



**MANCHESTER**  
CITY COUNCIL

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**A CERTAIN FUTURE.**  
MANCHESTER'S CLIMATE CHANGE ACTION PLAN.

# **Eco-Neighbourhoods workshops in February & March 2015**

## **Report Summary**

**April 2015**

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## Background

'Manchester: A Certain Future' (MACF) is the city's climate change action plan with ambitious carbon reduction targets to be achieved by 2020; the plan has three headline objectives, and a fourth being considered including:

- Reduce the city's Co2 emissions by 41% by 2020 (from 2005 levels),
- Culture Change – embed “low carbon thinking” in the lifestyles and operations of the city,
- Prepare for and actively adapt to a rapidly changing climate,
- Make a rapid transition to a low carbon economy.

MACF recognises everyone has a part to play to make our city more sustainable and greener – including businesses, organisations, the Council, educational establishments and communities and residents.

There are many examples of local Manchester communities already helping to deliver sustainable and low carbon activity through environmental projects in their neighbourhoods. Communities can generate local enthusiasm and momentum using peer-to-peer communication, they are creative, dynamic and they know their local areas better than anyone; they can make change happen from the ground upwards.

Eco Neighbourhoods is a flexible approach for delivering positive environmental change within communities. It is delivered in different ways by different communities, includes both existing and new projects, and aims to join up activities, share best practice and pool resources.

Groundwork MSST, in partnership with the MACF Steering Group and Manchester City Council, held five Eco Neighbourhoods workshops in the spring of 2015. The aims of these workshops were:

- Bring together people who are making a difference on a range of community-based environmental projects, or who want to get involved.
- Enable participants to learn from and be inspired by one another, to plan ahead for even more and better projects and to contribute a strong neighbourhood dimension to MACF.
- Produce priorities and partly worked-up projects for local Eco Neighbourhood Action Plans.
- Provide information about sources of help, advice and funding.

The workshops were held in:

- Gorton North and Gorton South ( 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2015)
- Rusholme ( 24<sup>th</sup> February 2015)
- Old Moat and Withington (25<sup>th</sup> February 2015)

- Whalley Range (26<sup>th</sup> February 2015)
- Moston (2<sup>nd</sup> March 2015)

To find out more about environmental activities in Manchester participants were encouraged to visit [www.manchesterclimate.com](http://www.manchesterclimate.com) and sign up to 'Get the latest news to your inbox'.

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## Overview of the workshops

### **Gorton North and South Wards: 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2015**

The workshop was held at the New Covenant Church, Matthews Lane. Jerry Smith (Groundwork) chaired and the presenters were Helen Dodd who spoke about the horticultural work being carried out by Debdale Park Eco Centre, and Pete Abel who described the “St John’s Sunshine” community solar energy scheme in Old Trafford. The working groups were facilitated by Katherine Kennedy (Hulme Community Garden Centre), Raichael Locke (Manchester Environmental Education Network), Jerry Smith (Groundwork) and Paula Pearson (Groundwork).

The group discussions generated 14 possible project ideas. Of these three were prioritised for the action planning exercise (see Appendix 2). These were:

1. A “Love Gorton” community branding scheme promoting local environmental initiatives (prioritised by two groups).
2. Develop the relationship between Tree Station, local community groups and eco-schools.
3. Establish a project to bring together food growing and healthy cooking/eating initiatives, building on the work of the Gorton Growing Together Group.

The other ideas generated were:

- Get involved in Best Blooming Street competition
- Tidy up/resuscitate the Butterfly Garden
- Better, more co-ordinated communication of what is happening, in order to maximise networking and learning opportunities (it was noted that Ward Co-ordinators are already developing this). Could include an online Nature Forum/Blog.
- Allotment open days
- Connect local people to green spaces in Gorton via a series of regular volunteering and training events, thereby improving community cohesion and networking (it was noted that this could form part of the “Love Gorton” scheme).
- Invite the Prince’s Trust and/or the National Citizenship Scheme to work in Gorton to help improve the appearance of the neighbourhood.
- More wildflowers.
- Connect up green spaces into local wildlife corridors.
- Encourage churches, faith and community buildings to think about solar power generation.
- Increased take up of cycle awareness and cycle training opportunities.
- Better engagement with social housing tenants re energy efficiency, savings and behaviour change.

