

**Manchester City Council
Report for Information**

Report to: Communities and Equalities Scrutiny Committee – 6 February 2024

Subject: Manchester’s Sport and Physical Activity Strategy Annual Update

Report of: Strategic Director (Neighbourhoods)

Summary

This report highlights the annual (January to December 2023) progress that has been made by Manchester Active in the development and achievement of the Manchester Sport and Physical Activity Strategy.

This report provides an overview of the progress made using sport and physical activity to enable Manchester residents to be more healthier and happier, which includes; over £100 million of capital investment into the leisure estate to modernise and protect much needed services across Manchester’s communities, the delivery of over 25 major sporting events retaining Manchester as a global city of sport which inspires positive change and enhances talent pathways and legacy programmes, securing Manchester as hosts for both Women’s Rugby World Cup 2025 and UEFA European Football Championships 2028 and being announced as the first-ever European Capital of Cycling for 2024.

Annual priorities also included free holiday activities and hot meals for thousands of local children, ensuring being active supports both the city’s commitment to Make Manchester Fairer and net climate targets, welcoming record numbers through national and community centres, supporting thousands of patients with long term health conditions and assisting hundreds of clubs, groups, volunteers and organisations with events in communities across the city.

Recommendations

The Committee is asked to consider and note the progress made throughout 2023.

Wards Affected: All

Environmental Impact Assessment - the impact of the issues addressed in this report on achieving the zero-carbon target for the city	One of the core Themes of the Sport and Physical Activity Strategy, Theme 8, focuses on how Manchester Active ‘Contributes to a Zero Carbon City’. Manchester Active continue to collaborate with partners to support Manchester in accelerating its efforts to encourage all residents, businesses, and other stakeholders to act on climate change.
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion - the impact of the issues addressed in this report in meeting our Public Sector Equality Duty and broader equality commitments	Manchester Active instill EDI within our work practices by championing an unrelenting emphasis on diversity, inclusion, skills, and behaviours, to open up and increase volunteering and employment opportunities for people from a broader range of backgrounds and experiences. Manchester Active continue

	to ensure a broad appeal of sport and physical activity and to recognise and overcome barriers to participation.
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Manchester Strategy outcomes	Summary of how this report aligns to the OMS/Contribution to the Strategy
A thriving and sustainable city: supporting a diverse and distinctive economy that creates jobs and opportunities.	The Sport and Physical Activity sector is a key economic driver within the city not only as an employer, but also in attracting inward investment to underpin a wide range of key sectors in the city.
A highly skilled city: world class and home-grown talent sustaining the city's economic success.	The Sport and Physical Activity sector provides significant opportunities for training, development, apprenticeship programmes and volunteering. This contributes meaningfully to employment within the Manchester economy.
A progressive and equitable city: making a positive contribution by unlocking the potential of our communities.	Manchester Active is at the core of neighbourhoods, creating significant opportunities for all communities within the city to engage actively and energetically.
A liveable and low carbon city: a destination of choice to live, visit, work.	Manchester Active has a strong commitment to environmental sustainability through investment to modernise the estate. This is embedded within the management of the existing estate and the plans for investment and refurbishment.
A connected city: world class infrastructure and connectivity to drive growth.	The Sport and Physical Activity sector has over the last twenty years already invested significantly in new assets that have helped drive the City's growth agenda.

Full details are in the body of the report, along with any implications for:

- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Risk Management
- Legal Considerations

Financial Consequences – Revenue

None.

Financial Consequences – Capital

None.

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Background documents (available for public inspection):

The following documents disclose important facts on which the report is based and have been relied upon in preparing the report. Copies of the background documents are available up to 4 years after the date of the meeting. If you would like a copy, please contact one of the officers above.

- Report to Scrutiny – Sport and Physical Activity Strategy 5th December 2019
- Report to Communities and Equalities Scrutiny Committee - Sport and Physical Activity Strategy, 5th December 2019
- Report to Communities and Equalities Scrutiny Committee - Manchester Sport and Physical Activity Strategy Update and Proposed Refresh, 6th September 2022 and Report to Executive 14th September 2022
- Report to Communities and Equalities Scrutiny Committee - Manchester Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sport Strategy Update Report, 11th October 2022 and Report to Executive, 16th November 2022
- Report to Communities and Equalities Scrutiny Committee – Manchester Sport and Physical Activity Strategy 2022 Annual Update, 7th February 2023

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 No other city, arguably in the world, understands the significance of sport and physical activity as a catalyst for change like Manchester.
- 1.2 This report summarises the headlines from 2023, a 12-month period of a journey that is already more than 3 decades on, and still going strong. A journey that is testament to the strategic vision and faith City leaders placed in sport and physical activity, with the 2002 Games as the catalyst, rightly regarded as a turning point in Manchester's history.
- 1.3 A strategic vision that has brought in over £500m of capital investment over 30 years, delivering transformational impact to improve the health and well-being of residents, increase participation levels and encourage residents to lead more active lifestyles, connecting communities and residents to a local high-quality offer that delivers the most effective equitable activity programmes to all residents at all levels in the spirit of building neighbourhoods.
- 1.4 On behalf of the city, Manchester Active deliver the City's Sport and Physical Activity Strategy. A Strategy that contributes greatly to Manchester's key strategic outcomes, whilst also acknowledging and addressing the challenges both the City and the sector face. The Strategy ensures residents benefit from a focus on young people, health, environment and infrastructure and delivers work that continues to support the investment into safer and more vibrant communities.
- 1.5 To achieve this, Manchester Active play a strong, key and vital role right in the heart of local communities and neighbourhoods.
- 1.6 Across the city, Manchester Active 'places' are integral and provide safe, trusted, socially inclusive, accessible, welcoming and non-threatening locations, which play a key role in addressing deprivation and inequality.
- 1.7 2023 has been a landmark year for Manchester across the sport, physical activity, health and movement space.
- 1.8 Fundamental to providing the encouragement and inspiration to Manchester to move more, is Manchester Active's ability to work effectively with a broad range of partners. This year, in support of that approach, House of Sport Manchester opened as home to 14 National Governing Bodies (NGBs) and sporting federations, extending the Sport England strategy as a fifth 'house' alongside Lilleshall, Loughborough, Bisham and London, each supporting local needs, opening access to offices, co-located spaces and hybrid working environments, supporting a network and partner approach environment.
- 1.9 Manchester Active's core role is recognising that sport, physical activity and movement is a powerful agent of change for all people in Manchester. As a city, we understand its role in improving the physical and mental health of all Mancunians, supporting the economy, reconnecting communities and rebuilding a stronger society for all.

- 1.10 *Uniting the Movement* is Sport England's 10-year vision to transform lives and communities. A vision that Manchester Active share and support by working closely with those with influence to collaborate and reimagine how sport, physical activity and movement will remain central to the lives of everyone, increase participation, and improve lives.
- 1.11 Manchester is a great city, however not all residents have the same opportunities to be healthy and well, or to reach their full potential. This results in health inequalities – the preventable gaps between people with the worst health and people with the best health.
- 1.12 *Making Manchester Fairer* (MMF) is the city's new action plan to tackle that gap over the next five years, and with a view to the long term. The plan is based on what Manchester's residents and staff from a range of organisations and agencies have told us in recent years, as well as the evidence of what works from research and experts on health inequalities.
- 1.13 There are 8 MMF themes that the city have identified to tackle health inequalities. Of those 8, Manchester Active supports and contributes significantly to the following 5;
- Giving children and young people the best start in life
 - Preventing illness and early death from big killers – heart disease, lung disease, diabetes, and cancer
 - Cutting unemployment and creating good jobs
 - Improving our environment and surroundings in the areas where we live, transport, and tackling climate change
 - Strengthening community power and social connections
- 1.14 To achieve the best model to enable great outcomes for residents, Manchester Active influences our strategic partners who include Manchester City Council (MCC) colleagues, Sport England, Public Health England, NHS, UK Sport, National Governing Bodies, Universities, operators, clubs and community groups and VCSE communities to ensure through sport, physical activity, health and movement that no Mancunian is left out in the cold, and that Manchester is a fairer place for all.
- 1.15 The *Active Lives Survey* is carried out by Ipsos, an independent survey agency, on behalf of Sport England and the Office for Health Improvement & Disparities. The survey provides a world-leading approach to gathering data on how adults and children engage with sport and physical activity and supports anyone working in the sector with key data to help understand attitudes and behaviours around sport and activity, giving a unique and comprehensive view of how people are getting active.
- 1.16 The latest Active Lives Survey Adults results were published in April 2023. As you will see below Manchester has continued to improve across two of the three target areas with a slight drop in the Fairly Active respondents. The results are positive as Nationally both Mid and Most deprived areas are still struggling to bounce back to pre-pandemic levels whereas Manchester, has achieved gains in two of the 3 groups. It is clear however that there is still more

to do in continuing the journey of increasing active lives and widening access to tackle under-representation and increase activity rates.

