

Our Manchester Strategy 2025

Title page

Contents page

Foreword

The original Our Manchester Strategy was launched in 2016 and since then we have collectively made huge progress in becoming a place that Mancunians are proud of, a city that provides great opportunities, and which is admired and respected around the world.

This new Our Manchester Strategy sets the overarching priorities for the city over the next ten years. These priorities were chosen by *you*, the many thousands of people who in 2024 told us about your ambitions for the city. It is deliberately ambitious, because we know that you are ambitious for Manchester's future, and want to see people and organisations in Manchester working together to make these aspirations a reality.

You have told us that Manchester is a diverse and inclusive city full of people who are creative, productive, kind and supportive. As we embark on the next ten years of Manchester's journey, we must continue to build on our unique strengths to become a safe, clean, green, well-connected, modern, must-see city where every resident knows they belong. One where all Mancunians feel the benefit of economic growth and changes to come.

You've said what you want Manchester to be. **Let's make your** brilliant ambitions inspire us all to come together to create new and different ways to build the best possible **future for our city** in the next ten years.

Councillor Bev Craig

Leader of Manchester City Council

XX XX 2025 [to be dated on launch]

Manchester in 2025

A lot has happened in the last ten years and Manchester has made good progress towards our original goal of joining the top-flight of world-class cities.

Between 2015 and 2024 Manchester's population increased by an estimated 92,000, meaning that 627,700 people now call the city their home. We are a more diverse city, with over 43% of residents describing themselves as belonging to a minority ethnic community. We are better educated, with 77.3% of our people having a college level qualification and far fewer people having no qualifications. Our City is also wealthier and has the fastest growing economy in the county. Since 2015 the city has added 103,000 new jobs and our residents' median annual wages have increased from just under £25,000 to over £32,500 in 2024.

In the last ten years the city has also overcome some huge challenges. The Manchester Arena bombing in May 2017 was a horrendous tragedy, but also showed a city united in grief that supported those affected by the attack and the families who had lost loved ones. The COVID-19 Pandemic was a global event that hit particularly hard in Manchester, and while we are still recovering from some of its effects, the city also proved to be remarkably resilient, and has bounced back stronger than ever.

Manchester has achieved some great successes:

- More schools that are good or outstanding
- Hosting major national and international sporting events, cultural and business events
- Investing in people through becoming a Real Living Wage City, a United Nations City of Lifelong Learning and a Child Friendly City.
- Investing in culture through new venues like HOME, Aviva Studios and CO-OP Live, updating the Whitworth, Manchester Jewish Museum and Contact Theatre, and establishing the Manchester Cultural Awards.
- Investing in the wider city through the regeneration of places like Ancoats, Beswick, Collyhurst, Miles Platting and New Islington.
- Being recognised as one of the best places in the world to visit, work or set up a business.

What makes you proud of Manchester?

In spring 2024 we gathered over 10,000 responses to this question from people across the city.

We've been careful to listen to as many voices as possible – including those who say they aren't proud of their city (yet, or any longer). We've also listened to how different groups and communities value different things about our city's life and character.

By listening to everyone, we can shape a future Manchester that we can all feel part of and proud of.

Here's a flavour of what cropped up most:

"This city's got heart."

The **people** – their welcoming approachable character, open-minded attitude, and how we pull together when it's tough.

"Art that's everywhere, for everyone ... music culture and football vibes."

Our **impact** on culture, music, sport and creative industries.

"A proper melting pot."

The **mix** of languages and ethnicities living together, accepting and celebrating what's different.

"Adapting to the new ... with world-leading history."

The **growing**, modern, busy, public transport-fed, innovative vibe of the city – but with credit to our pioneering industrial past.

"Different people together ... being accepted for what you are."

Opportunities – for all generations, faiths, lifestyles and cultures to get on, and do well.

"Punching above its weight."

An **international** reputation for the blue/red sporting rivalry, music, top-rank universities and as a global business HQ.

"We're hard working – and we've accomplished a lot."

Economic growth outpacing other UK cities, balancing and complementing the capital's dominance, showing how regional leadership works for the whole nation.

But the most common responses – in all the thousands we collected – were about our people: 'kind', 'helpful', 'supportive', 'resilient', 'amazing people who care about each other'.

And if that makes **you** proud, so it should! Welcome to the future Manchester.

The big challenges

While we have had a lot of success, we know there are still some big challenges for Manchester that we need to overcome.

1. Inequality

We need to work together to close the gap between Manchester residents who are doing well and those who are not. Some of our biggest gaps are between things like how healthy people are, how long they live, and how much money they earn. The Our Manchester Strategy aims to improve the lives of *everyone* in the city, not just those who are already doing well, and closing these gaps will mean that we are all better off overall.

2. Prosperity

We also need to work together to make sure that Manchester people *feel* a positive improvement in their lives. This could **mean feeling** happier or healthier, having more money to spare, or enjoying living here more. We need to connect more Manchester residents to the opportunities in **their** city. The Our Manchester Strategy aims to take everyone in the city on the next phase of **Manchester's** journey together.

