

Our Manchester

State of the City Report 2021



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Chapter 1: Overview and summary

Impacts of COVID-19

Along with the rest of the world, Manchester faced the unprecedented challenge of the COVID-19 health pandemic in 2020. It was a crisis unlike any other, which came at a time when we were already facing uncertainties about the UK's exit from the European Union (Brexit), changes to our global trading relationships, and the urgent need to tackle climate change. Alongside the significant health challenges came an increase in unemployment, greater usage of food banks, a rise in loneliness and mental health concerns, and a huge impact on children and young people's education, training and employment opportunities.

Manchester's residents have been disproportionately adversely affected by the pandemic. Existing inequalities, particularly for our most deprived communities, ethnic minorities and those already living in poverty, have deepened. There have been severe effects on our children and young people, who have faced significant disruption to their education and employment opportunities, widening the gap between those who are already the most vulnerable and their counterparts.

Despite the health challenges, the economic interruption and hardship the city has faced due to the pandemic, our aspiration for a more inclusive economy has not been diminished. Our city has a long and proud tradition of triumphing over adversity. We have a wealth of experience in developing a unique set of mature cross-sector partnerships to

create a shared vision for the future and deliver pragmatic and innovative solutions to our problems. Before the pandemic, this approach resulted in three decades of sustained economic growth driven by investment in skills, transport infrastructure, and major strategic developments in the city centre, our districts, and around Manchester Airport.

In the two decades before the COVID-19 pandemic, Manchester achieved exceptional growth. The city saw very significant increases in its population, and helped by major investment and strong partnerships, sustained economic growth. The city's assets, infrastructure, innovation, population and skills have enabled the city to be more resilient to the last recession than many other parts of the UK, and have powered growth over the past decade.

Our economy has become more diverse, with digital, creative, technology and health-innovation businesses now thriving alongside more traditional sectors, such as financial and professional services. This economic growth, building on the strengths of our existing communities, has helped to encourage a younger, more diverse and higher-skilled population. However, now there is a new set of challenges that needs to be overcome.

Manchester is at a critical point, due to the combined challenges of COVID-19 and Brexit, and the uncertainties in our well-established international relationships and trade. Adapting and mitigating the impact of climate change is a major challenge, given the city's zero-carbon ambitions, but it is also

an opportunity to build into our recovery plans. [Our Powering Recovery: Manchester's Economic Recovery and Investment Plan](#) sets out the importance of investing in our people, our places, and our prosperity to continue to strengthen our role in driving economic growth throughout the North and beyond the boundaries of the city. The next phase of public-service reform and health and social-care integration will require redoubling efforts to connect all our residents to the opportunities of economic growth and reduce demand.

This report looks back to the position from the period March 2020 to March 2021, and clearly outlines the impact the COVID-19 pandemic has had on our city, and the activities carried out to mitigate this impact and start the recovery process.

Our Manchester – Forward to 2025

In 2015, people were asked what their dream Manchester would be like, to help shape the Our Manchester Strategy 2016–25 and to let us know what makes the city a place where people want to live, work, play and do business. The consultation, which reached tens of thousands, gave the clearest picture yet of what matters to people. The Our Manchester Strategy was formally adopted by the Council in January 2016 and was launched two months later. It set out the long-term vision for Manchester's future, providing a framework for action by the Council and its partners across the city.

Over the first five years of the Strategy, Manchester made significant progress, going from strength to strength towards our vision. However, some challenges remain, and the COVID-19 pandemic has put the city in a very different place. Halfway through the Our Manchester Strategy, we took the opportunity, during summer 2020, to reset our priorities for the next five years to 2025, acknowledging – but looking beyond – current challenges, to make sure the city achieves its ambition. We asked what Manchester’s priorities should be; over 3,800 people responded with their views, and their priorities are at the heart of ‘[Our Manchester Strategy: Forward to 2025](#)’. The reset was overseen by the Our Manchester Forum – a partnership board of stakeholders from across the city who oversaw the creation of the original Strategy during 2015 and have been monitoring its implementation ever since.

While Forward to 2025 sets out the five-year vision and reset priorities for Manchester, it recognises the city must work swiftly to address the most pressing issues arising from the pandemic as we continue to live with and recover from COVID-19. These are not new challenges for some of Manchester’s communities, but they have been magnified. COVID-19 has disproportionately affected our Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities, those on low incomes, and our residents with disabilities, due to higher incidences of underlying health conditions and occupational risks. As uncertainty and unemployment have increased, the importance of tackling the underlying causes of poor health, deprivation and poverty – and ensuring equal access to the best education – have been brought to the fore.

Despite this, COVID-19 has also highlighted Manchester’s strengths, and it provides opportunities to drive further progress. Communities have joined together to support one another. National recognition for key workers who kept the city moving is a platform to push for improved pay, working conditions and progression opportunities. Less commuting has led to cleaner air. More residents have been using the green space on their doorstep and supporting local businesses. We are optimistic that Manchester can overcome the challenges and build on the opportunities.

In the five years to 2025, as we work to support the city to recover from COVID-19 and achieve our long-term aspirations, we must make sure that investment, growth, and new opportunities reach every neighbourhood and community, especially those most in need. Manchester’s success is fundamentally linked to Greater Manchester, the north west and the Northern Powerhouse; the Government’s plans to level up the country must present opportunities for investment and development to benefit the city and the wider North.

Renewed focus

The Our Manchester Strategy: Forward to 2025 outlines that in order to achieve our vision, our communities want to see a renewed focus on:

- **Our young people** – providing investment, support, opportunity and hope for the future of the city
- **Our economy** – fulfilling opportunities for our residents as we create and attract a talented, globally competitive and diverse workforce
- **Our health** – tackling physical and mental inequalities and ensuring fair access to integrated services

- **Our housing** – creating a choice of housing in liveable neighbourhoods throughout the city
- **Our environment** – pioneering zero-carbon solutions and improving green spaces
- **Our infrastructure** – creating active, integrated, affordable and green transport, as well as better digital connections.

During the consultation and engagement process, many residents indicated their desire for Manchester to be a ‘truly inclusive’ city, with all residents having the same life chances. Equality of opportunity was acknowledged to be a priority, especially by Black, Asian and ethnic minority residents. In response to that, and reflecting the impact of COVID-19 on exacerbating existing inequalities, Forward to 2025 has made a strong commitment to place equalities, inclusion and diversity as a cross-cutting theme of the strategy.

This commitment is further strengthened by making Equality one of the Council’s nine core priorities in our refreshed Corporate Plan, with a commitment to ‘Work together with Manchester’s citizens and our partners to understand our diverse communities, improve life chances, and celebrate diversity’.

Manchester priorities

For Manchester to achieve its vision, we will refocus our efforts on these priorities to 2025. Throughout each priority runs Manchester’s commitment to build a more equal, inclusive and sustainable city for everyone who lives, works, volunteers, studies and plays here. Only by working together can we achieve our priorities and vision. Our priorities to 2025 are:

A thriving and sustainable city

- We will maintain Manchester's vibrancy and ensure that all our communities are included in the life of the city, regardless of their age, ethnicity, gender, disability, sexuality, faith, or socioeconomic background.
- We will work to ensure Manchester has a strong, inclusive and innovative economy with diverse growth sectors, where our residents are recognised for their contribution via fair contracts and are paid at least the Real Living Wage.

A highly skilled city

- We will ensure that all Manchester's young people have access to good-quality education, and we will support them to be work-ready.
- We will continue to support all our residents to learn, progress, upskill and retrain so they can access the city's current and future employment opportunities.

A progressive and equitable city

- We will strive to create a truly equal and inclusive city, where everyone can thrive at all stages of their life, and quickly and easily reach support to get back on track when needed.
- We will improve physical and mental-health outcomes and ensure good access to integrated health and care services across the city.

A liveable and zero-carbon city

- We will create sustainable, safe, resilient and cohesive neighbourhoods, with more affordable housing, good-quality green spaces, and accessible culture and sporting facilities.

- We will achieve our zero-carbon ambition by 2038 at the latest, via green growth, sustainable design, low-carbon energy, retrofitting buildings, green infrastructure, and increasing climate resilience.

A connected city

- We will enable increased walking and cycling, and continue to develop an integrated, accessible, safe and green public transport system across the city and beyond.
- We will become a digitally inclusive city, with better digital infrastructure, access to digital technology, and strong digital skills.

Each year, we will demonstrate our collective progress towards these goals through the State of the City Report, which is organised according to the five themes. This year's Report represents the fifth year of analysis of our progress against the Our Manchester Strategy.

A thriving and sustainable city

A key factor driving the growth of Manchester over the past decade has been the stability and diversification of its economy. This has created new employment opportunities and attracted high levels of investment, making the city an attractive place to live, work and study. Recent years have seen Manchester diversify towards knowledge-intensive sectors supporting a high number of graduates and the city's higher-education institutions.

However, the prolonged COVID-19 restrictions and economic shutdowns have had a dramatic impact on the economy that could not have been anticipated.

Impacts across the city have been far-reaching and have disproportionately affected specific sectors and resident groups, while the repercussions on the hospitality, retail, culture and sport, aviation, tourism and visitor economies have been unprecedented. In addition to this, certain groups of people have been disproportionately affected by unemployment and loss of earnings resulting from the pandemic.

In recent years the rapid rise in Manchester's population has been boosted by the strong economy and availability of high-quality accommodation in the city centre. During the pandemic the development of this accommodation was paused, as was the movement of people nationally and internationally. In addition to this, decreasing employment opportunities due to the pandemic restrictions saw the number of people choosing to make Manchester their home greatly reduced. One of the main contributors to population growth in the city has traditionally been international immigration, including foreign students. Consequently, effort will be needed to minimise the impact that COVID-19 may have on Manchester's future population growth. Despite this, the city's reputation for welcoming people from around the world remains strong, and it is anticipated that as travel restrictions lift new residents will begin to arrive.

The Office for National Statistics population projections for the city have not been updated since 2018 and so do not take into account the effects of Brexit and COVID-19 on the city. These figures will not be revised until after the publication of the 2021 census results. However, the updated Manchester City Council forecasting model shows an increase in population since 2016 with an expected growth over the next five years.

The most recent data for economic growth (between 2018 and 2019) shows that Manchester's economy continued to grow compared to the rest of the UK, and during 2019, total employment continued to rise. Reliable data or analysis on the impact of the pandemic on employment structures is not yet available, but the prospects for different sectors are expected to vary. It is already evident that the pandemic has led to significant job losses across the city, and that new ways of working and changes in consumer behaviour will have significant ramifications for the employment opportunities in the city.

In the face of these challenges, the diverse and adaptable nature of Manchester's economy will be needed to ensure that the city is able to respond to and be resilient to the economic challenges in the years ahead. Alongside this, the continuing presence of a significant gap between resident and workplace wages presents a further challenge to achieving a recovery that is founded on inclusive growth. Ensuring Manchester has a strong and inclusive economy where residents are recognised for their contribution via fair contracts and being paid at least the Real Living Wage is one of the key components of the Our Manchester – Forward to 2025 reset. Despite this, the COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in a significant rise in poverty in Manchester, evidenced by a 90% rise in the number of unemployed people claiming benefits between March and May 2020. The true extent of in-work poverty has also come to light in the past year, and by the end of 2020, 37% of Universal Credit claimants were in work but eligible for benefits to meet their shortfall in income.

Manchester's city centre has grown and been transformed over recent years and is a major asset for the city. While the development of cities globally

has been reduced by the pandemic, Manchester has maintained momentum and continues its pre-pandemic growth trajectory following an initial slowdown in March 2020. Manchester has continued to successfully and sustainably develop, due to a strong, co-ordinated and collaborative response with partners across the city.

In recent years, cultural activity has been key to Manchester's growth and at the heart of the city's identity, enhancing its attractiveness and reputation. The value of the visitor economy pre-pandemic was £9 billion; it is estimated that during 2020 at least 70% of that value was lost, resulting in more than £6 billion loss to the economy, as well as thousands of job losses across the tourism, hospitality, leisure and culture sectors. Research shows that international visitors are not expected to return to pre-pandemic levels until 2023/24, and it is still too early to determine the impact of Brexit on international visitors to the city. Despite this, there is expected to be pent-up demand to visit the city once the virus is managed and restrictions lifted, and this will be supported by new attractions at existing and new businesses, such as The Factory, RHS Bridgewater and Therme Manchester.

Manchester's visitor economy has been a key driver in the city's economic success over recent years, supported by Manchester Airport as a global gateway. Travel restrictions during the pandemic have had an unprecedented impact on the local and regional visitor economy, affecting businesses, supply chains, and employment opportunities throughout the North. Many of these are ongoing and likely to be long-lasting, resulting in consequent changes to consumer behaviour.

A highly skilled city

A highly skilled workforce is essential to ensure Manchester's economy continues to thrive. Increasing skill levels within the city's population will ensure our residents can access the high-level jobs the city's economy is creating and help reduce levels of dependency, giving everyone the opportunity to benefit from the city's economic success. Over the past 16 years, the progress made in improving the skill levels of residents has been a key component in ensuring the city's overall growth is maintained.

The pandemic has had a significant impact on the skills and labour market. The rapid change of skills supply-and-demand landscape has resulted in some occupation areas growing rapidly while others are declining. An important part of the city's recovery work has focused on skills, the labour market and business activity.

Ensuring children have a good start in life and preparing them to learn is critical to the future success of the city. The Council remains committed to improving school-readiness through continued engagement with Early Years settings and the provision of specific targeted early help intervention where it is needed. During 2020, Early Years Foundation Stage assessments (the teacher assessment of children's development at the end of the academic year in which the child turns five) were unable to take place. Services across the city focused on partnership working, and a range of organisations adapted their approaches to provide flexible service delivery and a blended approach.

The pandemic has had a major impact on the delivery of education for children and young people in the city. Schools were closed for most pupils for significant periods of the 2019/20 and 2020/21 academic years, and the UK saw the cancellation of national assessments and exams. As such, our focus has been to support schools, Early Years settings and other education providers to provide good-quality remote learning and to support the most vulnerable. Support was provided for schools and education settings via the provision of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), over 3,000 laptops to support vulnerable and disadvantaged children, and the gifting of thousands of books, including a book to every child in Year 6 in both 2020 and 2021 in Manchester. All schools in Manchester provided a remote learning and an extended curriculum offer, including for children with special educational needs/disabilities. Despite remote learning and home schooling, there are likely to be attainment setbacks in future years. Manchester's educational institutions continue to work hard to ensure our young people can access education. Following the COVID-19 pandemic, improving the outcomes for all children will remain a key educational priority as well as an increased focus on emotional resilience for all Manchester children to support them in their recovery from the crisis.

School Ofsted inspections were suspended in March 2020; however, before this, 90% of schools and 98% of Early Years settings were classed as 'good' or 'better'. The quality of Manchester's primary and secondary schools continues to improve, and the number being rated as 'good' or 'outstanding' by Ofsted are above the national average.

The Manchester College continues to support its students to think beyond their next educational step towards their ultimate career ambitions so that they can be assisted to meet these aspirations. This vision is being supported by the development of a new £140million estate, which will provide students of all ages with state-of-the-art, industry-standard facilities to support the delivery of a high-quality, technical education. From September 2021, the college will commence its delivery of T Level courses, delivering a significant level of post-16 technical education. The commitment of the college to ensuring that all students achieve their full potential has also played an integral role in seeing the college become the number one college in Greater Manchester for overall achievement.

There remains a focus on increasing the number of residents obtaining qualifications in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering or Maths), digital and creative skill-related subjects. Rapid progress is needed in the development of digital and technical skills, as the growth of Manchester's digital sector is currently being inhibited by the lack of appropriately skilled candidates to fill the available roles. In addition to this, digital skills continue to grow in importance across all occupations, while digitisation and automation play an increasingly important role in changing the skills needs in employment. Several fast-track and intensive training courses are now emerging to address this challenge. In addition, these initiatives are focused on improving diversity within the sector and ensuring that there is greater digital inclusion, so that all Manchester residents have a basic level of digital literacy.

Supporting the delivery of Manchester's commitment to be zero-carbon by 2038 will see a growing need to create good-quality green jobs that support socially responsible businesses to thrive, secure investment for zero-carbon and climate-resilient infrastructure, and establish the products, services and business models that we need to succeed. Manchester's new employability programmes aim to prioritise green-economy skills to broaden the skill base and support growth. It is estimated that over 6,000 additional jobs in the low-carbon and renewable-energy sector will be required by 2030, increasing to over 10,000 by 2050. We are working closely with the GMCA to gather and analyse skills and intelligence information in order to understand the occupation, skills and progression pathways and to identify specific gaps in provision.

Ensuring the city's residents have the necessary skills to engage with the needs of the job market has become increasingly important following the ongoing economic impacts of COVID-19. As such, there is a need to ensure that Manchester takes full advantage of the Government's schemes to support people into work and training. This includes the Kickstart Scheme, which supports young people aged 16–24 at risk of long-term unemployment, into newly created paid employment, with the Government directly paying employers the young people's wages for six months, plus an amount to cover overheads. Locally, the Manchester's Rising Star Fund was launched in January 2021 to support ambitious young people with up to £2,000 to overcome barriers that are preventing them from progressing in education, employment, training or self-employment. Since its launch over £35,000 has been awarded.

Effective careers education information and guidance (CEIAG) plays an important role in building ambition and aspiration to ensure Manchester's young people have the necessary knowledge, understanding, confidence and skills to make informed choices and plans about their future learning and careers. The Council continues to support the CEIAG network to help make our young people aware of the city's changing economy. We have continued to support and encourage businesses to work with our primary and secondary schools and colleges to help our young people reach their full potential and support a bounce back in the economy, and especially work-based learning. During the pandemic we successfully maintained the CEIAG network, and over 80% of secondary schools and colleges engaged via virtual meetings. In addition to this, the network was introduced to 15 businesses, many having a social value commitment to Manchester.

Good-quality apprenticeships across all ages, levels and sectors are critical to building a strong and resilient economy. 2020/21 has been a challenging period for employers, providers and those seeking apprenticeships. During the period after the COVID-19 lockdown began (23 March 2020 to 31 July 2020), there was a decrease of 47% in the overall number of apprenticeship starts nationally compared to the same period in 2019. In the academic year 2019/20, apprenticeship starts fell by 18% nationally and fell by 23% in Manchester compared to 2018/19. The focus of employers has also shifted towards higher-level and older apprentices. Owing to a data time lag, it is difficult to assess the full impact of the pandemic on apprenticeships, but Manchester continues to increase the number and quality of apprenticeships.

Despite the strength and resilience of Manchester's economy, there are still significant challenges to overcome to connect all Manchester's residents to the city's growth. Improvements made in recent years in skills, qualifications, job security and wages have not reached all our residents, leading to a persistent gap between workforce and resident wages. This has been further negatively impacted by the economic crisis following the pandemic. In response to this, Manchester residents facing redundancy or a reduction in their working hours have been supported by a partnership that assists them to retrain or find new employment opportunities.

In certain communities, there remain concentrations of residents with low or no qualifications, alongside issues of social exclusion and poor health. However, despite the impact of the pandemic, in 2020 the number of residents with no qualifications has continued to fall from 24.7% in 2004 to 7.8% in 2020. The gap between Manchester's population and the national average is also reducing; in the past year the gap has halved, and Manchester is now only slightly above the national average of 6.2%. Conversely, the proportion of Manchester's residents educated to degree level has continued to increase from 27.3% in 2004 to 47.7% in 2020; this remains higher than the national average, 42.8% in 2020. An integrated approach with partners is required to support residents with no and low levels of qualifications. Adult education provides one route to respond to these challenges, but a more cohesive skills system with clearer defined priorities is needed if it is to make a significant impact on social mobility in the city. The Manchester Adult Education and Skills Plan has continued to evolve, change and adapt over the past year to meet the challenges of the COVID-19

pandemic and skills shortage in the city, and adopts a place-based approach to meet the needs of the city's residents.

A progressive and equitable city

Manchester aims to be a place where everyone has the same opportunities and life chances, with the potential to lead a safe, healthy, happy and fulfilled life, no matter where they were born or where they live. This means reducing disparities between different areas of the city and different communities within it. While Manchester has made real progress towards achieving this aim – including improvements in education and housing, better access to jobs, and reducing the number of young people not in employment, education or training – much more work is needed.

The urgency of this has been heightened by the exacerbating effect of COVID-19 on the existing inequalities in the city, which disproportionately affect some of the most already disadvantaged communities. For example, it is estimated that Black, Asian and minority ethnic groups account for 45% of the city's population; however, at the peak of the pandemic, these groups accounted for approximately 60% of COVID-19 cases. Many minority ethnic groups were more economically vulnerable than the rest of the city's population and were up to four times more likely to work in 'shut down' industries during lockdown. Nationally, disabled people accounted for approximately 60% of COVID-19 deaths, and learning-disabled people were found to be up to six times more likely to die from COVID-19, trends that were reflected

locally. The pandemic has had a particularly profound effect on disabled people, those with long-term health conditions, ethnic minorities, women, migrants, those living in poverty, and older people; the exact nature and extent of the social and economic impacts of the pandemic continues to evolve. The Council's focus on reducing inequalities is now more important than ever, and it remains committed to tackling these entrenched inequalities so Manchester can become a progressive and equitable city.

Manchester has been working for a number of years to radically transform public services so they are focused on our people and our communities, rather than organisational silos. The integration of health and social care is transforming the experience and outcome of people who need help by putting them at the heart of the joined-up service. This approach is reflected in Manchester's [Locality Plan – Our Healthier Manchester](#), which presents the first five years of the ambitious, transformational change needed to deliver our vision to radically improve health and care outcomes in the city. The plan supports residents to become independent, resilient and better connected to the assets and networks in place in the community. As part of this, services will be reformed so that they are built around residents and communities.

The number of individuals and households experiencing homelessness in Manchester has remained high and there remains significant pressure on services that are working to prevent and tackle homelessness in the city. The Government's 'Everyone In' initiative launched during the lockdown of the city centre in March 2020 successfully provided safe, supported

accommodation for people who had been sleeping rough in the city, or who had been living in shared spaces in emergency accommodation. Consequently, there was a decrease in begging opportunities during this period and a greater engagement with statutory and support services. The number of people presenting as homeless decreased by 3% from 2019/20, largely due to a drop in presentations during the first national lockdown, in March 2020. However, the number owed a statutory duty increased in 2020/21, in part due to people accessing support via emergency COVID-19 accommodation who would not have engaged with services in the past. The Council continues to work in partnership with voluntary, statutory and business partners to prevent and tackle all forms of homelessness.

During 2020/21, we worked with partners to develop a range of responses to tackle rough sleeping that focus on increasing access to settled homes in the social and private-rented sectors. A wide range of incentives were developed for tenancies in this sector, including specialist support, financial assistance, rental guarantees and landlord-insurance policies. This has successfully helped over 1,000 households move into private-sector properties. 2020/21 also saw the launch of the Rough Sleeper Accommodation Programme, which supports and provides accommodation for those impacted by rough sleeping. Phase 1 of the scheme saw more than seventy properties developed and delivered. A particular challenge in Manchester has been the lack of settled accommodation for individuals who need a home as well as mental health support. During the past year, the Greater Manchester Mental Health (GMMH) team have partnered with the homelessness service to pilot innovative

ways to tackle some of these barriers, including providing funding for deposits and rent voids to secure properties.

Various initiatives have been developed to provide support for those with long-term health problems and disabilities. Activity continues to support our residents to access good-quality work, with employment being recognised as a key contributor to reducing health inequalities and improving health and wellbeing. High rates of health-related worklessness have persisted in Manchester in times of economic growth and economic downturn. The Working Well programme takes a holistic approach to supporting residents into good-quality employment by offering a range of skills support, work experience and employment support. There is now a need to ensure that the work of these programmes is scaled up to support those with physical and mental health issues.

Reducing the number of children and families living in poverty and supporting them to be more resilient and able to meet their full potential is key to building a progressive and equitable city. The COVID-19 pandemic has had a huge impact on the city's children and families, plunging many more into poverty. The latest data shows that the number of children in Manchester living in poverty continues to rise and is significantly higher than the UK average. Work in Manchester has focused on employment as a route out of poverty, raising and protecting family incomes, boosting resilience and building on strengths. In December 2020, the Family Poverty Core Group approved the [Family Poverty Strategy Reprioritisation](#) document, which was developed to ensure that in light of the COVID-19 pandemic the strategy continues to meet the

needs of children and families living in poverty. The reprioritised strategy included additional priorities, such as digital inclusion.

Building a safe, happy, healthy and successful future for our children and young people is imperative for the city's success, as outlined in the [Manchester Children and Young People's Plan](#). However, the impact of COVID-19 and the periods of lockdown on the city's children and young people is becoming increasingly evident. Despite the resilience shown, we know that children and young people from disadvantaged families have been disproportionately impacted. Throughout the pandemic, Manchester continued to provide services for vulnerable children and families, and referral rates to Children's Services in 2020/21 were similar to the previous year. The number of Looked After Children has slightly decreased to 1,371 (by the end of March 2021), but remains consistently above other similar local authorities. Consequently, Children's Services are taking a comprehensive approach to reduce the number of entrants into the care system and the length of time that children spend in local authority care.

[Manchester's Early Help Strategy \(2018–21\)](#) states that families, particularly those with multiple and complex needs, will have access to co-ordinated Early Help in accordance with need as soon as difficulties are identified. A collaborative approach between Early Years, Early Help and the Local Care Organisation has been developed taking a whole-family approach, and the Early Help Hubs have a key role to support this at the neighbourhood level. This has helped to provide Manchester's children with the best start in life and ensure they are ready for school.

The COVID-19 pandemic has presented a unique challenge for Adult Social Care, which has played a critical role in supporting vulnerable people across the city to remain safe and as independent as possible. Work during the pandemic focused on hospital discharges, providing ongoing support for care providers, ensuring a supply of PPE, and COVID-19 testing. The pandemic has strengthened the city's commitment to deliver integrated health and adult social care between Manchester City Council and Manchester University Foundation Trust.

The [Manchester Healthy Weight Strategy](#) was agreed in March 2020 and launched in May 2021 with MCRactive. The strategy was developed with a range of stakeholders and takes a whole-system approach to tackling obesity across each life course. The delivery of the strategy will be supported by the Healthy Weight Project within schools and work with health visitors to support children.

The mental health of many people has been negatively affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Be Well, the wellbeing and social-prescribing service for Manchester, has been an essential component of the neighbourhood response. During the pandemic, the service worked with partners across the city as part of the community response to support individuals around the delivery of medication and food parcels. This ensured that vulnerable residents had the support they needed.

The pandemic has had a major impact on cancer services; significantly fewer residents presented at their GP practices and there was a consequent drop in cancer referrals. Referrals are still not back to pre-pandemic levels, and there continues to be some evidence of hesitancy among residents to attend hospital.

A long-term plan to tackle Manchester's entrenched health inequalities is set out in the [Manchester Population Health Plan \(2018–27\)](#). This plan is now the overarching health and wellbeing plan for the city. Good progress has been made in several areas, such as a reduction in the number of mothers being reported as smokers at the time their baby was delivered, and an increase in the proportion of cancers diagnosed early. However, evidence suggests that the pandemic has had a major negative and disproportionate impact on the city's residents. The life expectancy of Manchester residents and recent improvements in death from preventable diseases (such as cancer and cardiovascular) may have been reversed by the pandemic. Clear evidence has emerged that the pandemic has also disproportionately affected particular groups, notably Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities, those born outside of the UK, disabled people, and those in high-risk occupations and/or in poverty. Consequently, Manchester still has some of the worst health outcomes in the country, with significant inequalities across the city.

In order to progress towards becoming a progressive and equitable city, there has been a continual shift in the focus of services towards the prevention of problems and early intervention. Services are being focused on hubs within communities to aid integration and partnership working, and to maximise the impact of the strengths of the communities in which people live. Such actions aim to ensure people receive the right support from the right place at the right time so they can lead healthy, happy and fulfilled lives wherever they were born and wherever they live, and so they can continue to benefit from the success of the city.

The introduction of Integrated Neighbourhood Teams is transforming the way residents experience their community-based health and adult social care. This has been critical during the pandemic. Intervention, prevention and reablement and services that better support people's needs in the community have supported vulnerable people, preventing the need for more intensive health and social-care interventions and ensuring the safe discharge from hospital as soon as they are able. The move to integrated working with community-based health and social-care staff working collaboratively within the Manchester Local Care Organisation (MLCO) is crucial to the city's success. Manchester has been a national leader in developing more integrated health and social care in recent years; the city is well placed to take advantage of the Government's national reforms to establish Integrated Care Systems at the level of Greater Manchester, including plans to 'supercharge' MLCO. As part of this work, a new agreement between Manchester City Council and Manchester University Foundation Trust (MFT) has been developed that will effectively deliver integrated health and adult social care and include the delegation of responsibility for adult social care to MLCO.

The Age-Friendly Manchester programme aims to improve the quality of life for older people in the city, making Manchester a better place for people to grow old. [Manchester: A Great Place to Grow Older \(2017–21\)](#) outlines systems and structures needed to work well together to improve the health and wellbeing of older people through a collaborative and partnership programme. Intervention, prevention, reablement and services that better serve people's needs in the community are resulting in fewer adults, particularly older

people, in need of going into residential or nursing care. However, Manchester's older people have been disproportionately affected by COVID-19 and its subsequent restrictions, affecting both their physical and mental health. Social connectedness and low levels of digital access have also led to an increase in loneliness and social isolation. In response to this, the Age Friendly Manchester Older People's Board has reset its priorities with a renewed focus on the city being more age-friendly in order to ensure that Manchester is a progressive and equitable city.

A liveable and zero-carbon city

Ensuring Manchester is a great place to live with sustainable, safe, resilient and cohesive neighbourhoods is crucial to us fulfilling our 2025 ambitions. This will be achieved by providing a range of high-quality housing options in clean, safe, attractive neighbourhoods, and by maintaining widespread access to high-quality cultural, sporting and leisure facilities. Pursuing a zero-carbon future with cleaner air will also help to create attractive neighbourhoods where people are happy.

Despite the challenges presented by the pandemic, Manchester continues to try and meet the varied housing needs of all its residents by developing a diverse supply of good-quality housing available to rent and buy that is well designed, energy-efficient and affordable. During the pandemic, homes continued to be delivered at scale, with more new homes built in 2020/21 than in any year since 2008.

A key part of the city's recovery from the pandemic will be the continued increasing delivery of housing – particularly affordable housing. The demand for housing from our most vulnerable residents has not diminished and has become more acute, with growing numbers on the housing register and in temporary housing. Manchester is committed to deliver new housing using brownfield land where possible, but this is only made possible by continued access to Government funding. Without this investment, the city will be limited in its ambition to build much-needed homes for our residents and progressing our zero-carbon ambitions.

In July 2019, Manchester City Council declared a climate emergency, which recognised that the crisis of climate change is the single biggest challenge faced by the world today and can only be overcome by taking urgent, radical action. Manchester is committed to becoming a zero-carbon city by 2038 at the latest and has set a carbon budget for its direct carbon emissions, setting out how much CO₂ can be used between 2018 and 2100. Over the past year, a range of projects and initiatives has been delivered to progress our zero-carbon ambitions. The Council's direct-carbon emissions have significantly reduced in recent years, but the city is not yet decarbonising at the required pace and collective and urgent action is now required.

Ensuring that Manchester is clean and well maintained and that residents are supported to take pride in the city is one of our key priorities. The standard of street cleansing in an area makes a significant contribution to its perception and appeal as a neighbourhood of choice. The Council continues to be committed to recycling more of the

city's waste, but despite this it is anticipated that the recycling rate in 2020/21 will fall, as residents spend more time at home and produce more waste. Fly-tipping also increased during the pandemic as household waste increased. Manchester continues to work closely with communities and partner agencies to address littering and fly-tipping through a process of enforcement and education, together with a programme of direct action in partnership with the local community.

Through the Community Safety Partnership, the Council continues to work with other public-sector bodies, universities, Greater Manchester Police, businesses and communities to develop new initiatives to tackle crime and antisocial behaviour. While the overall approach is to reduce the amount of reported crime, in some cases known to be underreported (such as domestic violence and abuse incidents), the strategy encourages people to report suspected incidents. Following the March 2020 lockdown, cases of antisocial behaviour in the city more than doubled. This was largely due to the Greater Manchester approach to intervene when house parties and gatherings occurred that breached COVID-19 regulations. The COVID-19 pandemic has also had a significant impact on levels of recorded crime, both locally and nationally. Across Greater Manchester, offences reduced mainly due to the impact the city centre and its night-time economy normally has on crime statistics, and the pandemic led to bigger reductions in theft and robbery offences than other kinds of crime. More generally, crimes against the person reduced less than crimes against property, while offences flagged as domestic abuse in Manchester saw a small increase. There were also signs, particularly in the early months of lockdown, that young people

were experiencing increased exposure to domestic violence. Extra funding has been secured to commission extra services providing increased capacity to focus on early intervention and prevention.

Conserving, protecting and enhancing biodiversity is a key priority for Manchester. A plentiful supply of well-managed green and blue infrastructure plays an important role in improving health and wellbeing; it also encourages more active lifestyles and contributes towards the city's carbon-reduction strategy. During the past year, Manchester's parks have seen a significant increase in visitors, as they became more important during lockdowns to support residents with their physical and mental wellbeing. The pandemic also saw the formation of two new Friends Groups and 17,500 volunteer hours were used to help keep parks litter-free.

Manchester has a dynamic and vibrant history of cultural innovation delivered by major cultural institutions alongside a rich mix of smaller organisations. The sector provides a key role in delivering both economic and social objectives of the city. The COVID-19 crisis has seen the cultural sector's income generation and programming output severely reduced, and it is anticipated that the sector will continue to face challenges into the coming months and years. Many organisations reacted quickly to the challenges faced during lockdown restrictions by seeking different ways to deliver their programmes. This demonstrated a creative approach to maintaining relationships with audiences, participants and artists, as well as supporting more vulnerable members of society to engage and be creative. In response to the ongoing challenges, Manchester has developed a [Cultural Recovery Plan](#) to aid the sector's recovery.

During the past year, Manchester's libraries have provided a lifeline for residents when their ability to visit other venues was severely limited. Despite visits to libraries inevitably falling during the pandemic, there was an exceptional increase in the use of electronic resources. During the third lockdown at the beginning of 2021, libraries remained open, as they were considered to be an essential service for residents, partially due to their role in providing free internet access. Libraries have also offered a varied and diverse online programme of events and activities for all ages, which have been very popular.

MCRactive, a not-for-profit organisation overseen by the Council, are responsible for driving sport and activity across the city by encouraging everyone to have a more active and healthier lifestyle. During the pandemic, MCRactive have developed new ways to support residents via online activity, which saw more than forty weekly live streams or online classes delivered during periods of lockdown.

Manchester's Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) sector has been integral to the city's response to the pandemic. The recent State of the Manchester VCSE Sector report (Macc et al, 2021) identified that Manchester's VCSE sector comprises 3,871 voluntary organisations, community groups and social enterprises that make a difference to Mancunians' lives every day; this number increased sharply in response to the pandemic. VCSE services and initiatives are delivered by some 162,000 volunteers giving around 481,000 hours each week, valued at £242million per annum (based on a Real Living Wage of £9.50 per hour).

During the pandemic, the Volunteer Centre Manchester received over 7,000 volunteer applications. Over 2,500 registrations of support were received as marshals for vaccination sites, and 300 to support surge-testing efforts. The Voluntary and Community Sector delivered the COVID-19 Impact Fund and distributed £745,000 to support the mental health and wellbeing of priority resident groups and £50,000 to support victims of domestic violence and abuse. VCSE groups and organisations have worked in extremely challenging circumstances to support residents' health and wellbeing, yet despite this, the pandemic has presented a significant challenge for the VCSE sector. This is illustrated by 50% of Manchester VCSE organisations having had to use up their reserves in the 12-month period up to July 2021, 51% of these directly because of COVID-19. In an increasingly challenging funding environment, the long-term impact of the pandemic on the viability, diversity and strength of Manchester's VCSE sector remains to be seen.

A connected city

For a city to be successful it needs to be well connected locally, nationally and internationally. Connections are essential for residents to access work opportunities, education and services, and for businesses to access markets and their customers. As modern technology is increasingly enabling these connections to happen virtually, fast and reliable digital connectivity is needed alongside effective and efficient physical connectivity.

The Council has continued to work collaboratively with Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM) to take a strategic approach to planning our city's

transport network. A refreshed [Greater Manchester Transport Strategy 2040](#) was adopted in early 2021, along with a five-year delivery plan of infrastructure priorities. This strategic approach has been built on in Manchester with the adoption of a refreshed [City Centre Transport Strategy](#) in March 2021, which prioritises walking as the main way of moving around the city centre.

Manchester Airport enables excellent national and international connectivity by air. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, passenger numbers increased year on year to 29.4million passengers in 2019. However, passenger numbers have been severely impacted by the pandemic reducing to just over 7million during 2020; a 76% reduction compared to 2019. The Airport is currently undergoing a £1billion transformation programme, due for completion in 2024. This work has significantly increased the size of Terminal 2 and will maximise the capacity of the Airport to be able to carry 55million passengers a year. In recognition of Manchester Airport's key role in supporting the economy of the city and the North as a national and international transport hub, the Council has been the major contributor to an economic support package put together in May 2020 by all ten Greater Manchester local authorities.

Progress has continued to be made to improve Manchester's rail connectivity over the past year. Preparations continue to facilitate the construction of High Speed 2 (HS2), with plans focusing on the development of a new station to be constructed at Manchester Piccadilly, which will also support the regeneration of the surrounding area. Plans for high-speed rail links connecting Manchester to other cities in the North of England have also

been progressed by Transport for the North. Both schemes will transform the connectivity of the region to the rest of the UK, driving economic growth.

Improvements have been made to strategic and key-route road networks to support the movement of people and freight locally and around the country. Highways England continue to progress several projects specifically focusing on the M60 and its role in distributing traffic through the city and to other areas outside Greater Manchester. Within Manchester, the Manchester and Salford Inner Relief Road (MSIRR) is essential to distribute traffic more effectively throughout the city and to improve the capacity of the network. During 2020, several improvements were made along this route to improve the flow of traffic and improve access into the city centre for cyclists and pedestrians. Working with partners to improve the safety of the highway network through targeted investment to develop infrastructure to reduce accidents and enforcement operations saw a reduction in those killed or seriously injured on Manchester's roads during 2020. Manchester is working with Highways England to ensure that these projects can be aligned with our commitment to be zero-carbon by 2038.

Before the COVID-19 pandemic, journeys into the city centre by car were decreasing year on year and there were subsequent increases in walking, cycling and journeys made by public transport. Owing to the pandemic, there has been a 18% decrease in journeys into the city centre by all modes and a significant impact on the volume of patronage on public transport and highways usage. The extent to which public transport can regain mode share is likely to be dependent on a

range of factors, including confidence in hygiene and cleanliness, the effectiveness and adoption of face coverings by passengers, and overall prevalence of COVID-19 in the community. In addition to this, it remains unclear whether the upsurge in walking and cycling, which was encouraged by the clearer roads of the lockdown period, will be sustained.

Increased amounts of investment are being made into the highways network to make it easier and more attractive to make more short journeys on foot or by bike. In [Greater Manchester the Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan](#), known as the Beelines, there are details of how Greater Manchester will create a genuine culture of cycling and walking. Funding of £160million has been made available, with Manchester securing £79million for projects to deliver improvements to the highways network to make it easier and more attractive for people to take shorter journeys on foot or by bike.

In March 2021, the Greater Manchester Mayor announced that powers contained in the [Bus Services Act 2017](#) would be used to introduce a system of bus franchising in Greater Manchester. This would see the introduction of a unified brand across the city region for buses, with simplified, integrated ticketing across the bus network and Metrolink. This will support the development of a resilient and accessible comprehensive transport system that is attractive and affordable, enabling residents to access jobs, education and services in a seamless journey by combining several modes of transport.

The transport system is a major source of emissions that are damaging health and contribute to climate

change. Manchester is taking action to reduce the harmful levels of pollutants that exist in some areas of the city. In 2021, the Clean Air Plan for the region was approved by the ten Greater Manchester authorities; this includes the introduction of a Clean Air Zone by 2024 and a multimillion funding support programme for businesses and organisations to be able to upgrade their non-compliant vehicles. The Council continues to work with TfGM to expand the region's electric-vehicle public-charging network in order to encourage the use of electric vehicles and to support the city's commitments to be zero-carbon by 2038. Ways to further decarbonise transport by increasing the use of low-emission and electric vehicles and implementing a public-charging network are being explored.

In 2017, a consortium including the Council and TfGM secured £3.7million funding to trial a driverless electric shuttle service at the Airport and trial the use of autonomous vehicles between Stockport Railway Station and the Airport. It is hoped this will reduce congestion, improve air quality and road safety, and reduce carbon emissions. These trials were due to commence in summer 2021.

Manchester is already leading the way to becoming a digital city. It is one of Europe's fastest-growing technology cities with a strong and resilient digital sector. Ensuring that residents are equipped with the skills and technology to make the most of our rapidly digitising world is of fundamental importance to our future success. Over the past year, this has become increasingly important as the reliance on reliable broadband connections and digital skills has become increasingly important during the lockdown restrictions imposed during the pandemic. Work is underway to develop a Digital Strategy for

the city, which will focus on skills, neighbourhood connectivity, business and zero-carbon. Digital exclusion can have a range of negative impacts, such as social exclusion, an increased risk of poverty, and reduced access to employment. In 2020, Manchester developed a [Digital Inclusion Action Plan](#) working with stakeholders across the city to reduce digital exclusion. Part of the city's response to the pandemic was to provide over 900 residents with digital support via the Response Hub. This support has been able to continue by being integrated into the services provided by the Council's Libraries team.