18 participants agreed to share their contact details.

### **Rusholme Ward: 24<sup>th</sup> February 2015**

The workshop was held at Trinity House Community Resource Centre, off Platt Lane. Cllr Kate Chappell (Executive Member for the Environment and MACF Steering Group member) chaired and the presenters were Anne Tucker from the “Upping It” group who talked about

the group's work in recycling and tidying back alleys, and Kevin Wigley of Red Rose Forest who spoke about the work of the "green streets" programme in and around Rusholme. The working groups were facilitated by Esther Barnes (MCC Environment Strategy), Paula Pearson (Groundwork) and Jerry Smith (Groundwork).

The group discussions generated 13 possible project ideas. Of these five were prioritised for the action planning exercise (see Appendix 2). These were:

1. Clean-up and encourage recycling around the terraced streets of Wilmslow Road West and the Eastlands estate.
2. A project with Manchester Grammar School (or another local school) around birds and the local owl population, to engage them more effectively with Birchfields Park and its Friends group.
3. Tree legacy mapping and plan – Birchfields Park.
4. Install roof solar panels on Birch Community Centre and Trinity Resource Centre (prioritised by two groups).
5. Greening and improvement of the shopping parade on the Anson Estate.

The other ideas generated were:

- Encourage Xaverian College to become an Eco School
- Street tree planting in Norman Road
- Improvements to Wilmslow Road/Park Crescent/West Point/Fallowfield Park/Owens Park including tree and shrub planting, replacement of diseased trees, railings and more street planters, maintained by the community.
- Deal with problems caused by vehicle parking on green verges around Victoria Park (Eva Street, Viscount Street, Rita Street, Grandale Street, Fleesom Street, Ravensdale)
- Improve Platt Fields Park by getting volunteers to tidy up and improve flower and herb beds and get involved in park management
- Green various "tarmac pockets" – including Dickenson Road, Telfer Road, Meldon shops.
- Alley-gating and greening in Stanley Avenue to prevent anti-social behaviour and improve appearance.
- Connect food growing to healthy cooking and eating initiatives.

14 participants agreed to share their contact details.

### **Old Moat and Withington Wards: 25<sup>th</sup> February 2015**

The workshop was held at the Gandhi Hall, Brunswick Road. Jerry Smith (Groundwork) chaired and the presenters were Pauline Hocking from the Old Moat Greenies who talked about their work with "Sow the City" and other horticultural initiatives, and Philippa Reece and Richard Eccles of Southway Homes who described plans for environmental improvements to social housing in the area. There was also a slideshow illustrating the work of the "Green Heroes" at Old Moat Primary School though unfortunately the school was unable to attend owing to a clash of dates.

The working groups were facilitated by Lisa Lingard (MCC Environment Strategy), Rachel Summerscales (Hulme Community Garden Centre), Jerry Smith (Groundwork) and Paula Pearson (Groundwork).

The group discussions generated 14 possible project ideas. Of these five were prioritised for the action planning exercise (see Appendix 2). These were:

1. Create an Old Moat and Withington “Green trail” or health walk (prioritised by two groups).
2. Encourage community groups with buildings to install solar roof panels.
3. Get more people to grow their own food and produce their own compost – especially older people, low income residents, private tenants and students (prioritised by two groups)
4. A rolling clean-up programme to tackle litter.
5. Engage the community with the new cycling route – via schools, universities, community centres and Civic Society – to encourage more people to cycle to work/school/uni.

The other ideas generated were:

- Create a sensory garden in Ladybarn Park (site of former tennis club)
- Red Rose Forest/Southways joint bid for funding for community orchards and wildflower planting
- Clean and green specific local sites including corner of Ridsdale Avenue, car parking areas around Copston Street.
- Landlords’ gardens in North Withington have been made “sterile” to reduce maintenance costs. Suggest a project with Manchester Student Homes to encourage food and fruit tree growing in private landlords’ gardens.
- Tackle air quality issues along Parkway and Wilmslow Road via tree planting and monitoring.
- Realise the aspiration in the Withington Village Action Plan to create pleasant walkways around Withington village.
- Bring schools, universities and local traders together to jointly sponsor community activity.
- Promote and expand the excellent environmental work of Old Moat Children’s Centre as a model to be used more widely.
- Use the Community Guardians network to get more people recycling.