3. Housing

Our growing population has created huge opportunities but has also put more pressure on housing in the city. We have an ambitious strategy to build many more homes, many of which will be affordable and low carbon. We are also working to end homelessness in the city. The Our Manchester Strategy aims are to have enough good quality and affordable homes, in attractive neighbourhoods that are well maintained with good facilities, public services and green spaces.

4. Climate Change

Climate change is a global challenge but Manchester has an important role to play in tackling it. We have already adopted an ambitious target to be a zero-carbon city by 2038 and have worked hard to reduce our carbon emissions. At the same time we know that some of the effects of climate change will be felt here in our city and that we must be prepared to manage these effects. This needs to be done in a way that is fair to everyone, and which has wider benefits to our city through improved health, cleaner air or better public spaces. The Our Manchester Strategy aims to reduce our carbon emissions and prepare for a changing climate.

5. Safe, clean and green neighbourhoods

You have told us how strongly you feel about the places you live in, but that our neighbourhoods are not always places that you feel proud of. We know that we need to make sure that all parts of the city are clean, green and well-kept, and that they are places that you can feel safe in whenever you are out and about. The Our Manchester Strategy aims to improve our neighbourhoods, and to make sure they are looking their best and feel safe and secure.

Our Vision

[Short version/strapline to be developed with document design and creative]

After the best start in life, Manchester people in 2035 will enjoy more healthy, happier years. Mancunians – adopted and home-grown – will continue to be proud and celebrate their city. They will feel valued and respected, supported to play their part in the life of the city, using their unique strengths to make a city that we are all proud of.

Manchester people will share in a growing economy that provides better jobs and prospects; developing and enjoying new technology that boosts our public services and quality of life.

Manchester will be an even more must-see city, with amazing things to do. Our neighbourhoods will be clean and green, with good, affordable homes and good public services. Mancunians will feel safer indoors, outdoors and online.

We will stay on track to reduce Manchester's carbon emissions and manage the impacts of climate change. Our public transport will be greatly improved, quick, cheap, clean and reliable.

Our world-renowned sport and culture will attract global recognition and bring many people to our city, and it will be for everyone, everywhere across the city.

Our Priorities

Manchester will focus on twelve things for the next ten years. These priorities are grouped into three themes:

Our People is about everyone who calls Manchester home, making sure that they can live their best lives.

Our Neighbourhoods is about all the places we live, making sure that they are places we can be proud of.

Our City is about the things which will secure our future, which make us one of the best places in the world.

Our people will:

1. *Be supported to be happy, healthy and active from childhood to adulthood.*
2. *Be proud of our diversity, feel valued, included and that they belong.*
3. *Be supported to participate, engage and influence decisions about their communities and neighbourhoods.*
4. *Get a great education and be able to learn new skills as they grow older.*
5. *Be safe in person and online.*

All our neighbourhoods will:

6. *Have enough good quality and affordable homes.*
7. *Be attractive, well maintained with good facilities, public services and green spaces.*

Our city will:

8. *Have a growing economy that provides jobs and opportunities for everyone.*
9. *Adapt to a changing climate and rapidly reduce our carbon emissions.*
10. *Have world-renowned things for everyone to see and do, showcasing our talent for sport and culture.*
11. *Have transport that gets you where you want to go, quickly, cheaply, safely and cleanly.*
12. *Embrace technology to achieve the city's aims, safely and ethically.*

What these priorities mean in practice [example text only – further detail to be worked up for final version]

Priority 1: Our people will be supported to be happy, healthy and active from childhood to adulthood.

For many years the health of people in Manchester has generally been worse than the England average. This priority is about making sure that people in Manchester, whether they are young or old, feel and are healthier and happier, and that the difference between those who are healthiest and happiest and those who are not, isn't because of their race, sex or the amount of money they have.

- There are lots of things we are doing to make this priority happen, working together between the City Council, the NHS and other services:
- Improving physical and mental health and wellbeing, preventing ill-health and addressing health inequalities, so that people live longer in good health wherever they are in the City.
- Improving access to health and care services, so that people can access the right care, at the right time, in the right place, in the right way.
- Working to tackle the main causes of preventable deaths - things like heart disease, stroke, cancer and lung disease.
- Making it easier for people to lead healthier lifestyles, whether this is by keeping fit, eating well or making it easier to speak to someone for advice and support.
- Helping people stay connected to others around them and tackling things like loneliness and isolation.
- Providing places and spaces where people can be active and join in with other people.
- Continuing our work to become a Child Friendly City where all children and young people feel safe, heard, cared for and able to flourish.
- Continuing our work to become an Age Friendly city in which people in middle to later life can age happily with equality, respect and independence.

Checking our progress

You've helped to set some ambitious new priorities for our city. We want to clearly show how these are being achieved. The Council and its partners will set out the plan of action for making these ambitious priorities happen.

The Council and partners will regularly share statistics and figures to check if our work is having the right effects. We'll also use them to see if we are closing the gap between people who are doing well and less well.

And whatever the numbers say, we want to understand how residents feel about the progress being made. We can only achieve the ambitious goals for the city if everyone pulls together to make the future Manchester we all want to see.

We will ask for your views on this every year– in a reshaped **twice-yearly survey** based on the new priorities. And we'll publish results and other relevant figures in our yearly **State of the City** report.