- The number of **Active** (150+ minutes per week) residents in Manchester has continued to increase over the past 3 year (60.6%, 61%)
- The number of **Fairly Active** (30-149 minutes per week) residents has dropped this year after a positive increase in the previous year (12%, 10.6%)
- The number of **Inactive** (less than 30 minutes per week) residents has increased this year after a positive drop in the previous year (27.4%, 28.4%)

1.17 For Active Lives Children and Young People survey, unfortunately, Manchester like many of the other GM Boroughs, had insufficient responses from schools to generate specific locality data. As a result, Greater Manchester data has been published to report on trends of activity levels of children and Young People.

1.18 The data shows that **Inactivity** has risen to 32.2% (up from 28.7%) in GM since last year after a promising reduction the previous year (down from 36.6%) but this reflects the general trend across the Northwest. Whilst the number of **Fairly Active** in GM showed a slight improvement, up 0.2% from the year before. The number of **Active** in GM has dropped to 45.6% (down from 49.3%) from the previous year.

1.19 Although the data isn't specific to Manchester, it highlights the necessity of taking action to improve the activity levels of Children and Young People. Challenges within the sector, such as the cost of living, have been proven to contribute to the declining trend in activity levels for this demographic. Consequently, Manchester Active is focusing efforts on initiatives like the Holiday Activity Fund and School Holiday Activity program to tackle this issue. Further information is available in Theme 2. Additionally, collaborative efforts with Sport England are underway to enhance engagement methods and improve response rates from schools in Manchester for more localized data

Delivering the City's Sport and Physical Activity Strategy in 2024

1.20 Below provides a visual representation of the strategic themes;

- Our vision
- Our 3 priority themes (1-3)
- Our 5 enabling themes (4-8)



[See Appendix 1.](#)

2.0 Annual Report - Manchester Sport and Physical Activity Strategy

- 2.1 Underpinned by one of the most extensive public consultations the city has ever undertaken, engaging with thousands of residents, partners and multiple stakeholders, the sport & physical activity strategy is a culmination of the overwhelming responses received.
- 2.2 A strategy that is a long-term vision for Manchester, by Manchester, split into 3 priority delivery themes and 5 enabling themes.
- 2.3 This report provides an annual summary of how Manchester Active work with the sport, health and physical activity sectors in a collaborative manner to deliver against our 8 interrelated themes.



ENCOURAGE RESIDENTS TO MOVE MORE

- 2.4 The remit of this theme is to encourage all residents to move more, particularly those with poor health and increasing regular activity for all people falling short of the recommended levels contributing to improved health outcomes.
- 2.5 This year, Manchester Active collaborated with Manchester Integrated Care Partnership (MICP), Manchester Local Care Organisation (MLCO) and Manchester Foundation Trust (MFT) Community Respiratory Teams to develop a model and new approach to supporting people living with COPD (Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease).
- 2.6 The pathway for people living with COPD is a structured exercise and education programme called pulmonary rehabilitation, in which 90% of patients who complete the programme experience improved exercise capacity or increased quality of life. However, Manchester's take-up is <13%. The partnership aims to increase uptake and offer an alternative pathway called 'Breathe Better.'
- 2.7 'Breathe Better' is coordinated by Manchester Active physical activity and movement officer. It builds on the 'Making Waves Model' developed in Coventry, where COPD care is supported in the community rather than in a clinical setting. Manchester's 'Breathe Better Get Together' allows patients to build a rapport with their doctor or nurse through regular, relaxed interaction while meeting others with the same condition. The model promotes a positive life experience for COPD patients, using community assets, including third-sector organisations.
- 2.8 Get Togethers occur in community spaces and are supported by local physical activity providers, specialist nurses, and physiotherapists from MFT, and patients are referred by MFT and primary care networks. From the Get Togethers, patients ask questions, share experiences, and, when ready, get referred to pulmonary rehabilitation or through Manchester Active Physical Activity Referral Scheme (PARS).

- 2.9 The project is being piloted in Wythenshawe, Higher Blackley & Charlestown, and Gorton & Levenshulme and has been commissioned for a second year.
- 2.10 Manchester Metropolitan University (MMU) Institute of Sport have agreed to explore ways of working with Manchester Active. MMU opened a new City Centre Institute facility, which includes high level analytical equipment with applications from elite to recreational level and is home to academics with expertise across the sport and physical activity sector. Potential projects currently being explored include, but are not limited to:
- Opportunity for collaboration in relation to the 2024 European Capital of Cycling as a catalyst for change
 - Metric and measurement of community intervention in sport, a key area of challenge and opportunity
 - Student opportunities – through Rise Programme, MMU Sport, and placement opportunities and building a pipeline of talent into Manchester
 - Opportunity to share learnings from recent Qatar project
 - Opportunity to engage with Metropolis Think Tank event
 - Opportunity to connect with Health Innovation Manchester
 - Opportunity to look at the social impact of Men's EURO 2028

2.11 **Walking update**

- 2.11.1 The Manchester Walking Audit was widely promoted throughout May and initial findings show that 46 walks take place across Manchester each week, with a good spread across the city. This is c. 2,400 walks per year, demonstrating the significant contribution that walking makes to the city's physical activity offer.
- 2.11.2 Manchester Active Walking Team delivered a Walking Workshop to 100+ people, including residents, VCSE groups, health and community professionals and members of MCC Parks team. The workshop encouraged and facilitated more walking in communities. Those who accessed the workshop continue to be supported further and linked to other walking (and cycling) opportunities and funding.
- 2.11.3 The Greater Manchester Walking Festival took place in May, with 50 Manchester-based walks across the city from over 30 organisations, including many themed walks such as Walk and Talks, teddy bear picnics, nature and art trail walks.
- 2.11.4 The Manchester Active PARS team introduced two non-referral weekly walks for people with long term health conditions to improve aerobic capacity and mobility. 'Nordic Walking' meet weekly from Asda Eastlands walking around green spaces of Phillips Park, Clayton Vale and the Rochdale canal. Suitable for all but in particular people with knee and hip pain, supporting weight management and posture. The 'Velodrome Indoor Walk' at the National Cycling Centre is a flat, circular walk, protected from the weather available all year. Ideal for people lacking in confidence. It's fantastic for walkers with conditions such as COPD (Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease) or PAD (Peripheral arterial disease) where outside walking is challenging. Both walks are highly social, giving people a weekly meeting point to chat and support one another, relieving stress, enhancing mood and creating

friendships.

2.11.5 This year the 'Levenshulme Art Trail' was born. From kingfishers to all things Manchester, the neighbourhood in South Manchester now benefits from hand painted murals by local artist Richard Preston and supported by local residents. Commissioned by the Council, the trail is a collaboration with local partners and community members, creating pride in local nature and helping brighten up the local environment. Residents now get involved with the art and trail, which helps their wellbeing and talking with their neighbours. As part of this project, the trail now features on the Love Exploring App through ongoing partnership work to support walks and trails digitally across the city.

2.12 Cycling update

2.12.1 In December, the City of Manchester was successful in a bid to become the first ever European Capital of Cycling for 2024. A focus on cycling during 2024 and beyond will act as a catalyst to transform and enhance the cycling offer in the city. [See Appendix 2.](#)

2.12.2 The number of bike libraries operating across the city has increased to fourteen, including two operated from Moss Side and Arcadia Leisure Centres. Bike libraries provide local residents with the opportunity to hire a bike and equipment for free.

2.12.3 Manchester Active and GLL are taking part in the Council's e-Cargo bike pilot, twelve colleagues have accessed training to use the bikes to reduce the number of car journeys taken.

2.12.4 Regular led rides are being delivered across the city by several community cycling groups in the city, including Bike Hive, Station South, Moston Walking and Cycling Club and Bee Pedal Ready. British Cycling continue to deliver organised led rides through their volunteer programme including women-only rides.

2.12.5 Opportunities continue to be provided for local community groups, for example, Regain Cycling Group were invited to experience the Velodrome at the National Cycling Centre, demonstrating that only in Manchester can you (in the same year) learn to ride a bike, and then find yourself sharing the world-famous medal-factory track with current and future Team GB Olympic and Paralympic stars. [See Appendix 3.](#)

2.12.6 Fun Cycling sessions recommenced following last year's popularity, with regular weekly attendance by >16 women. Women came from all over north Manchester, different ages, abilities & ethnicities. Some sessions have welcomed 50+ attendees. Attendees stated that when they are riding, they forget about the difficulties of daily life, and riding has significantly helped their mental health.

"It has taken me back to my childhood learning to ride a bike" and others stating, "I've never had the opportunity to learn to ride a bike as it was something only men and boys were allowed to partake in."

