

OUR RIVERS OUR CITY



MANCHESTER
CITY COUNCIL



THE
ENVIRONMENT
PARTNERSHIP

:vivid**economics**



This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme under Grant Agreement No 730283

BACKGROUND

We live in unprecedented times.

In 2019, Manchester declared a Climate Emergency. Our population is growing, our environment and biodiversity facing pressures from increased urbanisation and economic growth. As a global community, our current trajectory is unsustainable. We need to do things differently.

Leading the way, Manchester has already committed to using policy to inspire the actions needed to become a smarter, more sustainable and liveable city. Shaping the future of our local river valleys is part of that ambition.

For hundreds of years, the rivers flowing through our City have been central to its success – providing water for industry, for wildlife and for communities. The rivers have survived multiple challenges and continue to flow beneath houses, streets, parks and railways.

Today, the river valleys of the Irk, Medlock and Mersey include many of the city's green spaces, connect Manchester to the wider City Region and contribute to the distinct nature of our neighbourhoods.

However, the rivers and their surrounding landscape are also the product of their past usage, and need to evolve in order to claim their rightful place in the story of Manchester's future.

In recent years we have come to understand and recognise how essential the environment is to people's lives, and the positive impact that access to quality green spaces, water courses and wildlife can have on our quality of life, our health and wellbeing and productivity, and how - if we work with nature - we can tackle many of our future challenges.

Our first step on this journey is to develop a long term vision and set of actions which will re-energise the City's river valleys.

But we can't do this alone.



WHAT HUMANS DO OVER THE NEXT 50 YEARS WILL DETERMINE THE FATE OF ALL LIFE ON THE PLANET

DAVID ATTENBOROUGH

THE RIVER VALLEY ACTION PLANS

To reinvigorate a focus on Our Rivers, three 'River Valley Action Plans' will be developed.

These plans will holistically assess the current functionality of our local rivers and streams, and their potential to provide multiple benefits to the city and its neighbourhoods. The plans will be used to support the integration of local environmental priorities and needs into Ward level planning.

To support the assessment, and facilitate local decision-making, we want to:

- Understand people's experiences of Manchester's network of rivers and streams
- Capture the problems and the opportunities for improvement that exist along and around the Irk, Medlock and Mersey as they flow through the city
- Create a vision for how rivers could look and function
- Use this information to establish a plan of action that will energise improvements and maximise the potential of the river valleys for years to come



**WORKERS ARE 15% MORE PRODUCTIVE
IN A GREEN ENVIRONMENT.**

IGNITION, 2020

JUST IMAGINE

If together, we plan ways to work with Nature, the urban landscape in our river valleys could:

- Absorb excess rainfall and reduce surface water flooding
- Clean water made impure by human activity
- Reduce the impact of extreme weather events – flood and heat stress
- Improve the quality of the air we breathe
- Create beautiful, sustainable, enterprising neighbourhoods
- Be better places for wildlife
- Improve our well-being and quality of life



**THE CLIMATE CRISIS HAS ALREADY BEEN SOLVED.
WE ALREADY HAVE THE FACTS AND SOLUTIONS.
ALL WE HAVE TO DO IS WAKE UP AND CHANGE.**

GRETA THUNBERG

JOIN THE CONVERSATION

Over the coming year, we will be reaching out - on social media, online and face to face - with the intention of including as many people as possible in the conversation about the future of Manchester's River Valleys, and **we need your help!**

We want to hear from anyone and everyone - community groups, young people, faith representatives, 'green' groups and businesses - people of all ages and backgrounds who live or work across the city.



Just as they were in the past, Manchester's River Valleys will be critical to our City's future. They will contribute to creating a place that is healthy, liveable and connected; a place where people can be proud to live, work, rest, play and invest. Help Manchester City Council to shape their future.

- SURVEY COMING SOON -

#OurRiversOurCity

f www.facebook.com/groundworkgm

t @GroundworkGM

in www.linkedin.com/company/groundworkgm

Foot Notes:

The Manchester River Valleys Strategy is being developed by Manchester City Council with support from The Environment Partnership, Vivid Economics and Groundwork Greater Manchester.

The River Valleys Strategy work is funded by GrowGreen, an EU Horizon2020 project, which aims to create climate and water resilient, healthy and liveable cities by investing in nature-based solutions (NBS). It is a five-year project funded through the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under Grant Agreement number 730283 and is coordinated by Manchester City Council. For more information: <http://www.growgreenproject.eu> Follow us on Twitter @GrowGreenCities

For more info on Manchester's Great Outdoors: a Green and blue infrastructure Strategy visit:

https://www.manchester.gov.uk/info/500002/council_policies_and_strategies/7061/green_and_blue_infrastructure