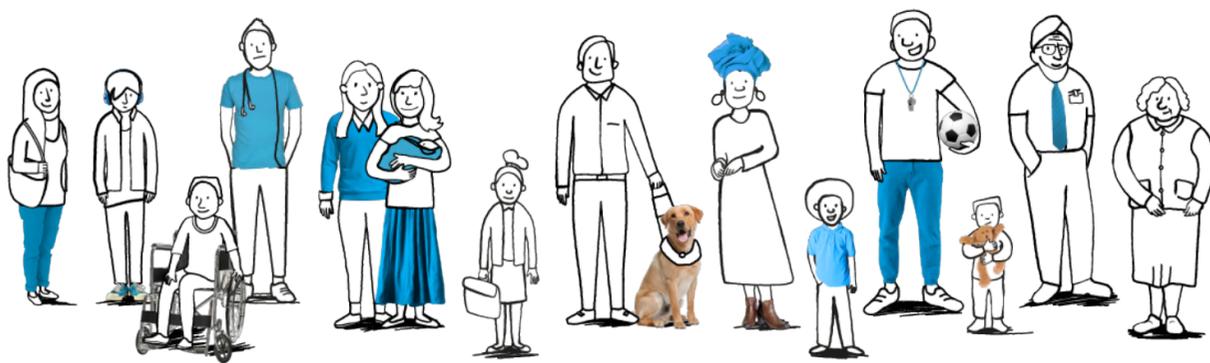
Conclusion

Significant progress has been made since the launch of the Our Manchester Strategy, with Manchester's population, economy and international profile all increasing. However, even before COVID-19 brought new challenges, there were many significant issues to overcome to fully deliver the vision for Manchester by 2025. The future of the UK outside the European Union continues to remain unclear, which may have an impact on future levels of migration and investment in the city. There is a need to address our communities' health outcomes and deprivation in our communities, and to ensure that our residents have the necessary skills to benefit from the success of the city. Addressing climate change becomes increasingly pressing each year. When delivering Manchester's recovery from COVID-19, we need to ensure a continued focus on addressing the challenges the city already faces, as well as the emerging ones resulting from the pandemic.

The reset of the Our Manchester Strategy has reframed the Strategy, recognising the progress Manchester has made over the past five years since the Strategy's launch in 2016, and the new and evolving challenges that have resulted from the ongoing effects of COVID-19. The reset will ensure the city focuses on the most salient priorities for the next five years to ensure we achieve our 2025 vision.

Through the Our Manchester approach, Manchester is seeking to address these challenges in a different way. Organisations, businesses and voluntary groups are continuing to put the four Our Manchester 'behaviours', outlined earlier in the chapter, into action and change the way they work. The Our Manchester approach is enabling new and different relationships to be established between the Council, partners, residents and workers in the city to ensure the city fulfils its potential and meets the aspirations of all who live and work in the city.

A thriving and sustainable city



627,000 residents expected by 2025

Population

Population growth expected over next five years, assuming a gradual resumption of international travel, continuation of construction projects and steady economy recovery. **An increasing number of residents are aged 25–39** due to the city's rising popularity as a place to live, study and work.

Source: Manchester City Council Forecasting Model W2020 (adjusted to include impact of COVID-19)

Living wage

In-work poverty is on the rise – by the end of 2020, **37% of Universal Credit claimants were in work but eligible for benefits** to meet their shortfall in income. It is estimated that 76% of Manchester residents earned at least the Real Living Wage of £9.30 in 2020. We aim to ensure that everybody is paid at least a Real Living Wage by 2025.

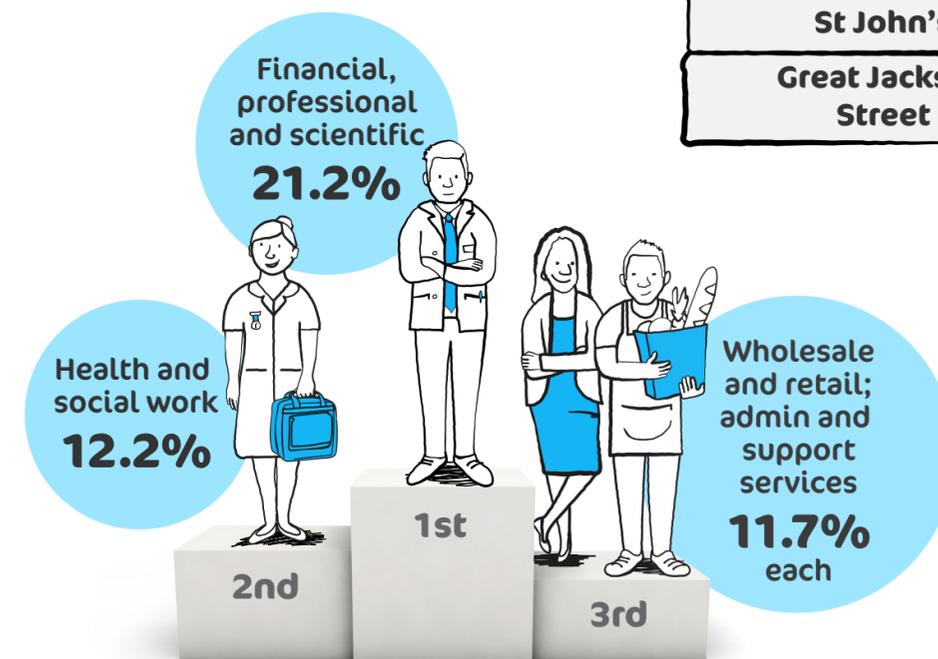
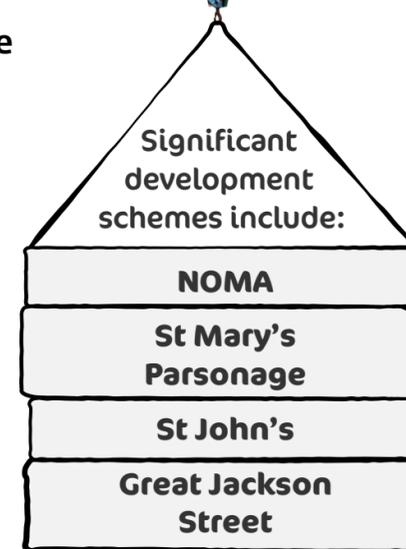
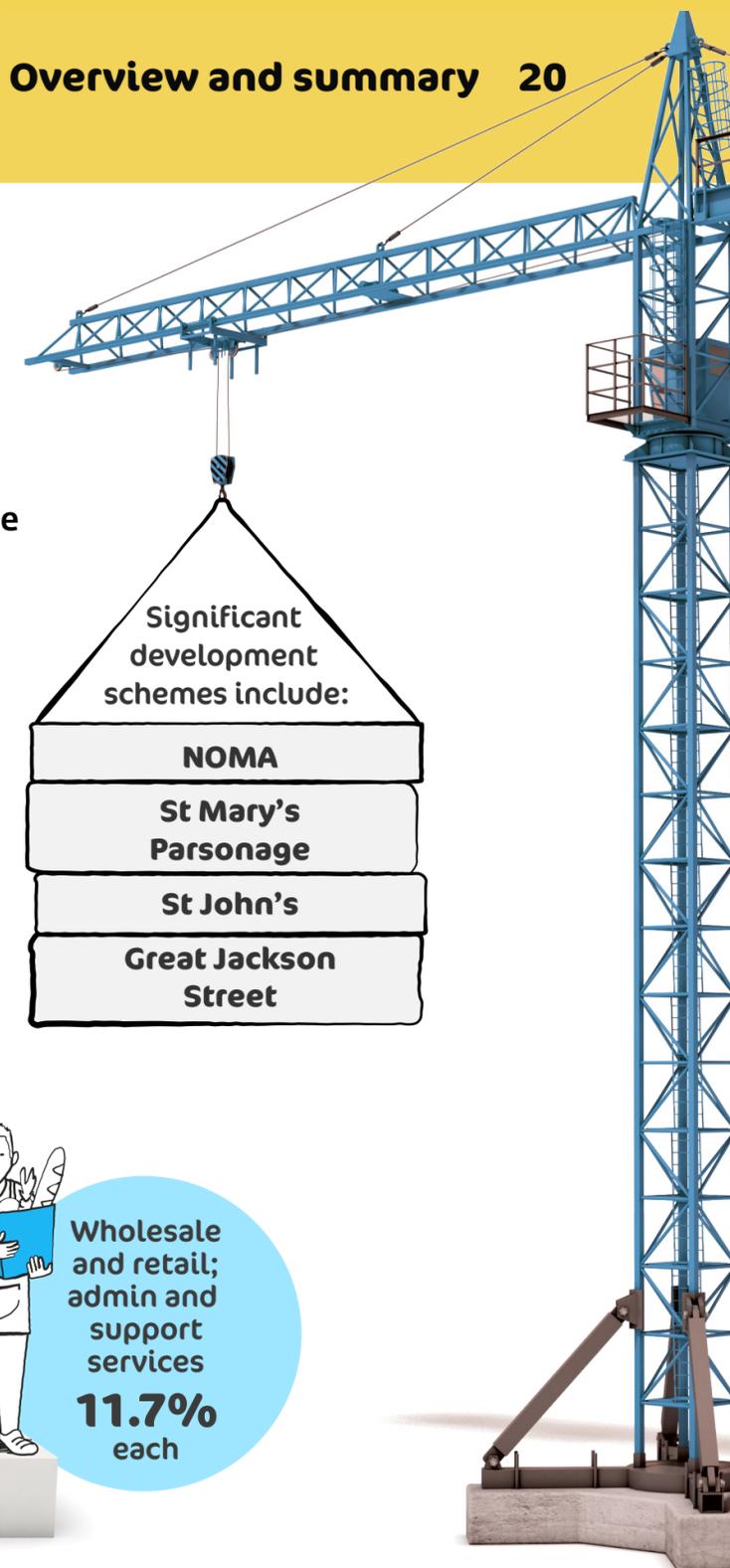
Source: Provisional 2020 Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings, ONS



Development in the city centre

Vibrant, mixed-use development has continued to transform the city's skyline – following an initial slowdown in March 2020, construction activity continued at a rapid pace. Manchester's Recovery and Investment Plan will help to ensure that this growth continues.

Source: Manchester City Council



Employment

Pre-pandemic, employment in the city continued to rise, from 357,000 in 2015 to 410,000 in 2019. The pandemic disrupted many of our sectoral strengths, significantly impacting upon culture and retail. New ways of working and changes in consumer behaviour will embed and bring further sectoral changes, impacting upon employment opportunities in the city.

Source: ONS Business Register and Employment Survey, 2019 (provisional). Percentage of the workforce employed in the city's largest sectors.

A highly skilled city

Remote learning

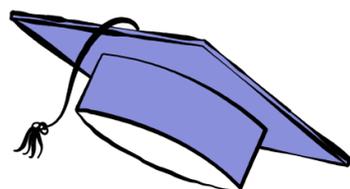
During the pandemic, schools, early years settings and other providers were supported to ensure a good-quality remote learning offer. **The Council provided advice and direct support for individual schools, distributed PPE, and allocated over 3,000 laptops to support vulnerable and disadvantaged children.**

Source: Manchester City Council



An estimated **6,175** new low-carbon sector jobs will be created by 2030, reaching **10,763** by 2050

23% of 2018/19 graduates originally from Manchester working in the city,



with a further **13%** working elsewhere in Greater Manchester

Graduates

An increasing number of students are enrolling at higher-education providers in the city. Early indications show that the graduate recruitment market is recovering to pre-pandemic levels. Manchester University estimates that approximately **48% of its graduates express a desire to stay in the city** for work.

Source: HESA Graduate Outcomes Survey (survey taken 15 months after graduating)

Skills for a zero-carbon economy

Manchester is committed to a green, zero-carbon and climate-resilient recovery. A zero-carbon skills framework is being developed to understand the skill needs that will emerge for each low-carbon sector, including retrofitting buildings, low-carbon heating, low-carbon transport and low-carbon services.

Source: Ecuity Consultants and Local Government Association, 2021

Universal Credit

Significant **increase in Universal Credit claimants between March 2020 and March 2021.** The number of Universal Credit claimants in work has increased due to the high level of furlough. Younger residents aged 16–29 account for an increasing proportion of in-work claimants.

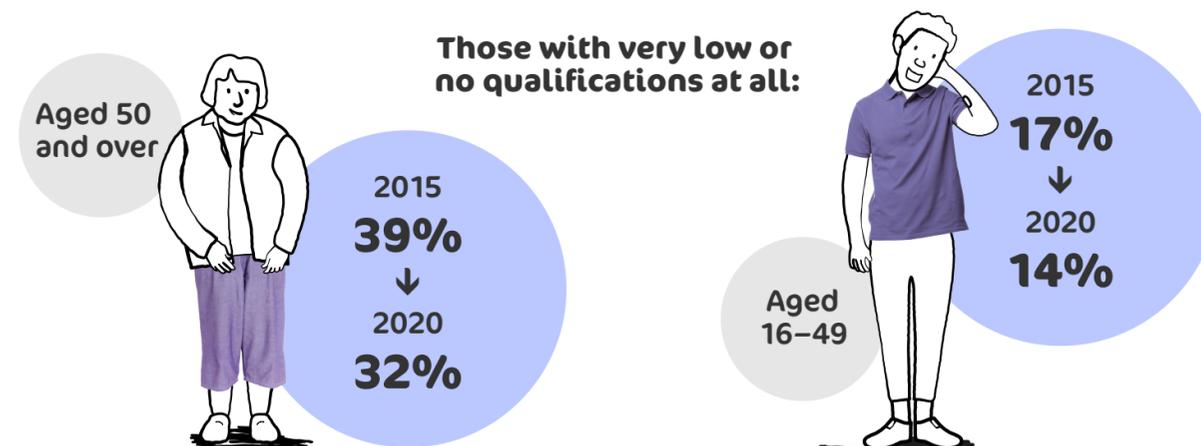
Source: StatXplore, Department for Work and Pensions



Qualifications

Over the past 16 years, the proportion of residents with no qualifications has reduced from 24.7% to 7.8%, and is now only slightly above the national average of 6.2%. Over half the Manchester working-age population with low or no qualifications are unemployed. Low skill levels are more prevalent in residents aged over 50.

Source: ONS Annual Population Survey, 2020



A progressive and equitable city

Homelessness

Significant increase in households residing in temporary accommodation over the past six years. There has been a 17% year-on-year increase in the use of temporary accommodation, in part due to the lack of move-on options during lockdown. **The Housing Solutions Service continued to see high demand in 2020/21** and a 30% increase in presentations where domestic violence and abuse was stated as the reason for loss of settled home.

Source: Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (P1e and H-CLIC statutory return); HPA2, Locata.



Increase from **406** (March 2015) to **2,546** (March 2021) households in temporary accommodation
9,608 people presenting as homeless (2020/21)

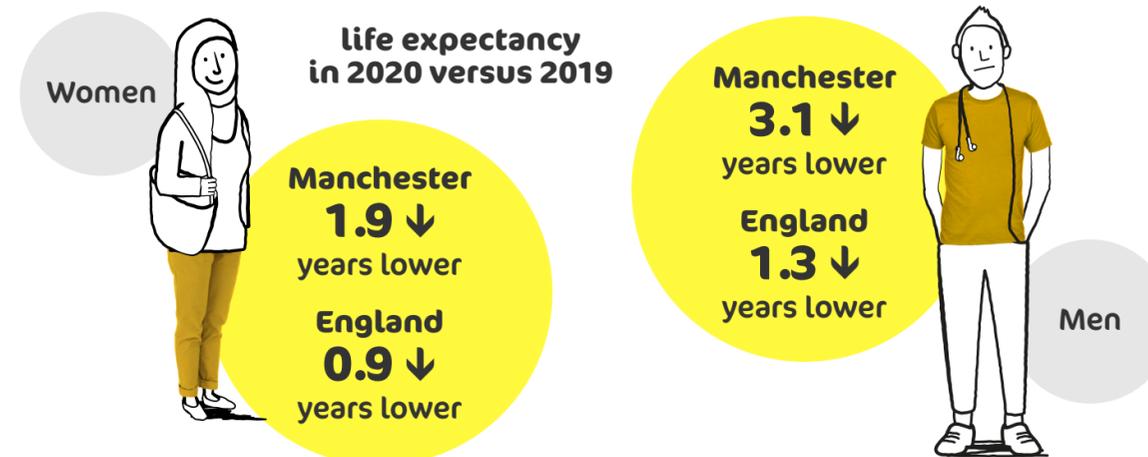


41.8% of Manchester children live in poverty vs **31%** of children across the UK

Family poverty

46,700 children living in poverty, after housing costs taken into consideration, in March 2020, an increase of 1,550 children since March 2019. Affecting around 41.8% of those aged under 16, this rate is significantly higher than the UK average. 2020/21 saw a 50% rise in demand for food banks and pantries, and over 110,000 food parcels were delivered to residents' homes.

Source: Research by the Centre for Research in Social Policy at Loughborough University for the End Child Poverty Coalition



Life expectancy at birth

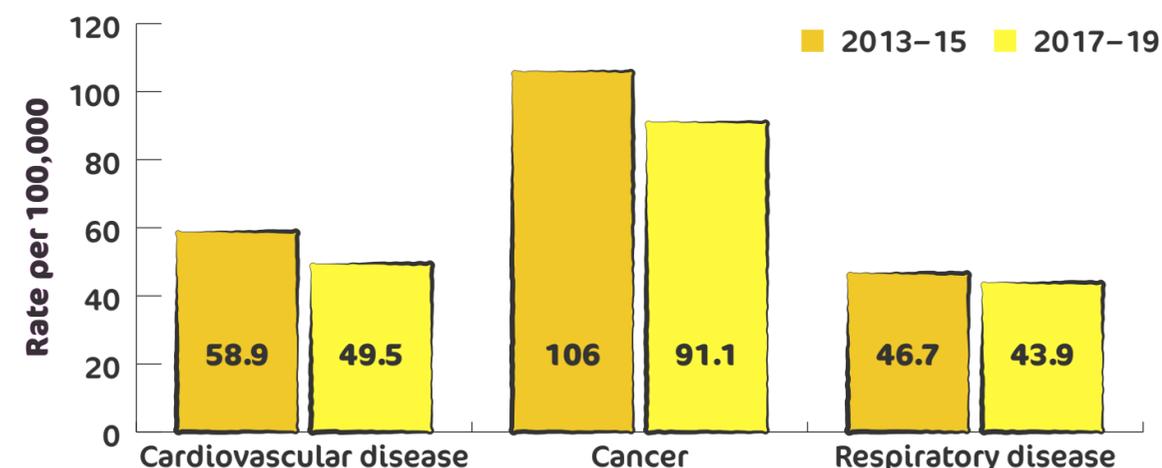
Provisional estimates of life expectancy at birth show the impact of the **COVID-19 pandemic**. The size of the fall in life expectancy in Manchester is more than that seen in England overall, widening inequalities in life expectancy between Manchester and the national average.

Source: England estimates, Public Health England; Manchester estimates, local analysis by Manchester Population Health Team based on ONS mortality data and mid-year population estimates.

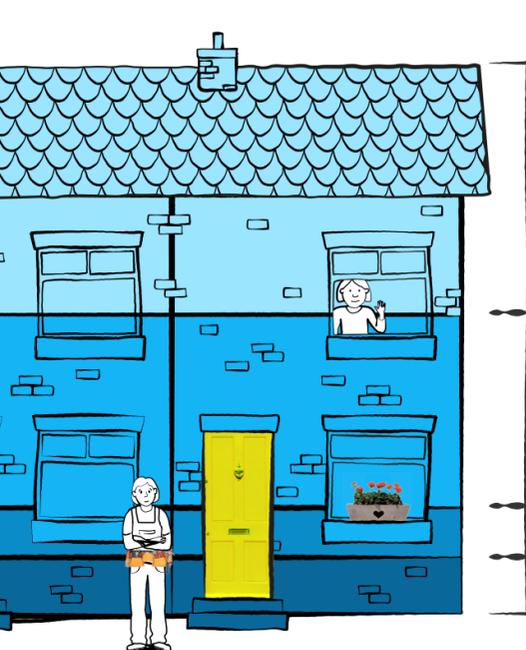
Premature mortality from causes considered preventable

Although rates have fallen in recent periods, Manchester has one of the highest rates (per 100,000) in England of premature deaths from cardiovascular disease, cancer and respiratory disease.

Source: 2013–15 and 2017–19 three-year averages, Public Health England/ONS



A liveable and zero-carbon city



2025 new homes target
32,000

17,499 new homes built

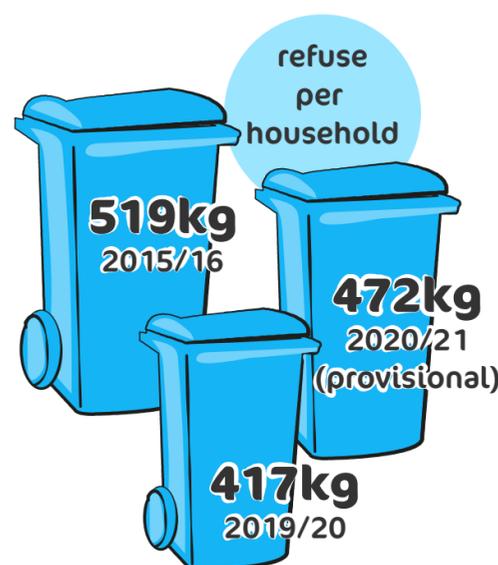
2025 affordable homes target
6,400

1,927 affordable homes built

Housing

The continued **delivery of new affordable homes is increasing housing options** for some of our most vulnerable residents. In 2020/21, 446 new affordable homes were completed across Manchester – the highest figure since 2011. However, the pace of delivery needs to increase if we are to meet our Residential Growth Strategy targets.

Source: Manchester City Council Expected Completions List. Homes built between April 2015 and March 2021.



Recycling

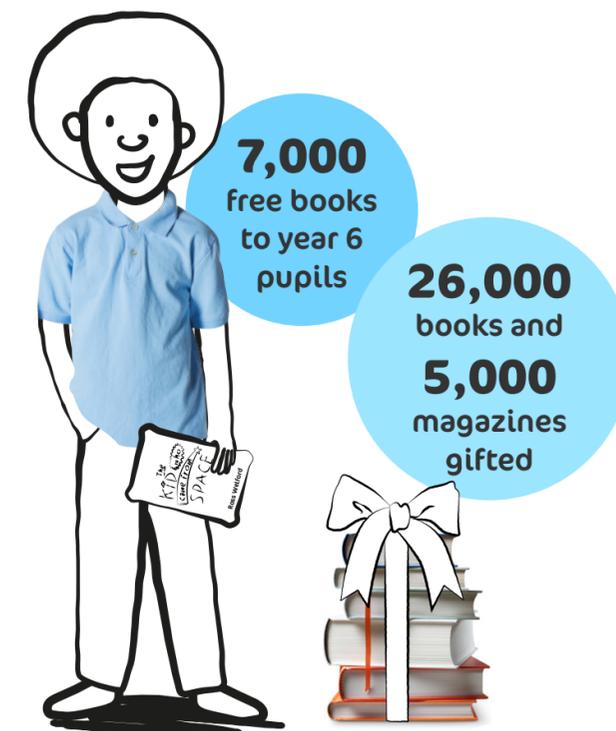
Recycling rates were maintained at **40%** in 2018/19 and 2019/20 but are forecast to fall to 37% in 2020/21. This is due to the COVID-19 pandemic and is in line with the national trend, which has led to residents spending more time at home and so producing more waste that goes into their refuse bins.

Source: Waste Data Flow

Libraries

Libraries worked with Read Manchester to ensure children continued to read despite the reduced access to libraries. In 2020/21, 26,000 books and 5,000 magazines were gifted through foodbanks and Sure Start centres, all 7,000 year 6 pupils in the city received a free book, and 16,000 children were given automatic membership to the Summer Reading Challenge, and a library card.

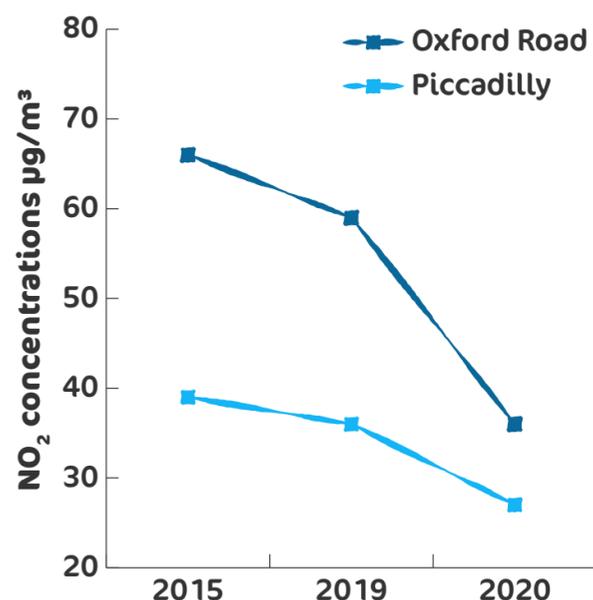
Source: Manchester City Council



Air quality

Long-term monitoring trends indicate that **there has been an improvement in air quality across the city**. During 2020, concentrations of nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) dropped significantly as a result of lockdown restrictions, resulting in Manchester meeting the 40µg/m³ legal limit at all monitoring sites.

Source: Air Quality England



Volunteering

Manchester's Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) sector has been integral to the city's response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The State of the Manchester VCSE Sector 2021 report identified that VCSE services and initiatives are delivered by some **162,000 volunteers giving around 481,000 hours each week, valued at £242million per annum**. During 2020/21, Manchester VCSE organisations received 7,331 volunteer applications via Volunteer Centre Manchester. This included specific opportunities for residents to support the response to COVID-19.

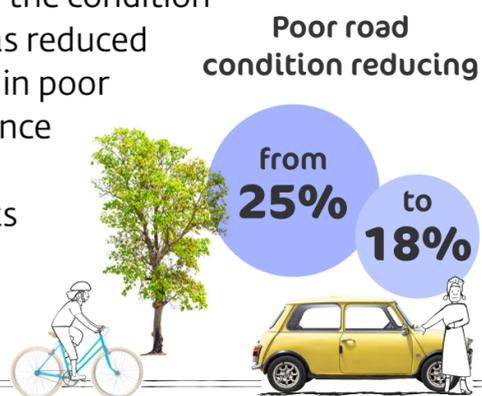
Source: Manchester Community Central

A connected city

Highways network investment

£66.1million invested since 2017 to improve the condition of the city's roads, footways and drainage has reduced the proportion of the road network rated as in poor condition, from 25% in 2017 to 18% in 2020. Since the start of the programme, the number of reported drainage gully faults and complaints has fallen by 47%.

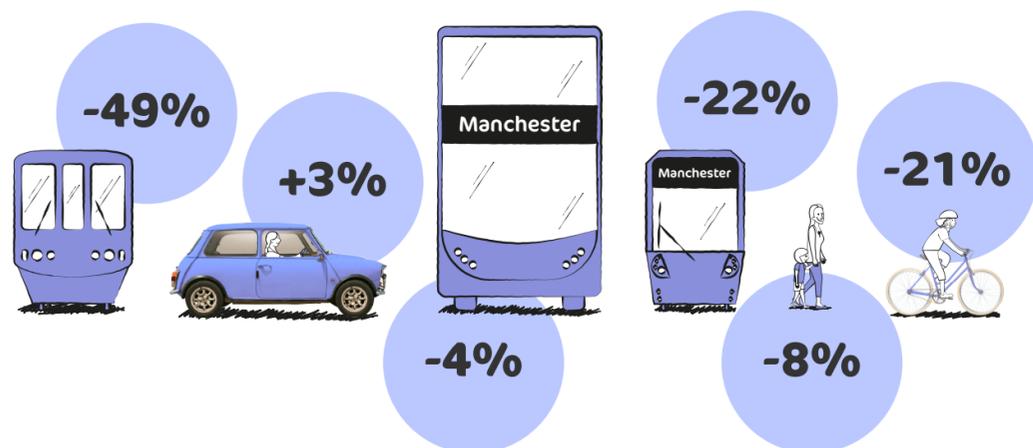
Source: Manchester City Council, GEIST survey



Trips into Manchester city centre

Travel demand to and from the city centre has grown significantly in recent years, reflecting increases in the number of jobs and the resident population. However, owing to the pandemic there was an 18% decrease in journeys across all modes between 2019 and 2020.

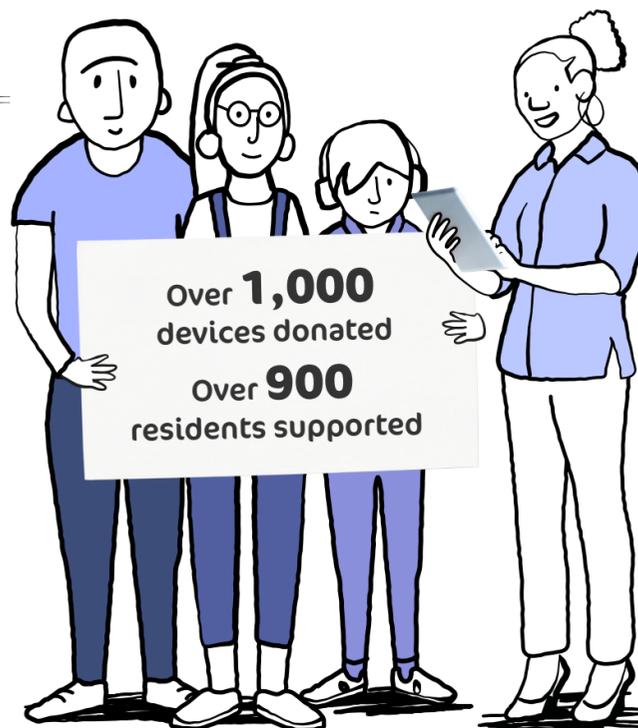
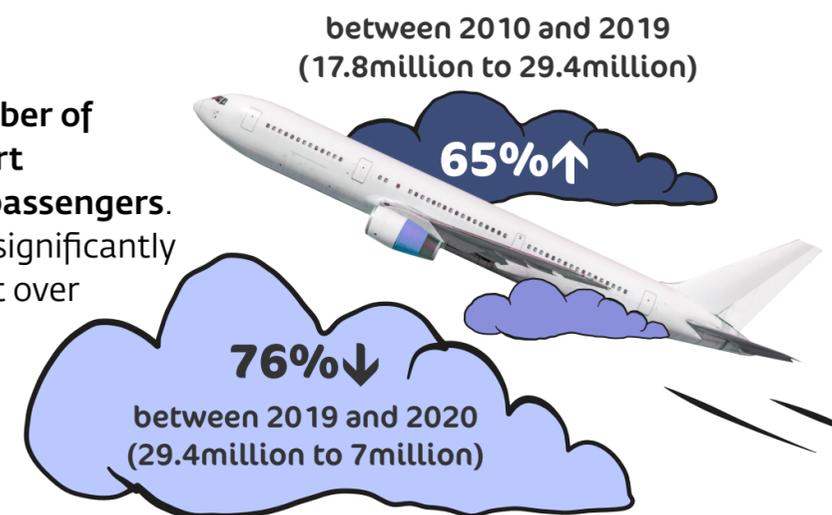
Source: TfGM. Percentage change in number of trips into Manchester key centre (7.30–9.30am) between 2019 and 2020. Rail surveys undertaken in mid-March were significantly affected by measures taken to combat COVID-19.



Airport

Between 2015 and 2019, the number of passengers at Manchester Airport increased by 27% to 29.4million passengers. However, the COVID-19 pandemic significantly reduced passenger numbers to just over 7million during 2020. These figures are a reflection of world trends.

Source: Civil Aviation Authority



Digital inclusion

The Digital Inclusion Action Plan delivers a diverse programme of activity to drive digital inclusion across the city. It includes a digital-support telephone service for residents without skills and/or confidence to use the internet effectively, and increases the number of residents with access to the internet through donating internet devices.

Source: Manchester City Council. Activity during the pandemic.

Digital connectivity

Consumers are upgrading to high-speed broadband packages but do not always take the fastest packages available to them. Ultrafast broadband (over 300Mbit/s) is now available to 68% of the city's homes and businesses, but only around 5,000 premises have taken up these ultrafast services.

Source: Ofcom

Chapter 2: A Thriving and Sustainable City

Strategic overview

Manchester's growth over the past decade has been attributed to the stability and diversification of the city's economy. The creation of new employment opportunities has contributed to the significant growth in the city's population, which has in turn attracted further inward investment from new businesses. In recent years, the economy in Manchester has diversified towards knowledge-intensive sectors, supported by high numbers of graduates from the city's higher-education institutions. These have remained to enter employment in the fast-growing sectors of science, research and innovation; business, financial and professional services; and cultural, creative and digital.

Manchester is at the forefront of work to research, pilot and implement the use of digital technology to transform connectivity and how the city functions. The innovative solutions being developed by the facilities associated with Manchester Science Partnerships along the Oxford Road Corridor and elsewhere in the city have been groundbreaking. Plans for the development of further sites within an innovation district along the Oxford Road Corridor and elsewhere in the city demonstrate a continuing commitment to support the growth and potential of the sector.

The prolonged economic shutdown experienced throughout 2020 and early 2021 could not have been anticipated. The impacts of this are far-reaching and have disproportionately affected specific sectors of

the economy and resident groups. Lockdowns and public-health restrictions have had repercussions on the hospitality, retail, culture and sport, aviation and tourism sectors, as well as the visitor economy. Residents working in insecure work have experienced greater uncertainty and may not have been protected by Government support schemes. In addition, over-50s; younger workers; Black, Asian and minority ethnic workers; and women have been disproportionately impacted by unemployment resulting from the pandemic. Employees in the gig economy and other forms of self-employment have also been exposed to greater levels of risk, with remote working not available across all sectors.

The critical role of key workers working in the foundational economy in roles in education, health and social care and other service providers has been highlighted and recognised throughout the pandemic; progressing fair and secure employment in these sectors is key to a more equitable future. Recovery from the pandemic must work towards a more inclusive economy, ensuring that residents from all parts of the city can benefit from high-quality jobs with fair pay and conditions, and opportunities for progression. There still remains a significant gap between resident and workplace wages, representing a real challenge to achieving a more inclusive economy and economic equality for residents across the city. While this gap may reduce during a recession or economic contraction if worker wages decline, the ambition is to both reduce the gap between worker and resident wages, and increase wages for both groups.

The pandemic has seen a systemic shift to online shopping, which is likely to impact on employment opportunities in future years, as well as the role of the city and district centres. The impact of the shift to remote working on employment opportunities and city centre recovery remains to be seen.

The regional, national and international visitor economy has also been a key driver in the city's economic success, supported by Manchester Airport as a global gateway. The travel restrictions curtailing domestic and international travel in 2020 and early 2021 represent an unprecedented shift to the local and regional economy, affecting businesses, supply chains, and employment opportunities throughout the north. The economic impact of these restrictions is unknown but is likely to be long-lasting and may impact upon consumer behaviour.

Analysis of progress

Building on our diverse and growing population

Manchester's rapid rise in population, boosted by a strong economy and the availability of new high-quality accommodation around the city centre, inevitably paused during 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Movement of people nationally and internationally was restricted, along with significantly decreased employment opportunities; the number of international students and workers choosing to make their home in the city was also curtailed by lockdown from March 2020. However, the city's

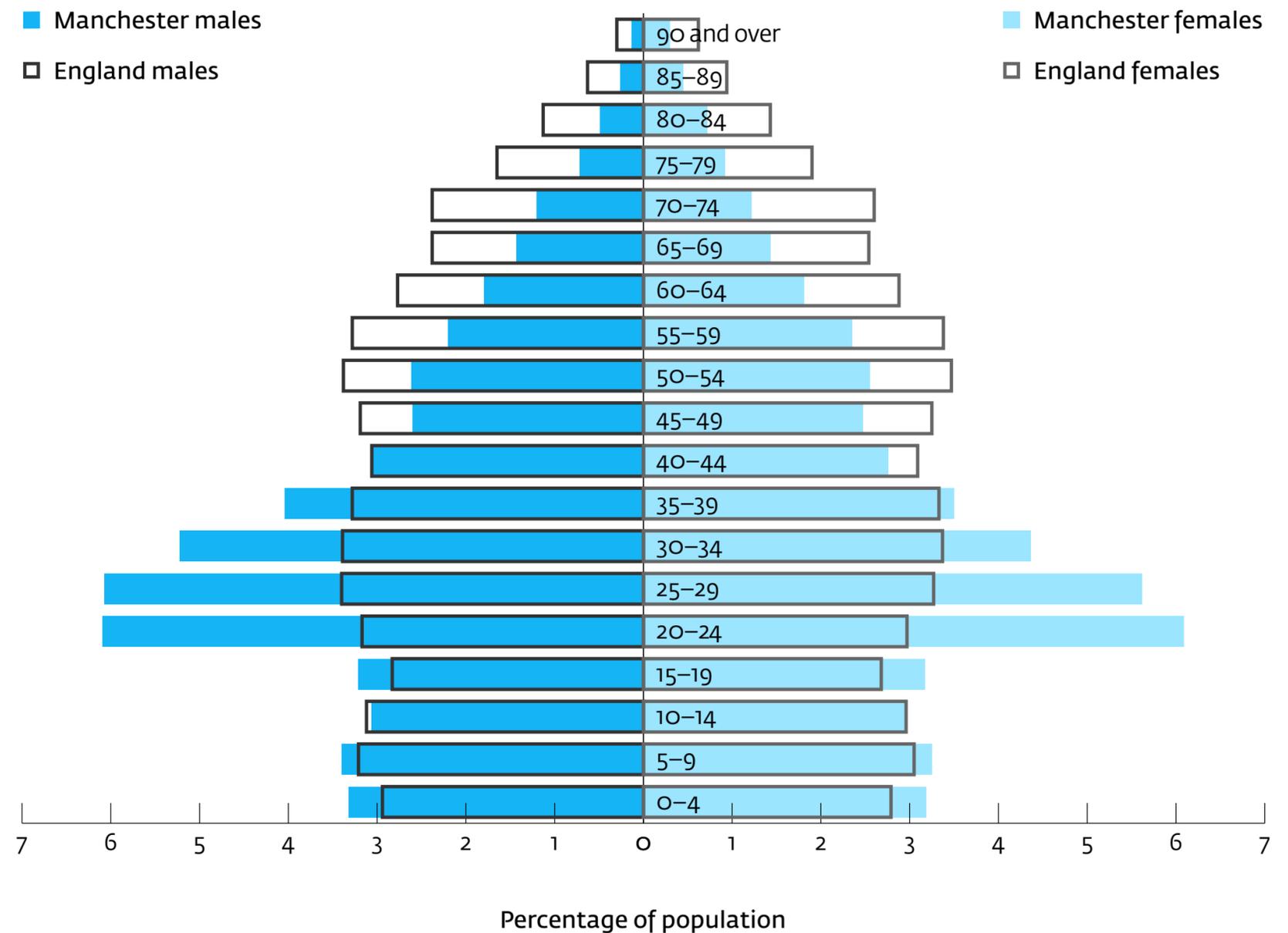
universities reported that many international students remained in the city, and there is tentative confidence that the city's economy will bounce back strongly, bolstered by the successful COVID-19 vaccination programme.

International immigration is Manchester's main driver of population growth; therefore, the Office for National Statistics (ONS) has estimated very low migration growth compared to predictions in the previous 2020 mid-year population estimate due to the limitation of travel. According to ONS, the mid-year 2020 resident population is estimated to be 555,741. However, this figure is much lower than the 579,400 forecast for mid-2020 by Manchester City Council, because ONS has not factored into its estimate the extensive building programme that has taken place in recent years and the city's rising popularity as an attractive place to live, study and work.

Figure 2.1 shows the age profile of Manchester's population compared to the rest of the country, highlighting Manchester's younger resident population due to a large student population and young workers living in the city. There is now a similar proportion of residents aged 25–29 to those aged 20–24. This is because in recent years a growing number of students have remained in the city after graduating to take advantage of the attractive new accommodation offer and available career opportunities. This is not only increasingly shifting the proportion of residents aged 25–39 upwards but, combined with the steady inflow of international workers, is changing the social structure of resident adults under the age of 40 in terms of their education levels and the industries they work in. The temporary rise in numbers from 'baby boomers' over the past decade is also now

reducing. This, combined with relatively low numbers of residents in their 60s, means the proportion of older residents, unlike the national trend, is decreasing, with just 9% of Manchester's population being over the age of 65.

Figure 2.1:
Mid-year population estimates by age for Manchester and England, 2020

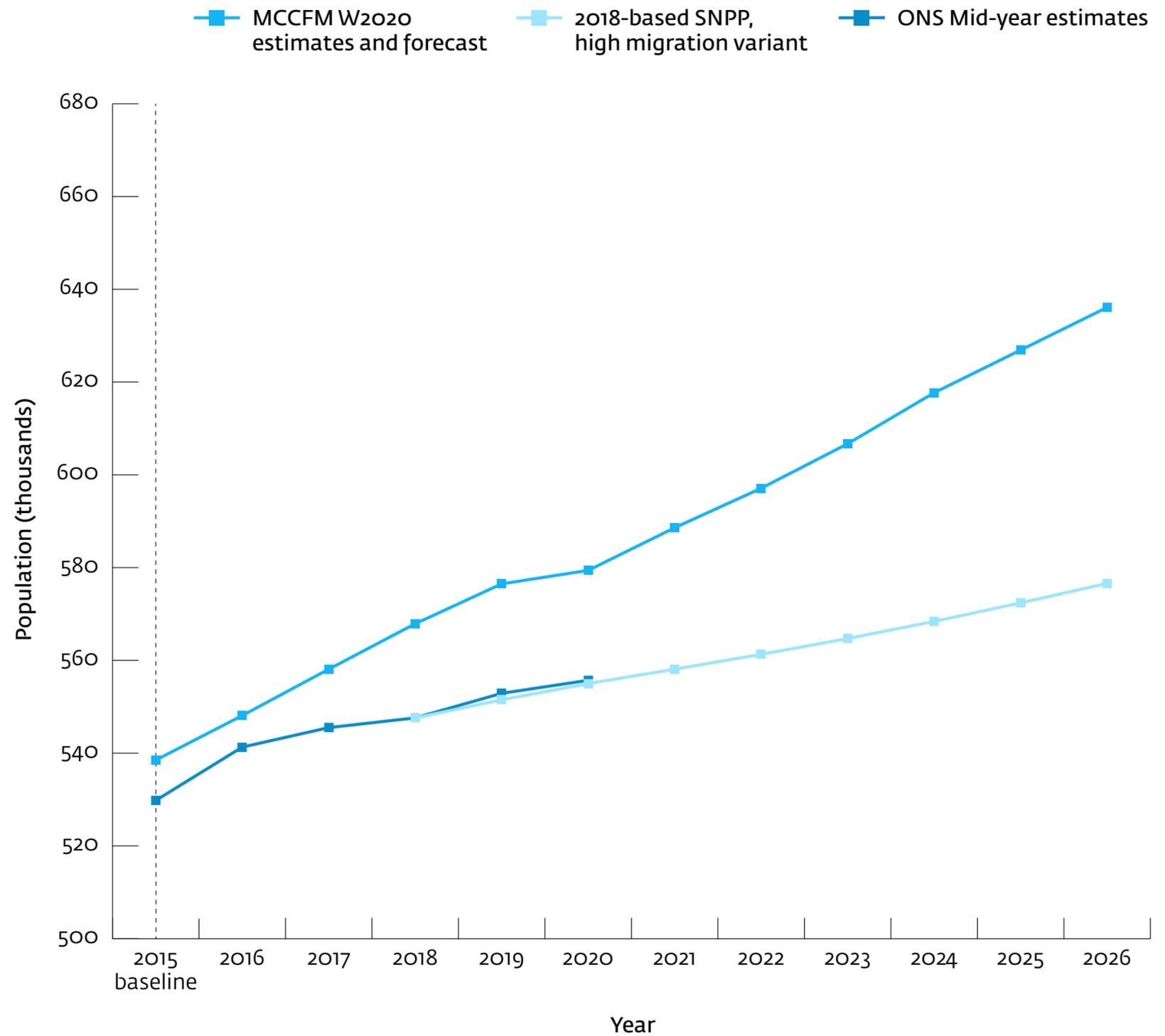


Source: 2020 mid-year population estimate, ONS © Crown Copyright 2021

ONS projections for the city’s future population have not been updated since 2018, so do not take account of the rapid growth in housing stock in recent years or the multifaceted impact of COVID-19. The 2018 projections overestimate the number of EU (European Union) residents leaving the city due to Brexit and the number of graduates returning home after finishing their studies, and also underestimate the rise in international students pre-pandemic. The long-term impact of Brexit on Manchester’s European population could also be further compounded by travel restrictions and changes in individual post-pandemic economic and social circumstances.