2.12.7 PARS update

- 2.12.8 Following the successful TUPE of the Physical Activity Referral Service (PARS) into Manchester Active in December 2022, the 'health' team continue to excel as they expand the successful PARS service to create new pathways that cater for more patients through more effective triaging.
- 2.12.9 Throughout this year PARS has continued to grow its offer and reach across a wide range of health pathways. PARS & pathways referral rate into service has seen a significant increase in 2023, up 75% throughout the year, to 7,269 from 4,132. In the same period, clinical assessment wait times have significantly reduced for all from 8-9 weeks, currently standing at 2-4 weeks. Crucial improvements in key areas for those in need. To see how PARS is making an impact, [see Appendix 4](#).
- 2.12.10 The increase in referral rate has occurred following partnership work with Primary Care Networks, LCO rehabilitation services and social prescribing services. This opened the referral criteria to include an additional five lower risk conditions, which are deconditioning, stress, anxiety, breathlessness, and weight management to give access to the referral service. On top of increasing the referral conditions, this also added an additional referral method. The online portal remains open, which now includes the Manchester Active referral form direct to the GP Gateway system. This links to the GP health record enabling quicker and easier referral routes.
- 2.12.11 To manage the additional referral rate, PARS now offers a triage system dependent on the reason for referral. The high-risk conditions will receive a one-to-one health screening consultation in clinic with advisors in pathway 1. Those with a lower risk condition are fast tracked into activity via pathway 2 sessions by offering information drop-in sessions which are designed to sign post people to local activity sessions. This has allowed us to manage an increased referral rate, by reducing the wait time for a consultation from 8 weeks down to 2 weeks. This is allowing people to access the physical activity opportunities in a timelier manner.
- 2.12.12 The main three reasons for referral to pathway 1 include, Coronary heart disease, Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) and Rheumatoid arthritis. Pathway 2 is seeing a significant increase in referrals, with the top three reasons for a referral being Muscular skeletal (MSK), Weight management and deconditioning.
- 2.12.13 PARS are now able to track users' activity journey via the Refer All system from referral, PARS pathway class through to a community independent class. Delivering 60 weekly PARS instructed pathway 1 sessions across the city consisting of cardiac rehab, pulmonary rehab, stroke rehab and Fall prevention classes. A further 160 weekly physical activity opportunities delivered over 35 venues by 25 community providers are also offered as part of the pathway.
- 2.12.14 The Manchester Active Health & Wellbeing team underwent restructuring to align with the 14 Primary Care Networks (PCNs) across the City with each area now supported by 3 delivery officers and 1 neighbourhood officer. Moving forward the delivery and neighbourhood officers will build closer relationships with each practice within the PCNs, which will enable Manchester Active to add more classes of necessity in each locality.
- 2.12.15 Other examples of best practice include The North Manchester Inclusion Partnership 'Diverse-City Festival' delivered across multiple locations, with the final

immensely successful events in Moston and Boggart Hole Clough. The festival was born out of last year's Cheetham Festival and Africa Day in North Manchester. A collaboration between Neighbourhood officers, Winning Hearts and Minds, North Manchester Inclusion Partnership and Cheetham Festival working with local people to create a festival that featured music, art, fun activities and food.

- 2.12.16 Alongside Manchester City Council and City in the Community (CITC), the Playzone at Ladybarn Park, Withington officially opened. The second to open, following Scotland Hall Road in Newton Heath, both providing access to free community football and youth-led sessions. PlayZones are purpose built recreational areas, with multi-functional football equipment including various sized football pitches and goals, football tennis zones, passing squares, benches, and floodlights. The opening event was attended by local school children from Mauldeth Road Primary School, Executive Member for Vibrant Neighbourhoods, Local Councillors, funders and other stakeholders.
- 2.12.17 Support was provided to Wellmindz, a new mental health group based at St Paul's Church on Victoria Avenue, Blackley to find a second venue for drop-in sessions. The group supports vulnerable adults with mental health needs, who Manchester Active connected to their local Northward housing office to provide a venue that cost nothing or very little that now delivers regular sessions that include yoga, helping relieve stress and anxiety.
- 2.12.18 Winning Hearts and Minds also supported the 'One Health of a Fun Day' event at the Chatterbox Project in Charlestown, North Manchester. Local people attended the event, young and old, to enjoy activities including arts and crafts, clothes shopping, physical activity, plant potting and more, alongside a healthy nutritious lunch. Local organisations such as Morrisso Health, the NHS and more attended to provide advice and help to all.



POSITIVE EXPERIENCES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

- 2.13 The remit of this theme is to support children and young people (aged 0-18) to have the best start in life, to enjoy taking part in sport and physical activity and support their all-round health & wellbeing, helping each local child reach their full potential through sport and physical activity.
- 2.14 In support of Manchester's work with UNICEF UK, to become a Child Friendly City, we're working collaboratively to create a city where children and young people have a meaningful say in, and truly benefit from, the local decisions, services and spaces that shape their lives. This includes representation on the Child Friendly City partnership group, the Neighbourhood Sports Team supporting the launch and consultation events, assisting group discussions with the young people and organisers, with 20 staff completing the Childrens Rights Training programme.
- 2.15 It is recognised that outdoor adventurous activity contributes greatly to health and fitness and continuing participation in outdoor pursuits also encourages the maintenance of a healthy lifestyle into adulthood. Ghyll Head Outdoor Education

Centre, based in the heart of the Lake District National Park is owned by the council and provides high quality outdoor residential education opportunities. The overall usage of the centre continues to grow since the council invested in a £1.4m capital development scheme and transferred the operational management to GLL in 2020.

- 2.16 The return to the site by schools, youth organisations, community groups and charities continues to grow with patronage exceeding 2022 figures by 40%, the number of Manchester schools attending Ghyll Head has increased by 20% since the last full year (pre-Pandemic). Although the increase in usage is a real positive and it is seen across almost all user groups, the additional staffing and financial resources required to facilitate a visit remains a challenge to schools and groups and has resulted in shorter residential visits and in some cases cancellations. Work continues with GLL and Manchester Outdoor Education Trust to ensure schools and groups are aware of funding opportunities to support the prevention of the cost-of-living crisis being a barrier to their participation.
- 2.17 Education Swimming programme continues to go from strength to strength. Across the city demand for swimming lessons remained strong with September receiving the highest number ever, 8407 programme. Even more impressively, this was done by reviewing pool space already being used for lessons and working with operators to reallocate and redesign the current pool space to accommodate more. During the 2022-23 academic year, 10,500 pupils from 149 schools attended weekly lessons. This was the final year that included pupils whose lessons were affected by the pandemic. A collaboration with schools ensured lessons offered top ups to those pupils that had not achieved the national curriculum attainment.

The table below sets out the End of Year National Curriculum Attainment. This is an improvement on 2021-22;

2022-23 End of Year Attainment	% Pupils
25 metres	70%
Swim a range of recognised strokes	51%
Perform a safe self-rescue	60%

The 2023-24 academic year is under way, with the first term complete. Current attainment is positive across all areas and is on average 3% above the attainment levels compared to last academic year, on track to achieve targets.

- 2.18 Dry sports courses have also seen a positive increase in numbers across the city. Numbers on gymnastics, squash, tennis, basketball and athletics courses have increased by 22% since January to 1,037. In addition to this an average of 2,688 participants per week access courses on a casual basis, and hopefully this positive trend will continue in 2024.
- 2.19 In April, to support Making Manchester Fairer, leisure operators launched a 50% swimming lessons discount for children in receipt of free school meals at all Council owned swimming pools across Manchester, achievable through sharing details of pupils eligible for HAF. Take-up has been positive with 597 children taking up this offer. This offer will continue in 2024 alongside work with leisure operators to increase the number of subsidised places available.

2.20 Free Swimming continues to be offered throughout all holiday periods and specific times at weekends at all pools for all children aged 16 and under. Following effective Easter and summer campaigns, targeting schools and existing users along with localised community external advertising, visits increased. In the first 10 months of 2023 there were 32,764 free swimming visits by Manchester children, a 55% increase on 2022 figures. It should also be noted that Abraham Moss Leisure Centre and the Manchester Aquatics Centre re-opened August 2023, which has had a positive impact. It should also be noted that due to the success of the Holiday Activity Fund (HAF) there is substantial free activity offered across the city during the school holidays, but free swimming remains popular with children and visits continue to grow. Work continues to promote and develop the popularity of dedicated weekend sessions across the city.

2.21 Manchester hosts two Junior Parkruns in the city, which is on par with similar sized cities, at Alexandra Park and Platt Fields Park, weekly free 2km runs. There were 89 events, engaging 4,566 young people and 1,495 volunteers. This data doesn't capture adults who participate with their children. The number of Junior Parkruns will be increased in the city in 2024 by identifying and recruiting potential volunteer groups to deliver the events.

2.22 Holiday Activity Funding (HAF)

2.22.1 The Department of Education (DfE) provided local authorities with Holiday Activity Funding (HAF) to develop a free activity and food programme during school holidays. This involves working with clubs and organisations across the city to develop programmes which have a positive impact on the children and young people of Manchester.

2.22.2 Over 28,000 young people benefitted from free school HAF provision, delivering 150,000 meals across 4,888 activity sessions over the school holidays from 112 unique local providers delivering free holiday activity with 93% attendance from Free School Meal (FSM) eligible children, along with developing a Free & Low-Cost Recipe book with a local NHS dietitian, and distributing 20,000 copies to low-income families.

