

SUSTAINABLE STORIES



Fair

Green

Dense

The Urban Challenge

The world we now live in is urban. According to some estimates 50% of the world's population now lives in cities; this is expected to reach 70% by 2050.

Cities are also incredibly old. The first cities grew out of the need for trade, transport, natural resources and people to come together to share their knowledge, skills and infrastructure.

Now cities themselves are forming groups: Greater Manchester is one such 'city-region', made up of ten local authorities working together on common issues.

Cities are sources of challenge and problems; inspiration and innovation. What comes to mind when you think of cities? Dirt, noise, pollution, overcrowding and traffic? Or excitement, buzz, creativity and community?

Love them or loathe them, cities are on the rise and the challenge of creating sustainable cities is one that must concern us all.

Towards Sustainable Cities

In the 1980s, a group of world leaders defined sustainability as ‘development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs’.

World organisations have gone on to state that sustainability involves thinking about how the economy, society, environment and culture all relate to each other.

Agreeing on the principles is easy, but putting it into practice is not. Whose needs are we talking about? Who decides whose needs come first? Complex urban problems that require joined-up thinking can fall between the cracks.

And what should be sustained? Sustainability is a tricky problem because we all have different stories to tell.

Sustainable Stories

First, there are *stories to reassure us*. There are problems, we are told, but the biggest issue is how to sustain existing pathways in order to ensure that our current needs continue to be met. We need to keep the economy oiled, industry happy, people buying, populations growing – but in a more responsible way. We are heading in the right direction, but need to leave less mess behind us and let more people reap the rewards.

Second, there are *stories to shock us*. We are simply consuming too much, too quickly; growing too fast, without adequate checks and balances. We have already failed to meet targets for carbon reduction, the gap between rich and poor is widening. Food and fuel shortages loom. Potential solutions – such as population control, limited or zero economic growth or radical political reform – are discussed only at the margins.

Third, there are *stories to motivate us*. The challenges are real and urgent. A change in direction is indeed essential. This is best achieved by steady, incremental progress, multiple initiatives and projects designed in, by and for communities. The emphasis is on creating experiments or niches for action, so that small-scale changes can gradually transform systems from within. People need to be inspired and motivated to change.

What does this mean for Greater Manchester?

What stories are being told? And whose voices are missing from the debate?



RECYCLING

Poison

Pollution

Inspiring engagement for sustainable cities: the role of creative play and production

Sustainable urban development is about now and the future. What state are we leaving the world in for our children and generations to come?

This pilot project aimed to explore how creative play and production could encourage children to think about sustainability in relation to their local area.

The project brought together the Centre for Sustainable Urban and Regional Futures at the University of Salford, Buddleia, Creative Concern, Manchester Environmental Education Network and okf productions.

The process involved:

- an exploration of the local area in Cheetham Hill
- a ‘philosophy for children’ session around the themes of Fair, Green and Dense cities
- a reflection and story-telling exercise
- production of large-scale art work depicting utopian and dystopian visions of future Cheetham Hill
- a short stop-start animation
- an eco-rap performed by the children.

Many thanks to Laura Burton and all the children of the Eco-Schools Team at Temple Primary School, Cheetham Hill for their inspiring work:

Laura, Emmie, Julia, Javeria, Rabi Ullah, Bushra, Mariam, Mariyah, Dylan, Assad and Julia.