ONS is not producing a revised projection until after the publication of the 2021 census results in 2022. However, Manchester City Council’s forecasting model, (MCCFM) has been updated. Figure 2.2 shows how the number of people living in the city has grown since the launch of the Our Manchester Strategy in 2016 (according to our model, ONS estimates and projections) and how it is expected to grow over the next five years. MCCFM figures have been adjusted to include the impact of COVID-19, but this forecast is likely to change due to the limited information available to verify the assumptions made, and the remaining uncertainty. It is, however, a best estimate based on the data currently available. The forecast assumes a gradual resumption of international travel during 2021, a continuation of construction projects, and a steady economic recovery over the next five years. However, as international travel is not expected to fully recover to pre-pandemic levels until 2023/2024, the forecast is likely to change.

Figure 2.2:
Manchester’s population estimates and forecast, 2015–2026



Sources: Mid Year Estimates (MYE) of population and Subnational Population Projections (SNPP), ONS © Crown Copyright; MCCFM W2020, Manchester City Council (PRI)

Cosmopolitan and culturally strong

Manchester has a long welcoming history and is a vibrant blend of many nationalities and ethnicities, which is a source of pride in the city. A strong sense of unity has been evident during the pandemic, as communities helped each other and community interactions were reshaped.

With little or no non-essential international travel throughout 2020 and early 2021, many people intending to make the city their home were unable to do so. However, Manchester’s international reputation for welcoming people into the city from around the world remains strong, and it is anticipated that new residents will begin to arrive again as pandemic restrictions are lifted internationally. That said, there is likely to be a static period while confidence in travel is rebuilt and international vaccination programmes align.

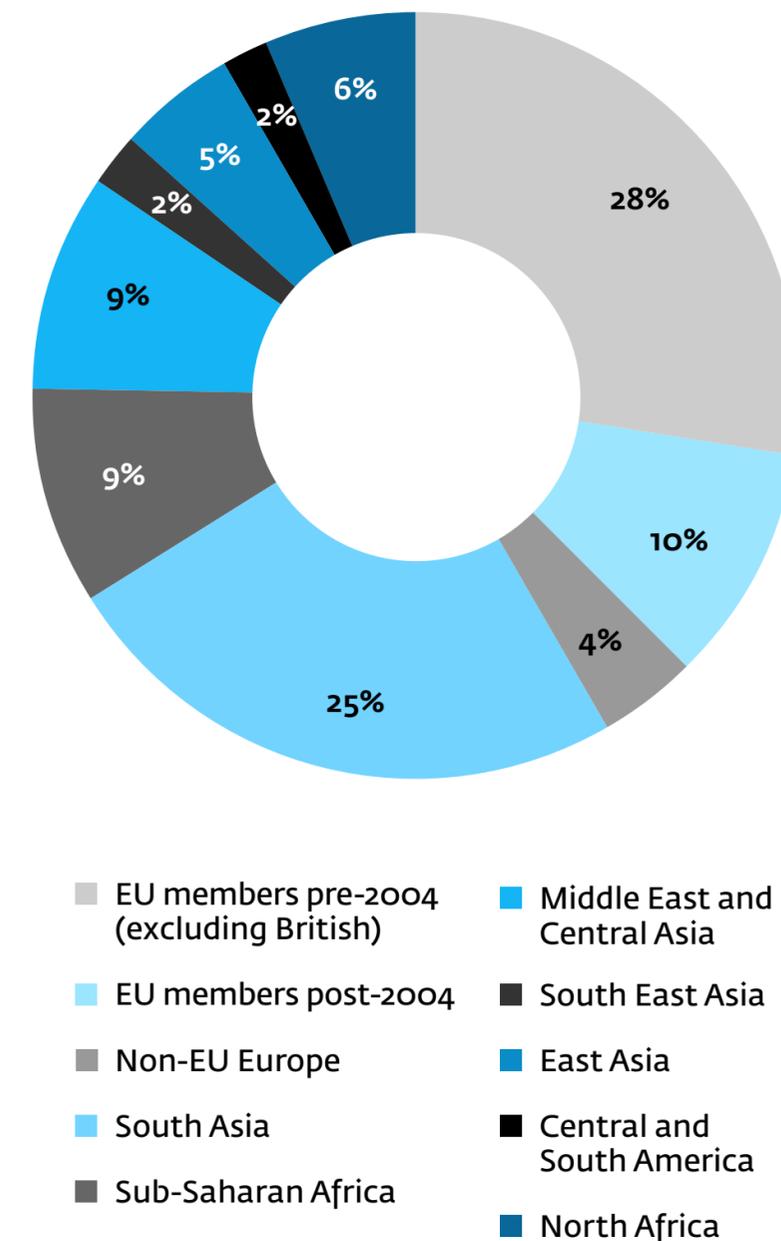
Meanwhile, many international students chose to stay in the city during 2020, joining an already large number of young professionals who have taken advantage of the concentration of new apartments around the city centre. This has created diverse neighbourhoods with diverse, talented, and ambitious communities.

The ONS Annual Population survey was conducted in 2020, and as some data sets were not available, estimates are subject to wide margins of error. The survey suggests that the number of residents with a nationality other than British was a little lower for most nationalities than in 2019. However, an increased number of residents was indicated for Europeans from outside the EU, Southeast Asians and particularly North African nationalities. Bearing in mind the potential for sampling error,

the survey estimates around 12,000 fewer non-British residents than at the same point in 2019. In terms of overall growth, this is more than offset by approximately 19,000 new British residents. The proportion of residents who are not British has, however, fallen as a result, from 21% of the population in mid-2019 to 18% in mid-2020.

Figure 2.3 shows the different proportions of residents whose prime nationality is not British (some may have dual nationalities). European countries now total 42% of these nationalities compared to 43% in 2019, because of an estimated decrease of 6,000. This reduction is not down to residents from countries that joined the EU after 2004 leaving, and Manchester’s proportion of these residents remains at 10%. This compares to the national proportion of 32%, so is much lower than average; as such, the Brexit effect has had a minimal impact on Manchester. As mentioned, growth in North African nationalities is indicated, increasing from an estimated 1,000 residents in 2019 to 5,000 in 2020 and now forming 6% of residents whose nationality is not British. These numbers are relatively small compared to the number of Asian and Middle East nationalities, estimated at 40,000 residents and forming 41% of nationalities that are not British. Within these figures, over half this number, 24,000, have a South Asian nationality.

Figure 2.3: Manchester’s international residents – estimate of nationality 2020



Source: Annual Population Survey, 2020, ONS © Crown Copyright

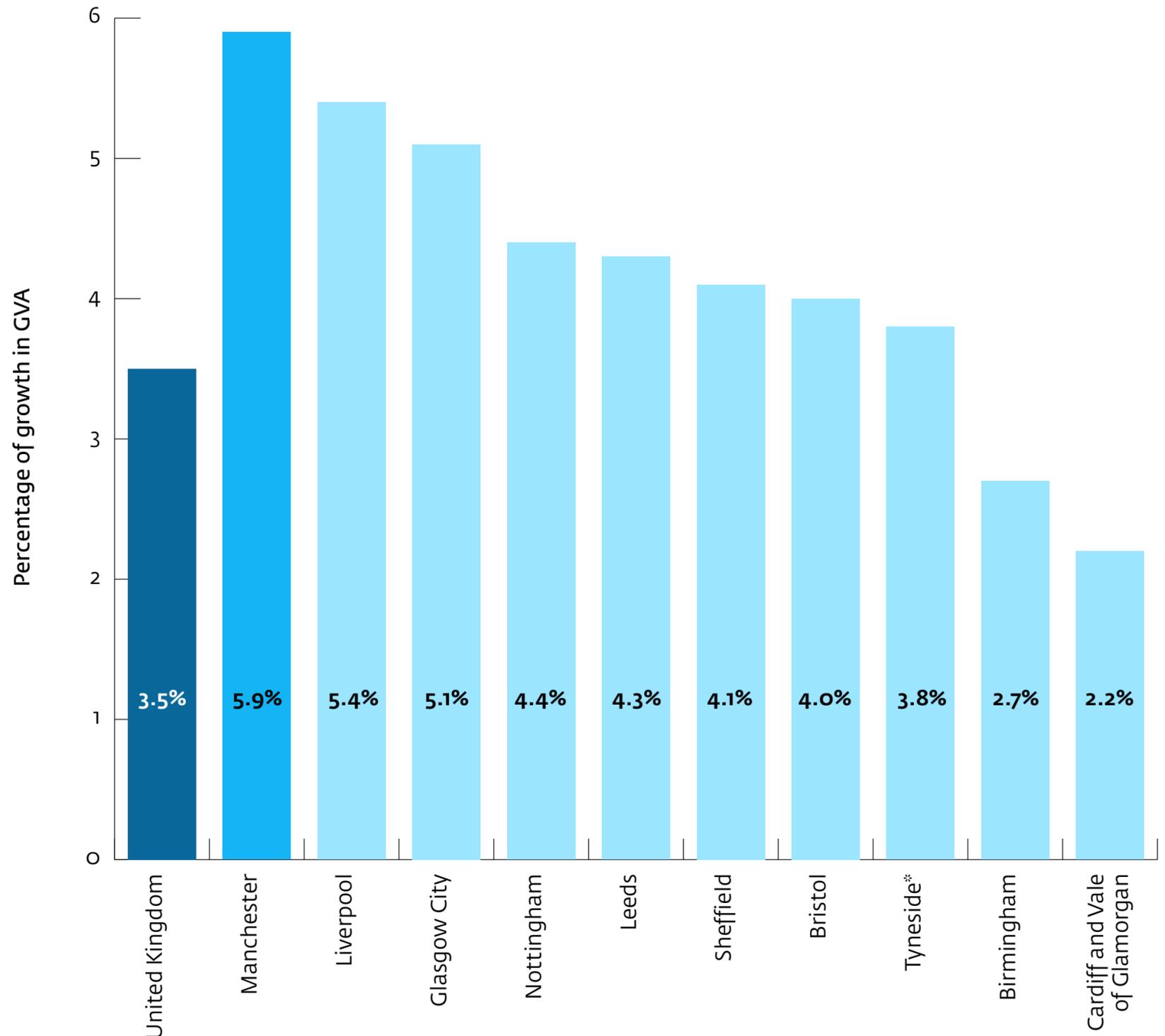
The majority of Manchester’s residents from Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds are British. However, the total number of residents with Black, mixed/multiple ethnicities, Asian or another ethnicity other than White British is much higher. The ONS’ latest estimate, again using the Annual Population Survey, suggests that in 2019, just over 230,000 residents were likely to identify themselves as being from an ethnic group other than White British, equating to 41.6%; 100,500 of these residents being Asian/Asian British, 53,000 Black/Black British, 33,000 of mixed or multiple ethnicities, 28,000 White but not British, and almost 19,000 likely to be from a different ethnic group (eg. Arab/British Arab).

Increasing productivity for the benefit of the city and the UK as a whole

Gross value added (GVA) is a measure of the value of goods and services produced by an area and is commonly used as an indicator of economic performance. Historically, ONS has produced estimates of regional GVA using the income approach and the production approach. In 2017, the strengths from both approaches were taken to produce a new balanced measure of regional GVA – known as GVA (B) – a single measure of economic activity within a region.

Manchester’s economy has continued to grow. In 2018, Manchester’s GVA (B) was £23.2million, which increased to £24.5million in 2019 (provisional). Figure 2.4 shows that between 2018 and 2019, Manchester’s overall GVA (B) grew by 5.9%, compared to 3.5% for the UK.

Figure 2.4: Percentage growth in GVA (balanced approach) between 2018 and 2019 (provisional)



*Tyneside includes Newcastle, Gateshead, North Tyneside and South Tyneside

Source: Regional economic activity by gross value added (balanced), ONS © Crown Copyright

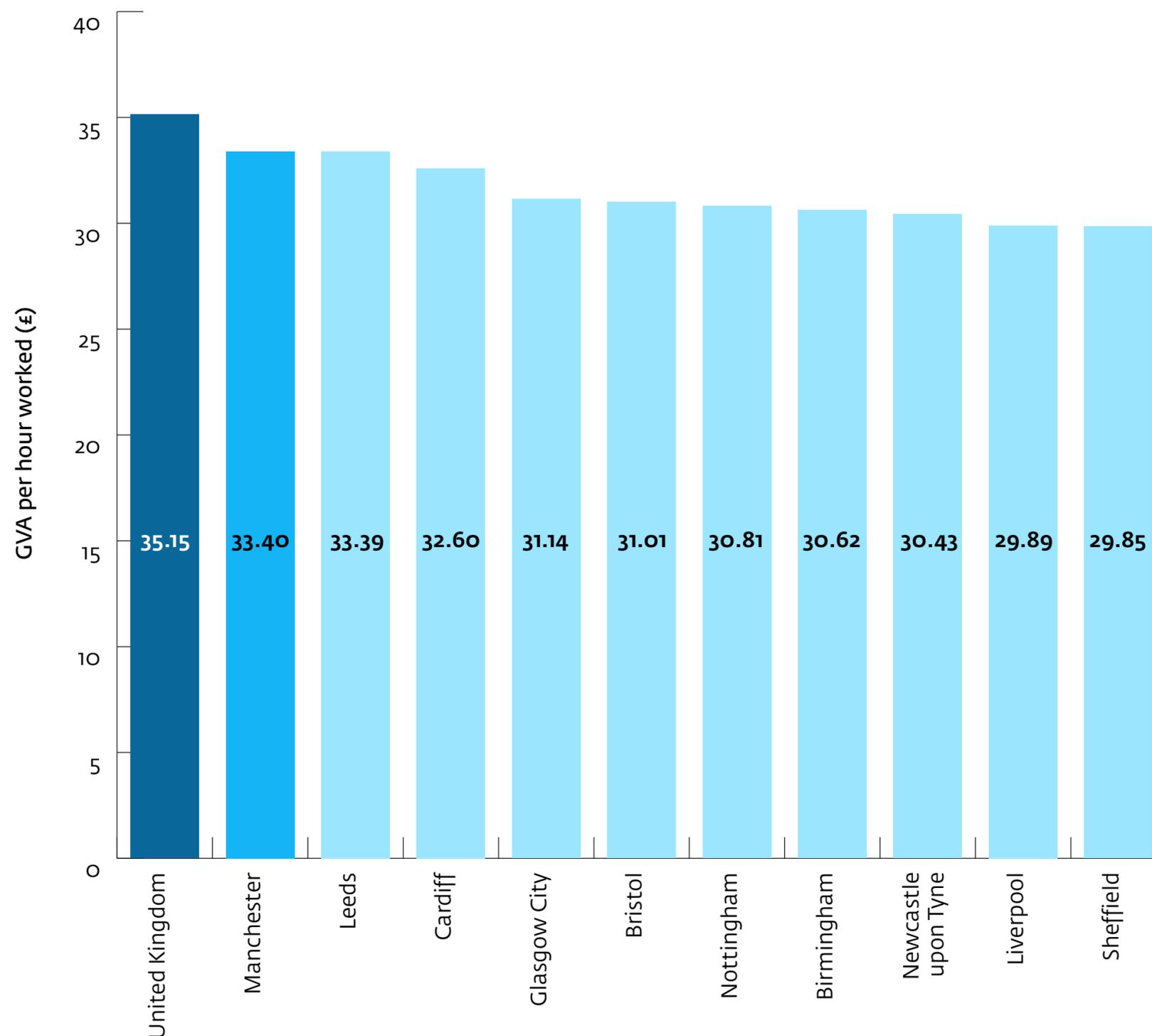
In 2019, Manchester’s GVA (B) per head of resident population was £44,356, compared to £29,599 for the UK as a whole (provisional figures). This has increased from £42,284 in 2018. GVA (B) per head can be a useful way of comparing regions of different sizes. However, when assessing regional economic performance, it is now recommended to use the experimental labour productivity statistics, GVA per hour worked or GVA per job filled, as these measures provide a direct comparison between the level of economic output and the direct labour input of those producing the output.

This is not the case for GVA per head, as this measure includes people not in the workforce (including children, pensioners and others not economically active) in the calculation and can also be very heavily biased by commuting flows. This is because if an area has a large number of in-commuters, as in Manchester, the output these commuters produce is captured in the estimate of GVA, but the commuters are not captured in the estimate of residential population. In this situation, a GVA per head measure would be artificially high if used as a proxy for economic performance of an area.

As the ONS has developed these statistics, previous years’ figures have been revised. According to current ONS statistics, Manchester’s Nominal GVA (B) per hour worked (data smoothed using a weighted five-year moving average) has increased consistently each year, from £24.20 per hour in 2004 to £33.40 per hour in 2019.

Figure 2.5 shows that in 2019 productivity levels were similar across the UK Core Cities, ranging from £29.85 to £33.40 GVA (B) per hour worked.

Figure 2.5:
Nominal (smoothed) GVA (B) per hour worked in 2019



Source: Regional economic activity by gross value added (balanced), ONS © Crown Copyright

Employment across the sectors

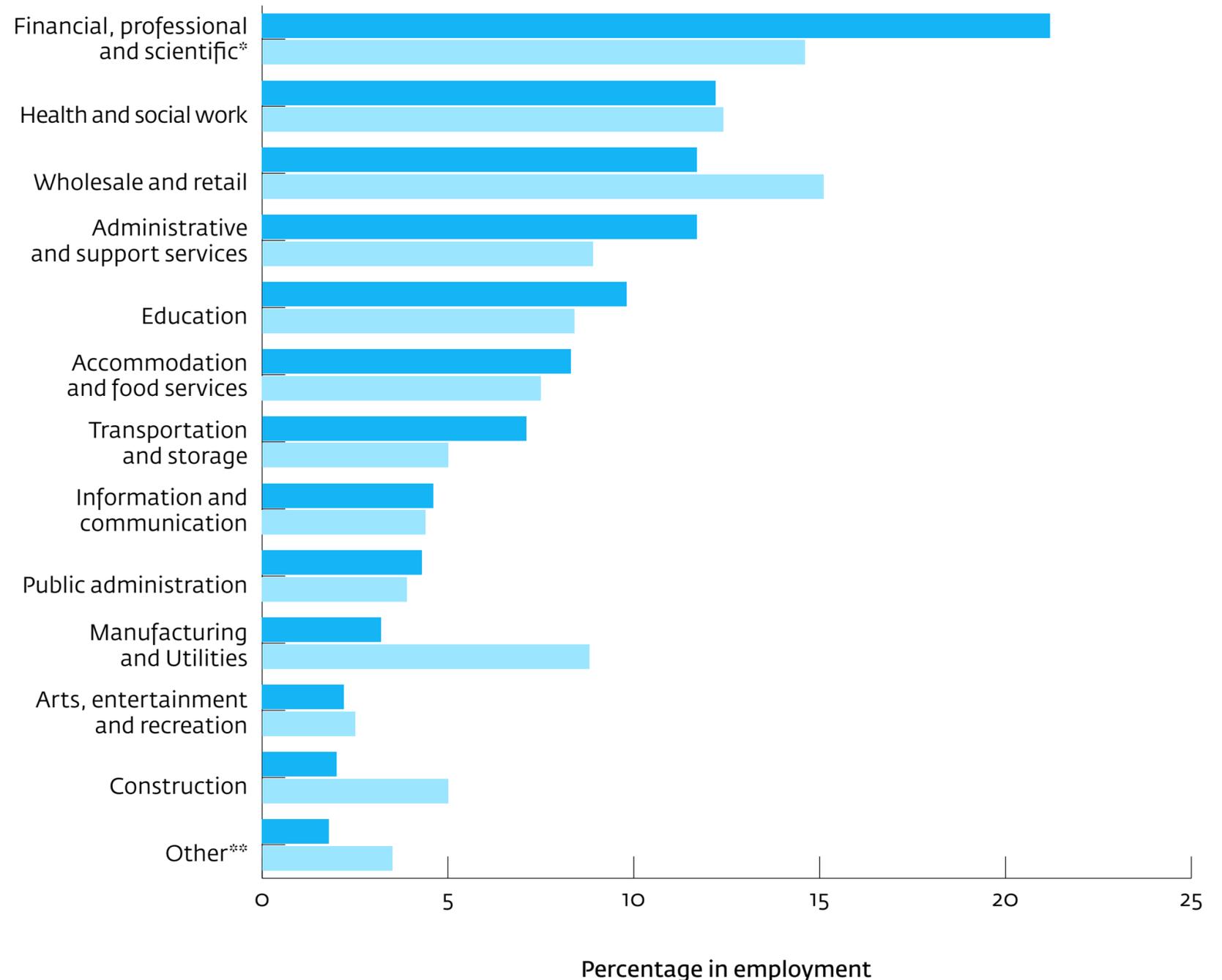
Figure 2.6 shows the distribution of employment across sectors in Manchester and England as a whole throughout 2019. The data shows that the largest number of employees in Manchester, 21.2% up from 19.5% in 2018, remain employed in the financial, professional and scientific sectors, compared to just 14.6% in England as a whole. This highlights that the city continues to benefit from diversifying its economy towards knowledge-intensive sectors.

Manchester’s high-growth sectors in terms of GVA and number of jobs have remained consistent over recent years with business, financial and professional services; cultural, creative, and digital; and wholesale and retail remaining major growth sectors. However, the pandemic disrupted many of these sectoral strengths, significantly impacting upon culture and retail. There is currently no data or analysis on the true scale and impact of the pandemic on employment structures, but it is known that unemployment and the claimant count significantly increased. The true impact is likely to become known after the end of the furlough scheme in late 2021. New ways of working and changes in consumer behaviour will embed and bring further sectoral and structural changes impacting upon employment opportunities in the city.

Figure 2.6:
Structure of employment (percentage by sector), 2019 (provisional)

* Includes Financial and Insurance, Real estate and Professional, Scientific and Technical
** Includes Agriculture, forestry & fishing, Mining & Quarrying, Other Service Activities.

■ Manchester ■ England



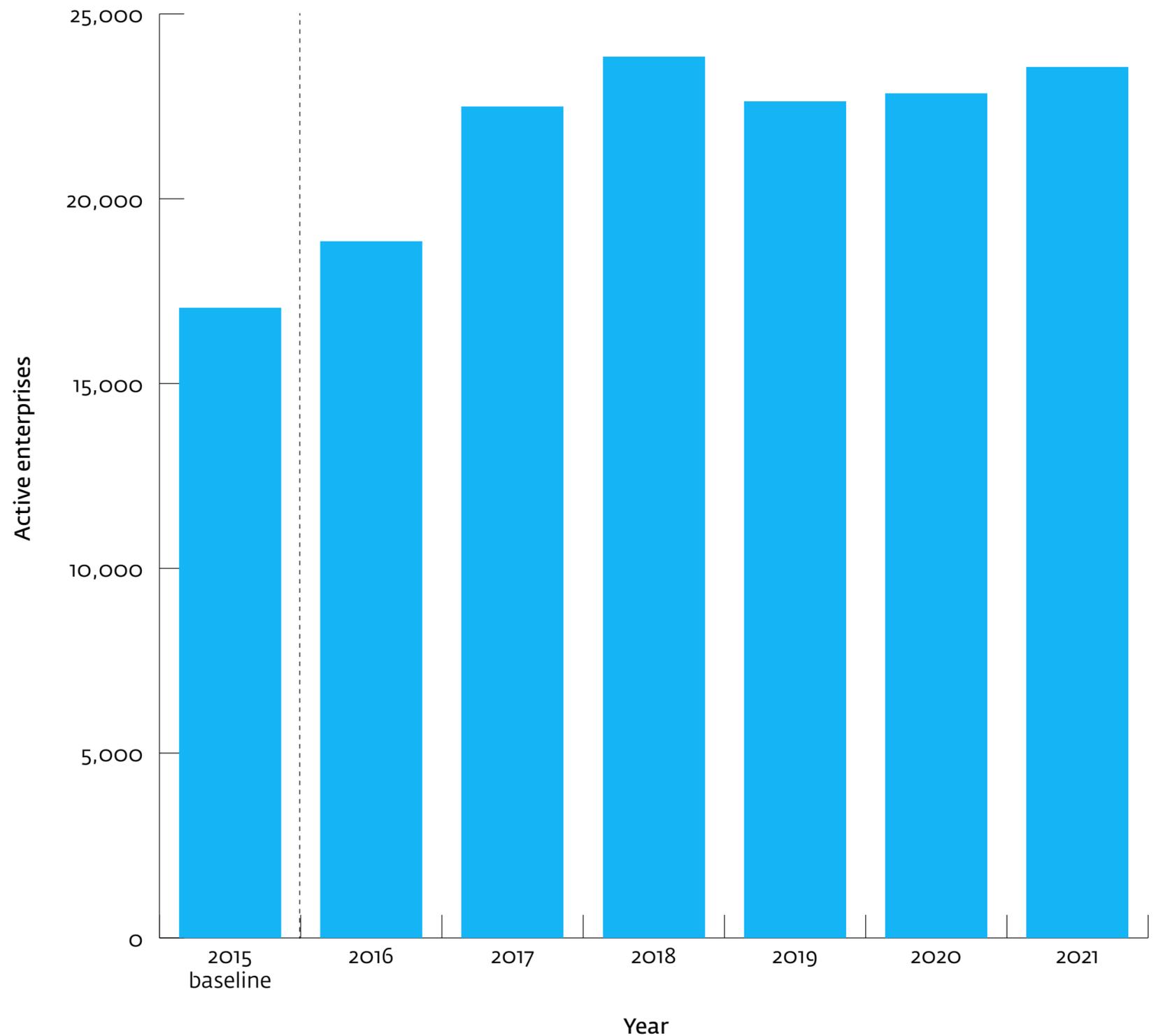
Source: ONS Business Register and Employment Survey, ONS (provisional 2019) © Crown copyright

Supporting the growth of established and emerging business sectors

Manchester has had a strong and leading reputation for enterprise and in recent years experienced high levels of confidence, evidenced by the large-scale development and regeneration programmes continuing across the region.

The ONS UK business activity, size and location figures are based on a snapshot of the Inter-Departmental Business Register taken in March each year, which includes all businesses registered for Value Added Tax (VAT) and/or Pay As You Earn (PAYE). Figure 2.7 shows how the number of active enterprises increased year on year since the publication of the Our Manchester Strategy, rising from 17,045 in 2015 to 23,845 in 2018. The number dropped in 2019 but has continued to increase since, with the latest March 2021 snapshot reporting 23,565 active enterprises, an increase of 715 from the previous year. The decrease to 22,630 in 2019 can be largely attributed to online retail businesses, which decreased by 34.2% between 2018 and 2019, from 3,995 to 2,630 businesses. The number of online retail businesses has continued to decrease, to 1,680 in 2021. It is worth noting that since 2015, foreign online sellers selling their goods in the UK have needed to register for VAT with HMRC. Very often, these VAT registrations use the UK address of a management company or accountancy firm, so it can be difficult to identify and exclude these businesses from the publications. The decrease in online retail businesses over the past few years may be in part due to the identification and exclusion of more of these foreign online sellers from the overall business count.

Figure 2.7:
Number of active enterprises in Manchester



Source: UK Business activity, size and location, ONS © Crown copyright

A place for innovation

The continued attractiveness of the city as a location for the digital and tech sectors has played an important part in the north west region being described as the perfect breeding ground for technology start-ups and scale-ups.¹ The Manchester-Liverpool region has ranked ninth globally among emerging ecosystems for start-ups in the 2020 Global Startup Ecosystem Report.²

International cybersecurity consultancy Coalfire has announced it is to set up its new European headquarters in City Tower in 2021 and intends to double its workforce in Manchester by 2023. The rapidly growing Norwegian health tech, Dignio, has also chosen the city to be its growth location in the UK and will be setting up its office in the Piccadilly area. In addition, a digital security innovation hub is to be set up in the heart of the city centre to complement the recently arrived GCHQ office. This will act as a focal point for Manchester's thriving digital security ecosystem and be a place where start-ups and growing businesses can be nurtured.

Work is being carried out to develop new offices and refurbish existing offices with tech-enhanced measures that can control the heating, ventilation and lighting to create efficient and sustainable workspaces through the collation of real-time data about how and when the building is used. When completed, occupiers of the new development at

No. 9 First Street will be able to collaborate with technology provider Smart Spaces to create their own app, giving them control over their own workspaces and transforming the environment for the benefit of the people using them.

There has been a further boost for Manchester's Oxford Road Corridor innovation district, which is already Europe's largest clinical academic campus and home to half the city's life-science businesses, making it one of the North's most important commercial areas³ with the completion of Citylabs 2.0. Once the building has been fitted out it will be wholly occupied by global molecular diagnostics company Qiagen for its Global Centre of Excellence for Precision Medicine, which will be supported by existing companies from Citylabs 1.0. Following planning permission being granted in early 2020, the construction of Citylabs 4.0 is underway adjacent to Citylabs 2.0 with completion due in 2022. This will provide seven floors of office and lab space and discussions are already underway with potential occupiers who are looking for space to expand from other Manchester Science Park sites. The development of Citylabs 4.0 will also see sustainability measures being implemented as part of a commitment to become net zero-carbon by 2030.

Having been delayed by COVID-19 disruptions, work has also begun on the Manchester Science Park site to replace the Base building with a five-storey block of workspaces specifically designed for companies working in high-growth sectors, such as low-carbon,

computer and energy technology, gaming and animation, and material sciences. There will be a particular focus on prototyping new products or modifying existing ones. The building is also to be home to the new Manchester Innovation Activities Hub, a community upskilling and training facility focused on specialist technical skills for the low-carbon and other knowledge-economy industries.

Such clustering of expertise along the Oxford Road Corridor enables the city to remain at the forefront of developing and piloting innovative solutions to the health, mobility and environmental challenges that are faced by cities throughout the world. Early 2020 saw the completion of the city's two European funded 'smart city' projects, 'smart energy' project Triangulum, and the city data project Synchronicity. However, some pilots from these projects continued with the adoption of the Manchester-I platform urban data hub as part of The University of Manchester's Urban Observatory, and TfGM continued to use Synchronicity sensors and cameras for real-time data on pedestrian and cycle-road use.

As well as promoting the innovative ideas coming out of the city on a national and international stage, efforts are being made to ensure local businesses also benefit through programmes such as Sustainable Cities and Infrastructure. These aim to give small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs) in the region the opportunity to work alongside large corporate businesses and leading academics on fresh approaches to the urban environment. Through this they are enabled to access new markets by focusing on the innovation and new technologies that will help create a cleaner and smarter place to live and work. Also, as part of

¹ <https://www.investinmanchester.com/media-and-events/industry-news/2021/2/8/north-west-england-perfect-growth-area-for-tech-startups-a2862>

² <https://www.investinmanchester.com/media-and-events/industry-news/2020/7/10/manchester-ranked-top-10-emerging-global-centre-for-startups-a2800>

³ <https://www.investinmanchester.com/media-and-events/industry-news/2020/7/17/next-stage-of-manchesters-health-innovation-campus-takes-shape-a2802>

the Greater Manchester AI Foundry project led by Manchester Metropolitan University, expertise in artificial intelligence is being shared with a minimum of 170 Greater Manchester SMEs to help them develop new products and services. In addition, The University of Manchester has established the Innovation Factory, which has the objective of creating 15–20 new spin-out companies each year based on the novel ideas being developed by its faculties. Funding has been provided for TfGM by the Department of Digital, Culture, Media, and Sport (DCMS) to test the use of AI-controlled traffic-control systems to reduce congestion and pollution and improve productivity by cutting waiting times at traffic lights.

The innovations achieved in digital health provision became vitally important during the COVID-19 pandemic in supporting the needs of people unable to access physical appointments. Particularly significant was the use of the Greater Manchester Care Record. This brought together all existing borough-based care records to create a single joined-up care record for Greater Manchester, and during the pandemic its use and the data flows into it increased rapidly. New information included whether a patient had been tested or diagnosed with COVID-19 to ensure continuity of care across different care settings. It also provided a means to support other digital projects, such as the remote monitoring of COVID-19 patients' oxygen levels, digitising heart-failure care plans, and home blood-pressure monitoring for pregnant women. In addition, the use for research of de-identified patient data informed the health and care response to the pandemic and the understanding of COVID-19 trends, assisting the control and prevention of the spread of COVID-19.

Digital innovations accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic also include:

- The Early Years App, which helps identify developmental issues earlier and ensures support for children and their families is provided quicker
- The Community Hub App, which matches volunteers with vulnerable people in need of support
- Services to provide mental-help support
- A reporting system to monitor PPE stock levels, staff availability, infection rates and outbreaks to be shared via a visual dashboard to present a clear picture of operational pressures during the pandemic.

Maximising the potential of the Business Growth Hub to support Manchester's businesses and entrepreneurs

The Business Growth Hub (BGH) provides a fully funded offer to encourage businesses to start up and grow across Greater Manchester. The Hub is funded by a range of local, national and European funders, including the European Regional Development Fund (supported by The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government); the Greater Manchester Combined Authority; the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy; and the Greater Manchester Local Enterprise Partnership. Local data from the Business Growth Hub shows an increasing number of businesses being supported year on year from 2015. In 2019/20 there was a sharp increase with 701 businesses supported as businesses required additional support due to the impact of the COVID-19 restrictions. In addition to support from the Business Growth Hub, thousands

of businesses in Manchester have been financially supported via Government grants and business rates relief since the start of the pandemic in March 2020.

Working with employers to promote fair contracts and payment of at least the Real Living Wage

Ensuring that Manchester has a strong inclusive economy where residents are recognised for their contribution via fair contracts and are paid at least the Real Living Wage is a key premise of the Our Manchester Strategy – Forward to 2025.

As detailed in this report, the last year has been an extremely challenging period for the city, its economy and residents. COVID-19 has resulted in a significant rise in poverty, evident by a 90% rise in the number of unemployed people claiming benefits between March and May 2020. The true extent of in-work poverty has also come to light in the past year and by the end of 2020, 37% of Universal Credit claimants were in work but eligible for benefits to meet their shortfall in income. This rise is also reflected in the demand for food support in Manchester – food parcels were delivered to over 2,000 households daily during the first wave of the pandemic. As food banks and community food services provide for the majority of residents in need of food support, this does not accurately reflect the scale of the need for it across the city. However, the increase in the need for food provision support highlights the growing extent of poverty in the city. While this inequality of wealth existed in the city pre-COVID-19, the pandemic and related economic conditions have highlighted and exacerbated the issue. Family poverty is discussed in more detail in the '[A progressive and equitable city](#)' chapter.

In light of the significant economic and social challenges caused by COVID-19, there has been growing recognition across Greater Manchester and nationally that social value can and must play an increasingly essential role in tackling poverty, and that in turn it must support a more inclusive and sustainable economy. Social value refers to wider value to residents and communities that organisations can generate via their local spending power; additional value can be achieved in a number of ways, eg. via mandating for good employment conditions, including fair contracts and payment, and ensuring local jobs for residents.

The Council has a long commitment to promoting social value. Since introducing its 2007 Social Value Policy, socially responsible procurement has been a key policy feature. In the past year, to support a sustainable and inclusive citywide recovery plan, the Council reviewed and strengthened its approach to social value for the benefits of achieving equality and inclusion for Manchester's residents. The policy was approved by the Executive in March 2021. Plans to promote and implement the policy's priorities are now underway with employers and partners across the city. In brief, the review set out the following priorities:

- **Priority cohorts** – in recognition of the fact that the impact of the pandemic was felt more acutely by certain groups, including the over-50s, young people and people from Black, Asian and ethnic minority communities, the review recommends that social value efforts are targeted at these priority groups
- **Prioritising specific actions to support the city's recovery**, such as maximising new job creation with new and existing job opportunities aimed at the priority cohorts

- **Procurement** – for the existing minimum social value weighting, which is applied to all tenders to be increased over time to a 30% weighting for all contracts (20% social value and 10% environment)
- **Greater Manchester Good Employment Charter** – for the Council's social value policy to endorse and encourage its supply chain to adhere to the principles

- **Anchor institutions** – for anchors to have a central role in supporting the economic recovery of the city through the championing of social value objectives.

Social value was embedded as a key objective of the city's high-profile Our Town Hall project. In the past year, social value has taken on an even greater significance.

Case study: Our Town Hall security contractor, Marpol

A great benefit the Our Town Hall renovation project has brought to Marpol has been the ability to provide high-quality work for officers assigned to the project team, new employees, and apprentices resident in Manchester.

Our presence as security contractor from start to finish enables us to make long-term employment plans. This longevity has driven greater predictability and stability in work patterns, including the introduction of a 48-hour weekly minimum contract, an opportunity for relevant continued professional development, an improved work-life balance, as well as remuneration in line with the Manchester Living Wage.

In response to how the national lockdown disproportionately affected young people, we adapted our apprentice-recruitment process to consider applicants without the required licensing certification. By starting with a work-experience placement, then

supporting the candidate to achieve their SIA Badge, we have provided a route into security as a career path for individuals who would not have previously been eligible.

Our commitment to undertake a wide range of socially responsible activities, including volunteering, work-experience placements, and apprenticeships, has seen us get involved with a wide range of initiatives; these include Manchester school careers events; providing care packages on behalf of a social-enterprise centre in Levenshulme; and promoting employment opportunities for looked-after young people engaging in their first employment through work experience. Not only has this been helpful to Manchester residents, but the business has benefited from improved community involvement and a local focus for growing our company culture.

National Minimum Wage and the Living Wage

The Living Wage Foundation campaigns for a National Living Wage to ensure that everyone can earn a Real Living Wage that meets living costs, not just the minimum set by the Government. The new Real Living Wage rates are announced in November each year, with Living Wage employers expected to implement the rises by May the following year. Currently, the Real Living Wage is set at £9.50 per hour. From school-leaving age to the age of 24, workers are entitled to a national minimum wage. This varies depending on the different ages between 16 and 24. From age 25, workers are entitled to the National Living Wage. Table 2.1 shows the different rates depending on age (April 2021).

Table 2.1:
National Minimum and National Living Wage by age, April 2021

Age group	Wage
23 and over	£8.91
21 to 22	£8.36
18 to 20	£6.56
Under 18	£4.62
Apprentice	£4.30

Source: <https://www.gov.uk/national-minimum-wage-rates>

The Living Wage is a key policy feature of Manchester City Council's social value policy review and has become a significant priority in Manchester. The Real Living Wage has long been recognised as key to lifting children, families, and individual residents

out of poverty and in turn improving their life outcomes. This was echoed in the Family Poverty Strategy reprioritisation carried out in 2020; achieving Living Wage accreditation was identified as a key priority in tackling inequality and poverty, including in-work poverty. The need for employers to pay the Real Living Wage was also a consistent theme in the consultation for the Our Manchester Strategy – Forward to 2025 and is now included as a key priority under the thriving and sustainable theme of the Strategy.

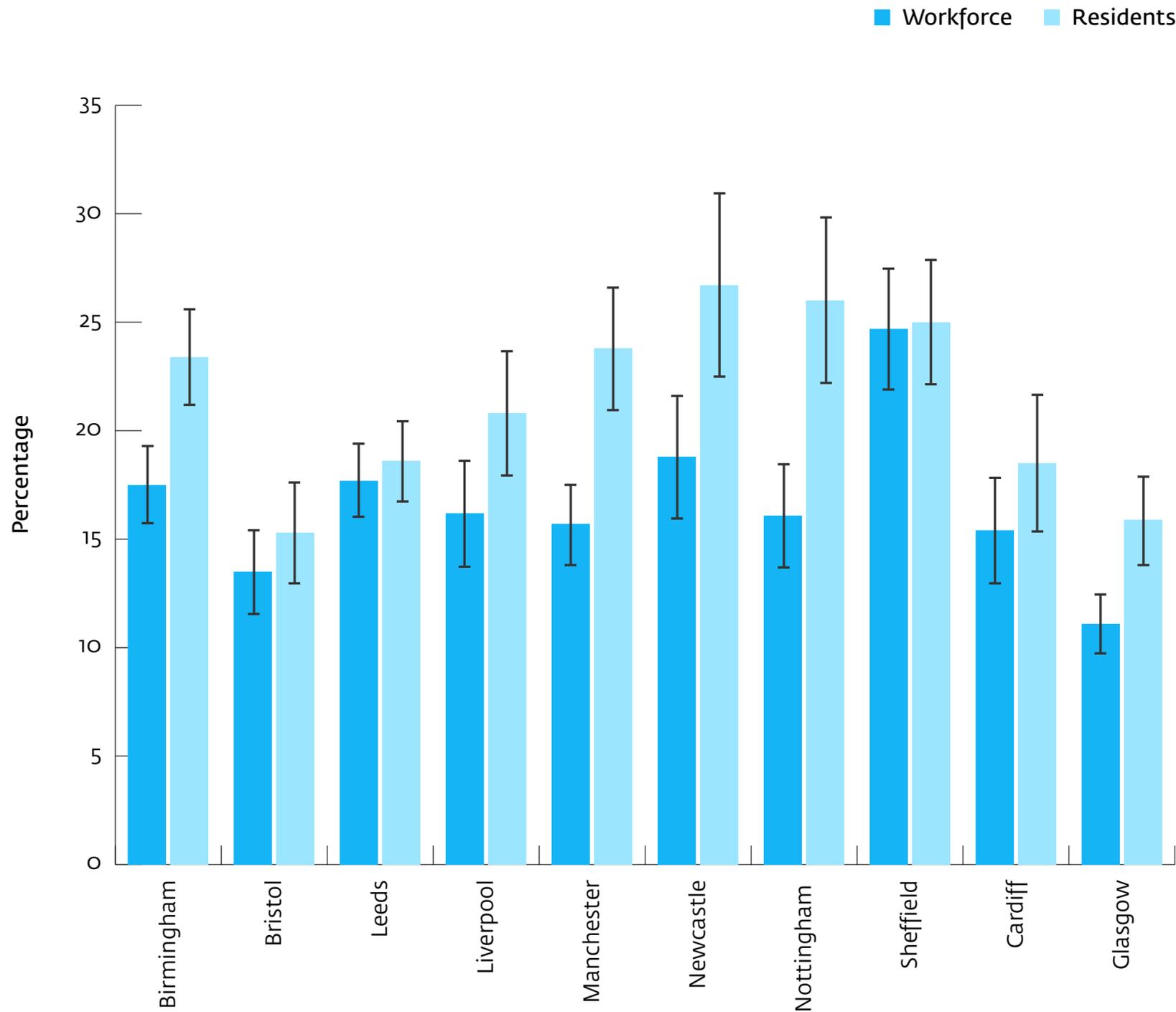
In November 2019, Manchester City Council was formally accredited by the Living Wage Foundation as a Living Wage Employer. Discussions are currently taking place between the Council and its partners on making Manchester a 'Living Wage Place'. According to the Living Wage Foundation, there are 95 accredited Living Wage employers headquartered in Manchester. This equates to a pay rise for 3,826 people, putting approximately £11million back into workers' pockets.