Holiday Period	No of providers	Sessions	Engagements	Unique Participants	Unique participants eligible for FSM	% participants on FSM
Easter HAF	95	1386	33559	8277	7463	88%
Summer HAF	108	3017	97222	15114	14159	94%
February half-term	19	108	2056	856	856	100%
Spring half-term	27	185	5427	2065	1932	94%
October half-term	27	192	7662	2569	2241	87%
TOTAL	112 (unique)	4,888	145,926	28,991	26,651	93% avg.

- 2.22.3 Huge improvements have been made to the booking system, moving Manchester towards all providers using a single system in 2024. One that will link to a database of FSM eligible children, ensuring that only eligible families are able to book. Provisions are also in place to support digitally excluded residents, whereby providers can manually add them to the system.
- 2.22.4 A new HAF application process was trialled, where groups apply in advance for the whole year (Easter, Summer & Christmas). This allowed providers who were successfully awarded funding to plan their annual scheme, and organise facilities, staffing and promotion. Making the process smoother from an administrative perspective for all. This same process will be adopted for all 2024 applications. For an overview of HAF impact, [see Appendix 5](#).
- 2.22.5 Discussions are ongoing to allow local community organisations to use school facilities in the holidays for their Holiday Activity Fund (HAF) provision.
- 2.22.6 Active Streets is a citywide initiative which involves transforming residential streets into community safety zones. Enabling children and adults to take part in sport and activity on their doorsteps, improving social cohesion and community connectivity. 2023 delivered 37 events, including 5 resident-led initiatives across the city in 24 wards, engaging 1,060+ local residents of all ages, providing 120+ hours of hyper-local community delivery. Active Streets works and engages with over 15 partners including Manchester City Council Neighbourhoods, Waste and Recycling and Housing Association's to deliver an increased and more diverse offer. Equipment can also be loaned to encourage regular engagement and to create more resident-led initiatives. After each event, all the relevant contact information in relation to the provision of support to local residents is provided.
- 2.22.7 Winning Hearts & Minds and Manchester Active, in collaboration with City in the Community, held the First 'Kicks' session at The Parkview School Pitch in Miles Platting. The sessions are free, every Wednesday, 5-7pm for ages 8-18. The first session was a huge success and continued throughout the year.
- 2.22.8 'School 50' Gymnastics Programme was introduced in collaboration with City of Manchester Institute of Gymnastics (CMIG) as part of Making Manchester Fairer. Following on from the Sport England funded 'Community Together' initiative, providing 600 primary school children from Gorton and Abbey Hey (areas with lower socio-economic demographics) with a high-quality introduction to gymnastics, with a half price funded offer to attend classes in Gorton, covering fees for 18 weeks including both CMIG and British Gymnastics annual registration fees, representing a saving of £82 per child.

This programme attracted 32 children to join the club with 21 continuing after the reduced fee programme concluded. During a 'cost of living' crisis, it is highly unlikely that any of the participating young people would have been able to start the sport. This provides children with a platform for healthier and more physically active lives, teaching the fundamentals of movement, balance and control, increasing a young person's confidence. The programme also encouraged parents to take their children to 'out of school' activities, especially those with less sporting experience, so the engagement was very encouraging, and plans are in place to

expand the programme. [See Appendix 6.](#)



ACTIVE ADULTS INCREASING AND SUSTAINING ACTIVITY LEVELS

- 2.23 The remit of this theme is about growing participation amongst adults and to ensure that those already participating in sport and physical activity remain doing so.
- 2.24 Manchester Active continue to engage with sports clubs and community organisations within localities across the city, building relationships and providing tailored support to each individual organisation to ensure adults stay active. These organisations work across three areas, North, Central and South Manchester, to form Community Alliances, supported by Neighbourhood Sport Officers. Localised activity sessions are prioritised in wards that do not have sports facilities or where travel presents a barrier and work continues with partners to increase participation opportunities in communities who have proportionally less activity, opening dialogue that brings sporting organisations together to share ideas, work collaboratively and improve the overall sporting / activity offer.
- 2.25 The city's sports clubs continue to face challenges in what are unprecedented times with the energy cost increase and the cost-of-living crisis, with work continuing closely with clubs to influence and ensure they continue to offer sport and physical activity at free or a low cost. In 2023, Manchester Active supported £83,000 of grant funding through the Neighbourhood Sports Fund. Clubs used some of this funding to offer reduced fees or membership for Manchester residents, funding equipment or some small capital projects. Stronger connections were also forged to support clubs to secure external grants from organisations like Sport England and We Love MCR Charity.
- 2.26 In addition to the Neighbourhood Sports Fund, Manchester Active also re-launched the Champions Charter Fund, allowing athletes and coaches to benefit from funding. £20,000 was distributed amongst athletes and £5,000 to coaches. Both athletes and coaches were from a variety of sports, spread across the city.
- 2.27 Overall leisure centre visits across the city increased by 1.5% from 2022 to 2,763,906, in a year where the Manchester Aquatics Centre and Abraham Moss Leisure Centre were welcomed back, both contributing to this improvement. Given lifestyle changes in trends around exercise residents still continue to access the great local facilities provided across the city.
- 2.28 Our operators are continuing to engage with residents to widen access and ensure there is adequate provision for underrepresented groups. Targeted programmes continue and constantly reviewed to meet the needs of all. For example, Abraham Moss Leisure Centre opened in August with a pool programme designed to reflect the needs of the diverse communities in Crumpsall and Cheetham Hill resulting in the delivery of an extensive woman only provision. For more on Abraham Moss Library & Leisure Centre, [see Appendix 7.](#)
- 2.29 Across the 138,709 active participants accessing leisure facilities, 48% have

declared themselves as a female, and 52% male. The data shows female memberships lower for the first time, were historically there has always been more female than male*, however overall usage has improved by 1% and work will continue to deliver additional targeted provision and communication for females.

**male members increase attributed to re-opening of the Velodrome, predominantly used by males. Historically figures show more female users across the community venues and the Elite venues have always had higher male members / users. Work will continue to focus on growing female participation at Elite venues.*

- 2.30 When looking at the number of active participants who are from Black, Asian and other Minority Ethnic backgrounds this currently stands at around 30%. An encouraging figure showing significant progress and reflecting positively the local cultural diversity. It should be noted that c. 21% of users do not disclose ethnicity. Where possible, leisure operators will source missing data to strengthen the accuracy of leisure member base data.
- 2.31 Manchester Active continue to work with 4Global (who manage Sport England's Moving Communities Data) to develop a dashboard to integrate member and usage data from both operators' systems to dissect and review who is accessing the centres. This helps to design centre programmes which are suitable for and representative of the local community.
- 2.32 Manchester now has six weekly parkrun locations, free to run, as the new Philips Park Parkrun opened this year, an additional regular weekly event that helped to improve the geographical spread, opportunities and access across the city. To date there have been 91,754 participants and 7,812 volunteers which increased by 15% from 2022.
- 2.33 The importance of Manchester parks as natural, free spaces in neighbourhoods supporting access to being active is never something that is undervalued by Manchester Active, in particular access to walking, running, and cycling and places to improve mental health. Investment opportunities and legacy from events is regularly leveraged to increase opportunities for participation at a localised level.
- 2.34 After more than a 5-year absence, cricket returned to Cheetham Hill Sports Club, with club committee cooperation and over £9,000 funding from the ECB to install a Non-Turf Cricket Wicket. Rainbow Surprise boys and girls now train and play, along with Lancashire Lions (visually impaired team) who established the club for their home matches and training, whilst Last Man Stands league use the site for regular competitive hardball cricket, generating income for the broader sports club.
- 2.35 Abraham Moss Leisure Centre opened the Northwest's first ever Urban Cricket Centre following an investment of £350,000 from the England and Wales Cricket Board via the Combined Local Authority, securing a 30-hour dedicated weekly cricket programme on site that will support local growth in cricket.
- 2.36 The Manchester basketball strategy welcomed a resurgence at Hulme Park courts, with 250 local WhatsApp members coordinating matches and tournaments. With

Basketball England securing £12,000 investment from national partners 'Wilson' in Manchester to continue to support parks and Friends groups.