There was also one general comment which was widely supported: “Do a few things well rather than lots of projects which aren’t sustainable”.

16 participants agreed to share their contact details.

### **Whalley Range Ward: 26<sup>th</sup> February 2015**

The workshop was held at Whalley Range Methodist Church, Withington Road. Gaby Porter, representing MACF, chaired and the presenters were Dave Saunders from the Whalley Rangers who showed a film of their large-scale community clean-up event of April 2014, and Nadine Andrews of Whalley Range 4 Wildlife who explained about the group’s efforts to conserve and support local wildlife especially in the parks. The working groups were

facilitated by Raichael Locke (Manchester Environmental Education Network), Rachel Summerscales (Hulme Community Garden Centre), Paula Pearson (Groundwork) and Jerry Smith (Groundwork).

The group discussions generated 18 possible project ideas. Of these four were prioritised for the action planning exercise (see Appendix 2). These were:

1. Set up an Active Travel project with initially two strands (a) to develop the Whalley Range on Wheels cycling scheme (b) to work with schools and parents to encourage walking to school.
2. Increase organised activities at Alexandra Park – health walks, green gym, wild play, bikes.
3. Hold a Nature and Islam event at the college, possibly relating to Eid celebrations.
4. Integrated neighbourhood-based recycling programme (city wide) with several elements including:
  - a. Enhanced funding for wards achieving recycling rates above specified targets
  - b. Provide free municipal compost to community gardens and groups
  - c. Biochar furnace (mobile?) producing fertiliser from burning organic waste (possible social enterprise)

The other ideas generated were:

- Deal with various grot-spots including end of College Road (litter), Wood Road/Manchester Road (blocked gullies), Withington Road shops and rear alley (litter), Clarendon Road shops (litter), May Road flats (general clean-up and environmental improvements – Mosscaire Housing), concrete planter at Burford Road/Withington Road junction (neglect).
- Promote local milk deliveries using re-usable bottles and eco-vehicles (and better pay for dairy producers).
- Develop the football and cricket grounds.
- Focus activities on Whalley Range Festival and Alexandra Park.
- Feed more records into the Greater Manchester Ecology Unit Grey to Green monitoring project.
- QR codes and tree interpretation panels.
- Use the college radio station for publicity for activities.
- Community district heating scheme – providing hot water and heating from connected solar panels on private homes and other buildings.
- Connecting up gardeners interested in wildlife via an Open Gardens scheme and the new Whalley Range Gardeners Facebook page. Try to interest a “gardening celebrity” to become involved.
- Use the Community Forum to encourage networking and mutual learning about local projects.
- Make use of publicly owned land for community growing/guerrilla gardening (schools, hospitals, sports grounds). Also work up a garden sharing scheme.
- Expand the Green Saturdays (family forest school) programme and make more use of local parks.
- Business engagement and incentives programme to improve visual amenity around local shops.



- Establish a residents association at York/Cromwell Avenue to make green improvements.

### **Moston Ward: 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2015**

The workshop was held at St Dunstan's Parish Hall, Kenyon Lane. Jerry Smith (Groundwork) chaired and the presenters were Naila Ilyas from Northwards Housing speaking about their work to encourage behaviour change, energy saving and cost saving with their tenants; and Ann Bates, Suzanna Lawson and Louise Waters from the Friends of Moston Brook group who talked about their work to create a green corridor along the length of the brook. The working groups were facilitated by Pete Stringer (Red Rose Forest), Katherine Kennedy (Hulme Community Garden Centre), Jerry Smith (Groundwork) and Paula Pearson (Groundwork).