Provisional figures from the ONS Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings show that in 2020 an estimated 15.7% (+/-1.9%) of the employees working in Manchester and 23.8% (+/-2.9%) of employees living in Manchester were paid less than the Real Living Wage, which was £9.30 at that time. Figure 2.8 shows that the disparity between Manchester resident employees and Manchester workforce employees earning less than the Real Living Wage stands at approximately 8.1%, slightly higher than Newcastle at 7.9%. Although the gap has reduced slightly from last year's 8.8%, it has the fifth-highest disparity in comparison to all other UK local authorities, behind Portsmouth, Tower Hamlets, Nottingham and Slough. However,

Manchester has the sixth-lowest proportion of workforce employees paid less than the Real Living Wage in the north west region, with Salford taking the top spot (14.5%, +/-2.8%).

In Manchester a lower proportion of full-time workers were paid less than the Real Living Wage in 2020: 8.1% (+/-1.6%) compared to 13.7% (+/-3%) of full-time Manchester resident employees. In addition, a lower proportion of part-time workers were paid less than the Real Living Wage: 37.1% (+/-4.9%) compared to 43.1% (+/-5.6%) of part-time resident employees. For both the workforce and residents it is the part-time employees who are much more likely to be earning less than the Real Living Wage. These trends are mirrored for the north west region and nationally.

Figure 2.8: Percentage of employees paid less than the Real Living Wage in 2020 (provisional) – UK Core Cities



Source: Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings, 2020 (provisional), ONS © Crown Copyright

Powering Recovery: Manchester’s Recovery and Investment Plan

The [Powering Recovery: Manchester’s Recovery and Investment Plan](#) sets out how Manchester will emerge reinvigorated from the economic shock of the COVID-19 pandemic and other challenges, such as the uncertainties of Brexit. It has been developed by Manchester City Council with the support of city business leaders and is a statement of confidence in the future of the city’s economy. It shows a resilient city with a diverse economy and strengths in key growth sectors, as well as strong existing partnerships and a track record of delivery. It has two main elements: early actions to cushion the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic downturn on Manchester people and businesses, and ready-made long-term investment programmes in key sectors to help power the recovery by creating new jobs and acting as a catalyst to further investment.

Development in the city centre

Manchester’s city centre has transformed and grown in recent years and is a major asset for the city. It successfully provides:

- A range of good-quality employment opportunities across a range of key sectors, supporting businesses and enterprises to grow and thrive
- High-quality and well-connected homes for residents
- A popular destination for domestic and international visitors, resulting in a strong visitor economy
- A broad range of retail and leisure amenities, which contribute to a vibrant city centre
- World-class educational institutions and facilities, which create a pipeline of talent.

Over the past 12 months, cities around the world have been acutely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Facing these challenges, Manchester has maintained momentum and continued its pre-pandemic growth trajectory, driven mainly by the city centre. Manchester's Recovery and Investment Plan will help to ensure that this growth continues, and that the challenges raised by the pandemic are met in collaboration with our partners across the city.

A strong, co-ordinated and collaborative response will help to support those most in need, build resilience, and ensure that Manchester continues to successfully and sustainably develop as an international city.

Following an initial slowdown in March 2020, construction activity continued at a rapid pace. Schemes progressed in the east of the city in Ancoats and at Mayfield; to the north at NOMA and Victoria north; and to the south in Castlefield and Hulme, including at St John's. Vibrant, mixed-use development has continued to transform the city's skyline to further cement Manchester as a leading city to live, work and visit. Examples are provided below.

NOMA

A refreshed Strategic Regeneration Framework (SRF) was approved by the Council in August 2020. This captured the progress made to date on this major regeneration scheme and set out the key challenges and opportunities for the next phases of development. To date the scheme has delivered:

- Some 563,000 square feet of office development, split between new-build space and the refurbishment of the area's heritage buildings, which support a significant proportion of the 5,300 existing jobs within the NOMA neighbourhood

- An exciting mix of retail and leisure spaces
- New high-quality residential development at Angel Gardens creating 458 new homes
- New public realm, including the delivery of Sadler's Yard
- £1.28million of investment into community and educational projects, alongside the generation of £4.5million of social value through volunteering, training, apprenticeships, and health and wellbeing initiatives.

Since the approval of the updated framework, work has started on the next exciting phase of development. This will see the delivery of a further 1.1million square feet of commercial development and 150,000 square feet of retail and leisure space, which combined will support an additional 5,300 jobs, doubling the number of people working within the area. This includes the innovative net zero-carbon scheme, No. 4 Angel Square, where development started on-site in December 2020.

St Mary's Parsonage

Developed in collaboration with a number of major landowners in the area, an SRF for the St Mary's Parsonage area was approved in July 2020. The framework sets out the overarching vision for the neighbourhood as a commercially led, mixed-use district set around high-quality public spaces.

Development in this location will reinvigorate the neighbourhood by:

- Enhancing permeability and connections to adjacent city centre neighbourhoods

- Building on the attractive public realm at Parsonage Gardens and enhancing other public spaces, such as Motor Square, further increasing the attractiveness of the area
- Delivering development that responds to the demands and requirements of the city centre, safeguarding the long-term future of heritage buildings, such as the Grade II-listed House of Fraser department store building, as well as developing new buildings.

In addition, the development could support:

- Flexible Grade A city centre office space
- A potential high-quality (4/5 star accredited) or boutique hotel offer
- A distinctive retail and leisure offer.

St John's

St John's is the £1billion development of the 13-acre former ITV Granada site being delivered in partnership between Manchester City Council and Allied London. The project is delivering a mix of new development, alongside the renovation and repurposing of the area's historic buildings, and when complete will provide:

- Enterprise City, the commercial area of St John's, providing 560,000 square feet of workspace
- The Factory
- A 179-bed hotel
- A mix of residential accommodation
- Up to 10,000 new employment opportunities.

Enterprise City will form an integral part of a new mixed-use neighbourhood providing a broad range of business space in a mix of buildings, targeting creative, media and tech businesses from large fast-growing companies to new start-ups.

The past 12 months has seen a significant level of construction activity within the St John's neighbourhood. The refurbishment of the Bonded Warehouse, a former 1860s warehouse, is now complete and provides co-working facilities and small suite space targeted at start-ups, entrepreneurs and SMEs within the digital and creative sectors.

This first phase of St John's has also seen the development of Manchester Goods Yard. This 300,000 square feet building, which is almost complete, will provide flexible workspaces and will become the new global headquarters for e-commerce giant Booking.com. It will be home to more than 1,500 staff, creating a dynamic workplace and hub for talent. Alongside this, other commercially led developments include ABC (107,000 square feet) and Globe and Simpson (90,000 square feet), which will be completed in 2021 and 2022 respectively.

St John's will be home to The Factory, a cultural powerhouse that will be used for theatre, music, dance, art and other performance-related events and conferences. The Factory will be one of the largest and most significant developments of its kind in Europe. It is anticipated that it will add £1.1 billion to the city's economy, supporting up to 1,500 full-time jobs, and provide a permanent home for Manchester International Festival (MIF). Construction has progressed apace over the past few months, and is scheduled for completion in 2022.

Great Jackson Street

Over the past 12 months, delivery at Great Jackson Street has continued at a rapid pace. Transforming the skyline of Manchester at the southern edge of the city centre, the full development will provide more than 6,300 new homes.

Deansgate Square represents the first phase of the development, which comprises four residential towers providing 1,500 new homes, including the 64-storey South Tower – the UK's tallest building outside of London. Development is now complete and 90% of the homes have been sold. Currently, 1,700 residents are living at Deansgate Square, and a further 3,000 are set to move in over the next 12 months. Alongside this, all 11 commercial units at Deansgate Square are let or under offer, and the mix of exciting businesses is expected to be operational in 2021.

Significant progress has also been made at the Crown Street site, which will provide a further 664 apartments. The Victoria residence was completed in October 2020 and is now fully sold; Elizabeth Tower is set for completion in 2022 and is already 98% sold. Future phases of development at Crown Street are also progressing, and plans are in place for a significant new city centre green space and a new primary educational facility.

In addition to the above initiatives, several significant schemes and projects remain either under development or in the pipeline for the city centre. These include Piccadilly, Mayfield, ID Manchester, Circle Square and St Michael's.

Visitor economy and international profile

The value of the visitor economy to the wider Greater Manchester economy pre-pandemic was £9 billion. Marketing Manchester estimates that in 2020 at least 70% of that value was lost, resulting in more than a £6 billion loss to the economy, as well as thousands of jobs across the tourism, hospitality, leisure, and culture sectors.

Data collection for 2019 was delayed due to COVID-19 response and is not yet available. Data collection for 2020, involving gaining information from businesses, began in line with staff returning to businesses in the sector but has been impacted by pressures experienced as businesses aim to survive and adapt to new ways of working. Remaining sectoral closures, limitations to visitor numbers due to social distancing and disparity between venues with the opportunity to adapt to outdoor provision remain a real concern.

International position

Manchester maintained its position as the third most-visited UK city for international visits between 2003 and 2019 behind London and Edinburgh⁴ attracting 1.66 million visits in 2019 – a growth of 38% between 2015 and 2019. This compared favourably with 11% growth across the UK for the same period. The top five markets for leisure visits to Manchester prior to COVID-19 were the Irish Republic, Germany, China, USA and Spain.

⁴ International Passenger Survey 2003–2019; Office of National Statistics and supported by VisitBritain

The travel and tourism statistics published by the ONS are usually based on the results of the International Passenger Survey (IPS), but the survey was suspended on 16 March 2020 because of the COVID-19 pandemic. The 2020 published figures are only available for the UK and are based on administrative sources and modelling (with the exception of Q1 2020 when the IPS was in operation) and should therefore be viewed with caution. The UK figures estimate 11.1million inbound visits in 2020, a 73% decline from the visit levels seen in 2019. The majority (63%) of the visits to the UK were in Q1, before any worldwide travel restrictions were put in place.

Visit Britain's latest inbound forecast for 2021 produced in May, estimates 11.3million visits to the UK, up 2% on 2020 but only 28% of the 2019 level. The forecast assumes the start of a recovery from May, albeit slow at first, with a step change in the summer followed by gradual recovery throughout the rest of the year as international travel opens up to and from a growing number of markets. Inbound tourism is still likely to remain well below normal levels throughout the rest of the year and by the end of 2021 Visit Britain still do not expect inbound tourism to be back to, or even close to, normal levels. Suppressed demand for city destinations and from international markets, corporate business, conferences and major events will all have a significant impact on the speed of Manchester's tourism recovery.

According to Oxford Economics, international inbound visits are not expected to return to pre-pandemic levels until 2023/24.⁵ Countries within

the EU accounted for six in ten (60%) inbound international visits to the Greater Manchester subregion in 2019. While it is too early to quantify, there is expected to be a negative impact on the visitor economy arising from Brexit, with the impact of the pandemic potentially compounding this as personal financial limitations and lifestyle changes become evident.

Domestic position

Manchester's tourism sector is also heavily supported by visitors from within the UK (staying visitors and day trippers).

Owing to COVID-19, significant parts of Manchester's tourism industry were closed throughout 2020, eg. theatres, museums and galleries, concert venues, sporting stadiums and conference centres. In addition, there was widespread cancellation of mass-attendance events and festivals.

The diverse and attractive offer of the tourism industry contributed to the fact that prior to the pandemic, Manchester was host to the second-largest number of overnight visits by a UK local authority, behind only Cornwall County Council and ahead of local authorities including Edinburgh, Birmingham, and the London borough local authorities.⁶ It is estimated that Manchester attracts 29.7million tourism day visits per year, making it the second-most-visited local authority for day trips, behind the 54.8million day trippers per year to the City of London.⁷

The pandemic has presented unparalleled challenges to Manchester's domestic market throughout 2020 and early 2021. The visitor numbers in Manchester's indoor-based tourism industry were impacted by safety measures aimed at best-managing the pandemic, including reductions in capacity, social distancing, reduced opening hours, and limits on inter-household mixing. Indoor-based tourism was further impacted by a reduction in consumer confidence and the increased risk of contracting COVID-19 within an indoor environment.

Restrictions to travelling and capacity on public transport has also affected the visitor economy; 77% of visitors to Manchester typically travel into the city via public transport,⁸ which had a higher level of risk associated with catching the disease than travelling in private transport. The reduced frequency of public transport services due to decreased day-to-day demand was also a consideration for potential visitors. Owing to its strong connectivity, Manchester is a destination choice for multiple households from around the region to meet up, and the restrictions to household-mixing led to the cancellation of many of these visits.

Manchester, and the wider Greater Manchester region, had a relatively high incidence rate of COVID-19 for much of 2020, compared to the UK average and many other destinations, and was as such impacted by additional restrictions for considerable periods of time. These factors led to decreased consumer confidence in travelling to Manchester, along with the fear that advanced

5 Oxford Economics, as quoted in evidence submission of VisitBritain for DCMS Select Committee: <https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/3984/html/>

6 Great Britain Tourism Survey 2019; VisitEngland

7 Based upon the Great Britain Day Visits Survey using a 2017–19 average

8 Greater Manchester Leisure Visitors Survey; Manchester sample; Marketing Manchester

bookings may be subject to last-minute cancellation if further restrictions were brought in. Managing the incident rate of the virus will be critical to the city's recovery, eg. those expressing they were not planning to visit in October 2020 cited 'the incidence rate of COVID-19 in Greater Manchester' as the biggest barrier to visiting.⁹

Manchester's full tourism offer is dependent on mass-attendance events, such as sporting matches, theatre shows, concerts and other live events. The city's vibrancy and atmosphere depend on large volumes of people being able to access the city safely and spend time in multiple indoor settings. Consequently, the visitor economy will be subject to further damage if restrictions on any of these activities are necessary to safely manage the spread of the disease and mitigate the risk to public health.

There is expected to be pent-up demand to visit the city and experience its offer when the virus is managed and businesses are able to open freely to the general public. New attractions, at both new and existing businesses, will further provide an additional incentive to re-engage with Manchester and encourage visits to the area. These include The Factory, Science and Industry Museum, and Manchester Jewish Museum, in addition to RHS Bridgewater and Therme Manchester, which are both on Manchester's doorstep.

Conference and business events

Conference and business events have a critical part to play in Manchester's ability to support jobs and generate economic impact through the

visitor economy. The value of this activity was last estimated to be £536million in economic impact and supporting 22,140 jobs. This is through business events that attract 2.6million delegates annually; additional value also comes from leisure extenders: delegates who stay on after a conference to experience their host city, and those who may not have considered visiting Manchester before and return for a leisure visit.¹⁰

Fifty-two major conferences were due to take place in Manchester in 2020; only two took place before the closure of venues and public gatherings. At the beginning of April 2020, 15 conferences were cancelled outright, resulting in an economic impact loss of some £13million to the city. Marketing Manchester has been working to support the organisers of the remaining 35 conferences, ensuring that the postponed events are rescheduled and not cancelled, thus ensuring the city can benefit in the future. In doing so, £44million of economic impact from these conferences has been secured. Despite it being a hugely challenging year for business meetings and events, Marketing Manchester submitted 12 bids for conferences and sporting events to be hosted in 2022 and beyond. The potential economic impact of these bids is £92.6million with a potential 12,962 attendees. In addition, five bids for future major conferences were confirmed, set to bring an economic impact of £4million and 2,575 attendees.

The Government's spring 2021 roadmap included steps for this sector to reopen, but is subject to change as it responds to infection and transmission

rates. Conference and business events are expected to take some time to recover due to the long lead times between organisers feeling confident to start planning their events again and the length of time before the date of the event.

As expected, international conferences have been the worst hit, and Marketing Manchester is striving to keep as many as possible in the city. Faced with the dual challenges of living with COVID-19 and leaving the EU there is a vital need to have a clear plan and resources to ensure the recovery and regrowth of this important sector. Manchester's Convention Bureau is delivering the priorities outlined in the Business Tourism 10-Point Plan to rebuild Greater Manchester's business tourism sector.

As the sector gradually reopens, priorities will include building confidence through messaging and promoting venues signed up to Government-recognised standards: Good to Go, All Secure and Project Confidence; working with the organisers of cancelled or postponed events and encouraging the future return of the event to Manchester; working with partners to develop their product to adapt to the changing needs in the marketplace; developing domestic marketing 'meet' campaigns to position the city for the domestic opportunities expected to come first; and working with ambassadors to build the longer-term pipeline.

Impact of the pandemic on the tourism industry and employment

Marketing Manchester was supported by NatWest to undertake a Tourism Business barometer, working with its network of contacts at Destination Management Organisations across the North of

⁹ Marketing Manchester UK Consumers Intentions and Sentiments Survey; Marketing Manchester; October 2020

¹⁰ Conference Value & Volume 2018; reporting on 2017; Manchester local authority dataset; Marketing Manchester.

England to understand and track the impact of the pandemic. The barometer identified significant concerns for Manchester-based businesses operating within the visitor economy and for the jobs these businesses supported:

- An average of 58% of Manchester businesses reported revenue levels to be over 75% down on business-as-usual July to October 2020, considerably higher than the 27% for the North of England.
- An average of 51% of Manchester businesses reported visitor numbers to be over 75% down on business-as-usual July to October 2020, considerably higher than the 26% for the North of England.
- By February 2021, 36% of businesses had concerns about their viability, in line with the average of 38% for the North of England; 64% envisaged making redundancies, significantly higher than the 31% for the North of England.
- By March 2021, Manchester businesses reported that, on average, 57% (the median value) of their February 2020 permanent workforce had been sustained, significantly lower than the 85% for the North of England, showing a significant loss of jobs in the city during the pandemic.
- In March 2021, 91% of Manchester businesses considered targeting new audiences/markets, and 55% considered diversifying their offer/ experiences to support their recovery – to adapt to the changes in the business environment, at least over the short to medium term.
- In March 2021, 60% of Manchester businesses anticipated a return to operating financially at pre-pandemic levels by the end of 2022, 30% during 2023, and 10% after 2023.

Visitors’ economic contribution

All visitors to the city make a huge contribution to Manchester’s tourism sector and the economy in general. This is illustrated in Table 2.2, which summarises the visitor value to Greater Manchester from a sample of visitor types, with figures taken from a range of different sources. It is expected that the Greater Manchester Leisure Visits Survey will next be carried out in 2022; the last survey was done in 2018.

Table 2.2:
Summary of the visitor value for a sample of visitor types

Visitor type to Greater Manchester	Spend per day	Average length of stay	Spend per trip
Leisure day visitor	£46	1 day	£46
Conference day delegate Could be attending a conference for more than one day but not staying over	£62	–	£93
Leisure visitor staying in paid-for accommodation	£130	2.7 nights	£351
International association delegate	–	–	£333

Sources: Greater Manchester Leisure Visits Survey 2018 (leisure visitors) and Conference Value and Volume 2018, reporting on the 2017 market (delegates)

According to STEAM’s Tourism Economic Impact Model¹¹ (the recognised measure of the value of tourism in the UK), the 4.9million staying visits and 61.8million day visits in 2018 were worth £4.86billion to Manchester’s economy and supported 53,400 jobs. These figures represent a huge level of growth over the five years since 2013, when the visitor economy was worth £3.71billion

and supported 46,000 jobs. There were delays to the STEAM programme related to the pandemic; therefore, STEAM 2019 and STEAM 2020 updates are due to be reported before the end of 2021.

The impact of COVID-19 effectively stalled Manchester’s tourism sector, with borders closed and airlines grounded. As domestic and international travel has opened up, restrictions, ongoing uncertainty, and confidence levels continue to significantly curtail the visitor economy, so

¹¹ STEAM (Scarborough Tourism Economic Activity Monitor), Global Tourism Solutions (UK) Ltd – 2018 report

forecasting at this time remains difficult. It is evident that many of Manchester's tourism businesses were negatively affected throughout 2020 and continue to be impacted into 2021. The implications for the wider economies and workforce that depend upon them are likely to be long-lasting. The challenge is ensuring a targeted response to sectoral and resident recovery support, and making sure those most affected can succeed and thrive.

Hotels and short-term lets

In the period prior to COVID-19, there was a huge (and at times unmet) demand for visitor accommodation in the city. The growth in the number of people visiting and staying in Manchester had pushed city centre hotel occupancy to a record high of 81% in 2019, despite capacity increasing by 70% (circa 4,300 additional rooms) between 2009 and 2019. Similarly, over the past five to ten years there has been a huge growth in short-term lets (STLs), which continued up to the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic in the UK. According to Airdna, the number of Airbnb listings in Manchester (by far the largest actor in the STL market) peaked in Q4 2019 at around 3,430 (1,740 entire homes and 1,690 shared accommodation listings).

However, while Manchester's hotel and short-term lettings markets traded broadly as normal for the first two months of 2020, the UK went into a national lockdown in March. This meant accommodation providers were closed to the general public and only open to cater for emergency response and to provide accommodation for public health professionals and the homeless community. When the sector reopened on 4 July 2020 the restrictions (limits on the number of households and rules for social distancing) significantly affected consumer

demand. Some providers remained temporarily closed, and by the end of July, Greater Manchester had enhanced restrictions compared to the rest of the country, which further curtailed trade. At the end of October, Greater Manchester entered Tier 3 restriction and from this point onwards travel in and out of the area was not permitted and accommodation providers were only open for those requiring accommodation for work or to study. This remained the case for the remainder of the year due to national or local restrictions.

As a consequence of this incredibly challenging business environment, the hotel occupancy rate for Manchester city centre in 2020 dropped to 36%. Similarly, the decline in demand for short-term lets during the lockdown saw listings for Airbnb's in Manchester decrease by 540 (16%) from the peak in Q4 2019 in the period up to Q2 2020, before subsequently remaining flat. This was attributed to landlords switching Airbnb properties (primarily in the city centre) from the short-term lettings market to the mainstream market as a means of managing the sudden drop in business.

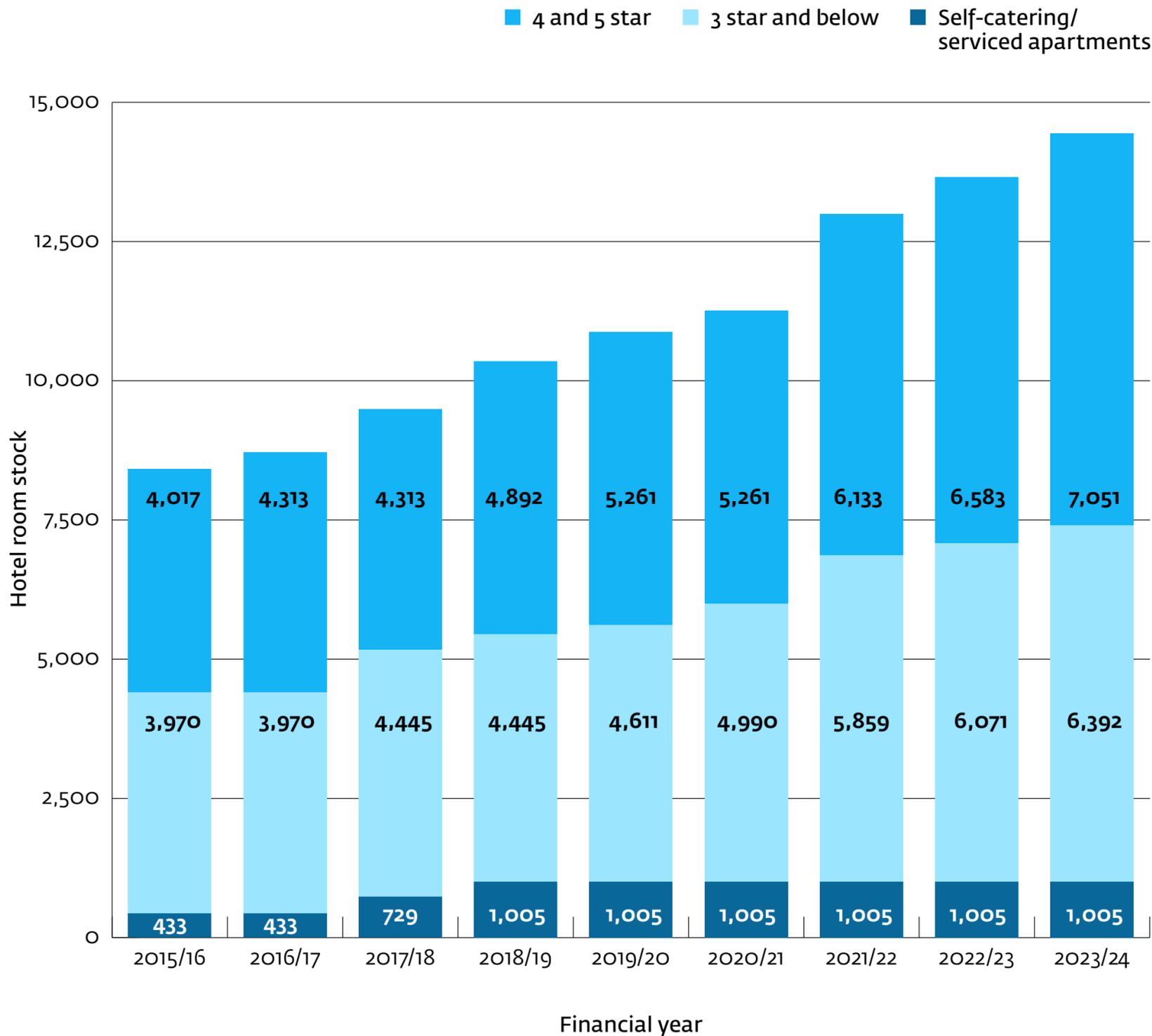
This dramatic decline in demand for visitor accommodation, along with a temporary pause in construction activity on some hotel development sites following the introduction of the Government's lockdown measures in March 2020, delayed the completion of a number of hotels expected to be finished in 2020/21. Despite this, two city centre hotels, with a total of 379 rooms, were finished towards the end of 2020:

- Hampton by Hilton Manchester Northern Quarter (3 star) – 221 rooms
- Premier Inn at Circle Square (3 star) – 158 rooms (opened to the public in May 2021).

This is unsurprisingly below the total city centre completions for 2019/20 (670 rooms across five new hotels) and the five-year average of 567 new rooms per annum. Nevertheless, the total number of rooms in the city centre under construction remains at almost record levels; 2,397 rooms are currently on-site, and a further 2,280 rooms have planning permission (as of Q1 2021/22). 428 of the rooms with planning permission, yet to start on-site, had their planning applications submitted and approved during 2020/21, suggesting significant confidence in Manchester's hotel market despite all the challenges the pandemic has created.

The hotel pipeline therefore continues to reflect an unprecedented level of growth in visitor accommodation in the city centre. Figure 2.9 demonstrates that, given the delays to construction in 2020/21, this increase in the city centre is expected to be most acute in 2021/22, when there is projected to be some 1,740 rooms added to the total stock.

Figure 2.9:
Growth in city centre room stock based on the consented hotel pipeline



Sources: Manchester City Council Business Rates (existing room stock, 2015/16 to 2019/20), Manchester City Council Expected Commercial Completions List (expected growth, 2021/22 to 2023/24)

Assuming that the pipeline is delivered as expected (notwithstanding the potential impacts of COVID-19 on hotel operators and construction plans), the scale of hotel development means the city now faces a dual challenge of not only recovering occupancy rates to pre-pandemic levels, but also doing so at a time when the number of hotel rooms in the city centre is forecast to increase at an unprecedented rate.

In the short term, this means hotel operators were working towards unrestricted opening from (no earlier than) 17 May 2021. It is understood that bookings made since the roadmap out of lockdown was announced were generally leisure (weekend) bookings and there are concerns about business tourism and the viability of delivering events and conferences with restricted capacity (a key element of demand for visitor accommodation). Therefore, the lifting of all limits on social contact (on 19 July) whereby large events can go ahead, will be key to rebuilding the city's visitor economy.

In the long-term Manchester will have to attract significantly more overnight visitors to the city if occupancy rates are going to be maintained in the city's hotels, given the anticipated growth in room stock. This will be a challenge because of the ongoing impact of COVID-19 on global tourism, intense competition for tourists (both domestically and internationally), and the yet unknown consequences of Brexit on visitor numbers to the UK. New brands and properties coming into the city should present further opportunities for Manchester to strengthen its appeal across its international markets and increase its capability to bid for larger business and sporting events in its key sectors. New hotel operators building in the city and due to open over

the next five years include Germany-based Meininger Hotels, Japan's Toyoko Inn, Portugal's Pestana Hotel Group, and the Netherlands-based QBIC. There are also existing hotel operators that will bring an additional brand to Manchester to include new properties such as Accor TRIBE property, Dalata Hotel Group's Maldron property, Malmaison's Hotel Du Vin property, and Marriott International's MOXY property. Recognising this, Marketing Manchester, Manchester City Council, CityCo and the Manchester Hoteliers Association are working in partnership to increase the resources going into the promotion and marketing of Manchester as a destination to visit for work and leisure.

In the short-term the level of new supply entering the market will disperse the staying visits generated over a wider supply base and could result in a slower pick-up of occupancy rates.

Conclusion

As detailed in this chapter, Manchester's recent history has seen economic success and diversification bolstered by internationally renowned sectoral strengths attracting businesses and talent to the city. The resilience of Manchester's economy has been tested throughout the economic closures, downturn and the seismic shift in travel following COVID-19.

Cities with large populations, in particular young adult populations, are likely to experience higher levels of economic disruption and unemployment in the wake of an economic crisis. A successful economic recovery will be based around Manchester's globally recognised sectoral strengths and its key

assets (including the city centre). It will also require a renewed focus on people, ensuring all the city's residents have the right skills and qualifications to access new opportunities, such as in the zero-carbon economy. The pandemic has also provided an opportunity to refocus Manchester's economy to be more equitable, inclusive, and sustainable.

By working on these priorities, Manchester can achieve its strategic goal of becoming a thriving and sustainable world-class city by 2025 – a city in which all its residents can participate in and benefit from a strong and fair economy regardless of their socioeconomic background. In addition, the strength and sustainability of Manchester's economy supports residents across the region and, as detailed in this chapter, many international residents too.

Chapter 3: A highly skilled city

Strategic overview

The economic crisis driven by the COVID-19 pandemic has caused severe economic disruption, affecting productivity, income and employment levels. The nature and unprecedented scale of the pandemic have the potential to have a medium to long-term impact on the way the city performs and operates across different sectors. Manchester City Council and its partners have responded to this challenging and unprecedented crisis by protecting the most vulnerable and ensuring the city is ready to bounce back as quickly as possible through inclusive growth. Not all sectors were affected adversely during the pandemic; there was strong growth in employment in the digital, health and social care, and education sectors. Manchester is ready and will play a leading role in levelling up the city and country. Manchester's Economic Recovery and Investment Plan, '[Powering Recovery](#)', is a key part of the response, alongside the development of an Economic Recovery Plan (ERP) for the city to help build confidence in the long-term future of the city. The plan also responds to other factors, such as Brexit, climate change, and building on the city's strengths to maintain confidence.

This chapter will explain how we have responded to these challenges, starting with education. The COVID-19 pandemic has had a major impact on the delivery of education for children and young people in the city. As well as the cancellation of national assessments and exams (including GCSEs and A levels), schools were closed for most pupils for significant

periods of both the 2019/20 and 2020/21 academic years. The focus therefore has been on supporting schools, early years settings and other providers to ensure a good-quality remote learning offer as well as additional support for the most vulnerable. The development of a long-term plan to address the pandemic's impact on the education of our children and young people is a major priority for the city.

The wider impact on young people, unemployment levels, and a range of businesses means that the scale of the challenge in returning to strong inclusive growth is high. The Council and its partners have demonstrated that the city is in a strong position to rise to these challenges and has already started to do so. This strength is based on our track record of delivery, spirit and continued resilience (including a diverse economy with assets and strengths in major growth sectors and a young and diverse population), and effective partnerships. The plan focuses on the three strategic aims identified in the [Our Manchester Industrial Strategy](#) – People, Place and Prosperity, and on the priorities of inclusive growth and our zero-carbon commitments.

An important part of the recovery work has focused on skills, the labour market, and business-support activity. Our response has been to deliver activity that tackles the impact of those furloughed or newly unemployed, youth unemployment, skills and employment support for adults and inequalities. Our response has been based on intelligence and a strong understanding of the evolving impact on our residents and communities.

The Employment Partnership was created to tackle emerging trends relating to unemployment and skill shortages, as well as to provide immediate employment support for residents. The Youth Unemployment group have prioritised delivering Kickstart effectively for young people, as well as maximising apprenticeship and traineeship opportunities. The Skills and Employment Support for Adults has responded by supporting providers and learners to continue participating through lockdowns when physical teaching has not been allowed or severely restricted. The [Manchester Adult Education and Skills Plan](#) remains at the heart of our response. Digital exclusion has been highlighted throughout the pandemic and has been a successful part of our response to ensure that all residents can be supported to access and effectively engage with the internet for both work and life.

COVID-19 has had a significant impact on skills and the labour market. With the rapid change of the skills supply-and-demand landscape, some occupations are growing rapidly while others are declining; at the same time, requisite skills within occupations are changing as a result of automation and digitalisation. Physical skills are becoming less important, and analytical and interpersonal skills are becoming more important. Negotiation, co-ordination and critical thinking are frequently the most desired skills reported by employers. However, there are some sectors that do still require physical skills, such as construction, and in particular those whose emerging growth of retrofit skills will help achieve the city's net zero-carbon ambitions.

Throughout this chapter we will look at the challenges and progress made in the past year in achieving inclusive growth, responding to the skill needs referred to above, and supporting young people through careers advice and guidance. We will discuss the impact of welfare reform in the context of responding to the pandemic, the challenges of the anticipated significant increase in unemployment and business closures, as well as the impact of education disruption on young people. We will also give our responses, such as: a focus on working with distressed businesses as new opportunities emerge; youth skills and encouraging young people to stay in education; graduate reskilling; apprenticeships schemes; and support for Black, Asian and minority ethnic residents and those aged over-50, who have also been disproportionately impacted by COVID-19.

Analysis of progress

Increasing the number of children arriving at school ready to learn

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) assessments – the teacher assessment of children’s development at the end of the academic year in which the child turns five – were cancelled in 2020 due to the pandemic.

The Council remains committed to improving school-readiness through continued engagement with our Early Years settings and schools, and by providing an integrated universal Early Years offer for all families with specific targeted early help and intervention where it is needed.

The city has a range of high-quality Early Years provision, including free entitlement places for children aged 2–4. Most providers work with our Early Years Quality Assurance team, who provide training, challenge, and support for settings and ensure that they are aware of the city’s wider priorities. Most of our Early Years settings have remained open throughout the pandemic and worked in partnership with the Council to ensure that settings are safe and able to provide places for our most vulnerable children throughout.

Sure Start Children’s Centres have also remained open and have continued to support the delivery of information, advice and guidance, essential health care and mental health support through our blended offer. Group work involving babies continued to be on a needs-led basis, as has one-to-one work with families. Early Years outreach workers continued to provide information advice and guidance.

Throughout the pandemic the service has worked with key partners and wider organisations to adapt and flex its approach to service delivery. It has offered support on a one-to-one basis or within a small group, delivered face-to-face or online, and telephone support has continued. Services offered throughout this period included:

- Health visitor sessions with families
- Outreach worker one-to-one sessions
- Breastfeeding support
- WellComm assessment (language development) and REAL intervention sessions (literacy development)

- Small group work for babies and Baby Box Project (gifting sensory boxes to newborns)
- Cooking projects, where parents are supplied with the ingredients and cook a meal online with other parents
- Links to support from the Citizens Advice Bureau, Shelter, Manchester Adult Education Service and Talk English.

The Early Years’ service also focused on targeting two-year old children eligible for free entitlement to mitigate against the potential impact on their learning and developmental opportunities during the pandemic.

Outreach workers ran a project over the summer targeting two-year old children who were unable to continue with their free entitlement due to setting closures or parental choice. Over 1,000 families were contacted and provided with an activity pack. The resources and activities promoted key early learning skills in the prime areas of communication, language and literacy. The activities were also designed to support positive wellbeing and mental health for two-year-olds. Families with three-year-olds were provided with a resources pack to support the transition into nursery. The project ran for 12 weeks between June and September 2020, and pre- and post-intervention assessment showed an improvement in all the learning areas measured.

Improving educational attainment to be above national average

School inspection judgements

School inspections conducted by Ofsted were suspended in March 2020 as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Before schools partially closed their sites, the overall Ofsted outcomes for Manchester in March 2020 indicated 90% of schools and 98% of early years settings were good or better. Both these were above national average and indicated an improving system. 93.3% of Manchester primary schools and 73% of secondary schools were judged by Ofsted to be good or outstanding (this compared to figures of 87% and 76% nationally at 31 August 2019, the last date for which comparable data is available). Of note was the sustained improvement in the secondary sector, which had seen a ten percentage point improvement each year for the past two years, with 53% judged to be good or better in February 2018 and 63% in February 2019.

Throughout the 2020 autumn term, Ofsted carried out visits to ten Manchester schools. These visits looked at how schools were getting pupils back up to speed after so long at home. They consisted of collaborative conversations, without any judgements being made. Head teachers reported that inspectors listened to their experiences and provided constructive challenge around their future plans. The visits were not graded, and no concerns were raised in any school. For each school, a short letter has been uploaded to the Ofsted website helping parents to understand what steps were being taken to help children back into full-time education.

During the spring term, Ofsted conducted additional monitoring inspections in nine Manchester schools that had previously been judged 'inadequate' or 'requires improvement'. Most of these inspections were conducted remotely. Inspectors explored how leaders were ensuring all pupils at home as well as those at school had access to a full education offer during the national lockdown. They also looked at how the school's curriculum was being developed. The outcome of all the inspections was overwhelmingly positive and most reports have been published on the Ofsted website. In all schools, leaders and governors were judged to be taking effective action to provide education under difficult circumstances.

School attendance

School attendance rates have been a success story in Manchester, with improvements being sustained over several years. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, absence and persistent absence rates in both primary and secondary schools were below national figures.

Following the first lockdown (spring/summer 2020), there was a multi-agency commitment to improving attendance with the introduction of an attendance hotline available for schools, professionals and parents/carers, and continued involvement from the Early Help hubs to promote good attendance during the autumn term 2020. This approach was effective, with overall attendance during this term 94% if children who were self-isolating (due to symptoms, awaiting a test result, or contact with a case of COVID-19) are excluded from data; this was higher than initially anticipated. Owing to high infection rates in the city during the autumn term, many pupils in Manchester missed significant amounts of schooling.

Since schools welcomed all children back following the second lockdown in March 2021, attendance has been good. While figures are not comparable with other data, attendance during half-term 5 (the first full half-term after lockdown) was 94% across all our schools. Across categories this is as follows: primary – 95.38%, secondary – 92.88%, special – 84.20%.

For many children, returning to normal hours of school attendance will develop their resilience and assist their transition back to some degree of normality, while also enabling them to reach their own academic and social aspirations.

School attainment

In spring 2020, as part of steps taken to fight the spread of COVID-19, the Government announced that all exams due to take place in schools and colleges in England in summer 2020 were cancelled, and that school or college-level educational performance data based on tests, assessments or exams for 2019/20 would not be published. Early Years Foundation Stage assessments were also cancelled, and results of Key Stages 2, 4 and 5 were based on teacher assessments, as no examinations took place. The most recently available attainment from the academic year 2018/19 is summarised below:

- 65.9% of children achieved a good level of development in the Early Years Foundation Stage 2019 profile, lower than the national average of 71.8%
- 61% of pupils achieved the expected standard in Reading, Writing and Maths, remaining below the national average of 65%

- Progress made by Manchester pupils in Reading, Writing and Maths was statistically significantly above the national average, with the most relative progress being made in Maths
- At 43.3, Manchester had a slightly lower Attainment 8 score than the national Attainment 8 score of 44.7
- 35.5% of pupils achieved a GCSE in both English and Maths, below the national figure of 40.1%
- 15.1% of Manchester pupils achieved the English Baccalaureate, with grade 5 or above in English and Maths, remaining below the national average of 15.8%, but the gap narrowed
- Progress 8 score of -0.11 was higher than the north west region but below the national progress score of zero
- Of the 8,310 A level entries, 22.2% achieved A*–A grades, slightly below the England average of 22.6%. 97.4% of A level entries achieved A*–E grades, remaining above the England average of 97.3%
- Of the 2,964 A level entries in STEM subjects, 24.9% achieved A*–A grades, remaining below the England average of 29%. 96.3% of A level entries in STEM subjects achieved A*–E grades, above the England average of 95.9%.