- 2.37 Working with Basketball England, funding was secured from international partners 'Universal Studios' to repaint the court and backboards at Platt Fields Park, costing £12,500. Through match-finding from Basketball England and Manchester Parks Investment Fund, over £14,000 was invested in Crowcroft Park basketball court, a facility highlighted locally as being in a very poor state. Along with strengthening relationships with the NGB, this investment provides residents and young people with better facilities, free of charge, for years to come.
- 2.38 Park Tennis delivered significant investment at a number of sites. As well as hosting a major event, tennis users and court bookings increased. In April parks tennis welcomed 18,393 registered users and through a targeted community across summer and run up to the Davis Cup, this increased to 26,459. Ensuring the sites are accessible, fit for purpose and affordable has been key to growth. Alongside the casual play offer through delivery partner 'We Do Tennis' providing programmes that meet the needs of local communities. User numbers increased month on month, proving tennis is not just a summer sport. A volunteer recruitment programme was carried out, recruiting 10 newly qualified coaches who volunteer on a weekly basis.
- 2.39 At the Manchester Sports Awards 2023, Ancoats Run Club took home the prestigious 'Club of the Year' awards. The club is a thriving community-run group in the heart of Ancoats. Initially set up as a way for local residents to socialise, has grown to almost 500 members. Runs take place daily from Monday to Saturday, some attracting 100+ members. Ancoats Run Club is free to join and led entirely by volunteers, providing a variety of runs to suit all abilities. The club has links to Philip's Park Parkrun and has supported a number of charitable initiatives since its inception.
- 2.40 In November, a group of women, who form part of a BAME network in Beswick, started their 'Learn to Swim' classes at East Manchester Leisure Centre. The women had never learned to swim before and wanted to become more physically active in an activity that was low impact. Our Place Partnership Officer working in Ancoats and Beswick engaged with residents to discuss the barriers to move more, identifying a common theme about not being able to swim - due to not having the opportunity to learn as a child or not having the confidence in water. To date, avg. 8 attendees per lesson, 4 sessions delivered with 50% of the women swimming with only 1 aid and 25% without any aids. [See Appendix 8.](#)
- 2.41 The Heart and Soul Community Research began in 2021 where residents were invited along to a series of workshops to look at '*what would make Woodhouse Park a healthier place?*'. From the engagement activities (including workshops, sessions exploring the area, residents engaging with more residents in key venues in the area) a vision was created with 26 final ideas and a core group of residents was formed known as the Heart and Soul Community Researchers. Since then, the community researchers have had an ambition to take forward some of the ideas and turn them into focused projects including a well-being trail and community led regeneration of the local parks. For more on the Place Partnership work in Woodhouse Park, [see Appendix 9.](#)

- 2.42 For the past 3 years, Max Trax (Delamere Park) have been working with residents, MCC, bike track designers and other local stakeholders to develop a plan to create the cycle track for the local community. The funding page has nearly reached half of its target - the aim is to raise £200,000.

Manchester Active collaborated with 'Step up Manchester' to further support the project who will match every £1 donated up to the value of £20,000. Other funding support has also been secured Places to Ride – British Cycling, Manchester City Council, Belsize Garage, Friends of Delamere Park, Two Wheel Claims, One Manchester, Manchester Local Care Organisation, Manchester Settlement, Booker Wholesale Ardwick, The Silly Country Bottle Beer Shop, Morrison's Openshaw, Tesco Droylsden, Sara Davis - Dragons Den, St. Clements Church, Marco Rea's, Design & Print Denton, Anthony Wood Autobodies, Fabrication Technology, Decathlon Eastlands, Bike Right, local donors and fundraisers and local schools.

- 2.43 This summer, the modernisation and operational performance investment improvements at the National Cycling Centre completed, upgrading the track and spectator facilities. This project ensured the iconic can continues to provide world-class training programmes, supporting the stars of the future, and hosting record-breaking championship events.

Stars of the future, like Grace Lister, part of Team GBs Junior Academy Talent Programme, where the upgrades have helped drive Grace further in her cycling journey, along with furthering the development of other athletes who train at the facility and encouraging stars of the future to take to the track and have a go. [See Appendix 10.](#)

- 2.44 Plant Hill Park has recently welcomed football back to the site after a number of years without a recognised club. Blackley FC took on the booking, and Manchester Active worked closely with their committee to support their ambitions to improve the site. Working with Manchester FA, the club secured £19,000+ over a six-year period from the Football Foundation to improve the grass pitch with the club committing to a further 4 years confirming a 10-year site investment. This support also unlocked smaller grants, providing new goal posts and training equipment with work to continue with the club to support their growth and help meet local community demand.



WORLD CLASS SPORT THAT INSPIRES POSITIVE CHANGE

- 2.45 The remit of this theme is about supporting high performance sporting success in the city, ensuring maximum sporting, social and economic benefits in return.
- 2.46 2023 has yet again raised the bar for the delivery of major sporting events in Manchester. A year when over £1.1m was successfully leveraged from UK Sport as part of their major event funding. A strategy and investment that enhances capital investment, increases programmes and provides more full-time coaches underpinning the three priority themes as a positive legacy for neighbourhoods.

- 2.47 The past year was not just a great year for events but reinforced Manchester's status as a true global power of sport as the city picked up fifth place for cities globally recognised for sport, the fifth consecutive year achieving top 10.
- 2.48 Manchester successfully bid to be one of eight host cities for the Women's Rugby World Cup 2025, welcoming 16 teams to play 32 matches across England with matches to be played at Salford City Stadium.
- 2.49 Working closely with colleagues at Manchester City FC, Manchester were successfully secured as a host city and the Etihad Stadium as a venue as part of UK and Ireland bid to host UEFA European Football Championships 2028.
- 2.50 Manchester has a long and proud history when it comes to Para-sport. In July, we were delighted to welcome athletes, supporters, and visitors to the new Manchester Aquatics Centre hosting the 2023 Para Swimming World Championships demonstrating the transformative power of sport, and as a city of 'firsts', why Manchester is always proud to lead the way.
- 2.51 Manchester welcomed international tennis fans to the city centre for the 'World Cup of Tennis' hosting the Davis Cup Group Stages, resulting in the biggest crowds in the event's history as a result of MCC communications and media support providing £306,000 Value in Kind (VIK) media coverage, including digital screens, social media, press releases / picture opportunities.
- 2.52 As a legacy of the Davis Cup, the event secured £483,095 investment across Manchester's parks, transforming 23 tennis courts, which experienced a huge increase in participation, with 20,000 registered online users, over 24,000 tennis courts booked and a range of activities, including weekly organised park tennis sessions offering both free and chargeable sessions for beginners to experienced players with equipment provided, and Local Tennis Leagues to allow regular competition, including a volunteer programme with 10 newly qualified coaches now volunteering weekly. [See Appendix 11.](#)
- 2.53 Other notable sporting successes include Manchester City FC's amazing treble winning season, Manchester hosting the British Weightlifting Championships for the first time, the return of the Tour of Britain Grand Depart, UK Athletics Championships and the UCI 2023 Masters Track World Championships on the brand-new Velodrome. [See Appendix 12.](#)
- 2.54 Following the relaunch of the National Cycling Centre in September, Manchester was announced as the first ever European Capital of Cycling for 2024. An incredible reward for the ongoing collaborative partnership work and vision to promote cycling in the city, sparking an even greater transport revolution to get many more Mancunians into the saddle and to pedal more.
- 2.55 Key pillars of the national sporting & physical activity framework were brought together under one roof with the unveiling of the 'House of Sport Manchester', home to 10 National Governing Bodies and one of five total Sport England 'houses' across the country. Not just physical locations, but shared hybrid working environments tailored to inspire collaboration and the generation of new ideas to influence the sport, health, and physical activity sectors. Having already welcomed the relocation

of the Rugby Football League (RFL) headquarters, Manchester is now the proud home to 14 National Governing Bodies and Sport Federations.

- 2.56 The International Paralympic Committee also announced this year that Manchester will be the new home of both the World Para Athletics and World Para Swimming governing bodies by 2026.
- 2.57 Manchester Active and GLL staff undertook a programme delivered by the acclaimed 'World Academy of Sport' of developmental training to help deliver world class services across Manchester's elite venue portfolio.
- 2.58 The above programme culminated in 3 Manchester facilities receiving the first ever UK Sport accreditation of Elite Training Centres (these being the National Taekwondo Centre, National Cycling Centre and Manchester Aquatics Centre). One of only eight locations in the UK recognised for its contribution to the preparation of elite Olympic and Paralympic athletes, a title that celebrates the city's role in helping athletes achieve their full potential.
- 2.59 Manchester's achievements in 2023 are marks not only of sporting excellence but also an inspiration to generations of young and old Mancunians, helping challenge societal perceptions and promote inclusivity.
- 2.60 2024 is set to be another exciting year for global sport with the Paris Olympic and Paralympic Games with lots of locally based athletes featuring at both including BMX, Track Cycling, Taekwondo, Swimming and Athletics star Keeley Hodgkinson, who'll be aiming for gold. Athletes will also be in the City ahead for the Games, for the UK Olympic Trials and weightlifters for the Para Powerlifting World Cup at the Wythenshawe Forum.
- 2.61 Greater Manchester will once again host the Tour of Britain Cycling, with the Women's event in June. September sees the return of Davis Cup Tennis. Event racing returns to in February to the National Cycling Centre for the National Track Championships. And the city will welcome the return of World Class Squash, with the PSA Manchester Open in May, celebrating the inclusion in the 2028 Olympic programme. Mass participation running will feature the Manchester Marathon in April (now the 2nd biggest in the UK), followed by the AJ Bell Great Manchester Run, both of which will see the City brought to life with runners of all abilities.



