

Welcome to

Manchester Park's Strategy



• Our Manchester •

Our Manchester references the relevance of parks and the key role they play in making our city truly world class. The result of extensive consultation, it sets out principles for creating a city that is thriving and sustainable, highly skilled and progressive, liveable, low-carbon and connected.

These principles are fundamental to the approach needed to improve the city's parks and green spaces over the next ten years and beyond. Of particular importance are:

- Listening and engaging with people about what matters to them, about their area and their services.
- Focusing on what can be achieved, rather than what can't.
- Uncovering how people can develop into happier, healthier and wealthier people making a good life for themselves and their family with the support of the people around them.



In Manchester there are:



12

River valley spaces

131

Parks

42

Allotment areas

52

Friends groups

40

Allotment societies

50

People in the parks team



Some interesting facts

Manchester has a population of **500,000+**



It has increased by **97,000+** since 2001 to become the fastest-growing city in the UK

58% of Manchester is made up of parks, woodlands, river valleys, fields, verges, canals, rivers, allotments and private gardens

The total area of public parks is over **1,000 hectares**, which is roughly equivalent to **2,500** football pitches



The average size of a Manchester park is **7.33 hectares**, equal to **18** football pitches



4,083 activities and events in parks in 2015/16



500,000+ people attended organised activities in parks and there were



3,352 volunteers and

contributed to the delivery of leisure services recorded in 2015/16



14,625 volunteer hours

Our Manchester



Plant a seed consultation

Unlocked a huge response, passion, energy and determination



1,978
individual responses



Average stay:
1-2 HOURS

f 180,000 hits

t 74,000 Twitter followers



91+
face-to-face conversations



Two-thirds of respondents
live in Manchester



A NEW PARK STRATEGY FOR MANCHESTER

Our Parks

Local parks: these are small spaces that provide a focal point for local neighbourhoods and can be defined as one or more of the following: a grass area, play area, sports facility, flower-bed. Examples include Anfield Road, Bignor Street, Chesterton Road, High Bank and Mersey Bank.

Community parks: these are larger local parks that have a variety of facilities and features, and can host activities and small community events. Examples include Brookdale Park, Chorlton Park, Crowcroft Park, Didsbury Park, Fog Lane Park, Philips Park and Swinton Grove.

Destination parks: these are parks that provide a range of facilities and visitor attractions. They include a variety of distinctive features and open space that can be used in different ways, such as the hosting of major events. Examples include Alexandra Park, Boggart Hole Clough, Chorlton Water Park, Fletcher Moss Gardens, Heaton Park, Platt Fields Park and Wythenshawe Park.



The Council is also responsible for the management of other important green spaces

River valleys: Manchester's river valleys are important natural assets providing vital environmental and educational resources; they act as green 'corridors' that help link other areas of green space across the city. Examples include Irk River Valley, Medlock River Valley, and Mersey River Valley.

Allotments: there are over 2,300 plots in Manchester serving lots of different communities. Allotments are key to sustainable food growth as well as important community assets. Eating fresh and organic food grown by residents leads to improved happiness and wellbeing, and improved physical health from regular exercise, as part of a healthy lifestyle. Access is provided for disabled people on some sites so that all plot-holders can do their bit for the environment in a really social way.



OUR VISION FOR MANCHESTER'S PARKS

“Together, we want our parks to be the soul, lungs and heart of Manchester by providing the conditions for our people, our environment and our city to flourish.”

We will achieve this by our parks being:

Fully accessible, welcoming and visually appealing
with some truly world-class destinations, a great heritage,
horticultural and tourist attractions.

Good for physical and mental health:

A natural health service where people can relax and feel safe, as well as a space for sport and culture, with the relevant infrastructure in place for this to happen.

High-quality assets where people meet and the community flourishes:

providing high visitor satisfaction and promoting Manchester as a place to live, work and visit.



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We will achieve this by our parks being:

Valued highly

by local people, organisations, visitors, and the people who work in them. Parks make a positive difference to people's lives and are a source of pride for everyone.

Net contributors to the city:

reducing the effects of pollution; producing food and plants; as well as providing learning, skills, training and job opportunities.



OUR VISION FOR MANCHESTER'S PARKS

“Together, we want our parks to be the soul, lungs and heart of Manchester by providing the conditions for our people, our environment and our city to flourish.”

We will achieve this by our parks being:

Valued and understood

through education, communication and effective partnerships where local people and organisations are involved in creating spaces where people can relax and feel safe.

Supportive of the diverse range of wildlife:

conserving natural habitats, improving air quality, mitigating climate change and flooding, and allowing people to engage with and learn about nature

Well managed:

in partnership with internal Council departments and external partners working together to ensure sustainable operation – both financially (by closing the gap between income and expenditure) and environmentally.



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Valued highly by local people, organisations, visitors, and the people who work in them. Parks make a positive difference to people’s lives and are a source of pride for everyone.

Putting Manchester’s parks at the ‘heart’ of the neighbourhood, providing people with access to green spaces and nature

Valued and understood through education, communication and effective partnerships where local people and organisations are involved in creating spaces where people can relax and feel safe.

High-quality assets where people meet and the community flourishes, providing high visitor satisfaction and promoting Manchester as a place to live, work and visit.

Ensuring that Manchester’s parks are vibrant, active places, reflecting and complementing the diversity and activity in the local community

Good for physical and mental health: a natural health service where people can relax and feel safe, as well as a space for sport and culture, with the relevant infrastructure in place for this to happen.

OUR VISION AND STRATEGIC THEMES

1

2

4

3

Net contributors to the city: reducing the effects of pollution; producing food and plants; as well as providing learning, skills, training and job opportunities.

