seek recognition for delivered projects	Manchester will always endeavour to develop best-practice approaches on the way the city's GI is managed and improved.	MGO has helped to develop over thirty best-practice case studies at a range of scales.	Numerous projects have been nominated for awards, including Tale of Two Cities, which won the RHS NW Biodiversity Award for Manchester's Wildflower meadows in 2016, and the MGO strategy itself, winning the 2018 CIEEM National Best Practice Award for Knowledge Sharing. The Bridgewater Basin Floating Ecosystems and the Manchester City Council Clean Streams projects were also commended finalists in the 2018 CIEEM Awards, in the small conservation category and community engagement category respectively.	

HEADLINE ACTIONS	GREEN – EXISTING COMMITMENTS TO GBI	GETTING GREENER – ADDED VALUE THAT MGO BRINGS	HOW DID MGO INFLUENCE THIS?	SUPPORTING QUOTES
Raise the awareness of the benefits of GI through public communication, education and training	Manchester has an ongoing commitment to engage and raise awareness of the importance and value GI brings to the city.	MGO has helped by having an independent stakeholder collective to oversee its development and delivery. This also acts as a sounding board for ideas and a springboard for collaborative working.	MGO has helped facilitate numerous GI-related seminars, including tree workshops for Manchester City Council planners, and seminars on GI best practice co-developed by MGO stakeholders. Several global environmental conferences have been hosted in the city, with key visits made to MGO projects, and workshops led by MGO stakeholders. MGO has also captured key statistics in relation to the wrong number of active groups involved in GI-related activity, eg. Britain in Bloom and Friends of parks.	

HEADLINE ACTIONS	GREEN – EXISTING COMMITMENTS TO GBI	GETTING GREENER – ADDED VALUE THAT MGO BRINGS	HOW DID MGO INFLUENCE THIS?	SUPPORTING QUOTES
Raise the profile of Manchester as an attractive place to live with access to high-quality GI within and beyond Manchester	Promotion and engagement is already undertaken by numerous partner agencies and organisations in a range of formats, including social media.	MGO has helped to provide the backdrop for numerous eco tweets via Manchester City Council social media, while partners have profiled their own GI projects via social media, YouTube, TV and radio.	MGO helps to showcase and celebrate best practice through knowledge exchange and sharing. Through the development of a focused GBI strategy, Manchester was invited to be part of a 22-city European Collective of Cities looking at the role GBI plays in urban environments – called EnRoute. It is telling that MGO was used by the project facilitators as the starting point for discussions at several of its international seminars, illustrating that MGO is helping raise Manchester’s profile on the global stage in relation to the GBI agenda.	<p><i>“Our EnRoute project demonstrates that nature-based solutions and green infrastructure are vital components of growing cities. Manchester’s GBI Strategy has helped us illustrate this and serves as an example for many other European cities in our network.”</i></p> <p>Joachim Maes, European Commission – International Project Co-ordinator, EnRoute</p>

REVIEW AND MONITORING

HEADLINE ACTIONS	GREEN – EXISTING COMMITMENTS TO GBI	GETTING GREENER – ADDED VALUE THAT MGO BRINGS	HOW DID MGO INFLUENCE THIS?
Review and Monitoring			
KPIs	There is already some reporting on GI KPIs such as SBIs, numbers of trees planted and updates provided for the State of the City Report.	MGO helps to provide the focus for further research into KPIs.	MGO is encouraging partners to help develop a better and more consistent set of indicators where possible.
Annual review and reporting	Environmental updates are provided annually via the State of the City Report.	Having MGO has helped to provide focus for consistent monitoring of activity.	MGO has helped to provide the impetus for the high-level MCR GBI Governance group to be established, with regular reports provided for the group and annual updates to scrutiny committees. Scrutiny reports have been supported by the attendance of external stakeholders.
Website and stories	Regular reporting via social-media channels.	More focused opportunity for sharing news stories and case studies.	MGO has a permanent web presence, along with a tree action plan, biodiversity action plan, and case studies. More GI-related stories are appearing on a range of media channels.

HEADLINE ACTIONS	GREEN – EXISTING COMMITMENTS TO GBI	GETTING GREENER – ADDED VALUE THAT MGO BRINGS	HOW DID MGO INFLUENCE THIS?
Review and update	Annual updates to Scrutiny	A three-year review/audit is being undertaken, to be published in January 2019. Plans will be made to refresh the implementation plan in collaboration with Brest as part of GrowGreen in 2019/20.	MGO was a key driver behind the successful GrowGreen EU bid, and capacity was made within the project to fund focused work on refreshing the implementation plan working in partnership with another EU city – Brest.