ACTIVE PLACES AND NEIGHBOURHOODS

- 2.62 The remit of this theme is about developing more active and sustainable environments and communities.
- 2.63 In 2023/24, Manchester Active made significant progress in delivering Sport and Leisure Capital Priorities, protecting and creating Active Places and Neighbourhoods across all locality areas. Capital programme secured over £100m investment with 20 capital projects live and in development throughout the year and 14 projects completed. The approved programme is a continuation of a long-term

transformational plan to secure a sustainable future for world class assets in East Manchester, wider community leisure estate and community sport facilities across the city; protecting much needed services and supporting significant growth in participation.

- 2.64 In February 2023 the Council adopted the Manchester Active Travel Strategy and Investment Plan (2023-2028), a plan that Manchester Active support and connect to through by influencing around leisure operators active travel plans for all facilities, by adopting MCC staff travel sustainability policy, through piloting eCargo bikes with GLL, representation on the citywide walking & cycling forums and the mandatory inclusion for Active Travel plans for capital investment projects (new build and refurbishments) have to have AT plans.
- 2.65 Station South Cycling Hub is located in Levenshulme and opened in 2022. It has already brought a wide range of community activity to Manchester residents, both in the Levenshulme area and beyond. It is important to Manchester and other partner organisations in delivering the City's Strategic Active Travel Plans. They have received project funding from Transport for Greater Manchester and Cycling UK, as well as Manchester Active and MCC. For more on Station South, [see Appendix 13](#).
- 2.66 The capital programme contributes to the City's growth agenda, and development of sustainable communities, focusing on tackling inequalities in participation in areas of most need in accordance with Making Manchester Fairer Plan.
- 2.67 Projects completed in this period include:
- Abraham Moss Library and Leisure Centre new build launched with state-of-the-art swimming, health and fitness, sports hall, and library facilities
 - The Velodrome, full refurbishment at the National Cycling Centre re-launched facilities with new green credentials – becoming the UK's first all-electric Velodrome
 - House of Sport Manchester, a new administration hub for the sport and physical activity sector
 - Tennis and Football Centre, including renewal of outdoor football pitch and indoor tennis courts to competition standards
 - Platt Fields Park, including upgrades to BMX track and sports lighting – providing a platform for growth in local cycling participation
 - Scotland Hall Road and Ladybarn Park Playzones, including upgrades to multi-sport games areas, new activity spaces and park lighting – encouraging more people to get active
 - National Taekwondo Centre, New Strength, and Conditioning Gym – state of the art facilities, inspiring the next generation of Mancunians
 - Basketball Court Upgrades at Hulme, Platt Fields, and Crowcroft Park sites – supporting access to free high quality sporting facilities
 - Cheetham Hill Cricket Club, New Non-Turf Cricket Wicket – increasing cricket participation in area of high demand
 - Debdale Park Cycle Path – new accessible cycling path widening access to physical activity
- 2.68 Through the Built Facility Strategy, work influences schools with sports facilities not currently open to the community outside of the school day. We're working with 12

schools through the DfE's Year 3 Opening School Facilities funding project (currently in year 2), delivering after-school programmes. The focus on year 3 will support every school to open facilities beyond school hours for community groups and clubs with all encouraged to consider sustainable programmes and target support towards women and girls, disadvantaged and culturally diverse communities, and those supporting special educational needs, disabilities or long-term health conditions.

The table below sets out Manchester schools in receipt of funding;

School	Ward
The East Manchester Academy	Beswick & Clayton
Manchester Communications Academy	Harpurhey
Coop Academy Manchester	Higher Blackley
Our Lady's High School	Higher Blackley
Burnage High School	Burnage
Oswald Road Primary	Chorlton
St Margarets Primary	Whalley Range
Chorlton Park Primary	Chorlton Park
The Willows Primary	Woodhouse Park
Haveley Hey Primary	Sharston
St Paul's High School	Baguley
William Hulme School	Whalley Range

As part of the programme delivery and the ongoing support for schools, a Neighbourhood model will be introduced to support schools around engagement with community clubs and organisations based on their specific facility needs and then partnered with a school.

2.69 Scotland Hall Road, Playzone Project. Following the installation of the new Playzone at Scotland Hall Road Park, City in the Community have worked in partnership with contractor BAM to refurbish the Stirling Centre, the centre sits within the park and provides services to the local community. The refurbishment project included 300 volunteer hours with a value of c. £5,000. All appliances and building materials donated by BAM and other local supply chains c. £48,000 and new flooring in the kitchen area provided by CITC to the value of £3,000. Including new fitted kitchen with modern appliances, for the centre to provide hot meals to young people and families, a new storage area which will support the additional space required for food bank stock. On completion of internal works, CITC and EDS players volunteered their hours, painting the main hall with donated paint to the value of c. £1,000.

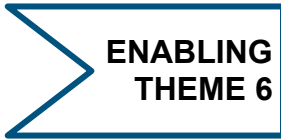
2.70 The approved programme continues to progress at pace, with all remaining live projects targeted for completion in 2024, including:

- Hough End Project – new Leisure Centre Extension, 3G Football Pitches and Car Parking - driving growth in sport and physical activity participation locally
- Manchester Aquatics Centre refurbishment – returning its status as a world class venue with state-of-the-art green technologies
- Citywide Park Tennis Programme – upgrades to 11 park sites, driving

recreational tennis participation across the city and moving facilities to a sustainable operating model in the long term

- Broadway Leisure Centre roof upgrade works – protecting community services
- Wythenshawe Park Pitch Improvements – creation of functional playing fields to support local sport demand

- 2.71 Manchester Active with partners will continue to bring forward capital priority projects in a sustainable manner, in response to current and future community needs identified in Manchester Indoor and Outdoor Sport Facility Strategies and suite of Local Facility Sport Plans. All short-term priorities are identified in Leisure Pipeline Programme or being developed with partners. New projects could be added to the pipeline programme where external investment is brought forward and contributions are secured via S106 agreements.
- 2.72 In the last 12 months, significant progress has been made with c.£1.6m S106 funding secured to deliver local sport strategy priorities to support the replacement and enhancement of sport facilities in Chorlton Park and Cheetham Wards. Once committed sums are available, business cases will be brought forward, and capital projects will be added to the approved programme for delivery.
- 2.73 In addition, Manchester Active have made significant strides in securing and increasing access to school sport facilities. Five Community Use Agreements have been secured through planning to provide new access to indoor and outdoor sports facilities including: Sandilands Primary School (Wythenshawe); Bignor Street/Olive School (North); East Manchester Academy (North); Sawley Road (new school) (North); Dean Trust Ardwick (Central). These CUAs will enable community access to four sports halls and changing rooms, a fitness suite and gym, three junior football pitches, cricket nets, and three MUGAs for Basketball and Netball. Once built, activation plans will be developed and implemented to support local sport development programmes.
- 2.74 Access to facilities will address and support unmet demand for individual sports and implement the strategic sport objectives identified in the Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sport Strategy and Indoor Built Facilities Strategy, contributing to increased physical activity participation across underrepresented groups.
- 2.75 Manchester Pitch Improvement Programme continues to be rolled out in partnership with The FA to improve grass pitch quality across the city. In the last 12-month period, new anchor club arrangements have been secured at Plant Hill Park and Hewlett Johnson Playing Field sites to support demand for match play from Blackley FC and Urban Soccer, respectively. FA grant funding has been secured for both sites to deliver a 6-year annual pitch maintenance programme totalling £64k. The new partnership agreements have led to reinstatement of disused playing fields, supporting to address shortfalls in grass football pitches in North Manchester analysis area and growth of junior teams.



COMMUNICATING WITH AND CONNECTING COMMUNITIES

- 2.76 The remit of this theme places residents at the centre of everything Manchester Active do. Ensuring the right message to the right person in the right way, with a commitment to establishing two-way communication with all residents providing choice supporting sport, physical activity, health and movement in Manchester.
- 2.77 The digital and data project is leading the way to prove that the leisure industry can communicate activities as efficiently and easily as other more well-known and established digital sectors, such as hospitality or travel. The Manchester Active website provides opportunities, in a single digital location, to access and find inspiration for where to experience sport and physical activity. At the end of 2023 both leisure operators committed to a developmental roadmap to complete the work required to allow residents to also book seamlessly across websites.
- 2.78 Over the past 12 months, the platform has welcomed a significantly redesigned website with additional content for health pathways and priority organisational content. Developments introduced additional community provider functionalities supporting 368 independent providers up by 72% from 213 in 2022, capturing data and insight from 43,689 MCRactive Go account holders, a growth of 185% in 2023, who booked 85,059 sessions which was an increase from 16,870 in 2022 of 404%. For an overview of Manchester Active digital infrastructure, [see Appendix 14](#).
- 2.79 A busy year delivered support for the Manchester Active movement, strategic themes, teams and key stakeholders and partners with a significant focus on Making Manchester Fairer by prioritising and continuing to promote accessible free or low-cost activities throughout the year. Key messages included the promotion of cycling, walking, swimming and running as entry-level activities for all, the Holiday Activity Fund (HAF) programme including the production of a unique low-cost, nutritionally balanced recipe book alongside school holiday campaigns which included social media takeover days and a visit from the Permanent Secretary of DfE, whilst also increasing awareness of Free-Swimming provision for 16+under and 60+over.
- 2.80 25+ major events were hosted across all 12 months of year requiring varying levels of Marcomms. The capital programme team were supported with multiple significant openings, refurbishments and improvements, highlights included the Manchester Aquatics Centre, National Cycling Centre, Abraham Moss Library & Leisure Centre, Chorlton Tennis Courts, 2 x PlayZones and the National Taekwondo Centre Gym.
- 2.81 Many different and diverse monthly campaigns were delivered in support of key organisation and city priorities and industry or national initiatives on both a local and city-wide basis. With key messaging updated to ensure relevant to Manchester's priority audiences. Including International Women's Day, Black History Month, Skate Chorlton Crowdfunder, Children's Mental Health Week, HAF, In Focus Series, LoadsToDo, Find Your 5, Rhythm of Manchester, National Walking Month, Pride,

SEND initiatives, National Play Day, World Kindness Day, Men's Health Week and International Day of People with Disabilities.