Throughout the pandemic, most schools remained open to vulnerable pupils, those with special educational needs, and children of key workers, with all schools and colleges retaining contact and an overview of all their pupils. Officers from the Council worked with education leaders to support them with their current offers for children who attended on-site and for the many more who were learning from home. This included regular communication

and virtual meetings with head teachers and school leaders with responsibility for different roles across various phases and partnerships, as well as school governors and early years settings.

The Council provided advice and direct support for individual schools, distributed PPE, and allocated over 3,000 laptops to support vulnerable and disadvantaged children. It also gifted thousands of books to schools and pupils, including a book to every child in year 6 in both 2020 and 2021 as a Manchester transition read.

The Council's School Quality Assurance Team visited schools during the autumn term, focusing on the remote learning offer provided by schools in order to ensure that all pupils could access high-quality remote education resources. All these visits demonstrated a remote learning offer and an extended curriculum offer, including for children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

Schools have needed to be flexible in their approach, developing bespoke solutions to the needs of their pupils, the impacts of positive COVID-19 cases, and the need for classes to self-isolate. Some schools loaned significant IT resources to pupils, while others found a more paper-based approach was more suitable as a way of providing remote learning. Other steps taken by schools to ensure good-quality remote education resources and additional support for particular cohorts of pupils where required include:

- Assessments used to identify gaps in the curriculum, with adjustments made accordingly, as well as bespoke changes dependent on the needs of the cohort (eg. increased focus on reading with identified year groups)

- Training and support for school staff to support rapid upskilling and build confidence in delivering a remote and/or blended learning offer, with specific 'blended learning leaders' and digital champions appointed
- Use of a blend of online platforms (Google Classroom/MS Teams) and online resources (eg. Purple Mash, Timetable Rockstars)
- Teachers retaining significant contact with pupils in their classes, for example through live registrations to start the day and live activities to finish the day
- High schools have been utilising the facility within a number of platforms for monitoring times students are actually engaged in learning, and have used this to target support for those who seem to be less engaged
- High schools have successfully provided live lessons across the whole range of national curriculum subjects. This included a specific example of curriculum enrichment activities on Fridays
- Special schools have strived to ensure some therapy sessions can still be provided online, eg. working closely with Nordoff Robins Music Therapist.

Additional consideration has been given to pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). Pupils across the city have been provided with specific support, in terms of devices, learning platforms, access to teaching assistant and keyworker support, practical activity and resource packs based on their individual needs, as well as training to help them learn through play and experiential learning. Additional support was also given to help with confidence and the transition back to school following periods of lockdown.

Feedback from young people themselves following the periods of lockdown indicated that they were eager to get back to school to restore routines and learning, and many children reported that they enjoyed accessing online learning. The impact of lockdowns on students will not only be on missed elements of the taught curriculum, but also on wellbeing and physical health, and the development of other skills such as teamwork, communication, making friends and managing friendships. It is also recognised nationally that the impact will likely be greatest on those children who are disadvantaged, and as the city has higher-than-national levels of disadvantaged children, this impact will be significant across the majority of our schools.

Following the COVID-19 crisis, improving outcomes for all Manchester children will remain a key educational priority. There will also need to be an increased focus on emotional resilience for all Manchester children as schools recover from the crisis, with expected increased anxiety levels among the pupil population.

Education Services within the Council will continue to work very closely with all the city's Early Years providers/settings, 186 state-funded schools, Manchester independent schools, alternative provision-providers and post-16 providers, other partners and education leaders to develop a long-term plan to address the impact of the pandemic on our children and young people's education.

This plan will take a holistic approach to education, build on what we already know works in the city, and allow school leaders the flexibility to innovate and develop solutions that will work for their communities. It should not just be about schools

but also how other agencies, community assets and services are able to support this plan. Furthermore, schools and services need to be ready to respond quickly to any new and emerging consequences of children and young people's missed education that we have not yet anticipated.

The impacts of the pandemic on children and young people, including consequences for their education and how they have been supported, are explored in more detail in the '[A progressive and equitable city](#)' chapter.

Post-16 provision Key Stage 5

Education providers across the Manchester post-16 sector have collaborated differently to support those most impacted by the pandemic by sharing information and changing delivery. They all transitioned to a remote learning offer following the first lockdown, and since then have managed to successfully switch between a remote, blended and face-to-face offer in line with Government guidance. Positively, the overall attendance and engagement levels of most learners has remained high. Vulnerable students or those unable to study at home were invited to attend on-site provision throughout the periods of lockdown. Robust safeguarding systems have been maintained, the mental health and wellbeing of students has been monitored, and additional services have been commissioned where needed.

All providers have responded effectively to the digital exclusion challenge, issuing devices and data to students where they have identified need. This has not been without its challenges, in terms of building an accurate picture of the level of need,

the quality of Wi-Fi and connectivity, and difficulties in the supply of laptops. The Council has responded by brokering devices into the city and working with GMCA and businesses to fill gaps.

The post-16 sector across Manchester has risen to the many challenges as a result of COVID-19 and Government guidance, which includes dealing with two academic years of assessing grades and supporting their Year 12 and Year 13 students to progress, alongside keeping students and staff safe.

LTE estates

The Manchester College and its higher education arm UCEN Manchester deliver a significant volume of post-16 technical education – over 5,200 16 to 18-year-olds, 6,000 adults and 1,300 higher-education students enrol every year. The College's vision has been supported by the LTE Group's ambitious £140million estates strategy for The Manchester College and UCEN. The new estate will provide students of all ages with state-of-the-art, industry-standard facilities from which a high-quality technical education can be delivered, and this remains on programme despite the challenges of COVID-19. The first new facilities came online in September 2021 with the renovated and expanded facilities at the Openshaw Campus ready for students in Sport, Care Professions, Public Services, Construction and Automotive. This will be followed in September 2022 when the new campus in Manchester City Centre, next to the Arena, will open with new facilities for courses linked to the digital and creative sectors, as well as other high-growth industries linked to the regional economic growth strategy.

The College's T Level courses, starting in 2021, will sit within the Industry Excellence Academies with a minimum 45-day industry placement. For those students who are undecided or need more time to determine the best technical route for them, dedicated support will be provided within Learning Hubs to transition them into Centres of Excellence or Industry Excellence Academies.

This commitment to ensuring that all students achieve their full potential, underpinned by focusing on future employment prospects, has also played an integral role in seeing the College become the number one college in Greater Manchester for overall achievement (with a 91.7% achievement rate in 2019/20¹). In the 2018/19 academic year, the College was ranked first for 16–18 and adult achievement, both higher than the national rates overall and at every level of study (levels 1, 2 and 3). In addition, the College was also rated number one in the country for achievement of basic skills in Maths and English across all ages.

Case study: Greater Manchester Colleges Group – Digital and Blended Learning Project

Greater Manchester Colleges Group are leading the way on a collaborative project to develop digital, remote and blended learning to enable high-quality learning throughout the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond.

Working collaboratively with colleges from across the city region, this project aimed to rapidly improve the quality of digital and blended learning in response to the challenges of the pandemic to provide good-quality off-campus learning. Led and managed by a small team from The Manchester College (LTE Group) the project was steered by senior leaders from across all nine further education colleges that serve the communities of Greater Manchester. Funded by the DfE College Collaboration Fund, the project built on the experience of the central team of The Manchester College in developing dynamic 'communities of practice' to sustainably improve the quality of their own college provision.

The key objective of this project was to bring together expertise from across all partner colleges to quickly evaluate, develop and deploy the most effective digital content and resources for use by teachers and students. Recruitment of Digital and Blended Learning Champions within each college enabled the rapid upskilling of teachers, building on 'what worked well'. This collegiate approach has had a significant and rapid impact on the confidence and skill level of teachers, enabling

them to support their students to continue in learning through even the most challenging times of the pandemic. Over 70,000 students have benefited from the improved confidence of their teachers and having access to high-quality resources that can support their learning outside the college campus sites.

The project has strengthened collaborative working across Further Education colleges and has been funded for a second phase, from August 2021 to the end of March 2022. During this next phase we will continue to strengthen and build cross-college relationships at all levels, from curriculum departments to senior leadership teams, and always with a focus on improving what we do for our students, whatever barriers they face. It is clear from our evaluation of the project that we have much to learn from this experience and, though we are yet to realise the potential of digital technologies to enable and enhance learning, we now recognise how important digital skills are for students and their teachers alike.

¹ Centre-assessed grade

Young people not in education, employment or training (NEET)

The Council has a pivotal role in ensuring young people continue in education or training until at least age 18. We aim not only to fulfil this role, but to go beyond to give our schools support to ensure our young people make a successful post-16 transition to a destination of their choice.

Manchester has supported young people through the pandemic by ensuring that the number and rate of NEET and unknown has not been exacerbated. In November 2020 there were 3.7% (434) 16/17-year-olds (academic Years 12 and 13) who were not in education, employment or training (NEET) and 5.5% (649) unknown. One of the main challenges has been that Career Connect, which provides our NEET prevention and NEET re-engagement service, has not been able to visit young people face to face or in their homes due to restrictions.

Through our networks and social-value partners, we are working with employers to create more opportunities for NEET young people to enter the labour market. We are specifically targeting sectors that will recover and grow beyond the pandemic, including construction, health and social care, digital, and the creative industries.

The Risk of NEET Indicator (RONI)

In 2019, the Risk of NEET Indicator (RONI) was introduced to high schools, including the Pupil Referral Unit, special schools and alternative providers, to identify Year 11 learners most at risk of becoming NEET. This enabled schools to provide additional support and interventions to ensure their RONI students had a secure and appropriate post-16 destination and the additional support to

make a successful transition into further education, training or work. In February 2020, out of a total cohort of 5,611 Year 11s, 472 learners were assessed as being high risk and 550 were assessed as being medium risk (18.2% of the cohort).

Most schools were able to continue to maintain contact with their RONI cohorts throughout the lockdown period; they were able to secure destinations for the majority, and where appropriate put plans in place to help them make the transition. Contact was maintained with 75% of all high schools and colleges throughout the lockdown period via weekly bulletins and network meetings. This enabled us to support post-16 transition and monitor the progress of Year 11 destinations.

The Council has collaborated with NEET providers, including The Prince's Trust, YMCA, Growth Company, City in the Community, MUFC, Sale Sharks, the voluntary and community sectors, and youth providers to reduce the number of young people who experience more than one session of being NEET.

Skills for a zero-carbon economy

Powering Recovery: Manchester's Recovery and Investment Plan clearly sets out Manchester's commitment to a green, zero-carbon and climate-resilient recovery. It sets out our commitment to create good green jobs, to support socially responsible businesses to thrive, to secure investment for zero-carbon and climate-resilient infrastructure, and to establish the products, services and business models that we need to succeed. Manchester's new employability programmes will aim to prioritise green economy skills to broaden the skills base and support growth in the digital economy.

To deliver the substantial change needed in the UK economy by 2050, Manchester City Council will play a key role in facilitating technology transitions in homes and businesses, informing residents through work in neighbourhoods, supporting local businesses and the upskilling of the local workforce. While the wealth of Government and local government net-zero targets will drive demand for low-carbon goods and services over the coming years, it's crucial that Manchester has a workforce in place to deliver the change needed by 2050.²

It is important that Manchester understands the skill gaps that will emerge within the low-carbon sector and that it capitalises on the opportunities for reskilling the workforce. Work is underway on the development of a zero-carbon skills framework to understand the skill needs and level for each sector. These include:

- Retrofitting buildings – requiring construction-related skills and technological advancements
- Low-carbon heating – understanding the skills needed to meet increasing demand for the design, specification, installation and ongoing maintenance of heat pumps (new jobs requiring NVQ level 3+ qualifications)
- Low-carbon transport – skill requirements in the ongoing maintenance of electric vehicles
- Consultancies and financial services (part of low-carbon services), requiring the highly skilled (NVQ level 4+); demand is ongoing and required to ensure service-sector organisations can respond to emerging opportunities.

² Local Government Association

Manchester cannot work in isolation, and as Table 3.1 shows, we are working within a national, north west and Greater Manchester context, recognising that each area will have a different journey, different assets and different opportunities to deliver on this agenda.

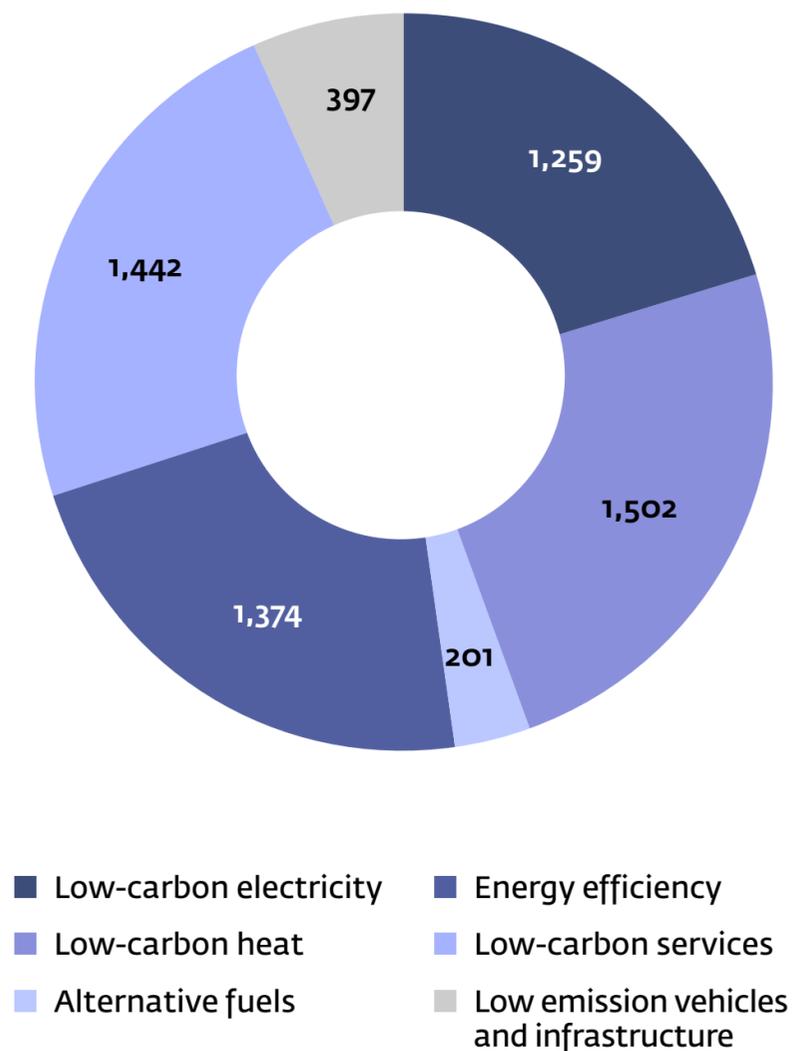
Table 3.1:
Skills Needs Assessment at different regional levels

Assessment of the Skills Provision for a 'Well Adapted and Low Carbon Northwest' (Final report to the NWDA/ Dec 2009):	GMCA's mission based challenge groups:	Manchester City Council – zero carbon skills framework:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transport 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low carbon buildings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low carbon buildings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capture and sequestration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Energy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Energy and energy materials – low carbon heat, alternative fuels
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low carbon energy technologies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waste 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transport
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy and co-ordination 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural capital 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional services
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring and research 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Circular economy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural environment and natural asset management
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raising awareness of and support for practical action 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The things we buy and throw away.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Energy supply 	–	–
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Energy efficiency and demand 	–	–
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risks and opportunities. 	–	–

Source: GMCA Industry Intelligence Team 2021

Figure 3.1 shows the projected number of new jobs created in Manchester by 2030 for each low-carbon and renewable-energy economy sector. It is estimated that 6,175 additional jobs will be required by 2030, reaching 10,763 by 2050.

Figure 3.1:
The number of new jobs in the low-carbon and renewable-energy economy sectors in Manchester – 2030 projection



Source: Ecuity Consultants and Local Government Association, 2021

The clear emerging opportunity for the city is domestic retrofit and the retrofitting of Council estates and buildings, and this has already begun with the major decarbonisation of Manchester's Civic Quarter. The transfer of Northwards Housing back into local authority control presents a major opportunity to drive the retrofit programme, not only to improve housing stock and bring it up to standard, but also to make headway into our emissions targets as set out in the Council's Climate Change Action Plan 2020–2025. Opportunities are being explored with GMCA to look at how we fund this work, as well as the skills needed to deliver the programme.

We are collaborating with GMCA to analyse skills intelligence and gather information into subsectors of the green economy to understand the occupations, skills and progression pathways, as well as identify specific gaps in provision.

Inspiring the next generation to be the best they can be and providing them with the knowledge, skills and resilience they need to succeed.

Careers Education Information Advice and Guidance (CEIAG)

Good career guidance helps inspire pupils towards further study and enables them to make informed decisions whenever choices are open to them. It also makes it more likely that they will make a successful transition into their next learning or work opportunity. The COVID-19 pandemic has increased the challenge to ensure that young people making transitions continue to receive good-quality careers advice, despite the effect of lockdowns on the education system and wider society.

Throughout the past year we have continued to support and encourage businesses, particularly from Manchester's growth sectors, to continue to work with our schools and colleges to help our young people reach their full potential, to support a bounce-back in the economy and especially work-based learning.

CEIAG Network and Support for Transition

The Council continues to facilitate the CEIAG Network, which meets each term and brings together careers staff from high schools, colleges and key partner agencies for the purpose of improving the careers offer for all students from Years 7 to 13. Despite the pandemic, last year we successfully maintained the network for over 80% of our high schools and colleges through virtual meetings and regular CEIAG bulletins.

Throughout 2020, the network was introduced to more than fifteen businesses, with many having a social-value commitment to Manchester. To support young people to build on their ambition and aspiration, schools and colleges have connected to businesses working in Manchester across a variety of sectors.

This year, there has been a much greater focus on supporting high schools to secure appropriate post-16 destinations for all Year 11 school-leavers, with an emphasis on vulnerable learners impacted by the pandemic. To support this work, the Council co-ordinated and distributed a transition guide to 16 settings, followed by weekly bulletins focusing on the key messages and actions from the guide, and the promotion of partner offers.

GM Careers Hub

The Council has continued to work closely with the Greater Manchester Careers Hub and Enterprise Co-ordinators to strengthen the quality of CEIAG in Manchester. They have continued to fund one of two Enterprise Co-ordinators to work with schools and representatives from business, the co-ordinators linking volunteers from business (Enterprise Advisers) to schools. These Enterprise Advisers have used their business knowledge and skills to support schools' strategic approach to careers, encouraging good-quality employer engagement. They have also helped schools to continue to progress and achieve the Gatsby benchmarks for high-quality careers guidance.

Skills for Life

Launched in June 2019, Manchester's Skills for Life programme was developed in response to requests from young people and employers for a 'curriculum for life' to equip children and young people with the 'softer skills' and knowledge so they can be better prepared for and succeed in the real world. The programme has a clear focus on the development of five skills: communication, teamwork, self-management, self-belief, and problem-solving.

Education and youth and play providers continue to use Skills for Life for campaigns and promotional materials, focusing on vulnerable groups due to the pandemic. A guide for employers has been produced and is being used on the Our Town Hall project and construction network.

Sir Howard Bernstein Legacy Fund

We Love Manchester Charity (WLMC) launched the Manchester's Rising Star Fund (supported by the Sir Howard Bernstein Fund) in January 2021. The fund supports ambitious young people with a donation of up to £2,000 to overcome barriers that are preventing them from progressing in education, employment, training, or self-employment. This year, the fund has awarded donations to several exceptional young people, including: a Paralympic swimmer, to fund an attachment to her wheelchair; a talented Royal Northern College of Music musician to purchase her own viola; a self-employed football coach to purchase equipment and resources; a neurodiverse videographer to fund specialist IT equipment; and ambitious young women received donations to purchase hair and beauty kits for college. Since January 2021, over £35,000 has been awarded to young people.

mEET Your Match

The [mEET your Match](#) website was commissioned by the Council, delivered by Greater Manchester Centre for Voluntary Organisations (GMCVO), and is now live. It has over sixty pre-employment opportunities listed, including study programmes, employability courses, traineeships, entry-level 1/2 apprenticeships, and volunteering opportunities.

Increasing the number of graduates in the city

A key factor in Manchester's continued success and resilience has been the development of a diverse economy supported by an increasingly skilled workforce. Increasing the number of graduates remaining in the city continues to be a high priority to retain skills and talent for the city's employers. Manchester is a young city because of

its population growth and is partly driven by the strong higher education (HE) provision and good graduate retention. Within the city, The University of Manchester (TUoM), Manchester Metropolitan University (MMU), Royal Northern College of Music (RNCM) and UCEN provide a plethora of undergraduate and postgraduate level courses in academic and vocational fields.

Our analysis of business start-up and dissolution data provided by our partner Experian suggest that in 2020, 6,004 new businesses were formed in Manchester, while 5,501 businesses ceased to trade – an increase of 503. The city's successful track record in fast-growing and efficient start-ups is mainly due to the hiring of graduates who can offer immediate and long-term value through their adaptability and eagerness to learn – both of which are essential to help new businesses succeed.

Manchester's HE institutions are also home to world-class specialisms and centres of excellence, whose research and expertise have supported growth in the city's key sectors. Importantly, much progress has been made in ensuring that some of Manchester's most disadvantaged young people access the city's world-class HE offer and beyond via widening participation initiatives and improvements in careers information advice and guidance. One of the key factors in Manchester's overall success and post-COVID-19 resilience has been the presence of a stable economy with a young, diverse and increasingly skilled workforce. This is essential for the creation of the jobs the city needs, to drive investment and enable the city to grow. In the academic year 2018/19, 73,299 students enrolled at Manchester's two universities. The latest figures show that this cohort increased to 73,906 in the academic year 2019/20.

Despite initial concerns about transition to higher education, admissions in September 2020 were strong nationally and locally. International students' enrolments also remained strong in 2020. Indications based on admissions data for 2021 also show strong levels of applications to higher-education providers in the city.

In recent years, the city has seen major growth and investment in the digital sector, including creative and digital, cyber, fintech, bioscience, and advanced materials, with continued growth into 2021/22. Early indications show that the graduate recruitment market is recovering to pre-pandemic levels. Manchester University remains one of the most targeted UK universities for corporate graduate schemes.

The true impact of a shift to remote working on graduate retention in the city remains to be seen. Graduates are now faced with more flexibility and choice and can potentially work remotely from other locations and/or for businesses based outside of Manchester. Despite this, Manchester's leisure, culture, and sport offer remains an attractive option for young people leaving university in the city and beyond. Manchester University estimates that approximately 48% of its graduates express a desire to stay in the city for work.

The Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) Graduate Outcome survey is now focused on the work location of graduates 15 months after graduating, and such data reporting on 2020 graduate destinations will be publicly available in summer 2022. Table 3.2 shows that the proportion of graduates indigenous to Manchester who entered work in the city within 15 months of graduating in

the 2018/19 academic year was 23%, with a further 13% working elsewhere in Greater Manchester. This represents a slight increase on the previous year's graduate cohort, when 20% were working in the city 15 months after graduating.

Table 3.2:
Work location of graduates indigenous to Manchester 15 months after graduation

Location of employment	Academic year 2017/18	Academic year 2018/19
Manchester	20%	23%
Greater Manchester (excluding Manchester)	13%	13%
Greater Manchester	33%	36%
North west (excluding Greater Manchester)	32%	39%
UK (excluding north west)	32%	22%
Non-UK	3%	2%

Source: HESA Graduate Outcomes Survey (survey taken 15 months after graduation)

Building awareness of and growing the number of apprenticeships in the city

The provision of good-quality apprenticeships across all ages, levels and sectors is crucial to a strong and resilient economy, and will be even more important as a route to provide opportunities for young people who have been adversely affected by COVID-19. Good-quality apprenticeships enable businesses to grow, and support residents to develop the skills and qualities needed to succeed in the labour market.

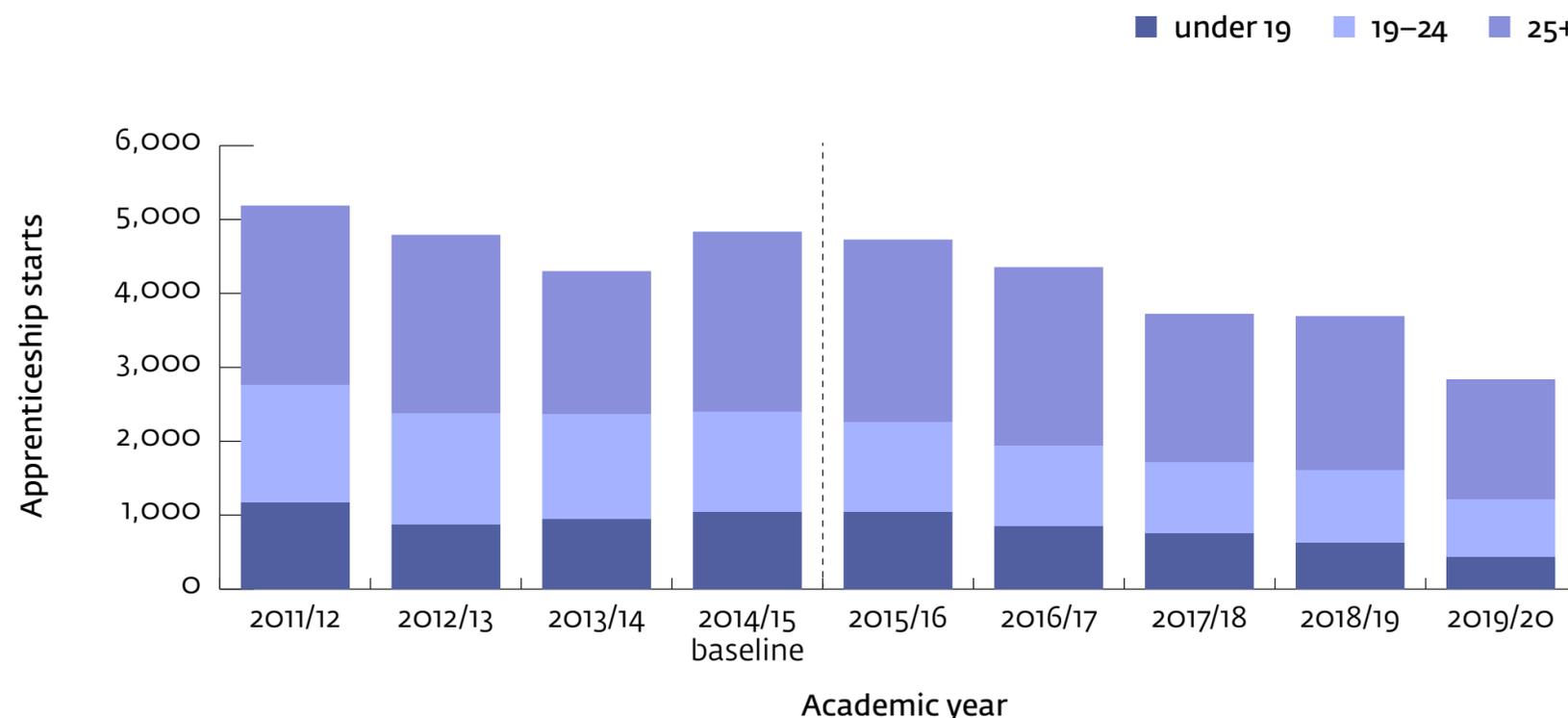
2020/21 has been a challenging period for employers, providers and those in or seeking apprenticeships. During the period after the COVID-19 lockdown began (23 March 2020 to 31 July 2020), there was a decrease of 47% in the overall number of apprenticeship starts nationally compared to the same period in 2019. Sectors such as hospitality, travel, tourism, and retail have been severely hit; at the same time, COVID-19 has impacted significantly on current apprentices, their employers and learning providers. Business inactivity, furlough and redundancies all contributed to the disruption of apprenticeships.

Practical issues such as working from home, recurring lockdowns and social distancing have posed significant challenges for apprentices –

with many not having access to equipment or internet. Some learning providers have closed their doors for extended periods. Young people finishing school or college, particularly disadvantaged young people, have faced profound difficulties accessing face-to-face career guidance, networking events and work-experience opportunities.

In the academic year 2019/20, apprenticeship starts fell by 18% nationally and fell by 23% in Manchester compared to 2018/19. Figure 3.2 shows the trends in apprenticeship starts by age from 2011/12 to 2019/20. In 2019/20, compared to 2018/19, apprenticeship starts decreased across the age ranges, with a 31% decrease for under-19s, a 19% decrease for ages 19–24, and a 22% decrease for the 25+ age group.

Figure 3.2:
Apprenticeship starts by age

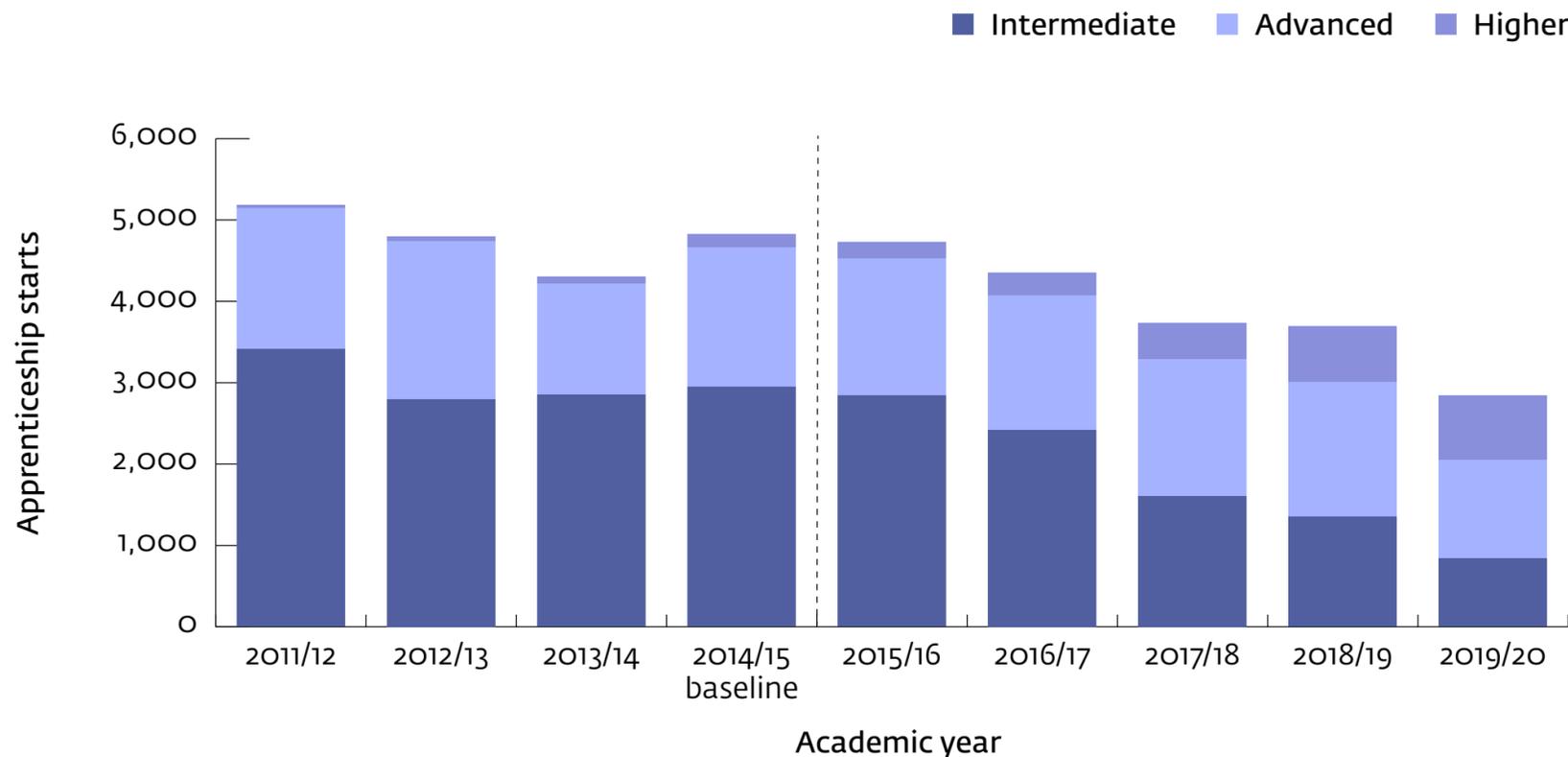


Source: Skills and Education Funding Agency

Prior to COVID-19, a key priority for the city was to increase opportunities for 16 to 19-year-olds to begin their careers as apprentices. As these figures show, this now presents an increasing challenge in Manchester as the full impacts of the pandemic are felt.

Figure 3.3 shows a reduction in both intermediate and advanced level starts across 2019/20, with intermediate level the hardest hit, decreasing by 37%. On a positive note, the table shows a marginal 16% increase in higher-level apprenticeship starts in 2019/20, to 790. Higher-level apprenticeship starts increased significantly between 2014/15 and 2018/19, from 170 to 680.

Figure 3.3: Apprenticeship starts by level



Source: Skills and Education Funding Agency

This data supports the view that COVID-19 has shifted the focus of employers towards higher-level and older apprentices and away from entry-level opportunities accessed by younger age groups.

Owing to the time lag on data relating to apprenticeships, it is difficult to assess the full impact of COVID-19 at this time, though it is anticipated that apprenticeships will be further affected by the end of furlough, phased reopening of sectors, and any future restrictions. It is also hard to predict how the many support packages put in place in response to COVID-19 will mitigate the negative impacts.

Support for apprenticeships in response to the pandemic continues to be delivered at a national, regional, and local level. In August 2020, the Government introduced financial incentives for new apprentices – an additional £2,000 for each new start aged 16–24 and £1,500 for those aged 25+. The March 2021 budget extended this incentive eligibility period to September 2021 and increased the size of the grant to £3,000 per new apprentice, irrespective of age. Also, in March the Government announced the launch of Flexi-Apprenticeships aimed for the end of 2021. These new-style apprenticeships should provide employers and apprentices with greater flexibility around working and learning choices.

The Kickstart scheme, launched in September 2020, provides fully subsidised work-placement opportunities for 16 to 24-year-olds at risk of long-term unemployment. Kickstart offers six months of work placements paid at the national minimum wage. In Manchester this scheme is supported by a strong partnership of local

partners, such as DWP (Department for Work and Pensions), Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA), Manchester Growth Company, training providers and Manchester employers. The Council is seeking to provide over forty Kickstart placements to young people in 2021 across a range of service areas. The Council has committed to topping-up the Government's minimum wage payment to the Manchester Living Wage threshold for these placements.

At a regional level, programmes such as Stimulating Employer Demand for Apprenticeships (SEDA), SME support grants and the Greater Manchester Levy Matchmaking Service have provided vital support for the apprenticeship landscape in Manchester. The SEDA programme has created 309 new apprenticeships across Greater Manchester. The SME support scheme gave apprenticeship grants to 45 Manchester businesses and the Levy Matchmaking Service supported 312 new apprenticeship starts in the three years from 2019 to 2021.

For National Apprenticeships Week in February 2021, we worked alongside a range of partner organisations to promote the Build the Future theme. Our communications campaign was delivered together with a series of events and workshops, video case studies, inspirational posts, and the promotion of current apprenticeship opportunities across a variety of Manchester-based employers. The campaign gathered over 50,000 social-media interactions.

The Council continues to work with Manchester employers of all sizes through a myriad of initiatives, such as business engagement and business network

support. This is in addition to existing procurement, social value, and planning mechanisms. A central focus of this work is to support local benefit – increasing training and job opportunities for Manchester residents. Throughout COVID-19 we have continued to drive forward key projects to strengthen apprentice recruitment in the city.

Our Town Hall

Our Town Hall (OTH) supports M-Futures, an innovative higher-level shared-apprenticeship scheme that provides a unique vocational pathway into professional roles in construction. The first intake of six apprentices, recruited to the scheme in September 2017, completed their apprenticeships in summer 2019. Three apprentices from this cohort are taking degree-level qualifications paid for by their employers, Mace, F&G and Ramboll. Following the success of the first cohort, a further nine apprentices have been appointed to the design team and management contractor Lendlease. As the project progresses into the construction phase, OTH aims to create at least 100 apprenticeship opportunities at level 2 or level 3, predominantly in trade roles. These opportunities will be targeted at Manchester residents and be linked to the existing skills and training offer in the city. This is in addition to the target of 50 higher-level apprentices.

The Factory

The Factory is a new venue for performing arts, visual arts and popular culture developed in collaboration with Manchester International Festival (MIF), the Council and the Arts Council. It will provide a catalyst for the cultural sector to collaborate and deliver specialist training and apprenticeships.

MIF are leading on a Cultural Training Academy to develop a paid summer internship programme for students. As part of the wider social-value commitments, MIF is employing 65 new apprentices. In addition to this, a partnership between MIF and the Science and Industry Museum will provide work-experience opportunities for 450 residents throughout the construction and operational phases of the project.

The Hut Group

Throughout 2020/21, The Hut Group (THG) have created 150 new apprenticeship roles every month across their north west sites, with most of these opportunities available at their Airport City headquarters.

Since 2019, we have worked closely with THG to support the development of their Airport City sites and their ongoing commitment to recruiting locally in Manchester. We have played a key role in facilitating links between THG and schools and colleges in south Manchester to inspire their future talent pool. In the long term we will continue to develop links with THG and the local community to support their aspiration to recruit hundreds of apprentices at Airport City over the next five years.

Reducing the number of residents with no or low qualifications and increasing the opportunities for people to improve their skills throughout their working lives

It has been well documented that improvements made in recent years to skills, qualifications, job security and wages have not reached all our residents and communities. The ONS Annual Population Survey estimates that over half the

Manchester working-age population with low or no qualifications are not in employment (39,000 out of 68,000). This has led to a persistent gap between workforce and resident wages. Manchester's residents, particularly the over-50s and Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities, are still underrepresented in higher-paid, higher-skilled sectors and occupations, and overrepresented in lower-paid jobs, with too many paid below the real living wage as discussed further in the '[A thriving and sustainable city](#)' chapter.

The proliferation of lower-skilled occupations and low-productivity sectors, such as hospitality and retail (sectors particularly hit by the pandemic), where many roles are part-time, is a key contributing factor to this. There is also a local disparity in that 39% of residents work in low-skilled roles compared with 29% of those who work in the city but live outside it.³

Essential core skills needed for work, including resilience, communication, team-working, initiative, self-reliance, and an interest in lifelong learning, as well as job-specific skills and qualifications, are key to ensuring residents in some communities in the city are not left behind in benefiting from the growth and opportunities the city's economy presents.

Prior to the pandemic we knew that some groups were already more likely to have low skill levels, particularly older residents, those for whom English is not their first language, disabled residents, and residents with a long-term illness. Low skill levels are linked to lower rates of employment and with employees being less likely to access learning and

training opportunities. They are more likely to be employed in low-paid jobs vulnerable to automation, and have difficulty with moving into better-paid, good-quality work. Low-skilled workers are therefore now more vulnerable to job losses related to both structural changes in the economy and COVID-19.

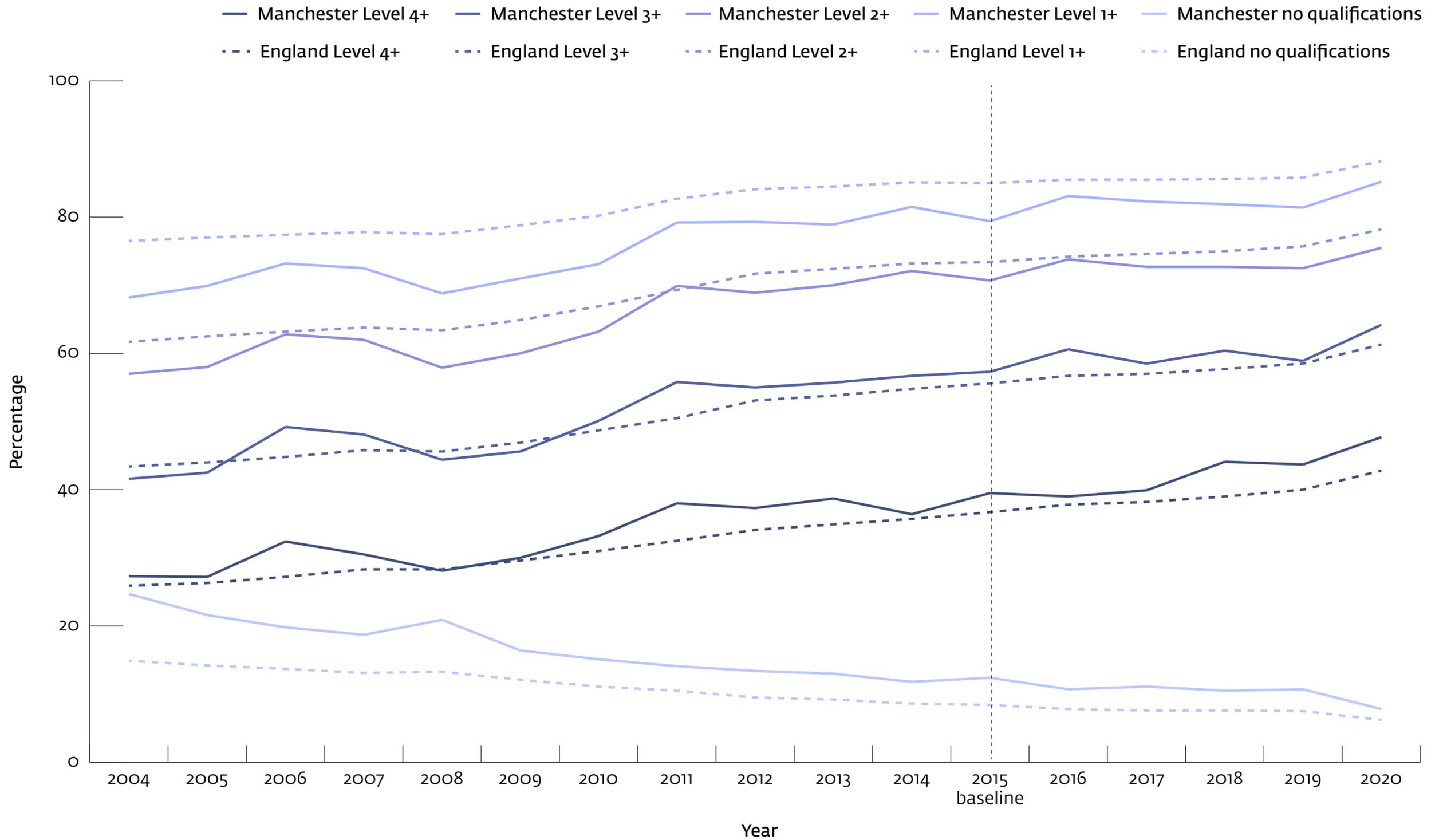
In response to the economic crisis, the Council set up a partnership to intervene. Through this, Manchester residents could request support if they were facing redundancy, end of furlough or reduced hours, so they could retrain or find new employment. The partnership has successfully supported residents facing redundancy at Manchester Airport, the Arcadia Group, Debenhams, and Princes soft drinks factory in north Manchester.