The group discussions generated 11 possible project ideas. Of these five were prioritised for the action planning exercise (see Appendix 2). These were:

1. Connecting Moston and Failsworth – map walkways connecting green spaces and eco projects; lead organised walks (prioritised by two groups).
2. Support local people to grow simple food crops and cook healthy food (share recipes, expertise and produce) (prioritised by two groups).
3. More investment in community renewables such as solar, ground source heating, air source heating.
4. Improve maintenance and access to community green spaces through co-ordinating the efforts of Community Payback, employee volunteering, BTCV/Conservation Volunteers and “Friends of...” groups.
5. Publicised the green spaces that are on people's doorsteps but of which they are unaware.

The other ideas generated were:

- Growing and selling food – growing groups to share and sell excess produce.
- Street tree planting to provide natural cooling and management of surface water run-off.
- Support residents associations in private as well as social housing to educate and empower local people to save energy and save money (Northwards model).
- Integrate the MEEN, Forest Schools and Eco Schools programmes more effectively.
- Green and smarten up the play area on Nuthurst Road.
- NEPHRA, Friends of Moston Brook and Friends of Broadhurst Clough to be encouraged to work in partnership on projects covering a wider area.

17 participants agreed to share their contact details.

## Summary of projects

- From the summary of workshops it can be seen that the most popular were projects aimed at improving the visual appearance of a site, street, shopping area or estate.
- The next most popular was projects aimed at communicating, learning, interpretation, networking and developing use of social media and blogs,

Closely followed by the remaining in order of popularity:

- Projects aimed at greater involvement of schools and universities,
- Community horticultural projects of various kinds,
- Projects around connecting green spaces physically; green corridors for wildlife; neighbourhood trails,
- Projects around community renewables, especially solar,
- Projects aimed at integrating similar or linked existing schemes, for example food growing with cooking,
- Projects to engage older people or people with sensory impairments,
- Projects to enhance volunteering and personal development opportunities,

## Neighbourhood information

For each neighbourhood there are 3 pieces of information resulting from the workshops:

1. Environmental Audit – table of audit and ward map. The audits are divided into 4 themes:
  - Better looking neighbourhoods,
  - Giving nature a helping hand,
  - Living better lives,
  - Sustainability.

There is also a list of Eco Schools activity.

2. Eco Neighbourhood Action Plans
3. Contact list
4. Ward maps with environmental initiatives

This information is available on the following website: [www.manchesterclimate.com](http://www.manchesterclimate.com)

## Workshop evaluation responses

- 43% of participants who completed an evaluation form were “very satisfied” with the workshop,
- A further 53% “satisfied”,
- No-one felt dissatisfied.

As is often the case with such events the principal positive outcome was felt to be the contact-making and networking (22 people mentioned this). The other main positives were:

- Getting ideas, being inspired by others – 14 mentions
- The quality of the group work and facilitation; engagement of participants – 13 mentions
- Learning and obtaining information - 8 mentions.

Other positives mentioned were:

- The prioritisation exercise,
- The way in which the workshops related to a wider framework and planning process,
- The sustained pace and positive atmosphere of the events,
- The quality of the presentations (this was also probably an aspect of the “inspiration” comments),
- The value of having the maps,
- The quality of the community input, and
- The overall format of the workshops.

The main criticisms or “could do better” comments were:

- Disappointing resident/community attendance (5 mentions)
- Too big an agenda/lack of focus (4 mentions)
- Unclear how this will be followed up (4 mentions)

Other criticisms concerned lack of time generally, lack of time for people to introduce themselves and say what they were doing, confusing maps, and too much talk. Too much paperwork, the screen was hard to see, not enough focus on sustainability, a feeling that workshop priorities may not reflect community priorities, and distracting behaviour (talking/noise) from other unrelated venue users.

### Participant suggestions

- 25 participants offered “pledges” as to what they would do as a result of attending the workshop.
- Six people said they would personally get involved in an activity in the community such as litter picks;
- Six also said they would actively communicate information and ideas to others through various means including Facebook groups;
- Five said they would stay in touch with new contacts they had made through the workshop,
- Four said that they would use what they had learned to influence their organisation;

- Four said they planned to establish a new project or group to take forward something that had inspired them.

## Potential funding sources

Note: This is an outline guide only. For more information visit the relevant websites. The guide covers funds which are specifically for environmental work. There are many other general funds such as National Lottery which can also be applied to.