- 2.82 To engage with the key priority audience, Manchester Active utilised national and international days to celebrate certain Manchester communities. For example, over Black History Month, a special 'In Focus' interview series happened celebrating inspirational Black people from Manchester. Over the month a number of people from Manchester black community were interviewed, to help them tell their story and share the work they do in their communities.
- 2.83 Over International Women's Week, an 'In Focus' interview took place with Manchester Laces, a local LGBTQ+ football team to discuss the changing representation in football, the barriers and obstacles still in place, and what the future holds. Shared publicly across Web and social channels. Interviews also happened with Belinda & Anna, two women who work in different areas of the cycling sector, about improving cycling representation and their experience working in different areas of the cycling sector. Shared publicly across Web and social channels.
- 2.84 Thanks to the legacy programme of the UEFA Women's Euro 2022 tournament, 2023 realised the lasting social impact on female participation in football. The Tournament raised the profile of the women's game in Manchester, with demand increasing from women and girls, not only to participate but also to join the workforce which includes a number of newly qualified female coaches and referee's this season. Female participation in football has seen a fantastic rise of 50% (over 2 seasons) across Manchester, and thanks to a female specific course delivered last summer, the city now has 20 newly qualified female match officials refereeing across grassroots football (33% increase). There are now 4,772 registered female players in Greater Manchester split across 4 leagues; Greater Manchester Women's League (1,009), Manchester Women's Flexi-League (605), South Manchester Girls League (2,397) and North Manchester Girls League (953) and 99 clubs in Manchester, from U7 to open age, with female teams.
- 2.85 During the Summer Holidays and October Half-Term, Manchester Active, working in partnership with GLL, hosted an inclusive sport and physical activity taster for families with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). Numerous families attended, enjoying a mixture of Cycling, Boccia, Rugby, Basketball, Athletics, Goalball, Blind Baseball & Tennis. All the sports were delivered by sports clubs and organisations from Manchester who currently deliver regular SEND specific sports provision. It is hoped that the attendees left feeling inspired and informed to join some of these regular activities. Due to the success of both events Manchester Active plan to run a series of these events across Manchester throughout 2024.
- 2.86 Content creation and capture has also improved significantly over the year. With new equipment and an improved focus from teams in support of highlighting the work they deliver and capturing relevant and representative content, the internal image library has grown extensively, alongside the ability to control the production and output, for an example see [Skate Chorlton Crowdfunder link](#).
- 2.87 Across digital and social platforms Manchester Active have welcomed over 115,000 visitors to their website, 74% from a mobile device and the Activity Finder viewed

186,000 times, regularly engaging directly with relevant content to over 10,000 followers across key social platforms with a reach of over 700,000. [See Appendix 15.](#)



REALISING THE POTENTIAL OF THE WORKFORCE

- 2.88 The remit of this theme is about developing a future fit for purpose workforce, with skills to support the least active to get active, to grow and sustain interest in sport, and to support elite success, providing employability skills, creating jobs, and individual benefits to those engaged.
- 2.89 Working with MCRVIP for Sport Volunteers Manchester Active engaged with developers and project lead to ensure new users answer specific questions regarding type of volunteering opportunities and how they heard about MCRVIP. This allowed better insight into volunteers and helped providers to tailor opportunities. Including supporting a new App development to provide a more modern user-friendly platform and trialled a new digital DBS function providing volunteers more opportunities on projects where a DBS is required.
- 2.90 Learn to Ride sessions in Cheetham were provided and funded following on from the Cycle Nation community cycling research study (with British Cycling / University of Glasgow) with significant interest from, mainly South Asian, women wanting to learn to ride. 38 women attended (126 attendances, above average compared to TfGM's public courses). The training was very mixed in ability, from those who couldn't ride at all, to more confident riders. Of these women one borrowed a bike and three purchased their own bikes with many of the women keen to join in discussions about future steps for community cycling in Cheetham. The study formed recreational cycling group 'Regain' who, ahead of the holy month of Ramadhan, attended the National Cycling Centre for a taster session on the velodrome track.
- 2.91 The volunteer workforce training offer has continued to be delivered over the past 12 months. Courses around Neurodiversity and two Buddle workshops have taken place with a total of 52 attendees over the Q3 period, with an additional 66 attendees attending safeguarding, first aid and mental health first aid courses over Q1 & Q2. With a core focus over the past few months has been to finalise courses and workshop offered for 2024 with 17+ courses available to book to date in addition to the Manchester Young Leaders programme which is going to be launched in Q4 across the city working with over 45 young people over a 12-month period.
- 2.92 Workforce Survey completed and circulated to Manchester sports clubs, VCSE sector and holiday activity providers, receiving 138 responses. The feedback allowed us to develop a volunteer-led course and workshop offer for 2024. Working with Sport England, StreetGames and various other training providers Manchester Active created a comprehensive training package for volunteers to develop skills and knowledge. All courses and workshops are low cost or free, covering a wide range of topics including safeguarding, first aid, how to recruit and retain volunteers, mental health first aid and neurodivergent workshops.

2.93 In 2023, Winning Hearts & Minds supported a number of Manchester Teenage Market events. The Teenage Market gives young people a free platform to highlight their creative talents. It's all about supporting the next generation of market traders, with each event a perfect opportunity for markets to connect with their town's population of young people, by providing a platform for them to be entrepreneurial, trial new business ideas and sell creative products. There were a total of 4 events, inviting over 40 Young Trader's and 16 performers to pop-up locations across Manchester.

2.94 Manchester Active continually look for ways to get more for Manchester people through the work delivered to ensure a boost for the local neighbourhood economies, minimising impact on the environment and generally contributing to keeping Manchester ticking and growing.

2.95 During the year, Manchester Active staff have undertaken volunteering hours for the following activities:

- Lally Allotment Clean Up and Food Bank Support: 11 Staff (Business Development and Central Support Teams) spent the day at the Lally Allotment helping clean-up to get ready for the winter. The staff also helped unload a delivery for the food bank and unpack it onto the shelves
- We Love Manchester Three Peaks Charity Walk: Three staff members took part in the Three Peaks Charity Walk
- Dragon Boat Race: Eight staff members took part in the Moet Dragon Boat Rade at Debdale Park
- Supported both the Taekwondo GP and the Para Swimming World Champs
- Supported St Dunstan's RC School
- Volunteering as a School PTA member at a school within Manchester
- One staff member is on the Board of Step-Up Manchester

2.96 Cycle September, collectively Manchester Active clocked up an impressive 654 miles from 93 individual rides. 58 transport trips were made, reducing carbon emissions (when switched from car usage).

2.97 Across the team many staff members take part in volunteering in their personal time, which is not claimed against their Volunteering Hours, so far this year this has included:

- Blood Donations
- Beavers and Scouts Volunteers
- Football Coaches
- Hosting a Ukrainian Family
- Manchester Basketball Club Board Member
- NW Counties Squash Committee
- School Governor (Greater Manchester)
- Supporting local events (carnivals / MacMillan Coffee Mornings / Pensioner Groups)
- Volunteering in local community groups
- Volunteering at local parks

2.97.1 Leisure Operators Workforce and Volunteering Development

2.98.1 Leisure operators GLL developed a programme of free to access training courses to assist with removing barriers around costs and access to qualifications to get into employment for residents. Courses included First Aid, NPLQ and STA Swim Teachers. GLL committed to delivering 1 targeted training course / programme in the community per quarter, to date 9 NPLQ courses have been delivered with 109 people accessing free places, in addition STA Swim Teacher qualifications have been delivered to existing workforces to improve their career development and First Aid training delivered for local sports clubs and providers.

2.98.2 East Manchester Leisure Centre hosted 4 free 'Cookson First Aid' sessions, which will continue into 2024. These sessions deliver lifesaving first aid training for families in the local community.