As part of this approach, a Council web page has been set up www.manchester.gov.uk/helptonetwork for residents to request support from three main triage agencies: Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB), National Careers Service (NCS) and Career Connect. Ninety-four people have requested support through this triage referral system. About 75% of residents using the programme were unemployed and most were looking for advice on how to secure a new role, with 80% interested in working in a new sector. In addition to referral to a triage agency, residents can also sign up to remote courses from Manchester Adult Education Service (MAES) and National Careers Service, including skills development, CV writing, interview skills, careers fairs and webinars. We are also aware that hundreds of residents have contacted DWP and NCS directly to access their redundancy support package.

Of the working-age population, 50 to 67-year-olds are the most acutely affected, making it harder for them to be part of the city's economic growth. Figure 3.4 suggests that there has been an overall decline in the proportion of residents with low or no qualifications, and an increase in the proportion of the Manchester working-age population with higher-level qualifications. The most significant contributing factor to this is the retention of graduates in the city, as outlined previously.

³ Ekosgen 2019

Figure 3.4:
Percentage of resident population aged 16–64 qualified to NVQ (National Vocational Qualification) level

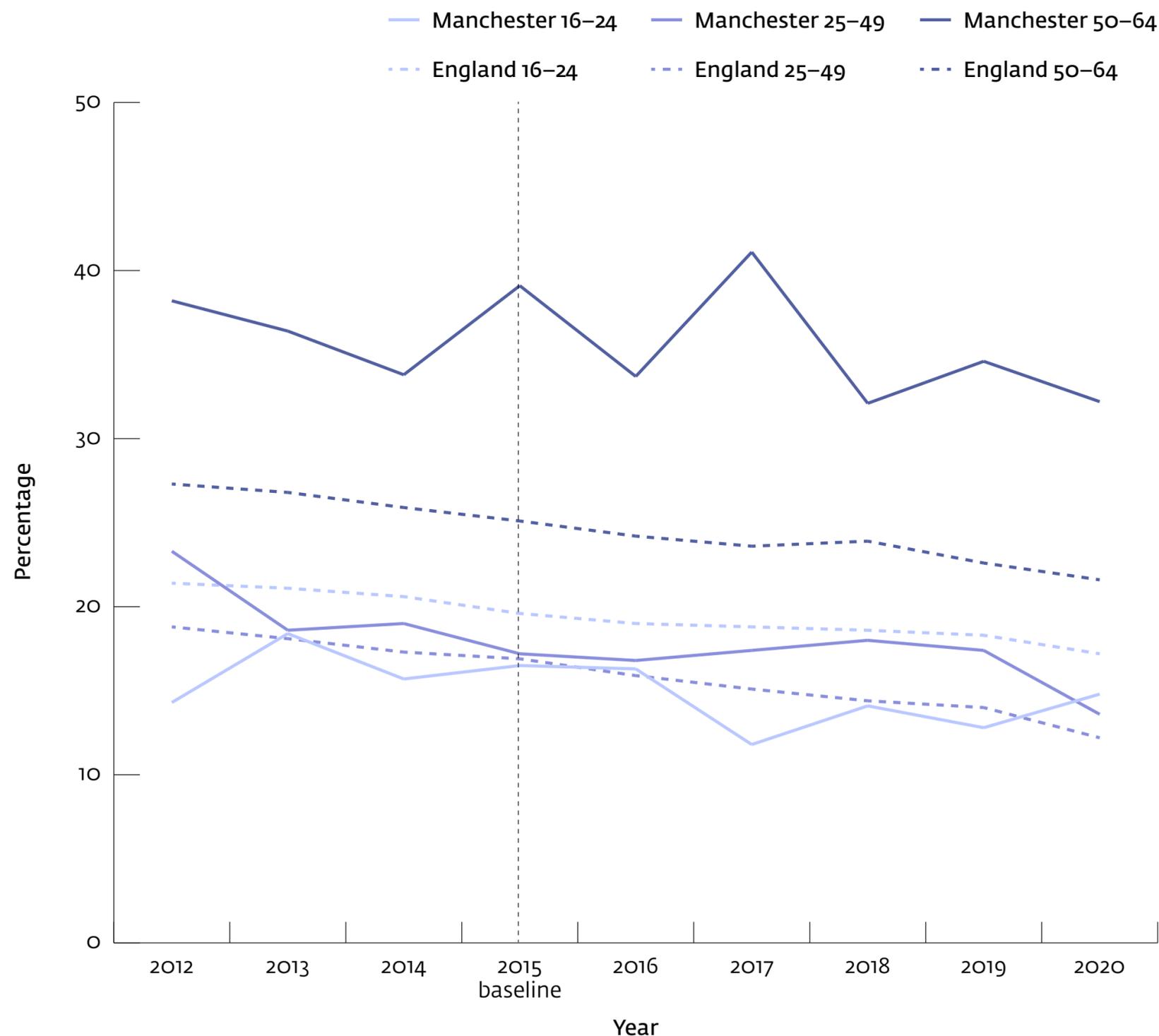


Source: Annual Population Survey, 2020, ONS © Crown Copyright

According to the ONS Annual Population Survey, the proportion of the Manchester population not holding any qualifications fell from 12.4% in 2015 to 7.8% in 2020. The most recent 2020 figures show a positive trend in that the gap we reported on last year, namely the proportion of the Manchester population with no qualifications at all compared to the national average, has now halved in the past year from 3.2% points to 1.6% points.

Conversely, a high proportion of Manchester's residents are qualified to degree level or above, with 47.7% now holding higher-level qualifications, higher than the national average (42.8%). Over the past 16 years, the proportion of residents with no qualifications has reduced from 24.7% to 7.8%. Skills and qualifications have an impact on how residents fare in the labour market. In Greater Manchester, the employment rate of those with higher-level equivalent qualifications (Level 4+) is 84%. In contrast, only 37% of people with no qualifications are in employment. Figure 3.5 shows the number of residents with no or low qualifications by age group. Manchester has a higher proportion of residents aged 25–49 with no or low qualifications: 13.6% compared to the England average of 12.2%, a slight closing of the gap since last year. There is a much higher proportion of residents aged 50–64 with no or low qualifications: 32.2% (a decrease of 2.4 percentage points since last year) compared to the England average of 21.6%. It is recognised that the resident population aged over 50 in Manchester is particularly challenged by a lack of qualifications.

Figure 3.5:
Percentage of resident population with no or low qualifications



Source: Annual Population Survey, 2020, ONS © Crown Copyright

The proportion of older learners going into sustained employment following their learning in the city was already much lower than other age groups before the pandemic. There is a concentration of older people in sectors that were closed during lockdown, including non-food retail, restaurants and hotels, passenger transport, personal services, and arts and leisure services.

Adult education

Manchester's adult skills landscape has continued to evolve, change and adapt since last year's State of the City Report. This section of the chapter provides an overview of the city's skill shortages and challenges, and the impact of COVID-19 on skill provision and labour-market requirements, explaining how the city has responded so far. It also includes the impact of and current predictions about long-term change and opportunities, the important role adult learning plays in a successful economic recovery, and how residents aged 19+ will be connected to opportunities both now and in the future.

The THINK report, which the Council commissioned in June 2020, identified key inequalities and groups of residents in unemployment:

- **Young people** – significant rise in unemployment last summer in the 18 to 24-year-old age group. Latest figures show this is starting to change.
- **Graduates** – SMEs have had limited ability to support graduate recruitment and development, and some larger employers have had concerns about on-boarding young talent (graduates and apprentices) during the pandemic.
- **Older workers** – prior to the COVID-19 crisis, people aged 50–64 already had the lowest re-employment rates following redundancy.

- **Ethnic minority groups** – the pandemic exacerbated pre-existing inequalities, with higher unemployment, lower earnings, lower self-employment rates and higher housing costs; a spike in the claimant count in neighbourhoods with large Black, Asian and ethnic minority communities was linked to occupations in hospitality and the night-time economy.

The Manchester Adult Education and Skills Plan has four main objectives:

- Our residents will be inspired to learn and enabled to develop the skills and attributes they need to succeed in life and work
- Our employers will value the adult education and skills system and actively engage in shaping programmes that help them to thrive
- Our providers will deliver world-class education that leads to good-quality employment and enriches lives
- Everyone in our city will value the contribution that adult education and skills make to achieving our ambitions for Manchester.

These objectives were set to respond to the key labour-market challenges, such as:

- The disconnect between growth in labour demand at advanced and higher levels, and the focus of adult education in the city at intermediate level and below
- Fast growth in labour demand in sectors that rely on low-skilled, low-paid employment
- The need for upskilling of existing staff for employers to get the skills they need, providing more low-paid residents with access to good-quality jobs

- The changing skill needs
- Employers needing to better support and understand the inequality in opportunities that exists in the city.

However, there have since been significant changes that have impacted on the delivery of the skills system, including lockdowns, a sharp rise in unemployment, and Brexit.

In addition, there have been significant developments in national policy that continue to reshape how the system delivers for post-16 learning in Manchester, such as the Government's [Plan for Jobs](#), announced in summer 2020; [Manchester's Recovery and Investment Plan](#), developed through spring 2020; the recently published [Skills for Jobs](#) DfE White Paper; and the 2021 Budget.

There has been significant investment into welfare-to-work provision, such as Kickstart, the JETS (Job Entry Targeted Support) programme, and Restart, which have, in parts, aligned well with the city's priorities. There is nothing specific in the programmes for minority ethnic residents or older workers who have also been adversely affected by the impacts of the pandemic. In addition, most of the programmes are commissioned nationally – presenting a challenge and the necessity to join them up with skills and wider support services in the city.

The Government's Skills for Jobs White Paper called for a transformation of skills provision to meet the requirements of employers in local regions. It envisages the creation of local skill plans that will be driven by close collaboration between employers and local learning providers. The development of

local skill plans will be led by business representative organisations, which will set out the key changes needed to make skill training more responsive to employers' skill needs. Manchester has a long history of public, private and business representative organisations working together effectively to create a skilled workforce and grow the economy. We will strengthen existing partnerships and forge new partnerships to develop a skills system that can adapt to the changing needs of employers. We will also enable Manchester's residents to make use of new opportunities afforded by technology adoption and innovation, and support the city's net zero-carbon ambitions.

The Adult Education Budget (AEB) remains the most substantial source of funding for adult learning in the city. Devolution enabled the GMCA to provide stability for the city's Further Education colleges and training providers through more flexible and responsive provision to meet the emerging needs of residents and businesses during the 2020 restrictions.

The Community learning fund continues to commission community-based learning through VCSE providers, who play an important role in engaging residents with low levels of skills and confidence in learning. The ongoing role of community-based learning will be particularly important for creating pathways into learning and in increasing adult participation among those socially excluded groups that could benefit most.

GMCA awarded each of the ten Greater Manchester Authorities £200,000 through the Local Authority Grant Programme – forming part of the GMCA Devolved AEB and Local Growth Fund

GM Digital Talent and Skills Programme. This funding has provided additional resources to further develop the ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) Advice Service initiative, the Digital Inclusion Action Plan, and the Manchester Adult Education and Skills Plan. Over the next 12 months these extra resources will enable the Work and Skills team and stakeholders to effectively deliver more adult-learning initiatives to priority groups.

Digital skills continue to grow in importance across all occupations, as well as in everyday life, as digitisation and automation continue to play a significant role in the changing skill needs in the economy and the world of work. Recent findings from the Greater Manchester Industry Intelligence Team tell us digital skills are needed across all growth sectors, based on the impact and further acceleration of digitisation.

To respond to the first national lockdown, our adult education providers rapidly and successfully adapted to the needs of their current learners and developed new models of blended and distance learning.

Case study: Manchester Adult Education Service

Manchester Adult Education Service (MAES) have continued to build on their work with employers, enabling businesses to enhance the learning programmes of adult learners through their work on social value, and working with recruiting organisations to find the talent they need from Manchester residents.

The service has developed an ongoing relationship with Laing O'Rourke. The company has delivered several sessions for learners, took a group of adult learners on a week's placement (pre-pandemic), and has recently delivered a training course on careers in STEM for 12 MAES learners. Organisations such as G4S, Engie, Lendlease and One Manchester have also delivered sessions for learners who are considering secure work by reviewing CVs and conducting mock interviews.

MAES have also developed a strong reputation with DWP for delivering good-quality provision and for being responsive to the needs of their partner employers. They have been the delivery partner for several sector-based work-academy programmes and have seen some positive job outcomes from this work. For example, MAES recently worked with GSTS to recruit security personnel for the hospital. From an initial cohort of eight, six have secured permanent employment, and GSTS would now like to partner with MAES on a regular basis when recruiting, as they found that applicants who came via this route were much better prepared for the roles than via traditional recruitment methods.

DWP selected MAES as a training partner when they wanted to expand their own capacity and recruit new job coaches who could support those who lost employment due to the pandemic. MAES devised a two-day course to prepare applicants for the DWP selection process and have delivered this to more than 120 participants since September 2020.

MAES have also added the new Essential Digital Skills qualification to their offer for 2020/21. The qualifications are built around the new digital-skills framework, which recognises the range of digital skills needed to fully engage in work and life in current times. It is a significant development from previous IT qualifications, which tended to be computer system-based; 379 participants have enrolled for the new qualifications to date.

However, MAES recognise that for many residents who find themselves digitally excluded, qualifications are not their motivation and so different types of provision are in place to ensure the offer is inclusive. MAES run 'Skills Up' workshops, where residents are able to drop in and focus on specific things relevant to them, whether it be how to use Zoom, or how to search the internet. These sessions ran (socially distanced) throughout most of the recent lockdown so that digitally excluded people had the support they needed to engage. However, as lockdown lifts, MAES have plans to offer more of these sessions and have already introduced them at community locations such as North City Library and Clayton Sure Start.

In addition, MAES also sought to address the digital inclusion of learners who didn't have devices throughout the pandemic. The service offered a Chromebook loan scheme to all learners who could not engage with online learning otherwise. At its peak, the scheme provided devices for over a thousand people. MAES have now resumed classes in centres and most of the Chromebooks have been returned.

MAES are still operating in a socially distanced way, which makes the delivery of some provision more complex than usual. They have a curriculum plan for 2021/22 that is based on social distancing coming to an end. However, it is well placed to respond should social distancing be necessary again. Having developed significant expertise with online learning, MAES have also added several distance learning programmes to their offer for the next academic year.

Addressing the increasing demand for digital skills

The pandemic has been a catalyst for digital transformation across all sectors in the city. This has accelerated the demand for more technical digital skills for all sectors and sizes of businesses. The types of skills needed are wide-ranging and include high-level technical skills needed within existing IT teams in businesses (especially around areas such as cyber, data analysis and software development), digital-specific leadership and management skills (especially around the more supportive, remote team management roles), and digital skills for non-technical staff (data analysis, cyber, user experience and digital marketing skills).

There continues to be a high volume of creative and digital businesses based in the city that is rapidly increasing the demand for digital and technical skills. Headline findings from the 2021 Manchester Digital Skills Audit show a positive picture in comparison to some industries, with '40% of businesses reporting an increase in revenue in the past 12 years' and '34% still being able to grow their teams'. However, there was a decline in the diversity of the workforce among most ethnic groups and no significant change in the gender imbalance since 2019. Developers remain in demand, with '60% of businesses believing developers will be key in relation to company growth over the next three years. The other top four key skills in demand for the future of work were identified as: user experience, strategy, sales and business development, and marketing.

The industry is working collaboratively to respond to many of these challenges through networks such as the Manchester Digital Skills Network and the cross-sector Responsible Tech Collective.

Case study: Responsible Tech Collective

In autumn 2019, the Responsible Tech Collective was established with a vision of establishing Manchester and the wider region as an exemplar for ethical tech, and a mission to bring home the humanity to tech.

For funders Luminate and the Co-op Foundation, the city region's rapidly growing digital ecosystem combined with its progressive social history and diverse demographic to offer the potential for a culture of responsible technology. Structures enable the practice of data ethics and design ethics, and address diversity and inclusion, and digital exclusion. They also empower data ethicists to become change-makers in their organisations and industries.

Led by systems-change agency Noisy Cricket, the collective emerged as a result of bringing together cross-sector organisations, including the Co-op Group, the BBC, Greater Manchester Combined Authority, and Manchester City Council. These are bolstered by responsible tech pioneers such as Open Data Manchester, Ethics Kit, Diverse and Equal, and People's Powerhouse.

While awareness of the negative consequences – and subsequent damaging PR – of technology among the collective was high, understanding of how to engage in more conscientious conduct was low, as was the ability to influence teams, leaders and organisations in practising responsible tech. Taking action was also high on the agenda, recognising the opportunity to learn while doing, and creating solutions

that could help organisations deliver better products and services, and fuel performance and innovation too.

With the intention of effecting wider systems-change in its wake, the Responsible Tech Collective focused on four locally aligned challenge areas, using participatory practice to put people, communities, society and the environment first in its creation of the following:

- A people-powered smart city governance model and marketplace
- An ethnic equality in-tech set of standards and consultancy tools
- A citizen-led security-standards policy and communications tool
- A responsible tech diagnostic-tool framework and innovation service.

Working with local service designers, user researchers, data analysts and tech ethicists from Reply and Honey Badger, the collective developed principles and standards, infrastructures and prototypes that will be developed into pilotable products and services. The ambition is to scale the Responsible Tech Collective and its multi-disciplinary solutions to tech hubs across the UK and internationally.

At a Greater Manchester level, Digital Bootcamps have been effective in bridging the gap by providing the technical and coding skills needed in industry now. They allow residents who would not normally be able to afford to participate in bootcamps to take part, and at the same time support the industry to diversify by including more underrepresented communities. Half the 1,322 participants were Manchester residents, and those who completed their training moved into employment; 35% of participants who entered the courses found employment in a skilled digital role, and more are expected to do so. Participants have been trained for a wide range of digital roles, including software development, data analysis, content creation, dev-ops, cyber security, digital marketing, cloud engineering, and additive manufacturing.

The programme has provided a pathway for a diverse range of residents into digital roles, including women returners, ethnic minorities, people with disabilities, unemployed young people, socioeconomically disadvantaged groups, and people displaced by COVID-19 and/or on low pay and needing to retrain or upskill into a new role. It continues to be important that these programmes align with the roles that the industry tells us are difficult to fill through the Digital Skills Audit, and an extension of the bootcamps will support an extra 124 participants into software development and cloud roles.

Case study: Fast-track Digital Workforce Fund

The Fast-track Digital Workforce Fund, has been effective in addressing immediate digital-skills shortages by providing participants with the technical and digital skills needed in industry now. The £3million fund is a joint venture between the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, Greater Manchester Combined Authority, and Lancashire Digital Skills Partnership. It was established to support Greater Manchester and Lancashire residents with accessible routes into digital employment.

It has enabled residents who would not normally be able to pay to participate in flexible digital bootcamps to do so, and at the same time is supporting the industry to diversify by including more underrepresented communities.

TechEquity Mcr is one of the skills bootcamps offered to residents and embodied a diverse consortium of community and education partners, including; T.A.P, the Heroworx Institute, and Malleable Mind. Over the course of two years, the career-readiness project addressed specific skill gaps in Linux, computer networking and cyber security for participants who identified as women or transgender.

The aim of TechEquity was to offer high-value technical careers to residents who would normally be excluded from these types of opportunities. The project offered a pathway into tech for Hulme and Moss Side residents in

particular – wards that have neighbourhoods experiencing deprivation and high levels of racial inequality.

A grass-roots, traditional approach was taken to recruitment. The consortia built strong relationships with local organisations to create trust pathways into communities, eg. working with Caribbean and African news and radio outlets in south Manchester to reach the community. This holistic approach resulted in more than 300 local enquiries for 36 placements. The tailored cultural and gender-sensitive marketing resulted in more applications from ethnic minorities (66% of the applicants) and 75% recruited for the programme, which is four times higher than the current 14–15% (across genders) in the UK tech workforce (Inclusive Tech Alliance Report 2019).

Learners undertook professionally recognised technical qualifications in Red Hat Enterprise Linux, LPIC Linux Professional Institute and CompTIA. Within the six months after the 16-week course, 55% of learners went on to secure employment in STEM-related businesses and organisations or went on to higher learning. The demand for programmes such as TechEquity to upskill and create opportunities for residents was demonstrated, as enquiries outstripped supply ten to one.

Developments such as MMU's new £35million digital arts school, School of Digital Arts (SODA) and The Cyber Resilience Centre for Greater Manchester (CRCGM) will attract growth and add to the city's creative and digital technical skills and training offer. This acceleration, supported by the pandemic's restrictions, has also put a spotlight on the city's growing digital divide and the need for digital skills for access to services and support, as well as for learning and work. In 2020, the ONS Internet Users survey estimated that 27,000 adults in Manchester were digitally excluded.⁴ With better data metrics in place through the Manchester Digital Exclusion Index, we know this number is in fact much higher and growing, GMCA believing 1.2million people to be digitally excluded across Greater Manchester. The pace of digital transformation means digital inclusion is important to skills acquisition generally and more residents will need support to adapt and upskill throughout their working lives.

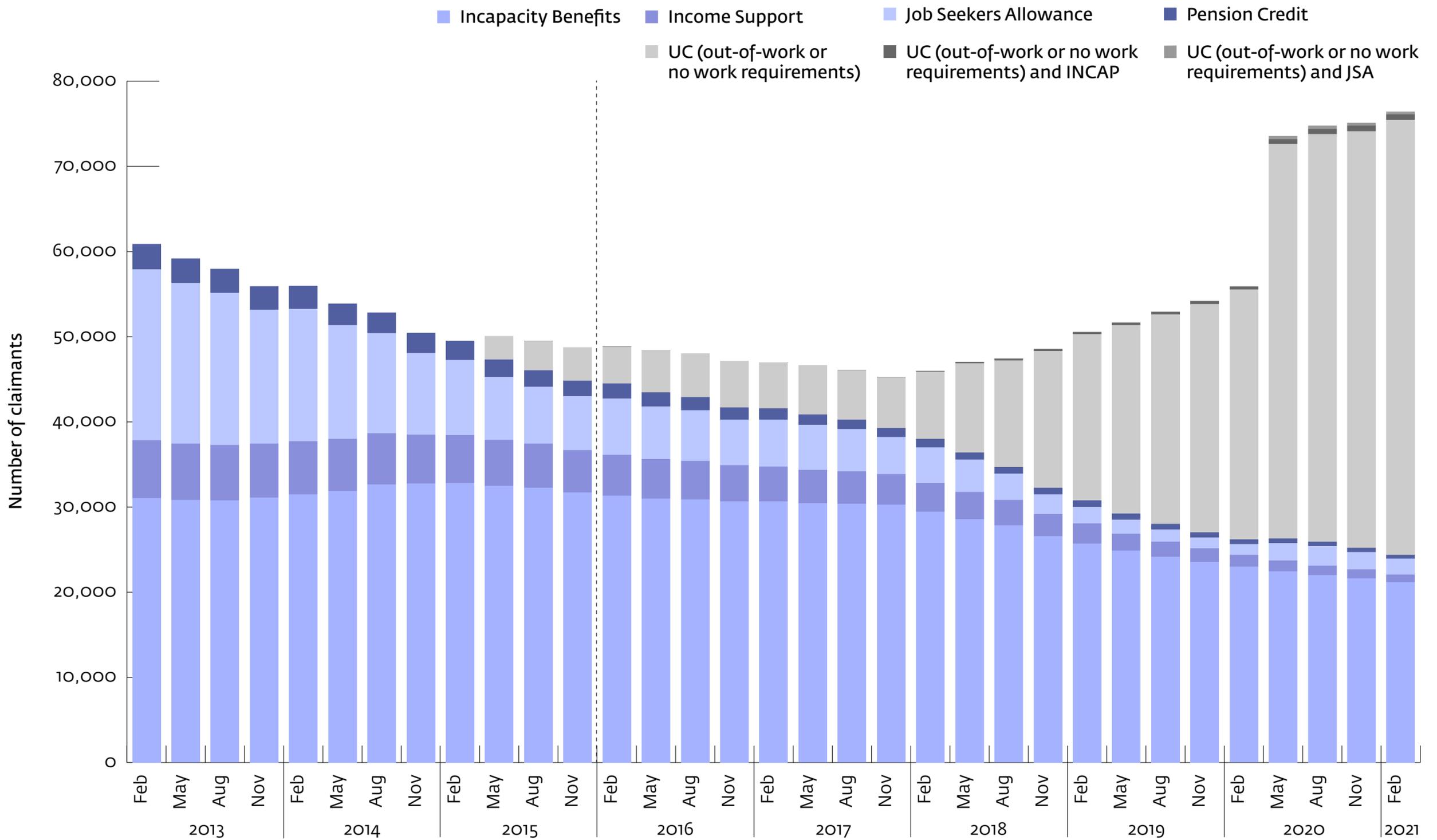
Over various lockdowns and restrictions, adult-learning providers and VCSE have responded and adapted well to increase their basic digital skills offer. However, there was already a challenge for providers engaging with learners who have low levels of digital skills and confidence with digital-skills training. One of the key issues is the availability of digital kit and data, and for many learners having a place where they can safely and proactively engage in learning. The Digital Inclusion Action Plan, which has been developed by the Work and Skills Team and Libraries, provides a cohesive plan of action to reduce digital inclusion over the next year. Digital inclusion is discussed in more detail in the '[A connected city](#)' chapter.

⁴ Used the internet over three months ago or never used the internet.

Creating new jobs accessible to Manchester residents and reducing the number of people who are out of work.

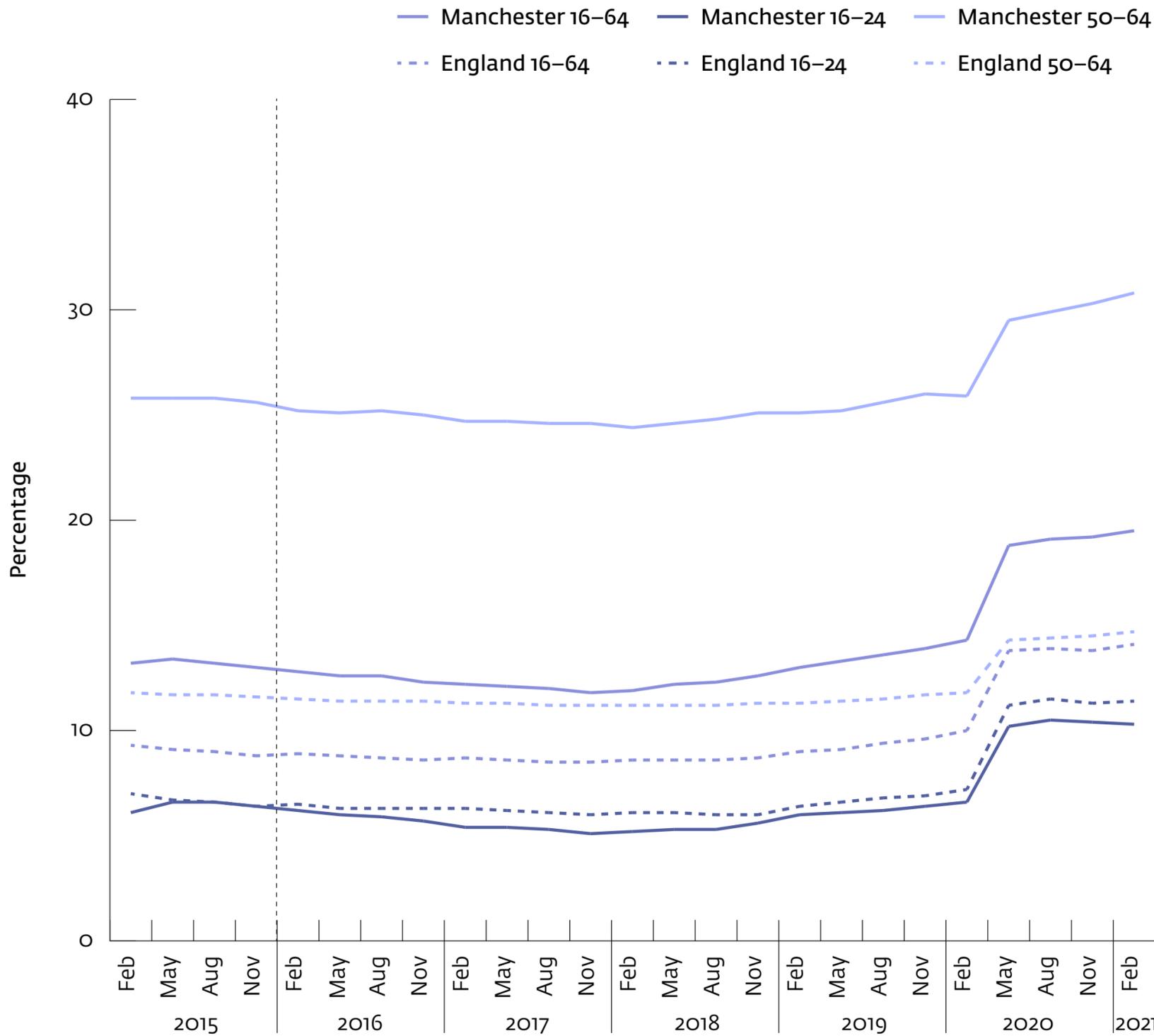
Figure 3.6 shows that in February 2021 there were 76,436 people aged 16–64 claiming out-of-work benefits in Manchester. The worklessness levels in the city fell steadily between February 2013 and November 2017, from 60,871 to 45,278, and then increased to 56,785 in February 2020. However, due to the rising levels of unemployment during the COVID-19 pandemic, by May 2020 the out-of-work benefits claimant count increased significantly to 73,583, with a further increase to 76,436 by February 2021. Out-of-work benefits include Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA), Employment Support Allowance (ESA), Income Support (IS), Universal Credit (UC) (where the claimant does not work) and Pension Credit. This figure includes some claimants who may not currently be actively seeking employment, eg. those in the support group of Employment Support Allowance, but not those who are working a low number of hours, who would previously have been recorded within the out-of-work benefit claimant numbers undertaking 'permitted work'.

Figure 3.6:
Working-age residents (aged 16–64) claiming an out-of-work benefit by type



Source: Department for Work and Pensions. Note that those who claim UC with no-work-requirements are now included and figures have been revised retrospectively to reflect this.

Figure 3.7:
Percentage of resident population claiming an out-of-work benefit



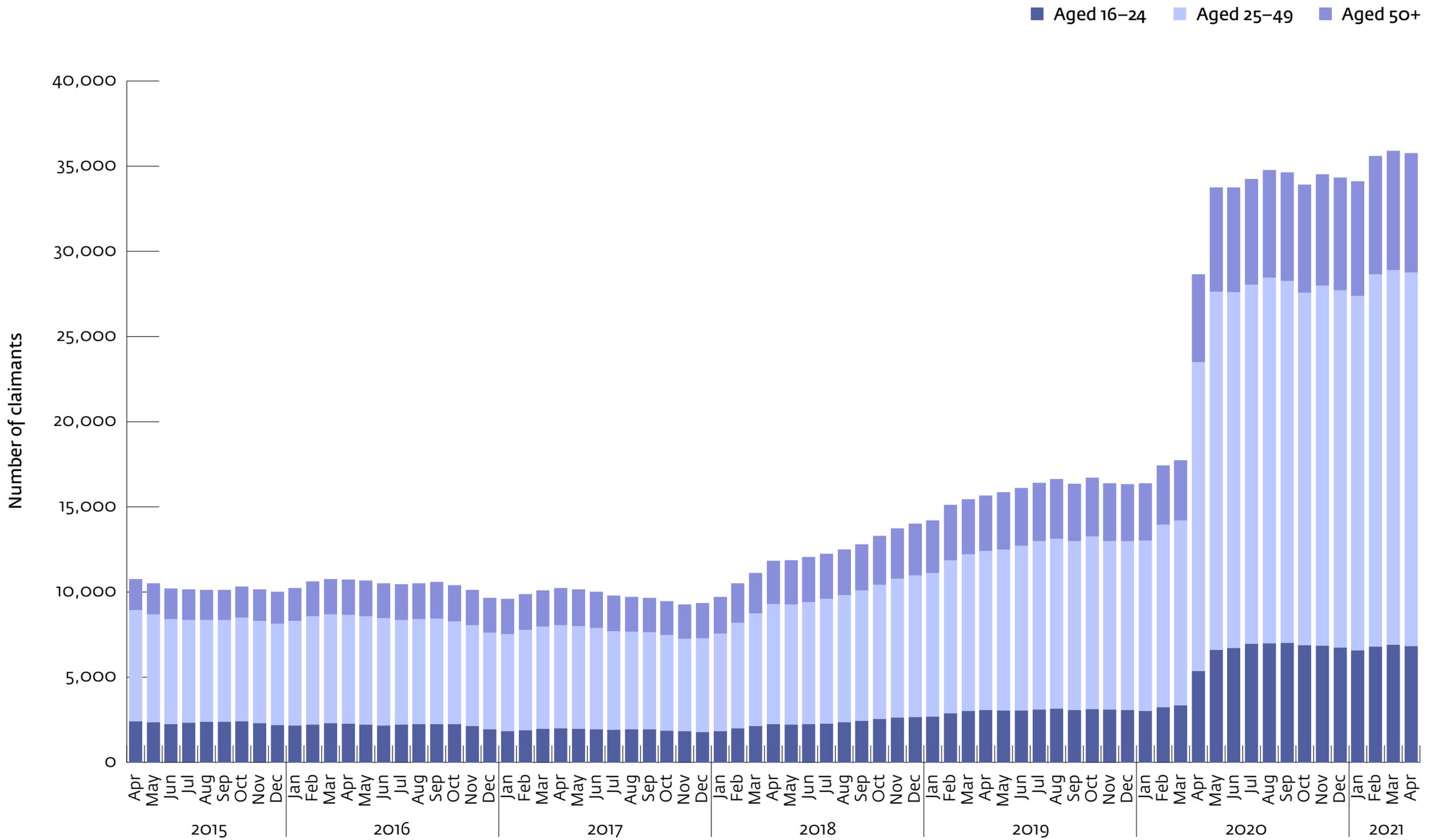
Source: StatXplore, Department for Work and Pensions. Note that those who claim UC with no-work-requirements are now included and figures have been revised retrospectively to reflect this

At 19.5% in February 2021, the out-of-work benefits claimant rate for those aged 16 and over in Manchester remains higher than the national rate of 14.1% (Figure 3.7). Owing to the rising levels of unemployment during the COVID-19 pandemic, the out-of-work benefits claimant rate increased significantly from May 2020, creating a 5.4 percentage point difference between Manchester and the national average in February 2021. Figure 3.7 shows that 25.9% of Manchester residents aged 50–64 were claiming an out-of-work benefit in February 2020 and had remained at this level for some years; this rate increased to 30.8% in February 2021, more than double the national rate of 14.7%.

It is worth noting that not everyone who is out of work claims an out-of-work benefit, and the number of residents who are out of work is likely to be much higher, particularly in the 18 to 24-year-old age group. The ONS claimant count is the headline indicator of the number of people claiming benefits principally for the reason of being unemployed. It includes the number of people claiming Jobseeker’s Allowance, as well as those who claim Universal Credit and are required to seek work and be available for work. In Manchester there were 17,740 claimants in March 2020.

Figure 3.8 shows this almost doubled to 33,750 by May 2020 because of the first COVID-19 lockdown. It remained stable until the start of 2021, when it slowly rose to 35,755 claimants in April 2021, an increase of 102% from March 2020 compared to a 114% increase nationally. Significant increases were noted across all age groups between March 2020 and April 2021: claimants aged 16–24 doubled, from 3,340 to 6,815; claimants aged 25–49 doubled, from 10,860 to 21,945; claimants aged 50 and over almost doubled, from 3,540 to 6,995.

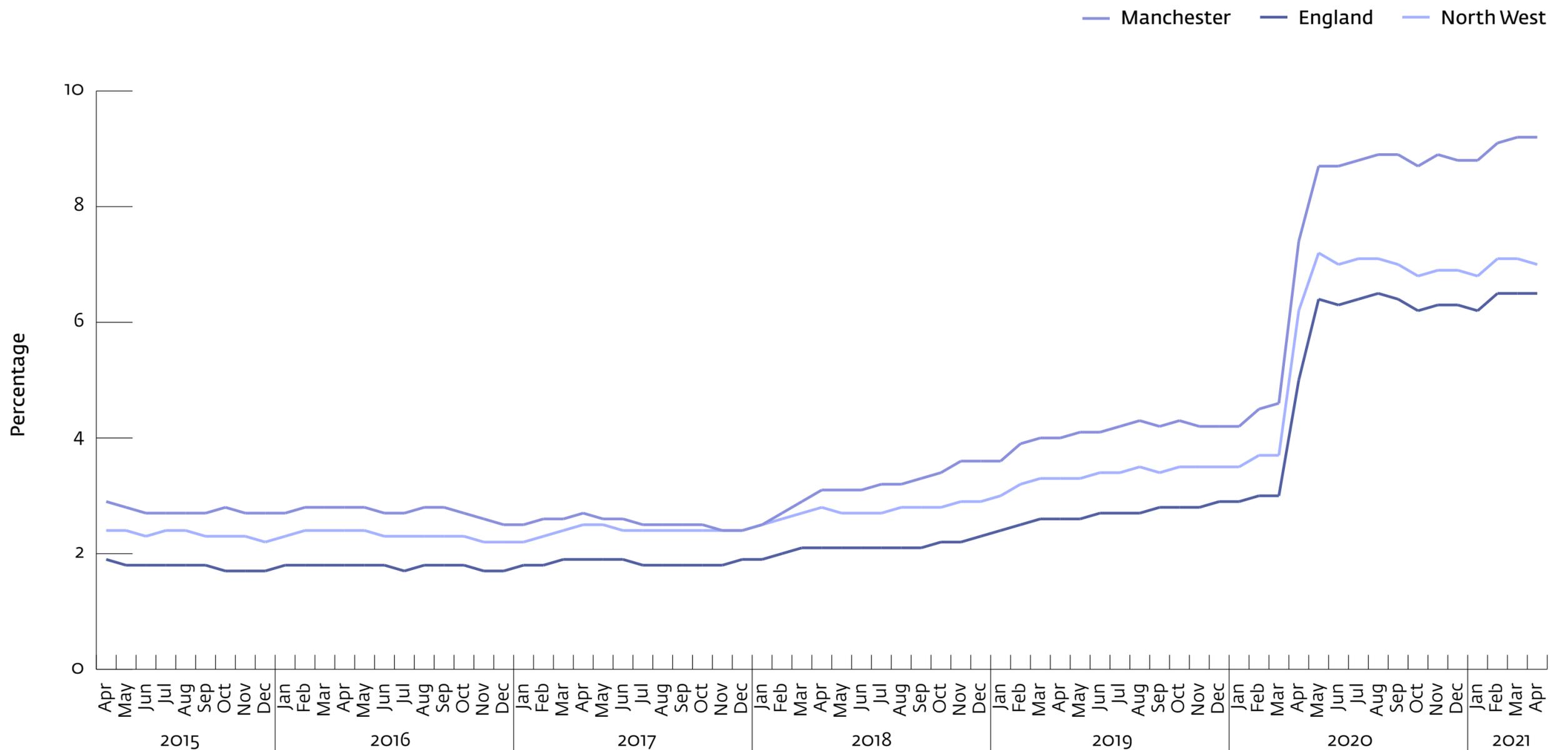
Figure 3.8:
Manchester claimant count – number of people claiming benefits principally for the reason of being unemployed



Source: ONS claimant count (experimental statistics), ONS © Crown Copyright

Figure 3.9 shows that the unemployment claimant rate in Manchester has remained above national and north west regional levels for many years. Between March 2020 and April 2021, the rate increased significantly, from 4.6% to 9.2%, while nationally the rate increased from 3% to 6.5%.

Figure 3.9:
Percentage of resident population aged 16–64 claiming benefits principally for the reason of being unemployed



Source: ONS claimant count (experimental statistics), ONS © Crown Copyright

Prior to the pandemic, in-work poverty was already a significant issue for Manchester, resulting from welfare reform and the rise in the gig economy compounding pre-existing issues of poverty and deprivation. We have witnessed some sectors experiencing growth in this past year, such as online retail and food and drink sales. However, the impact of COVID-19 has been devastating to certain sectors, notably hospitality, retail, leisure, culture, and the night-time economy, which will take time to rebuild following the easing of restrictions. The sectors most affected were those that had insecure and part-time work and those not benefiting from furlough or Government business grants. People who had never claimed benefits before became increasingly reliant on food banks and state benefits.

Benefit enquiries to the Citizens Advice Bureau have increased by 15% since the start of the pandemic, and the number of debt enquiries has started to increase, suggesting a delayed impact on resident finances. The number of Housing Benefit claimants (including those on Universal Credit) remained steady between March 2019 and March 2020, then started to rise in April 2020. By November 2020 it had increased by some 20% since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, with most of the growth coming from households living in the private-rented sector.

Manchester Housing providers, including One Manchester, Northwards Housing, Wythenshawe Community Housing Group and others, continue to offer welfare rights and debt advice to their customers and have been instrumental in providing a wide range of support for those impacted by COVID-19. This includes support with claims,

calculating benefit entitlement, and ensuring customers get access to the help they need through energy vouchers and food parcels for those in crisis. They also provide sustainable offers by signposting to long-term affordable food options, such as pantries and food clubs. In addition, the citywide advice contract through Citizens Advice Manchester and partners such as Cheetham Hill Advice Centre (CHAC) have also supported residents with benefit claims and debt advice to ensure customers receive the advice and support they need in a timely manner regardless of tenure. The Council's Appeals Team has continued to support vulnerable and disabled clients with their benefit appeals despite the lockdown.