Having parks that are resourced effectively and sustainably through active and productive partnerships with residents, organisations and businesses

Well managed, in partnership with internal Council departments and external partners working together to ensure sustainable operation – both financially (by closing the gap between income and expenditure) and environmentally.

Establishing a ‘Manchester Parks Standard’, which will deliver safe, high-quality parks and green spaces for all residents across the city

Fully accessible, welcoming and visually appealing with some truly world-class destinations, a great heritage, and horticultural and tourist attractions.

“They are the lungs of the city – a beautiful and calm space, and a little piece of countryside in the city”
 ZOE, WITHINGTON, ONLINE CONSULTATION



“Consider Manchester’s parks as a huge botanical resource – a national collection spread over many locations with a place on the world stage”
 FRIENDS OF PLATT FIELDS AND FRIENDS OF BIRCHFIELDS, CENTRAL CONSULTATION EVENT



Our Manchester



Parks at the Heart of Neighbourhoods

“Small pockets of green
are a relief in some areas,
and handily placed, so we
don’t need just to think of
large but distant spaces”



ACTIONS

Manchester City Council, together with local communities and partners, will:

1. Review and define the city's park-planning standards for quality and accessibility, identifying the relationship between parks and the key areas of housing growth.
2. Ensure that any development and planning gain results in further investments in the city's parks.
3. Promote better links between separate green spaces, for example by welcoming opportunities to develop pocket parks, green corridors and urban green spaces.
4. Bring together all information about the city's parks and facilities so that their use can be maximised.
5. Review the facilities in parks to ensure that they are well used and able to be used, and – where appropriate – that they are able to generate income for their upkeep.
6. Co-ordinate and create management plans for individual parks, taking into account existing plans and information.
7. Consider developing pilot projects that increase the functionality and biodiversity of parks to improve resilience to climate change.

“As I suffer from several ailments and can't walk without pain, it's a godsend. It benefits my health and wellbeing, and is freedom from sitting at home”

RESPONDENT, WYTHENSHAW, ONLINE CONSULTATION



Vibrant Parks, Vibrant Communities



“I go to the parks to train with friends and like-minded people. We go in all weathers – I love the banter, meeting new people, keeping fit, and seeing all the plants and wildlife changing through the different seasons”

RESPONDENT, ONLINE CONSULTATION



ACTIONS

Manchester City Council, together with local communities and partners, will:

1. Continue the conversations with park users and potential new users to develop, co-ordinate and clearly communicate the citywide programme of park events and activities.
2. Prepare an events strategy for parks and open spaces that considers how good-quality events can improve the visitor experience and bring a positive financial return.
3. Develop inclusive facilities and activity programmes across selected parks for all age groups and underrepresented groups, for example people with an impairment.
4. Review park policies and bylaws to ensure they are relevant and foster an *Our Manchester* approach.
5. Improve access to information on Manchester's parks.
6. Continue the conversations with park users and potential new users to develop and implement a park-user survey and engagement programme to understand satisfaction level with the use of parks.


“My kids have all their birthday parties in the park. It’s a big part of their lives”



ANDREW, MOSS SIDE,
ONLINE CONSULTATION



A Manchester Quality Standard

 “The parks in Didsbury are an oasis of delight. Volunteers have come together to create an imaginative and resourceful approach to park management. Their hands-on approach develops an ownership of the public spaces that the general public appreciate and value highly”

RESPONDENT, ONLINE CONSULTATION



ACTIONS

Manchester City Council, together with local communities and partners, will:

1. Develop an agreed quality standard for parks and green spaces that is appropriate for different types of parks.
2. Identify and implement both capital and revenue investment priorities to support the implementation of the ten-year strategy.
3. Communicate the parks management and delivery structure and standards, ensuring the highest possible levels of transparency and accountability.
4. Agree and test alternative techniques in landscape management and create opportunities for training and employment for local people.
5. Test new ways to capture and understand park usage.
6. Track progress towards service goals and priorities and report annually on progress.
7. Provide leadership and reporting arrangements for parks – with both internal and external partners.
8. Establish an ‘age-friendly’ standard for parks.
9. Update and expand the use of digital and information technology in parks.

“Dog-walkers are
the eyes and ears
of the park”



ANNE, CENTRAL CONSULTATION EVENT



Productive Parks in Partnership

“Manchester City Council
needs to be prepared to
let volunteers do more;
one strimmer would
make so much difference
to a Friends group”



PAULINE, SOUTH CONSULTATION EVENT



ACTIONS

Manchester City Council, together with local communities and partners, will:

1. Identify sustainable income-generating opportunities and business models for a range of suitable parks.
2. Bring forward investment cases for sites with the greatest possible income opportunities.
3. Identify and secure resources from partners to improve the infrastructure and continue the progress created by Clean City investment.
4. Strengthen partnerships with Friends groups, community groups and stakeholders.
5. Establish a programme of engagement and partnership with education providers, the private sector and local communities.
6. Establish a programme of training and development for staff and stakeholders.
7. Develop and implement a volunteer strategy.



“The beauty of what I see motivates me to help in my park”

PAULINE, SOUTH CONSULTATION EVENT



“There are people waiting to be asked, but no one is asking them”

SARFRAZ, NORTH CONSULTATION EVENT





“As a student here, I loved to escape the city and relax in Wythenshawe Park and Marie Louise Gardens

“As a mum, I tired my sons with football in Fog Lane, and long walks by the Mersey



“As a couple, we ran round Fog Lane, Didsbury and Fletcher Moss. When my husband was dying of cancer, we used Fog Lane as a short cut, and loved to sit and watch the flowers grow



“Now I gain peace of mind from walking in all my local parks, remembering happier times”

RESPONDENT, DIDSBURY, ONLINE CONSULTATION