2.98.3 GLL also deliver a Trainee Management course and this year the Trainee Managers introduced 2 initiatives for Christmas, 150 Christmas cards were written by staff across the partnership and taken to Acacia Care Home in New Moston for the elderly residents where residents greatly received them. The second initiative was a toy collection at the annual communications day where over 50 toys were donated to local Children's Society in Levenshulme.

2.98.4 GLL also successfully applied for £10,500 funding for the Active Kindness programme, to create a clear pathway for volunteers to support activities in leisure centres. Volunteers have been invaluable in supporting events and holiday programmes during 2023 and the programme ensures volunteers develop new skills whilst in a rewarding setting which could lead to employment.

2.98.5 Everyone Active at Wythenshawe Forum offer complimentary memberships to people living with Parkinsons and their carers. The more physically active people with Parkinson's are, the easier it is to live well and manage the complexities of the condition. There are currently over 30 people on this membership at the centre.

2.98.6 Wythenshawe Forum also committed to the continuation of a partnership with Manchester College, providing sport and physical activity sessions for those with additional needs. The aim is to extend the programme in the future to include swimming as well as sport hall activities.



CONTRIBUTING TO A ZERO CARBON FUTURE

2.99 The remit of this theme is about creating a low carbon culture with partners & communities, taking action and evolving practices to make sure Manchester Active respond decisively to the climate change emergency and achieve targets to become a zero-carbon city by 2038.

2.100 A refreshed Manchester Active Climate Change Action Plan (CCAP) has been developed with support from MCC Zero Carbon Team. The CCAP has been re-aligned to follow on from MCC's CCAP 2023 -25 to ensure it aligns with the workstream. The refreshed plan reinforces the commitment as an organisation to take responsibility for emissions as well as supporting partners and stakeholders across the City to play their full part. A newly developed Governance Structure is now in place setting out leadership against the five workstreams which is supported by a working group that incorporates leisure operators.

Achievements against The Five Workstreams are;

Buildings and Environment

The Council's decarbonisation programme has seen over £20m invested in carbon reduction technologies across the leisure estate including, but not exhaustive, solar PV's, Ground & Air Source Heat pumps. Reduction of energy use is also supported by smarter operations across the estate and the introduction of the Stark energy monitoring system. From January to November 2022 the leisure estate produced 4.459 tCo2. When looking at the same period in 2023 this figure has risen to 4.801 tCo2, this is a 7.6% increase, however the estate reopened 3 centres following extensive refurbishments in 2023 and Broadway has been added to the estate after being under alternative management for 8 years which contributes 0.342 tCo2 generated. It should be noted Broadway is an Edwardian pool in need of decarbonisation measures, there is currently a bid into the Sport England Swimming Pool Support fund to install much needed measures.

The National Cycling Centre is showing a huge reduction in gas and electricity usage since decarbonising measures were installed, in quarter 2 the centre has used less than 10,000 Kw of gas and in the same period last year it used over 128,000 Kw, considering the velodrome was closed for refurbishment last year that is a 90% reduction in gas usage. The new solar PV's have generated 102,310 Kw (saving 22.73 tCo2) reducing the need to draw energy from the grid to operate the newly electrified velodrome which makes the facility carbon zero.

Efficient and Effective Products and Services

Developed a framework to procure from suppliers who have sustainability plans & have committed to zero carbon initiatives and will support activity providers in 2024 who do not have these plans in place.

Influence and Educate Staff & Stakeholders

All staff have completed carbon literacy training which empowers them to influence partners & stakeholders, and the new governance structure will ensure CCAP is embedded in all workplans.

Officers worked with UK Sport & British Swimming to monitor the sustainability impact of the World Paralympic Swim Champs, the assessment monitored clear areas to measure sustainability including energy use, travel,

waste & recycling. The report gives us a baseline for sustainability for major events delivered at the Aquatics Centre. [See Appendix 16.](#)

Create a Sustainable Waste and Recycling Structure

Operators continue to monitor waste & recycling rates; with a 2023 focus on reducing waste. They have committed to being single use plastic free in 2024 which has already been introduced across catering outlets.

House of Sport Manchester offices have been refurbished and rather than buy new, through a partnership with Sport England unused furniture was upcycled from offices and redistributed to other areas of the business.

Travel and Transport

Introduced e-cargo bikes at House of Sport Manchester, along with bike ability training for staff to travel between meetings.

Established four bike libraries at Arcadia Leisure Centre, Moss Side Leisure Centre, Station South and NACRO funded through TfGM for residents to book and use, all bikes are constantly booked out.

Travel Guides are promoted on operator websites to encourage users to use public transport or walk / cycle to centres.

A number of leisure buildings car parks have been identified in MCC's strategy for electric vehicle charging points which will be rolled out in 2024, allowing residents to charge vehicles whilst accessing leisure facilities.

3.0 Conclusion and Next Steps

- 3.1 2024 will be another progressive year for Manchester Active as they continue to support making Manchester fairer for all residents, building on Manchester's global reputation as a city alive with sport, assisting hundreds of clubs, groups, volunteers and organisations, supporting thousands of patients with long term health conditions and encouraging and inspiring all Mancunians to move more each day.
- 3.2 We're excited to help the city as the first European Capital of Cycling, and support all Manchester born, trained or connected athletes ahead of Paris Olympic and Paralympics, capitalising on the inspiration these events provide the next generation, as Manchester welcomes back an improved Hough End Leisure Centre to grow participation, and return the status of the Manchester Aquatics Centre as a world class venue with state-of-the-art green technologies, further improving the tennis programme at 11 park sites ahead of the Davis Cup returning, and continue to grow the support for the HAF activity and PARS interventions needed by those with long-term health conditions to get or remain active.
- 3.3 There are several areas that are recognised as current challenges that need focus and prioritisation.

- Strengthening our digital platform to enable residents to find and easily access activity opportunities across the city.
- Intensifying our initiatives aimed at encouraging Manchester residents to lead more active lifestyles, with the goal of overcoming challenges and advancing within the Active Lives Framework.
- Growing and influencing local health networks to ensure a greater integration of our physical leisure services with healthcare services at a local level.
- Continuing the momentum to maintain and support our infrastructure and places and addressing anticipated lottery funding budget challenges.
- Supporting and driving activity investment and opportunities our parks and green spaces.

3.4 The following next steps are proposed:

3.4.1 12-month review of annual progress (February 2025)

4.0 Appendices

Appendix 1 – Our Vision

Appendix 2 – ACES European Capital of Cycling Bid (linked)

Appendix 3 – MCR Active Regain

Appendix 4 – Physical Activity Referral Service (PARS)

Appendix 5 – Holiday Activity Fund

Appendix 6 – City of Manchester Institute of Gymnastics (CMIG)

Appendix 7 – Abraham Moss Library and Leisure Centre

Appendix 8 – Place Partnerships, Beswick

Appendix 9 – Heart and Soul Community Research

Appendix 10 – National Cycling Centre

Appendix 11 – Davis Cup

Appendix 12 – Major Sports Events Delivered in 2023

Appendix 13 – Station South

Appendix 14 – Digital Update

Appendix 15 – MCR Active Digital Annual Report

Appendix 16 – Manchester 2023 Allianz Para Swimming World Championships Event Impact Report

LIST OF INCLUDED ACRONYMS

BAME (Black, Asian and other Minority Ethnic)
CCAP (Climate Change Action Plan)
CITC (City in the Community)
CMIG (City of Manchester Institute of Gymnastics)
COPD (Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease)
CUAs (Community Use Agreements)
DfE (Department for Education)
ECB (The England and Wales Cricket Board)
EDS (Elite Development Squad Players)
FSM (Free School Meals)
GLL (Greenwich Leisure Limited)
HAF (Holiday Activity & Food Programme)
LCO (Local Care Organisation)
LDP (Local Delivery Partnership)
MCC (Manchester City Council)
MCRVIP (Manchester Volunteer Inspire Programme)
MFT - Manchester Foundation Trust)
MICP (Manchester Integrated Care Partnership)
MLCO (Manchester Local Care Organisation)
MMF (Making Manchester Fairer)
MMU (Manchester Metropolitan University)
MSK (Musculoskeletal Health)
MUGAs (Multi-Use Game Area)
NACRO (National Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders)
NGB (National Governing Bodies)
NHS (National Health Service)
NPLQ (National Pool Lifeguard Qualification)
PAD (Peripheral Arterial Disease)
PARS (Physical activity Referral Programme)
PCNs (Primary Care Networks)
PP (Place Partnership)
SEND (Special Educational Needs & Disabilities)
Solar PV's (Solar Photovoltaic Cells)
STA (Swimming Teachers Association)
TfGM (Transport for Greater Manchester)
TUPE (Transfer of Undertakings Protection of Employment Rights)
UCI (Union Cyclist Internationale)
UEFA (Union of European Football Associations)
VCSE (Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise)
WHM (Winning Hearts & Minds)