The Council has continued to provide work-club activity online to provide access to employment, training and skills development opportunities. Analysis of activity shows that in 2020/21, 20 organisations were supported with funding, 4,543 residents engaged with a work club, 1,888 had been supported into employment/training or volunteering, and 570 moved into part-time or full-time employment. Many of the organisations funded provide specialist support, such as Manchester Deaf Centre, Back on Track, refugee groups and mentors. We are re-commissioning work clubs for next year, providing £150,000 in grants, and giving a maximum of £10,000 to each organisation.

In March 2021, there were 79,295 Universal Credit claimants, which is an 88% increase since March 2020 at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, when Manchester had 42,120 Universal Credit claimants. In March 2021, 20% of working-age Manchester residents aged 16 or over were claiming Universal

Credit – the second-highest rate in Greater Manchester behind Oldham at 23%; this compares to an average of 18% for Greater Manchester and 15% for England. In March 2021, 34% of Universal Credit claimants were in work compared to 32% in March 2020, showing that the number of residents in work and claiming has increased, due to the high level of furlough and/or periods of unemployment or reduced hours. Universal Credit claimants aged 16–29 increased the most between March 2020 and March 2021, almost doubling. Claimants aged 30–44 remain the largest group; however, younger residents aged 16–29 account for an increasing proportion of in-work claimants. Also, since March 2020 there has been a growing concentration of Universal Credit claimants in east Manchester, and it is estimated that the Universal Credit uplift has led to an extra £4.816million per month for Manchester residents; this will likely cause considerable hardship when it is removed.

The staggering number of Universal Credit claimants requires rapid intervention to get residents back to work and prevent a generation of worklessness, a situation we witnessed in the 1970s and 1980s and are still responding to the social and economic impact of today. Focusing on young people, the over-50s, those with poor levels of skills, and some of our Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities who have been most affected by changes experienced in employment due to COVID-19 will have the biggest impact.

Conclusion

Improving outcomes for all Manchester children will remain a key priority, with an increased focus on emotional resilience for all Manchester children. Young people, those still in education and at early stages of their career have been particularly impacted by COVID-19 and are likely to continue to be in the future. Closures to education and varying degrees of home and online schooling will undoubtedly lead to setbacks in attainment, though it is not easy to quantify the impact of this at present.

Work focusing on young people reflects the importance of CEIAG, and up to date labour-market intelligence is critical in ensuring young people, and their parents and carers, are supported to make well-informed and realistic decisions about their future. The premium placed on transferable life and employability skills, flexibility and resilience by employers has been highlighted even more sharply throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. This will be key to ensuring residents and businesses can recover from resulting changes to the labour market in the years ahead.

The skill requirements to 'build back better' with the continued focus on supporting the foundational economy continues to be a priority, as businesses and sectors review how the new normal of agile working will impact on their sector, business and their staff. It is important that inequalities identified at the start of the pandemic – issues relating to poor health, digital exclusion, lack of skills, and lack of childcare – are responded to as we move back into various hybrid or full-time models of working. The move to a more inclusive economy must look

at and attempt to mitigate these trends in gender inequality, skills and pay if home/hybrid working becomes the norm in future.

A successful economic recovery will be based around Manchester's globally recognised sectoral strengths and its key assets, including the city centre. It will also require a focus on people, ensuring all the city's residents have the right skills and qualifications to access any new opportunities now and in the future. Recovery planning and implementation must connect more residents to the opportunities available in the economy, improve financial resilience, and broaden life outcomes. Existing challenges remain for the over-50s, and those with low qualification levels and skill gaps in key sectors. The pandemic has resulted in widening inequality in the city, and although an intersectional approach is needed to tackle the divide, the Council and its partners also need to work with those communities that have been disproportionately affected. This will enable skill providers, welfare-reform initiatives and employment support to better tailor and focus efforts to deliver better outcomes for our priority groups.

Chapter 4: A progressive and equitable city

Strategic overview

The Council's aim is for everyone in the city to have the same opportunities, life chances and the potential to lead safe, healthy, happy and fulfilled lives, no matter where they were born or where they live. This means reducing the disparities between different areas of the city.

The Our Manchester Strategy sets out how we will strive to create a truly equal and inclusive city, where everyone can thrive at all stages of their life, and quickly and easily reach support to get back on track when needed. It also states our ambition to improve physical and mental health outcomes, and ensure good access to integrated health and care services across the city.

As citizens, we all need to recognise the responsibilities we have to ourselves, our families, our communities and the city. We also need to take an Our Manchester, strength-based approach, starting from understanding the needs of the individual, and connecting people to draw on the strengths of the communities in which they live.

Manchester has made real progress towards achieving this aim, including improvements in education and housing, better access to jobs, and reducing the number of young people not in employment, education or training. To a large extent this has come from the strength of the collaboration between organisations, businesses and residents.

Despite these gains, there are still areas of deprivation in the city, with Manchester ranked the sixth most deprived local authority area in England.¹ These are less widespread than they were ten years ago, but exist nonetheless, and we must continue to address them. Over the past 18 months, the COVID-19 pandemic has deepened existing inequalities in the city, particularly for our more deprived communities, ethnic minorities, women, migrants, those living in poverty, and older people, meaning our focus on reducing inequalities is more important than ever. Low income and Black, Asian and ethnic minority households have been affected the most in terms of their health and unemployment.

Manchester's older people have been disproportionately affected by COVID-19 and the impacts of the lockdown, and many have reported they have felt marginalised. Older people are keen to play a part in Manchester's recovery, to be able to fully benefit from opportunities as more things open up and to be part of the process of finding solutions to a range of key issues that adversely affect residents in mid to later life from the age of 50.

There has also been a significant impact on our children and young people, with significant disruption to education, and there is evidence of a widening of the gap between those who are most disadvantaged and/or vulnerable and their counterparts.

As a city we have been working for a number of years to radically transform public services so they are focused around people and communities rather than organisational silos. We are working across traditional boundaries with the voluntary sector to bring innovation and new ways of working to the fore. We are bringing together health providers, the Council, the voluntary sector, education providers and communities in ways that will target the specific challenges we have in Manchester.

Integration of health and social care is transforming the experience and outcomes of people who need help by putting them at the heart of the joined-up service. There is a focus on public health and preventing illness, as well as transforming care for older people so that they can stay independent for longer. As a city we have world-leading strengths in health-related research. We will use our research strengths and our capability for testing new drugs and therapies to benefit our residents and radically improve the city's health outcomes.

We have modernised services for children and their families. The vision is for our teams to work closer with health, schools, the police, and colleagues in neighbourhoods and localities to place a greater focus on prevention and early support. Wherever possible, it will prevent problems occurring and unnecessarily escalating by ensuring that people can access the help they need early and that they are equipped to take care of themselves, increasing the life chances of our children and supporting their future independence. It will support people to find

¹ Indices of Multiple Deprivation 2019

work, stay in work and progress at work, so that all residents can take advantage of the opportunities of economic growth and are able to provide for their children. There is a comprehensive programme of work in place to oversee and guide the planned changes.

Our approach is reflective of Manchester's Locality Plan and aligns with the Bringing Services Together for People in Places programme, which is part of the delivery plan for Our Manchester. In addition, we continue to increase our collaborative work across Greater Manchester, scaling up the programmes that work, and designing new programmes with the voluntary sector and other partners that address the challenges we have as a city.

The next phase of reforming services needs to connect more residents to the opportunities available in the economy, reducing dependency, and helping build an effective recovery from COVID-19, while recognising that the pandemic has had significant greater impacts on those residents with the poorest outcomes.

Analysis of progress

Ensuring that shelter and support is available for homeless people who want and need it

The number of individuals and households experiencing homelessness in Manchester has remained high during the past year, and there remain significant pressures on services that are working to prevent and tackle homelessness in the city.

The Homelessness Service has adjusted to new ways of working due to the COVID-19 pandemic. There have been changes in the numbers and reasons for households presenting to the service, and the number of households in temporary accommodation, with a reduction of move-on options at the beginning of the pandemic. The Government's 'Everyone In' initiative and the lockdown of the city centre, which led to a reduction in begging opportunities, also led to a greater engagement with statutory and support services from people who otherwise may not have accessed services.

The number of people presenting as homeless has decreased by 3% from 2019/20, largely due to a drop in presentations during the first national lockdown, which commenced in March 2020. However, the number owed a statutory duty has increased in 2020/21, which is in part due to people accessing support via emergency COVID-19 accommodation who would not have engaged with services in the past.

The main reasons that people present to the homelessness service for assistance are set out in Table 4.1. This shows an increase across all reasons since 2019/20 except in households presenting due to eviction from the private-rented sector (PRS) properties, where there has been a big drop due to the Government moratorium on evictions. However, the service has seen a 30% increase in presentations due to domestic violence and abuse.

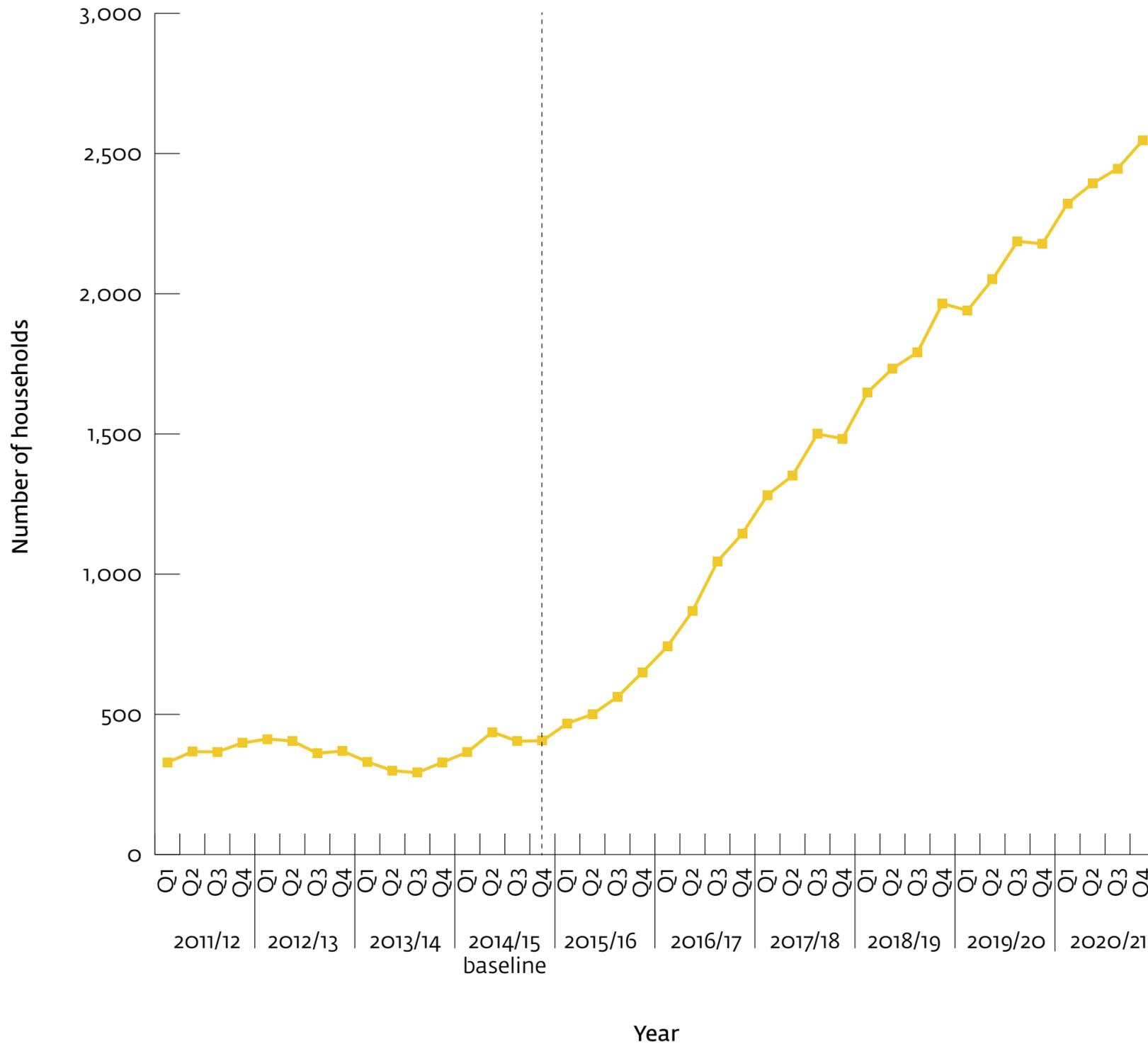
Figure 4.1 shows the number of households residing in temporary accommodation has increased significantly over the past six years, from 406 households at the end of March 2015, to 2,546 at the end of March 2021. There has been a 17% year-on-year increase in the use of temporary accommodation, in part due to the lack of move-on options during lockdown.

Table 4.1:
Homelessness presentations

Main reasons for loss of settled home	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
End of private-rented tenancy – assured shorthold tenancy	972	1,116	749
Family no longer willing or able to accommodate	922	1,057	1,470
Other	827	824	1,063
Domestic abuse	366	536	697
Friends no longer willing or able to accommodate	382	417	436
Relationship with partner ended (non-violent breakdown)	255	325	440

Source: HPA2, Locata. Top six reasons for loss of settled home

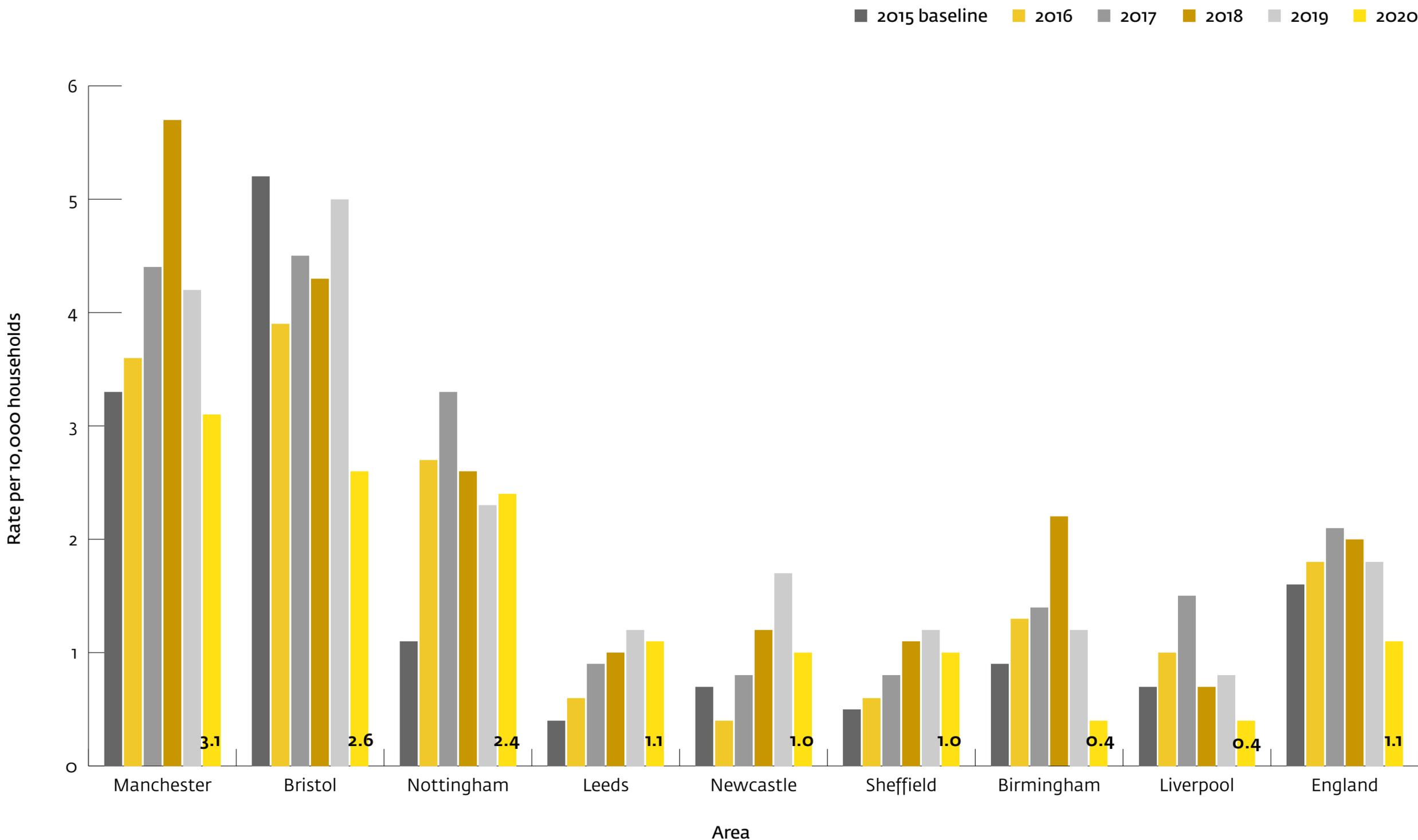
Figure 4.1:
Total number of households residing in temporary accommodation at the end of the quarter



However, the number of individuals recorded as sleeping rough in the city continues to decline. The 2020 single-night snapshot of people sleeping rough counted 68 people in Manchester, compared to 123 in 2018 and 91 in 2019. This represents a decrease of 25% since 2019 and provides some evidence of positive outcomes from the ongoing work of the homelessness service and partners in the city to tackle rough sleeping and move people away from a street lifestyle. Although the figures are moving in the right direction, rates of people who are sleeping rough remain high; Figure 4.2 shows that Manchester now has the highest rate of people sleeping rough per 10,000 households compared to other English Core Cities.

Source: Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (P1e and H-CLIC statutory return)

Figure 4.2:
Single-night snapshot of the number of people sleeping rough per 10,000 households



Source: Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government

The Council, working in partnership with its voluntary, statutory and business partners in the city, continues to work to prevent and tackle all forms of homelessness.

Manchester's Homelessness Strategy 2018–2023 is key to tackling this challenge, setting out three aims for reducing homelessness:

- Making homelessness a rare occurrence: increasing prevention and earlier intervention at a neighbourhood level
- Making homelessness as brief as possible: improving temporary and supported accommodation so it becomes a positive experience
- Making homelessness a one-off occurrence: increasing access to settled homes.

Making homelessness a rare occurrence

The Housing Solutions Service (HSS) continues to see high demand, and 2020/21 saw 9,608 people present as homeless. While this is a decrease of 3% compared to the previous year, this is largely because of a reduction in presentations during March to June 2020 due to lockdown. Demand for the service continues to be fuelled by loss of accommodation in the private-rented sector and increasing difficulties in finding affordable housing. Presentations from people who are in employment are increasing, particularly from those on zero-hour contracts, working irregular hours, or part-time.

In 2020/21, the Housing Solutions Service successfully prevented 789 individuals and families from becoming homeless through a variety of interventions. These included financial advice and income maximisation, applying for Discretionary Housing Payments,

negotiating with landlords, securing housing within the private-rental sector before a household becomes homeless, and referring to specialist floating-support services that can work with households to help them maintain their tenancies where these may be at risk.

During the pandemic, the Customer Service Centre closed its doors to the public, which meant the HSS moved to a telephony-based-only service. Staff deal with between 500 and 600 calls per week. As services move out of lockdown, HSS will remain a largely telephone-based service, with face-to-face appointments being made as necessary.

The eviction moratorium, which was put in place early on during the pandemic, came to an end on 31 May 2021. Provisions were included in the Coronavirus Act 2020 to extend the notice periods that certain tenants in England and Wales are entitled to receive when a landlord is seeking to recover possession of their homes. On 21 August 2020 the Government stated that landlords in England would be required to provide tenants with six months' notice, except in cases involving issues such as antisocial behaviour and domestic abuse. The cessation of the moratorium, coupled with the fact that there are now approximately 26,000 households across Greater Manchester in rent arrears due to the pandemic, is likely to have an impact on the HSS in terms of increased presentations from June 2021 onwards.

Hospital and prison discharge

The Hospital and Prison discharge team was established to assist in the transfer of patients to alternative accommodation to reduce the risk of bed-blocking within hospitals and to provide a

pathway for people being released from prison who had no alternative accommodation available to them. Between March 2020 and April 2021, the team received 732 'duty to' refers from hospitals and 688 from prisons.

In 2019, the discharge team was provided with time-limited accommodation at Dalbeattie Street in the Harpurhey area of the city. The property consists of ten self-contained flats, six ground-floor-level access flats and four first-floor flats. This type of accommodation is often difficult to source and in short supply in temporary accommodation for homeless people. Dalbeattie Street is consequently able to provide accommodation for people with physical and ambulatory issues primarily, those undergoing chemotherapy and radiation therapy, and people with mental-health issues.

To date, the scheme has housed 50 residents and rehoused 32, while 31 tenancies have been sustained. Owing to the success of Dalbeattie Street, the service is looking at procuring a larger property of 29 self-contained flats, which should be available in autumn 2021.

From January to June 2021, the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) and the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) awarded Greater Manchester funding to support hospital discharge for people experiencing homelessness during the pandemic. It was set up to establish 'Covid Care' accommodation, where individuals of no fixed abode can be accommodated to allow safe and timely discharge from hospital with a positive COVID-19 diagnosis; it also offers this accommodation to individuals in the community who have a positive COVID-19 test and require

suitable accommodation and support to self-isolate. The accommodation is made up of ten self-contained flats based in the Cheetham Hill area of Manchester.

Greater Manchester Mental Health Discharge Pilot

A particular challenge in Manchester is the lack of settled accommodation for individuals who need a home as well as mental-health support. There are also individuals currently in supported accommodation who are ready to move into an independent tenancy with support but struggle to find long-term accommodation, thereby reducing access to supported accommodation for people needing to be discharged from hospital. Greater Manchester Mental Health (GMMH) have therefore partnered with the homelessness service to pilot an innovative approach to tackling some of these barriers. This has involved creating a specialist private-rented sector (PRS) Officer role within the PRS team, whose remit is to work with individuals in mental-health services to identify appropriate tenancies in the private-rented sector. In addition, GMMH have contributed funding to secure properties including deposits, and rent voids for these properties.

Making homelessness as brief as possible

An online gateway system for access to Housing Related Support (HRS) services has now been in operation for two years, and new partner agencies continue to come onboard to use the system. This has worked to streamline access to the city's HRS services, improving people's experiences of accessing and engaging with specialist accommodation and resettlement, and floating support.

In-house temporary accommodation has continued throughout the pandemic, with staff ensuring that COVID-safe practices are maintained throughout the buildings and appropriate PPE is worn. This has been a significant challenge in some hostels, as individuals who are vulnerable with some chaotic behaviour patterns have struggled to self-isolate. While managing business as usual, and the additional accommodation provided through 'Everyone In' and 'Cold Weather', the service has also managed to provide further accommodation for families and singles alike:

- Apex House is an alternative to emergency accommodation, consisting of 20 self-contained flats for families with low support needs.
- Princess Road offers shared accommodation for up to eleven people and operates as short-stay, move-on accommodation from the Longford Centre in Chorlton.
- Rams Lodge provides 30 bed spaces for singles and childless couples. Support staff take a keyworker approach and between September 2020 and April 2021 the service successfully supported 44 people into more settled accommodation.

In addition, the homelessness service continued to provide floating support for 1,974 dispersed temporary-accommodation properties across Greater Manchester.

Officers have had to adapt their ways of working, home visits being replaced by remote support by telephone, email and text. However, a risk-based approach has been adopted, with doorstep visits taking place where engagement or safeguarding issues have been identified. The pandemic has fuelled an increase in anxiety and mental health

concerns across this client group. The service has supported families with practical issues such as obtaining food parcels and laptops for home learning, and linked them into wider support services.

Making homelessness a one-off occurrence

There is a continued focus on working with partners to increase access to settled homes in the social and private-rented sectors for people moving on from homelessness.

Initiatives within the private-rented sector have seen the Private Rented Sector (PRS) Service continue to operate as much of a business-as-usual model as possible throughout the pandemic. The PRS/ Move-on teams ensure that properties are suitable for residents; this includes carrying out inspections to ensure all properties meet housing and health and safety rating standards prior to applicants taking occupation. Assessments are completed to ensure the property is affordable, suitable and sustainable. The team offers a range of incentives to landlords and tenants to facilitate access to tenancies in this sector.

The incentives were expanded in 2020 to include specialist resettlement support, financial assistance, rental guarantees and landlord insurance policies to provide landlords in this sector with additional support. The PRS and move-on teams have successfully helped to move 1,080 households into private-rented sector properties in 2020/21 and they continue to work across Greater Manchester to secure good-quality, affordable properties in the private-rented sector. The team is in consultation to review the current team structure, PRS offer, processes and procedures in order to increase the number of people moving into the PRS.

The PRS team is also working closely with the Ethical Lettings Agency with the aim of continuing to increase the amount of affordable, suitable accommodation the Council will be able to use to tackle and prevent homelessness.

2020/21 has also seen the launch of the Rough Sleeper Accommodation Programme (RSAP), which is a Government-funded scheme providing accommodation and support for individuals impacted by rough sleeping. The scheme allows those who are ready to move on from emergency, temporary and supported housing, but who have limited rehousing options, to access a short-term tenancy while they explore their long-term housing aspirations and options. Resettlement support is provided to help individuals manage and maintain their tenancy. As part of phase 1 of the scheme, officers have been working with housing partners to develop and deliver more than seventy properties in Manchester, with additional properties being sourced and delivered by GMCA. A bid has recently been submitted for phase 2 of the scheme, which would see additional properties purchased over 2021/22.

Tackling rough sleeping

The range of responses that have been developed to respond to and tackle rough sleeping in the city have been increased in 2020/21. The Council's Outreach Inreach Service has grown, and now includes a bespoke service called the Protect Programme. This service is funded by the MHCLG as a pilot service to respond to the support and accommodation needs of people long-term rough sleeping who have struggled in other accommodation services previously. The team consists of four in-reach workers, two social worker and two mental-health practitioners. They use targeted data of

who is currently sleeping rough to provide them with a wrap-around support service into short-term accommodation, with a view to moving into a dispersed property. The support stays with the person from the streets and into accommodation.

The Housing First service provided a bespoke response for people who had experienced multiple and repeated episodes of homelessness and rough sleeping and accommodated 88 people in new homes with intensive wrap-around support. The service was expanded to provide a bespoke service for women with multiple disadvantages, and Manchester Action Street Health have delivered this in partnership with Housing First.

The funding from the MHCLG for the Rough Sleeper Initiative (RSI) was extended for an additional year, with some services funded via the initiative being refreshed and reviewed. Working closely in partnership with accommodation and support providers in the city, 710 individuals were relieved from rough sleeping in 2020/21, and a further 439 were prevented from rough sleeping in the same period using the funding from the RSI.

Cold weather

Manchester's cold weather offer is activated when the city sees temperatures of zero or below or other extreme weather patterns. While this is not a statutory duty, it is a support offer delivered by many local authorities, with Manchester operating an enhanced approach accommodating individuals for a minimum of three days each time the offer is activated.

This year, because of COVID-19, an extended service was delivered; individuals received a single en suite room offer on a no-return-to-streets principle. This aligned to the city's Everyone In programme.

Cold weather services are designed, delivered and reviewed through a partners group, which includes members who are experts through experience. Partners were heavily involved in referral and allocation processes, provision of food, phones and other welfare items (toiletries, clothes), as well as out-of-hours outreach into the early hours of the morning.

2020/21 saw 512 cold weather placements, with the offer extended from the first activation on 24 December 2020 to 31 March 2021. This provided an opportunity for clients to be linked into long-term accommodation and support pathways.

A Bed Every Night (ABEN)

Additional accommodation schemes for people who sleep rough have been developed to support Greater Manchester's A Bed Every Night initiative, and these continued to be delivered by the Council's partners across the city throughout lockdown. ABEN services responded well to the pressures and challenges, and there were notable successes in:

- Realigning and reconfiguring services to provide single-room accommodation
- Implementing COVID-safe practices for staff and residents, enabling them to provide accommodation for clients with symptoms and/or positive COVID-19 tests
- Supporting Everyone In by providing more stable move-on accommodation and acting as a significant accommodation source as the Council stepped down from the Everyone In accommodation offer.

There are 174 ABEN bed spaces available, all of which are single occupancy. This contrasts with the earlier ABEN offer, which was made up of 65% shared rooms or larger hostel-type accommodation. There are bespoke accommodation schemes for low and high-needs clients, as well as female-only, No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF) and LGBT+ schemes.

In 2020/21, ABEN services accommodated over 420 people, and all sites provided a 24/7 staffing presence. The focus is on primary support and welfare, accessing benefits, GPs, bank accounts and ID, and – most importantly – referrals into drug, alcohol and mental health services. Over the past year, 230 residents have had a positive move into supported housing.

Supporting people to find work, stay in work and progress at work

The Working Well offer, commissioned by Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA), provides support for unemployed people with health conditions or disabilities who are long-term unemployed or out of work. Greater Manchester and London are the only two areas where the Department for Work and Pensions has devolved the commissioning for the Work and Health programme (WHP). The current phase of the programme is being delivered in Manchester by subcontractor 'The Growth Company' and was launched at the beginning of March 2018.

The programme builds on the Working Well approach by taking a holistic approach to supporting people into good-quality employment, offering a range of skill support, work experience and employment support. Alongside this, support is provided for a range of issues, including housing, debt and health, to enable participants to sustain this work. This is co-ordinated with the Council to

ensure a broad range of support is available to participants. Referrals come predominantly from Jobcentre Plus (JCP).

By the end of March 2021, the Work and Health Programme (WHP) in Manchester had 3,021 starts (20% of all starts in Greater Manchester), with 85% of participants actively engaged. Of that number, 955 have started a job. The WHP has been delivering a service throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, adapting by carrying out all appointments via telephone, increasing the online health offer available (including access to the NHS cognitive behaviour therapy offer SilverCloud) and launching an online portal containing over 10,000 modules focused on work and health.

At the beginning of the pandemic, the programme saw no referrals coming from JCP, as their staff focused on processing an influx of Universal Credit claims. As the UK began to open up again, referrals onto the programme increased dramatically, reaching their highest since it began.

As part of the Plan for Jobs programme, announced by the Chancellor in June 2020, further funding was made available to DWP to expand the Work and Health programme with the Joint Entry Targeted Support (JETS) programme. This is aimed at people who have fallen out of work due to the pandemic, and the funding was devolved to GMCA. JETS is a light-touch support service that gives participants a tailored range of support, including, but not limited to, debt advice, transferable skills analysis, CV writing, job search, interview skills, self-efficacy and confidence-building in the current COVID-19 environment. The service also includes a Money Management Advice Service, bespoke to the need of the cohort coming onto the programme.

The Working Well Enterprising You programme, launched in February 2020, has continued to provide specialist support for those who are self-employed or in the gig economy. This included support for current businesses to help them become more resilient, reduce their costs, and diversify their service to survive through COVID-19 restrictions.

The Working Well Specialist Employment Service was launched using a digital offer in 2020, targeting those with severe mental illnesses, severe autism and/or learning disabilities. As the service follows a 'place then train' model focusing on engagement with employers to make the job possible, clients who were shielding or looking for work in sectors that were closed due to COVID-19 restrictions were placed on hold. However, the personalised support offer remained in place.

The Working Well Early Help programme, which supports a return to sustained employment for individuals with a health condition or disability who have either recently become unemployed or taken medical leave from an existing job, was also pivotal in Working Well's response to the pandemic. This supported key workers during the crisis by targeting hard-hit sectors such as Health and Social Care.

Overall, while impacted by the COVID-19 crisis, the Working Well programmes have worked closely with key referral partners (such as JCP, GPs and providers) to ensure growth in access to support, increased referrals (reflecting increased need) and positive programme start rates. The introduction of Working Well JETS, is a fundamental cornerstone

of adaptation to ensure Working Well programmes react positively to the pandemic and meet Greater Manchester residents' needs.

Family poverty

"A society is strong when it cares for the weak, rich when it cares for the poor, and invulnerable when it takes care of the vulnerable" – Rabbi Jonathan Sacks, 'Morality: Restoring the common good in divided times,' 2020.

The Manchester Family Poverty Strategy 2017–22 was developed to address child poverty in Manchester, which continues to be a major challenge affecting many of the city's children and their families. The Strategy, which was co-designed with partners and residents, aims to add value to a small number of key priorities that would have the biggest impact on the lives and outcomes of children and families.

The past 12 months have had a huge impact on the city's residents, children and families. While the full scale of the economic impact of the pandemic is still not fully clear, emerging intelligence is indicating that COVID-19 has had and will continue to have an immeasurable impact on the city's children and families, plunging many more into poverty. The Council and its partners have worked tirelessly to understand the full scale of the challenge in order to reduce the risks and mitigate the impact where possible.

Reprioritisation of the Family Poverty Strategy 2017–22

A key focus of the family poverty work in the past 12 months has been in relation to the reprioritisation of the Family Poverty Strategy, given the impact highlighted by COVID-19 and to ensure that the priorities in the Strategy continue to meet the needs

of children and families living in poverty. The reprioritisation was based on a consultation with each of the working groups, including diverse partners from across the city, such as The Bread and Butter Thing, One Manchester, Greater Manchester Poverty Action and Northwards Housing – all of whom have expertise in their respective thematic areas. The consensus was that the existing priorities were still relevant but were strengthened. In addition, a small number of additional priorities were included, such as digital inclusion, which was highlighted as a particular challenge for vulnerable residents over the lockdown period.

In December 2020, the Family Poverty Strategy Reprioritisation was approved by the Family Poverty Core Group. The priorities for the Family Poverty Strategy Reprioritisation are:

- **Sustainable work as a route out of poverty:**
 - Affordable childcare for parents
 - The role of anchor institutions.
- Additional priorities:
 - Manchester as a Living Wage Place
 - Citywide commitment to good employment practices.
- **Focus on the basics – raising and protecting family incomes:**
 - Lobbying Government to mitigate the impact of welfare reforms on children and families
 - Tackling the poverty premium
 - Food and fuel.

Additional priorities:

- Debt and financial management
- Digital inclusion.

- **Boosting resilience and building on strengths:**

- Strength-based approach in communities (Belonging)
- Improving the identification and signposting of families in poverty (Coping)
- Poverty-proofing services (Coping)
- Embedding careers advice and aspiration in schools (Learning).

Additional priorities:

- Maximising access to the benefits system
- Holistic support offer for residents
- Workforce support.

Progress to date is as follows:

Sustainable work as a route out of poverty

Flexible, affordable and high-quality childcare has been highlighted as a major issue affecting a family's income, and this has become a greater challenge over the lockdown period. Following the first lockdown, many childcare settings were struggling to survive. To support them, the Chair of the working group liaised with the Council's Business Rates team to support childcare providers through the extension of the criteria for the Additional Restrictions Grant. This, together with regular consultations with daycare providers to understand the impact of the pandemic on childcare settings, has helped inform the support offered to them. This has meant that an average of 90% of childcare settings remained open over the lockdown period.

Access and take-up of free childcare places for two-year-olds continues to be a challenge for some of the city's most vulnerable residents. The working group liaised with the No Recourse to Public Funds team and the Greater Manchester Immigration Aid Unit to develop a pathway to support newly arrived families to access the childcare offer they are entitled to. The group is also developing a campaign targeted at professionals working in north Manchester to raise awareness of the benefits of childcare for children, their families and society in general.

Focus on the basics – raising and protecting family incomes

Fuel poverty continues to be a challenge for families living in poverty. To support families living in fuel poverty, a Winter Warm Homes leaflet was produced, giving practical tips and advice on all aspects of fuel poverty, including details of the Council's Green Homes Grant. Approximately 1,250 leaflets were printed and translated into 17 community languages. The leaflet was targeted at those living in fuel-poor areas of Manchester in private-rented sector accommodation who tend to have the lowest levels of energy-efficiency. To further support residents with fuel costs, the Council, in partnership with Manchester Citizens Advice Bureau, assisted over 1,500 people to switch their energy provider and claim the Warm Homes Discount. It is estimated that residents in the city will save in the region of £70,000 a year as a result of switching energy providers.

Food poverty is a significant challenge for the city. Much of the work to support families with food poverty was undertaken by the Council's food response team with key partners from the basics

group, including the Bread and Butter Thing and FareShare, playing a key role in supporting both the Council's and the city's food response. As well as supporting the city's food response, the group supported the set up and delivery of food distribution hubs in areas of deprivation and has commissioned research to identify gaps in food provision to provide a better food offer for residents living in food deserts.

Poverty Premium – At the start of the pandemic, the Government acknowledged the inability of some families to live on basic welfare provision and raised the Universal Credit payment by £20 per week. This has been a vital lifeline for many families living in poverty. The uplift ended in September 2021. The working group will continue to work in collaboration with partners across the city and nationally to support the campaign to make this temporary uplift permanent.

Boosting resilience and building on strengths

Prior to the pandemic, the working group started to design a programme of activity with key partners, including Early Help, to look at issues of poverty in schools based on learning from the Cedar Mount Audit. This work was paused following school closures; however, it will be resumed now that schools are fully operational.

Practical guide to support families – To give families in need much-needed practical support, the Our Manchester Pocket Guide was developed in July 2020 as a one-stop shop of information to support residents with money, health and wellbeing. The guide, which was co-produced with a number of statutory, voluntary and community organisations, including the Be Well Service, Cedar Mount Academy and Wythenshawe Community

Housing Group, includes new contact information and signposting links, which have been uploaded to the Council's Helping Hands website. This means that residents have up-to-date information at their fingertips. The guide was distributed across targeted neighbourhoods citywide. The first phase (4,995 guides) was distributed through a number of statutory, voluntary and community organisations, including libraries; and the second phase (9,000 guides) was distributed via Neighbourhood Teams, BST partners, Sure Start Children's Centres and Food Partnership among other organisations.

COVID-19: food response – One of the biggest features of the pandemic has been the demand for food support and the city's food offer. In response to the increasing demand for food support over the period of the first national lockdown, the Our Manchester Food Partnership (OMFP) brought together social food providers, the NHS, housing providers, non-food delivery voluntary sector organisations and the Council to provide food parcels, which were delivered to residents' homes. March 2020 to March 2021 saw an unprecedented rise in demand on food banks and pantries – a 50% increase on average. This is in addition to over 110,000 food parcels delivered by OMFP-commissioned partners during the same period, administered and funded by the Council's Food Response Team.

Case study: Impact of COVID-19 on front-line NHS worker

Amanda (not her real name) is a front-line nurse, who has been working mostly weekend, evening and night shifts nursing COVID-19 patients since the start of the pandemic. Amanda's home life was challenging and she faced domestic violence. While she was ill with COVID-19, her partner left the family home, leaving a trail of debt behind that she did not know about, but became responsible for repaying. While she recovered from the initial virus, she developed Long Covid – a continued debilitating condition – and was unable to work.

Amanda was receiving sick pay from the NHS, but this was at a standard-hours level. Previously, her income had been enhanced by the unsociable working pattern she had developed. That, in addition to the debt situation, saw her unable to buy food via internet shopping. Feeling desperate at this point, she rang the freephone COVID-19 helpline number.

Following initial crisis intervention where food parcels were delivered via Manchester City Council's commissioned partners, Amanda was referred to Age UK, which accepted the referral even though Amanda was in her late 40s and not yet 50 years old. Age UK supported Amanda with food and debt management advice and is continuing to offer a range of support mechanisms.

Measuring child poverty in Manchester

Child poverty is defined as 'a household with children under 16 where income is less than 60% of the UK median' (ie. the UK average). Children in Low Income Families local area statistics,² is produced by DWP and HMRC, but does not take into account housing costs. The End Child Poverty Coalition (ECP) are using this dataset and combining it with housing-cost information from the Valuation Office Agency and the Understanding Society survey³ to adjust for housing costs. These statistics have been adopted by Manchester City Council to measure progress.

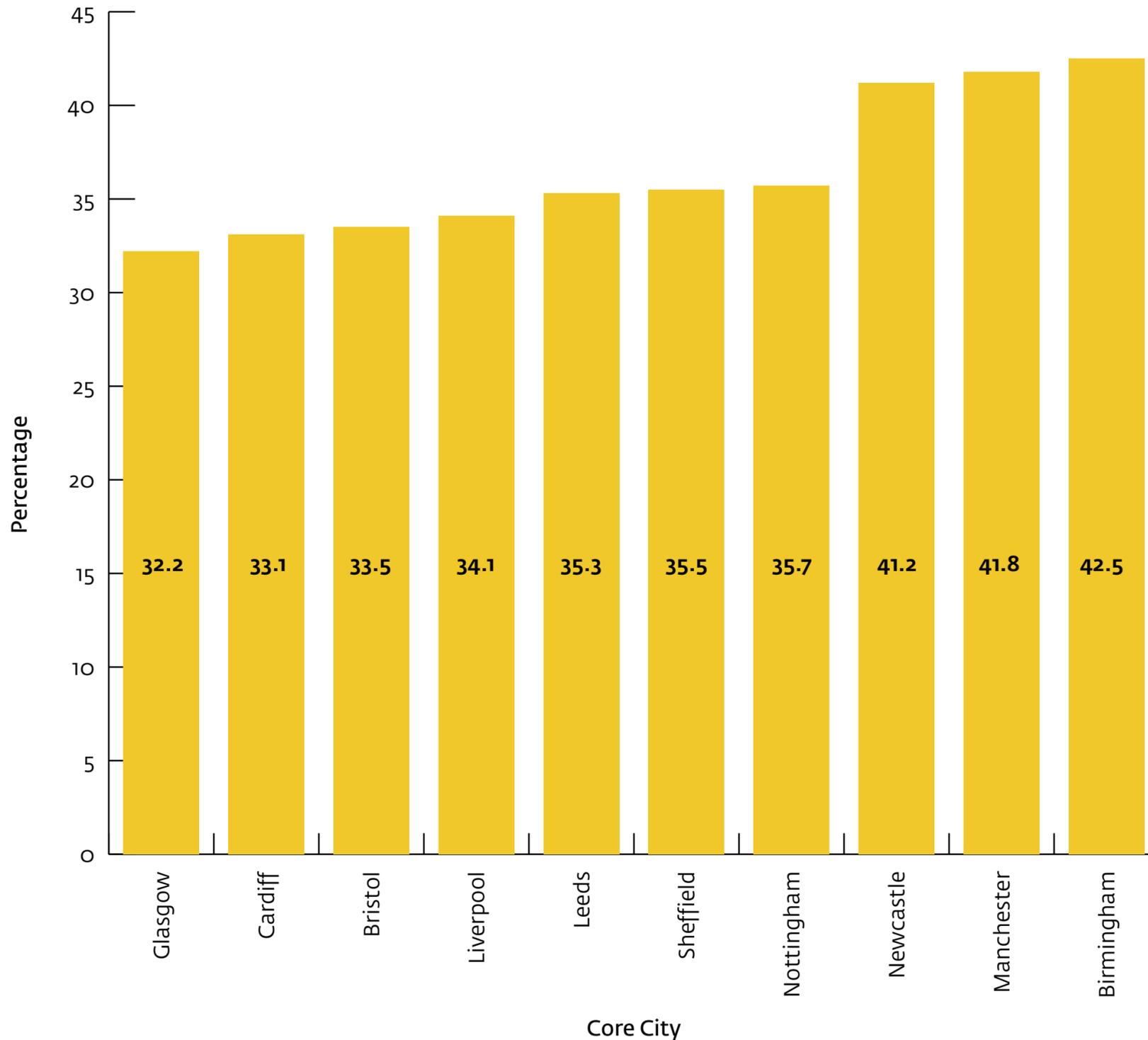
The ECP measure does not allow for a split of child poverty between working families and families not in work.