Beth Perry
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Kerenza McClarnan
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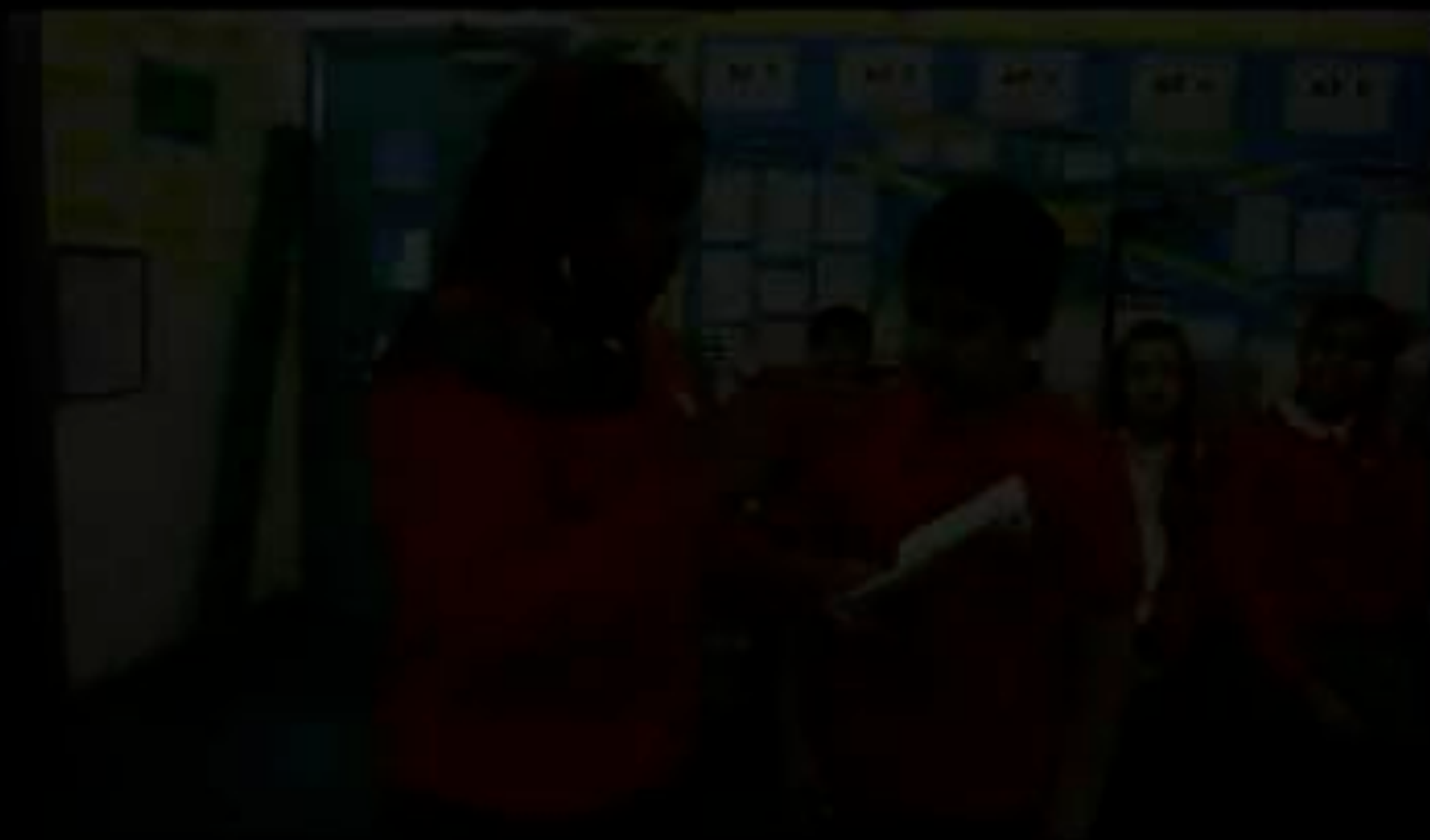
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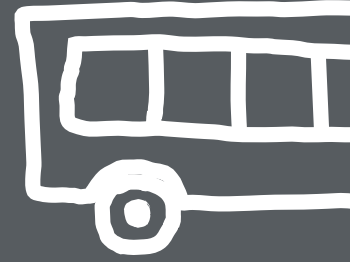
Martin Davies
Artist



EcoTeam
Temple Primary School

Greater Manchester has a population of nearly 2.6 million – 4.2% of the UK. The overall population of Greater Manchester has been growing since 2002, driven in particular by the sharp growth of the City of Manchester's population and the boom in city living in the conurbation core.

Greater Manchester



The conurbation has an extensive transport infrastructure that puts 5.2 million people within an hour's commute of the conurbation core – the largest travel-to-work area (TTWA) of any conurbation in the UK outside London.

Greater Manchester

Our homes generate 36% of our direct carbon emissions and the commercial sector generates a further third. Most of our building stock is pre-1970 and four out of five buildings are likely to still be in use in 2050.

Greater Manchester

The conurbation core extends from the city centre of Manchester into Salford Central and onto the adjacent development of Salford Quays/Trafford Wharfside – which includes Salford University and MediaCityUK, with a specific focus upon the creative and digital industries.



GM is the UK's largest urban area in population and economic terms after London. It is within the top 20% largest economies in the European Union.



Corroding Community Capacity? The Seedley and Langworthy Trust

Community hubs and centres have a critical role to play in building sustainable communities. The Seedley and Langworthy Trust has lost 40% of its staff since February 2012. Key projects, such as Resident Participation and Outreach Engagement, have been discontinued.

“How can you ask people to be more environmentally sustainable when they are worrying where their next meal is coming from?”



Food: Joining-up Environmental, Social and Economic Concerns

Food is important for the environmental, economic, health and well-being of residents. FareShare redistributes in-date surplus food from the food industry to organisations that work with vulnerable people in food poverty. Yet Greater Manchester ranks poorly compared with other English counties for access to locally grown food.

“The pockets of deprivation across Greater Manchester mean that greater food security is a significant challenge.”

Image:
Provided by EMERGE

Long-term worklessness remains a serious issue – it is associated with lower employment prospects, lower income and relatively poorer health.

There remain significant disparities in economic performance across the districts of Greater Manchester. People and places facing poverty and disadvantage are likely to be disproportionately affected by climate change.



Strong economic performance has been largely driven by GM South. This accounts for 87% of growth in jobs.



£4.4billion

The low carbon and environmental goods sector for Greater Manchester, measured in 2008/9, was already worth £4.4billion, supporting 34,000 jobs and projected to grow at more than 4% per year.

Greater Manchester

The Manchester 'Mini Stern' report of 2008 indicated a potential £20 billion of lost revenues over the years to 2020 if we fail to prepare for climate change.



Greater Manchester

Greater Manchester includes:
3 European Special Areas of Conservation,
21 Sites of Special Scientific Interest, 535
Sites of Biological Importance and 57 Local
Nature Reserves.



Greater Manchester

Approximately 60% of the city of Salford is greenspace, with the western half stretching across the ancient peat bog of Chat Moss.

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