### **Affinity Sutton Community Grants** [www.groundwork.org.uk/affinity-sutton](http://www.groundwork.org.uk/affinity-sutton)

Provided by Affinity Sutton (social housing provider) but managed through Groundwork.

### **A Team Foundation** [www.ateamfoundation.org](http://www.ateamfoundation.org)

Funds projects around concept of children and sustainability.

### **Biffa Awards** [www.biffa-award.org](http://www.biffa-award.org)

Funding between £10,000 and £50,000 for projects located within 10 miles of a Biffa operation and within 10 miles of a licensed landfill site. Postcode checker on website. Does not fund equipment or running costs.

### **Daylesford Foundation** [www.daylesfordfoundation.co.uk](http://www.daylesfordfoundation.co.uk)

Funds educational projects for children and young people in relation to organic food growing and the countryside.

### **Ernest Kleinwort Charitable Trust** [www.ekct.org.uk](http://www.ekct.org.uk)

Funds charities only in relation to environment, wildlife, education and enterprise. Mostly in Sussex but some grants elsewhere.

### **Esmee Fairbairn Foundation** [www.esmeefairbairn.org.uk](http://www.esmeefairbairn.org.uk)

Environment is one of their five strands; Food is another. Funds various directly relevant projects, mostly to the tune of around £30,000.

### **Garfield Weston Foundation** [www.garfieldweston.org](http://www.garfieldweston.org)

Environment is one of their strands. Funded Lancashire Wildlife trust re Brockholes Nature Reserve, Preston.

### **Heritage Lottery Fund – Land and National Heritage Programme** [www.hlf.org.uk](http://www.hlf.org.uk)

“HLF is keen to encourage more fundable projects from the natural heritage sector, a sector that has attracted less funding in the past”

The most relevant funding stream in most cases will be “Our Heritage” which gives grants of between £10,000 and £100,000 including funding for “natural and designed landscapes” and natural heritage – habitats, species and geology.

### **Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust** [www.jrct.org.uk](http://www.jrct.org.uk)

“Sustainable Future” is one of their strands, but funding is limited to small grants.

### **Oak Foundation** [www.oakfnd.org](http://www.oakfnd.org)

International funder usually for major projects with significant match funding so will not usually be relevant to community initiatives on their own – but possibly to really ambitious projects involving several communities?

**Peter de Haan Charitable Trust** [www.pdhct.org](http://www.pdhct.org)

Particularly relevant for environmental projects with an arts element. Interested in climate change and conservation of landscape, wildlife and flora. Work a lot with Wildlife Trusts so may be worth teaming up with Lancashire Wildlife Trust?

**Restore UK** [www.restoreuk.org](http://www.restoreuk.org)

Conservation and protection of habitats etc. eg funded a Mossland Restoration Project at Redmoss SSI in Lancashire (with Lancashire Wildlife Trust).

**Roddick Foundation** [www.theroddickfoundation.org](http://www.theroddickfoundation.org)

Environment is one of their strands. Have funded Slow Food UK, Tree Aid, Soil Association, Buglife and various other environmental initiatives.

**SITA Trust** [www.sitatrust.org.uk](http://www.sitatrust.org.uk)

Funds projects within 3 miles of a SITA operation. “Enhancing Communities” and “Enriching Nature” programmes. Postcode checker on website.

**UnLtd** [www.unltd.org.uk](http://www.unltd.org.uk)

Supports individual social entrepreneurs to realise their enterprise ambitions, including environmental enterprises. Most funding is in Big Local areas via their Star People programme but individuals in other areas may be able to access start-up funding for environmental social enterprises.

**Veolia Trust** [www.veoliatrust.org/funding](http://www.veoliatrust.org/funding)

Similar to Biffa and SITA; landfill grant funding for projects close to a Veolia site using an online postcode checker. Grants average £25K - £30K but can be up to £100K.

**Woodward Family Trust**

[www.Woodwardcharitabletrust.org.uk](http://www.Woodwardcharitabletrust.org.uk)

One of the Sainsbury family trusts, with a particular interest in the environment, unlike the others.