According to ECP, around 46,700 children in Manchester were estimated to be living in poverty (after adjusting for housing costs) at the end of March 2020 (the latest available data). Figure 4.3 shows this is 41.8% of those aged under 16 living in Manchester, based on the ONS population estimates, and a significantly higher proportion than the UK average of 31%. Of the local authorities in England, Manchester has the 12th highest rate of child poverty, compared with 17th in March 2019, when 40.6% were estimated to be living in poverty. It has the highest rate within Greater Manchester local authorities, and the second-highest rate for Core Cities, after Birmingham at 42.5%.

² www.gov.uk/government/collections/children-in-low-income-families-local-area-statistics

³ www.understandingsociety.ac.uk/

Figure 4.3:
Percentage of children under 16 estimated to be living in poverty (after housing costs) in the UK Core Cities 2019/20



Source: Research by the Centre for Research in Social Policy at Loughborough University for the End Child Poverty Coalition, 2020

Statistics from the DWP and HMRC show that in 2019/20 there were 45,905 children in Manchester living in poverty, before accounting for housing costs; 31,500 of these children were living in in-work poverty, more than twice as many as the 14,405 living in out-of-work poverty. The change since 2017, which saw the restriction of child benefit to two children as well as amendments to child tax credit and working tax credit, is an overall 23.1% increase in in-work poverty and a 7.9% decrease for those living in out-of-work poverty.

According to DWP, in March 2020 Cheetham had the highest rate of children living in in-work poverty at 425.1 per 1,000 children aged 0–15, followed by Rusholme at 404.8, and Levenshulme at 403.4. Longsight and Crumpsall also have high rates of children living in in-work poverty. These figures (which do not reflect the impact of COVID-19), illustrate that in-work poverty is a significant issue in the city. The analysis also highlights that there is a correlation between the rate of children living in in-work poverty in an area, and the percentage of children living in that area who are from Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds.

Both the DWP data and ECP figures only report until the end of March 2020 and therefore do not reflect the impact of COVID-19 on children and families. Free school meals (FSM) data is collected as part of the termly School Census and can be used as an indication of the number of children living in low-income households. In January 2020, 31.5% of the school population was eligible for FSM; in January 2021 this figure rose to 37.8%. There has been very little change in the size of the school population, so these figures indicate that the pandemic has seen a significant rise in the number of schoolchildren living in low-income households.

Healthy Start vouchers

As FSM numbers only include children attending Manchester schools, these figures do not account for any children under four years old living in low-income households. The number of women eligible for Healthy Start vouchers (available to pregnant women claiming benefits, and those who have a child under four years old) can give an indication of how this group of children may have been affected by the pandemic. From the start of the pandemic to the end of February 2021 there was a 15.8% increase in the number of women who were eligible for Healthy Start vouchers. This is the highest increase of the Core Cities and in line with the national increase; 61% of the 8,870 women eligible for Healthy Start vouchers are claiming their entitlement, higher than the national uptake rate of 54%, and ranking fifth in the Core Cities. Similarly, in January 2020, while 31.5% of pupils were eligible for FSM, only 82.8% of these pupils were claiming a meal. This compares with 78.7% nationally and ranks second highest of the Core Cities, behind Leeds.

Manchester Poverty Truth Commission (MPTC)

The Manchester Poverty Truth Commission, which was officially launched in June 2019, has now concluded its work. In March 2020 they agreed a number of specific themes and priorities to best address the systemic causes of poverty. The themes are child and family poverty, exploitation, and council tax and benefits. A number of key recommendations were published in the '[Key Findings and Impact Report 2019–21](#)', including:

- Ensuring that low-cost school uniforms are accessible for all
- More accessible cultural offer in the city

- More easily accessible information on services in the city; broadband should be regarded as a utility and available to all regardless of their ability to pay
- Better support for those with lived experience of involvement in gangs to set up community groups or community interest companies
- Specific training on the link between poverty and exploitation should be developed for dissemination at the city's universities to inform policy responses
- More options given to Council staff to write-off council tax arrears where appropriate
- Designing community-based workshops/pilots to bring those with council tax debts together with money advice specialists as a way of tackling council tax arrears.

The report will also be disseminated to key organisations in positions of influence across the city for their consideration.

Anchor institutions

Anchor institutions have long been recognised as having a key role in tackling poverty, given their size, budgets and the fact that they are rooted in the city. More recently, in response to the significant economic and social challenges facing the city, there has been an increasing recognition in Manchester and Greater Manchester that social value in the broadest sense, encompassing good employment practices and procurement, is invaluable to the inclusive recovery of the city. It has also been recognised that anchor institutions, given their role, are an important vehicle to deliver this.

This is reflected in the Council's recent review of social value, which set out a more prominent role for anchors in helping the city to deliver social value, and in the Family Poverty Strategy Reprioritisation, where the role of anchors was further strengthened.

Ensuring the best outcomes for vulnerable children

The Our Manchester Strategy sets out the city's vision for Manchester to be in the top flight of world-class cities by 2025. Critical to the delivery of the vision is supporting the citizens of Manchester, including its children, young people and families, to achieve their potential and benefit from the city's improving economic, cultural, and social capital.

The Children and Young People's Plan: Our Manchester, Our Children (2020–24), translates the Our Manchester priorities into a vision for 'building a safe, happy, healthy and successful future for children and young people'; this means:

1. All children and young people feel **safe**, their welfare promoted and safeguarded from harm within their homes, schools and communities.
2. All children and young people grow up **happy** – having fun, having opportunities to take part in leisure and culture activities, and having good social, emotional and mental wellbeing. It also means all children and young people feeling that they have a voice and influence as active Manchester citizens.
3. The physical and mental **health** of all children and young people is maximised, enabling them to lead healthy, active lives, and to have the resilience to overcome emotional and behavioural challenges.

4. All children and young people have the opportunity to thrive and achieve individual success in a way that is meaningful to them. This may be in their education, or in their emotional or personal lives.

The plan also highlights particular areas that Manchester is 'passionate' about achieving: ensuring children and young people live in safe, stable and loving homes; reducing the number of children and young people in care; ensuring children and young people have the best start in the first years of life; and ensuring children and young people fulfil their potential, attend a good school and take advantage of the opportunities in the city.

The delivery of the Our Manchester Strategy and the Our Children Plan can only be achieved through strong partnerships and facilitated through effective leadership and management at a locality level; and across the city there is a clear commitment to achieving positive outcomes for our children. The strength of the partnership in respect of Children's Services was recognised within Ofsted's Inspection of Children's Services in 2017 and again in a Peer Review undertaken by the Local Government Association in May 2019.

Impacts of COVID-19

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, Manchester's Children's Services and their partners have sought to continue to ensure the delivery of the services that underpin our children's strategy so that children can live safe, happy, healthy and successful lives. Overall, the partnership has demonstrated flexibility in responding to the challenges of lockdowns and associated restrictions to contain the virus.

The impact of COVID-19 and the periods of lockdown on the city and its children and young people is increasingly becoming evident. Although our children and young people have shown incredible resilience during this time, we know that children and young people, particularly from disadvantaged families, have been disproportionately affected, and so the opportunities for young people post-education will be reduced.

The full extent and impact of COVID-19 on the development, life chances and opportunities for the city's children and young people is not yet fully understood and may not be for some time. However, there are a number of known or emerging themes and issues:

- The education gap between those children considered to be disadvantaged and their counterparts will have widened.
- There are indications of increased rates of anxiety and mental health issues.
- The pandemic has increased inequality in the city – there has been a 6% increase in the overall number of children being eligible for free school meals. In addition, we have seen a significant increase in families accessing food banks over the past 12 months, and financial hardship has become a feature of everyday life for many children.
- There is the potential for increased levels of school exclusions as some young people struggle to return to routine and boundaries.
- Lack of opportunities for young people post-school and college are likely to lead to increased levels of Not in Employment Education and Training (NEET).

- Some children have reported feeling anxious about transition between school/college phases, their future opportunities, and feeling isolated/lonely. This appears to have the potential to compromise the aspirations and hopes of young people across the city.

The future delivery of the Children and Young People's Plan will therefore be considered within the context of COVID-19 and its anticipated impact on children, in addition to issues of race, disadvantage and discrimination.

Referrals to Children's Services

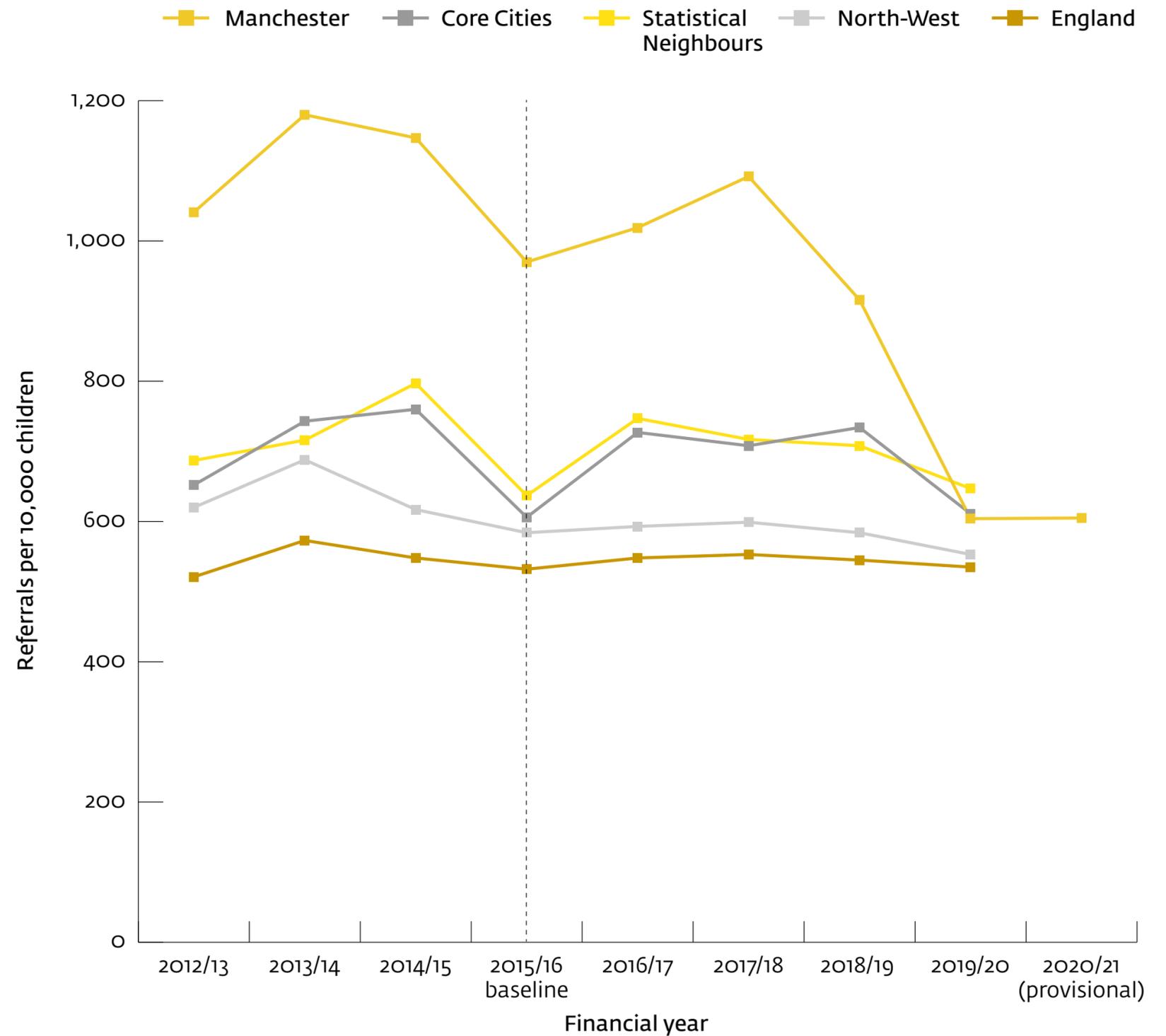
Children's Services in Manchester have continued to provide services for vulnerable children and their families throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. Since March 2020, the service has operated under the working premise of 'business as usual but doing things differently'. This mission statement reflected the service's commitment to ensure children were safeguarded and their needs were effectively met. The service has continued to work directly with children and their families throughout the pandemic, mindful of relevant health and safety advice. It has shown significant creativity and flexibility in its approach to service provision, while supporting the partnership's capacity to continue to develop collaboration in the knowledge that some families require a co-ordinated multi-agency level of support to safeguard children.

The Council has worked effectively to ensure the identification of vulnerable children, and, with schools, has jointly risk-assessed children to target support for them since the early phases of the pandemic. The service supported the expert advice on COVID-19 that children, on balance, were better

off at school, and supported many children and families to return to school during periods of lockdown. Further details of the pandemic's impact on schools, and the support provided for children and young people, is included in the 'A highly skilled city' chapter.

The provisional 2020/21 rate of referrals remains at a low level of 605 per 10,000 children. Figure 4.4 shows that this rate compares favourably to the national (535), regional (553), Core City (611) and statistical neighbour (647) averages for 2019/20.

Fig 4.4:
Rate of referrals per 10,000 of the child population aged under 18

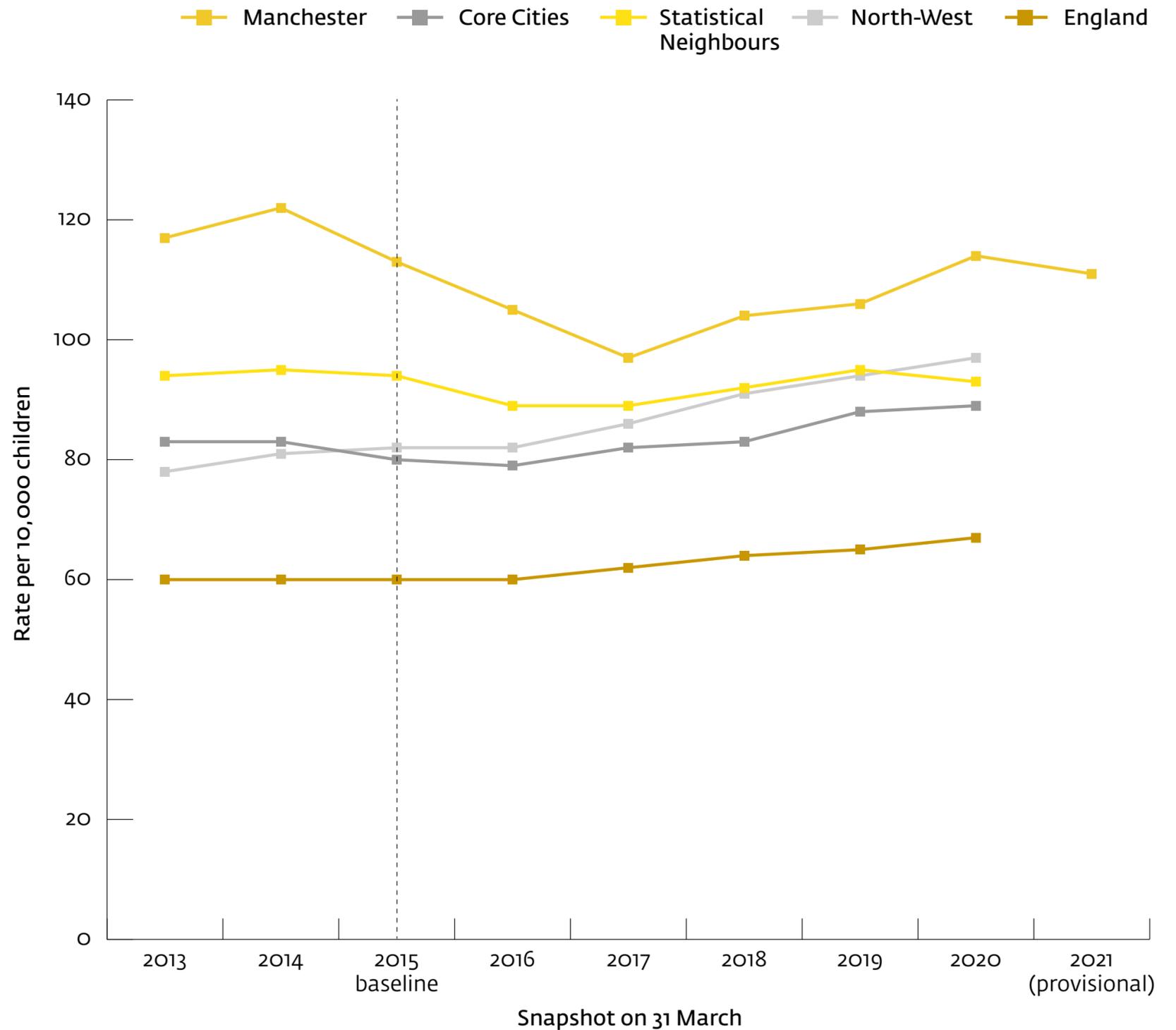


Source: Department for Education/MiCare

Looked After Children (LAC)

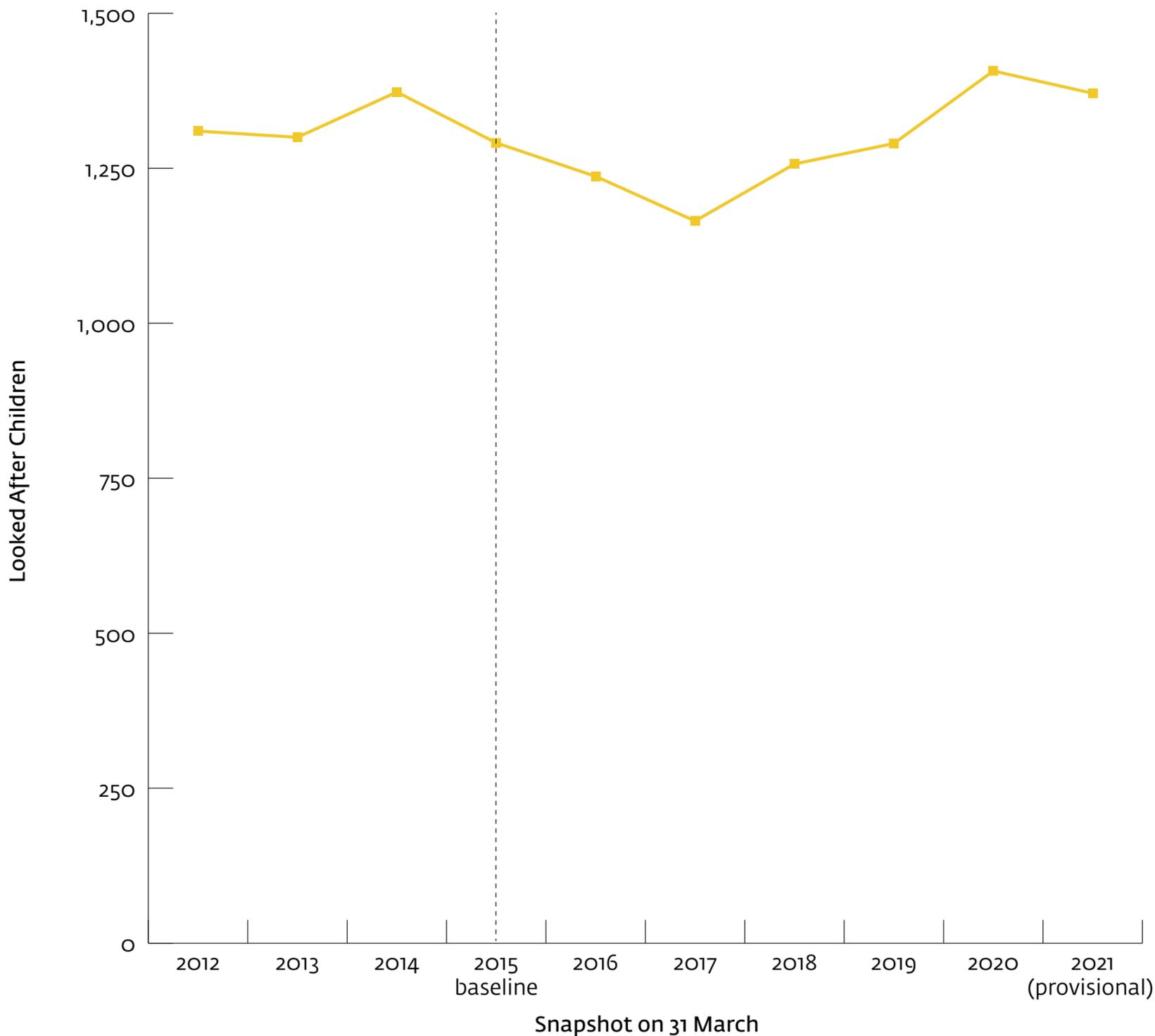
Figures 4.5 and 4.6 show that following a decrease between 2014 and 2017, the provisional number and rate of children looked after by the Council has risen to 111 per 10,000 children in 2021, and remains above the national (67), regional (97), Core City (89) and statistical neighbour (93) averages for 2020. There were 1,371 Looked After Children at the end of March 2021. Although the rate of Looked After Children is consistently above other local authorities, the increases are reflective of a national and regional trend.

Figure 4.5:
Rate of Looked After Children per 10,000 of the child population aged under 18 (31 March)



Source: Department for Education

Figure 4.6:
Number of Looked After Children



Source: Department for Education

The service takes essentially a threefold approach to work to reduce the number of entrants into the care system and the length of time children spend in local authority care:

- Continuing and developing edge-of-care and rehabilitation interventions
- Improvements to care planning and practice
- Shifting and accelerating the approach to permanence earlier in the child’s journey through the social care system.

Edge of care

Children’s Services employs a range of evidence-based interventions aimed at supporting families to remain together and where possible prevent the need for children to go into care, or where they do, to ensure a timely return home. These include Multi-Systemic Therapy, Multi-Treatment Foster Care, No Wrong Door and the Adolescent Support Unit – Alonzi House.

The services provided by Alonzi House have been adapted to include Looked After Children to promote stability and inclusion in family-based care arrangements. This has resulted in the multidisciplinary team operating out of Alonzi House to provide foster families with wrap-around support that includes an outreach element and both practical and emotional support, securing stability, permanent arrangements for children and significantly reducing ‘unplanned’ placement endings.

Care planning and practice

Fundamentally, the approach to reducing the number of children entering the care system is predicated on early intervention and high-quality practice that assesses risk and issues, and plans for

sustainable change in the behaviour of families and individuals. The successful delivery of the Children’s Services Locality Programme during 2019/20 has enabled the redistribution of social worker capacity. The aim of this has been to secure a timely plan of ‘permanence’ for children who become looked after and the continued improvement in the overall quality of practice. Over time it may be possible to divert further resources from specialist social work to early help services.

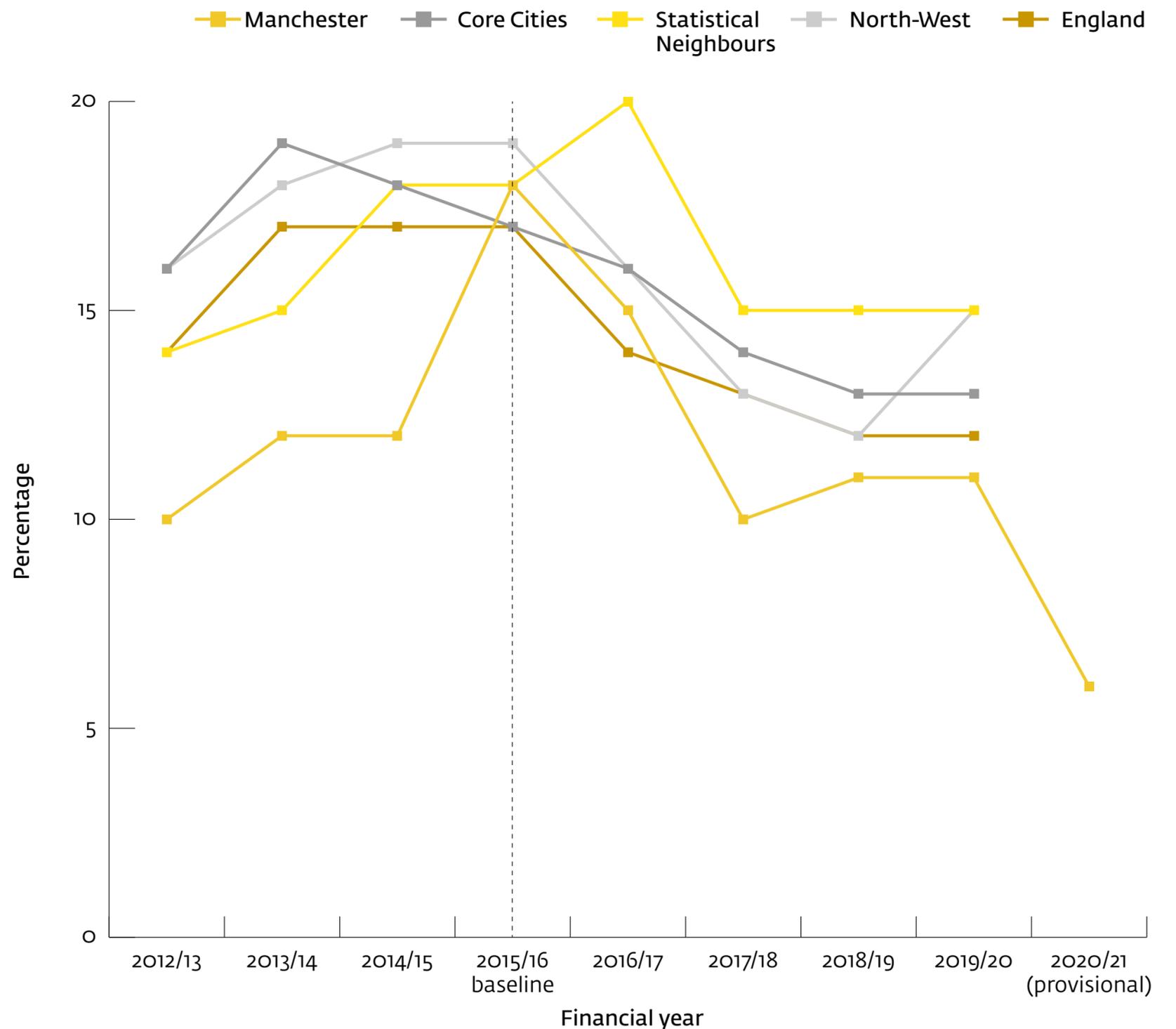
Permanence

Planning for a permanent ‘forever home’ for children begins with supporting them to remain within their family and community from the very first interaction with social care services. This is the essence of reform being delivered by the service to support children to remain within their family where it is ‘safe’ to do so, and to improve the timeliness in securing a permanent alternative arrangement for those who become ‘looked after’. It is essential that practice and the framework of policy and process that underpins it is focused on planning for and securing alternative solutions outside of the looked after system as soon as possible, such as placement with family or friends through special guardianship orders or adoption; for some this will also include a long-term fostering arrangement.

Percentage of children ceasing to be looked after during the year who were adopted

Figure 4.7 shows that the percentage of children ceasing to be LAC through adoption had fallen to 6% in 2020/21, compared to 11% in the previous year. Although the latest comparator figures are not yet available, the most recent national, statistical neighbour and Core City average figures indicate rates have remained relatively stable since 2017/18.

Figure 4.7: Percentage of children ceasing to be looked after during the year who were adopted



Source: Department for Education

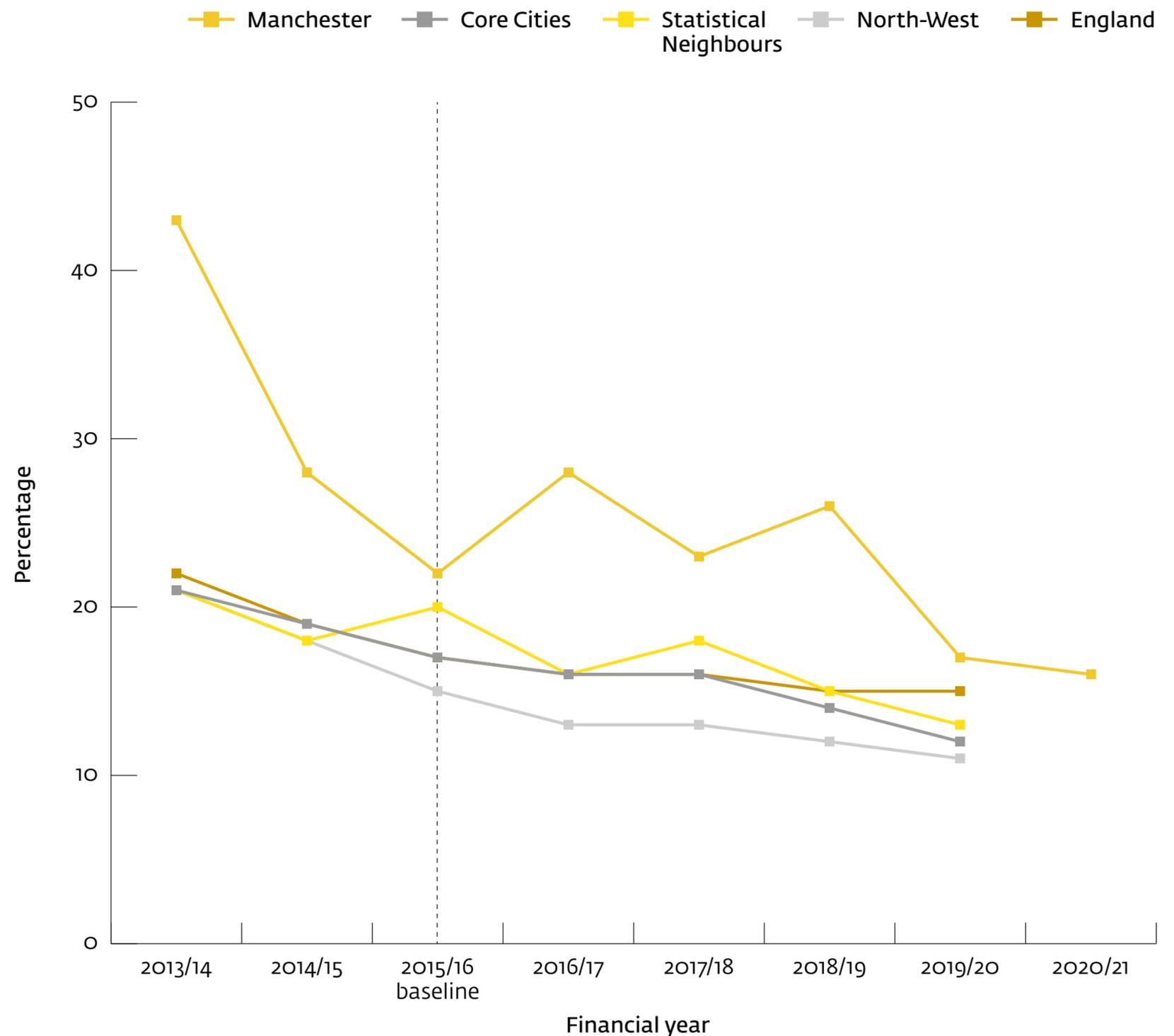
The number of children placed during 2020/21 has been affected by the pandemic, children being unable to be placed for part of the year due to restrictions that were in place. However, adopter approval numbers have remained consistent: 104 families have been approved this year, compared with 110 last year. This is a significant achievement during a time when many families delayed making applications or had to withdraw due to uncertainties in their lives, such as redundancies, caring responsibilities, home schooling etc. This consistency has ensured we continue to have a greater pool of prospective adopters available, all of whom have been assessed as having the skills needed to meet the needs of vulnerable children requiring permanence.

Percentage of care leavers aged 19–21 who were in unknown or unsuitable accommodation

Figure 4.8 shows that the percentage of care leavers aged 19–21 who were in unknown or unsuitable accommodation has reduced slightly over the past year, from 17% in 2019/20, to 16% in 2020/21, closing the gap to comparator groups.

Like all local authorities, Manchester now has a duty to provide support for all care leavers who want it up to the age of 25. In line with this, the Council has been reviewing its Care Leavers Offer with a strong focus on supporting young people to independence, including ensuring that all Care Leavers have access to suitable accommodation.

Figure 4.8:
Percentage of care leavers aged 19–21 who were in unknown or unsuitable accommodation



Source: Department for Education

Early Years and Sure Start Children's Centres

The city's Early Years offer, including our Sure Start Children's Centres (SSCCs) and our integrated approach, ensure that our children have the best start in life and are ready for school. The SSCCs have now aligned to the 13 neighbourhoods. Our Early Years revised governance arrangements and our Early Years strategic partnerships, at a neighbourhood level, support a place-based approach to collaborative working with a wide range of partners. Our Start Well Partnership is focusing on the 1,000 days and developing our Start Well Strategy.

Throughout the pandemic the SSCCs have seen an increase in demand for services and activities for new parents and babies, as well as services related to presenting needs such as food poverty and children's delayed development. The SSCCs have therefore taken a targeted approach to meeting this demand, reaching out to new parents and vulnerable families with a bespoke offer of support, advice and guidance.

Large-scale national research indicates that the pandemic has prompted a decline in children's emotional wellbeing, with younger children being particularly affected in terms of their ability to listen, share and to be sociable and independent. There are particular concerns about children's writing, speech and language. We know there remains a stubborn 6% gap between the children in Manchester and the national average in relation to achieving a good level of development. We have a strong core offer delivered by our Children's Centres and pathways, which provide parenting interventions and programmes to support communication and language development. Approximately 2,000

children receive a Speech and Language WellComm screen annually, and approximately 60% of children screened show signs of delay and therefore receive the speech and language WellComm intervention. In addition, approximately 1,000 children benefit annually from our parenting intervention. Following intervention, approximately 66% of children no longer present with conduct-disorder behaviour problems.

The SSCCs' summer offer of services and activities has engaged with a high volume of children and their families, paving the way back to more universally available services and activities in line with the easing of restrictions.

Early Help

Manchester's ambition, articulated in the [Early Help Strategy \(2018–2022\)](#), is that 'families, particularly those with multiple and complex needs, will have access to co-ordinated Early Help in accordance with need as soon as difficulties are identified. The offer is personalised, multi-agency and embedded within a whole-family approach. Children and young people in those families will live 'safe, happy, healthy and successful lives'.

Our strategic approach is fully integrated with the national Supporting Families Programme, which was formerly known as Troubled Families. When the initial five-year national Troubled Families programme ended in March 2020 it was extended for a further year. During this six-year period (2015–2021) Manchester worked with 12,121 families, of which 9,372 met Government criteria for sustained change. As the national programme evolves, we will continue to align and integrate our local offer with the national programme.

A collaborative approach between Early Years, Early Help and the Local Care Organisation is developing new ways of working, reflecting a whole-family approach, and the Early Help Hubs have a key role to support this collaboration at a neighbourhood level. Engagement with families and partners on Start Well priorities is underway and is focusing on 'what matters to families', and this will inform and shape the Start Well and Early Help priorities. We will achieve further impact and sustainability of the Early Help Strategy and approach via the continued partnership arrangements, including the Early Help Hubs, Bringing Services Together and closer collaboration with the Manchester Local Care Organisation. Sustaining partnership collaboration will inform future delivery arrangements and enable us to collectively deliver integrated teams for families centred around neighbourhood assets such as Children's Centres or schools.

During the pandemic, the offer of Early Help has been responding to the COVID-19 crisis and supporting vulnerable families that might be struggling. There have been increased requests for support with parenting, emotional and mental health support and wellbeing, alongside continued demand in relation to domestic violence and abuse incidents.

For many families, poverty and hardship has been exacerbated. As part of the Council's response to COVID-19 food and fuel poverty, this was alleviated for some through the COVID-19 Winter Relief Scheme, which was administered through the Early Help Service. 2,872 children have benefited from payments to relieve hardship identified by schools; this equates to £186,640 being distributed to alleviate hardship. In addition, supermarket

vouchers have been provided for children entitled to benefit-related free school meals and other vulnerable children during every school holiday since September 2020.

Adaptation of delivery meant revised guidance for all staff in the service in relation to face-to-face contact with families. This included doorstep visits, outside contact (walking in parks and meeting at other venues such as Sure Start Centres) and undertaking home visits where required. Staff liaised with partners to ensure families were supported and seen and Early Help practitioners found creative and innovative ways of engaging, communicating and supporting their families.

Support to ensure children attended school has been a high priority for the hubs, and Early Help practitioners have monitored school attendance, worked with families to understand barriers, and liaised with Pastoral Leads to resolve issues. Early Help are key partners supporting the school clusters arrangements and this is ensuring the wider needs of families in the localities are focused on. Following the resumption of a return of all children to school in March 2021, requests for Early Help support have been consistently high, averaging in excess of 800 per month, increasing significantly in March 2021 to 1,079 new requests for Early Help.

Domestic abuse notifications remain high and Early Help contribute to the daily multi-agency Domestic Abuse and Child Concern (DACC) meetings with police and social workers. In March 2021 there were 1,785 children discussed at the daily DACCs, and 291 went on to receive an offer of Early Help, most of the new notifications being referred into the social work service due to risk and complexity.

Demand for parenting support has been high; lockdowns have disrupted the delivery of face-to-face and group-work evidence-based programmes. In response, the Early Help Parenting Team developed a telephone appointment service during the summer to signpost and help parents. The helpline offered advice, guidance and strategies to parents and was popular, but could not be resourced once the term-time delivery of parenting programmes resumed. There remains a huge demand for parenting programmes across all three hubs and similar high demand is reflected in the early years. There is ongoing work with a range of partners, including Manchester Adult Education service, Early Years, health providers, and voluntary and community groups, to develop the range of parenting provision; current provision has adapted well to virtual, face-to-face and one-to-one support.

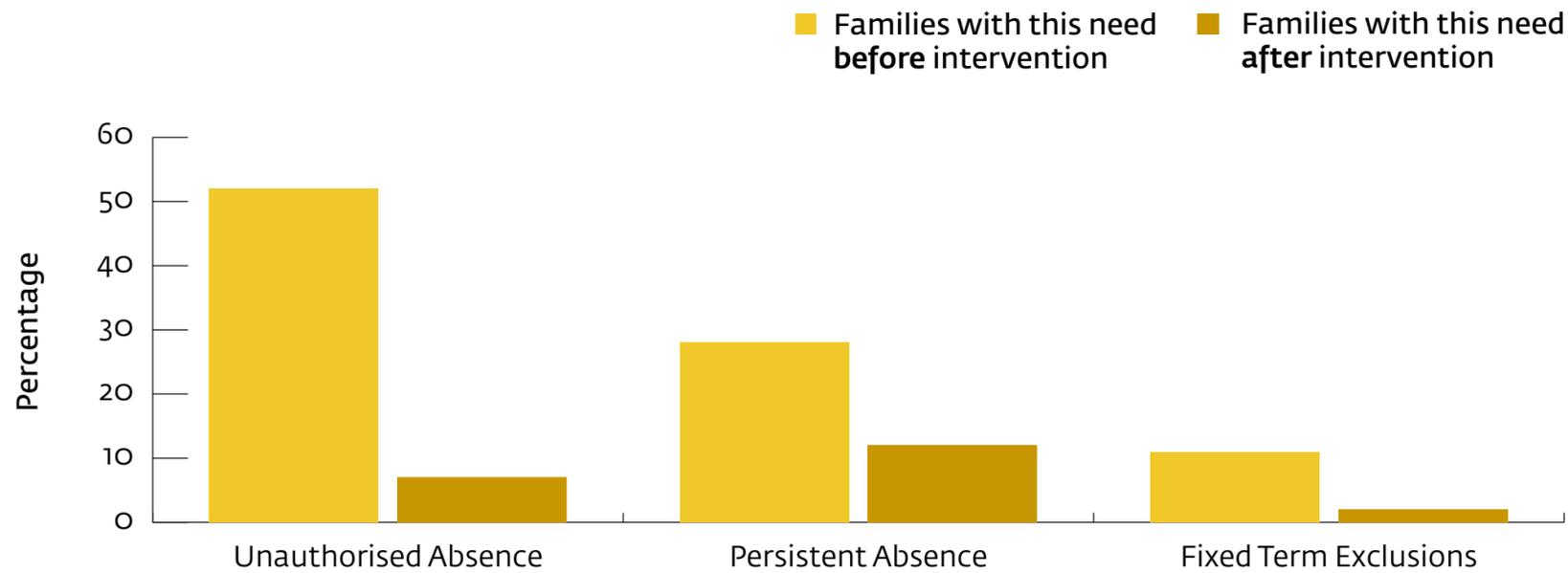
There is a strong focus on ensuring effective identification and support for babies – particularly babies born during the pandemic, who may have missed out on developmental opportunities around social and early years contact. This includes where developmental issues are not identified early enough and families where safeguarding and significant harm issues are being identified. During the pandemic we undertook a consultation and engagement as part of our Start Well Strategy, and 201 conversations were held with residents and 97 conversations with staff and volunteers. From these conversations, 91% of families reported that the pandemic had affected their experience of raising a baby. Families highlighted the lack of socialisation for babies and parents/ carers, isolation from friends and wider family members, and fewer activities and groups available.

We are addressing this through the Start Well partnerships and via targeted projects such as our Thriving Babies and Confident Parents Project. This project will provide enhanced early prenatal and post-natal support for families with complex vulnerabilities to prevent escalation and achieve early permanency for families. A thriving baby's team has been established and this will work with voluntary, community and adult services to improve the co-ordination and offer.

How do we know Early Help is making a difference?

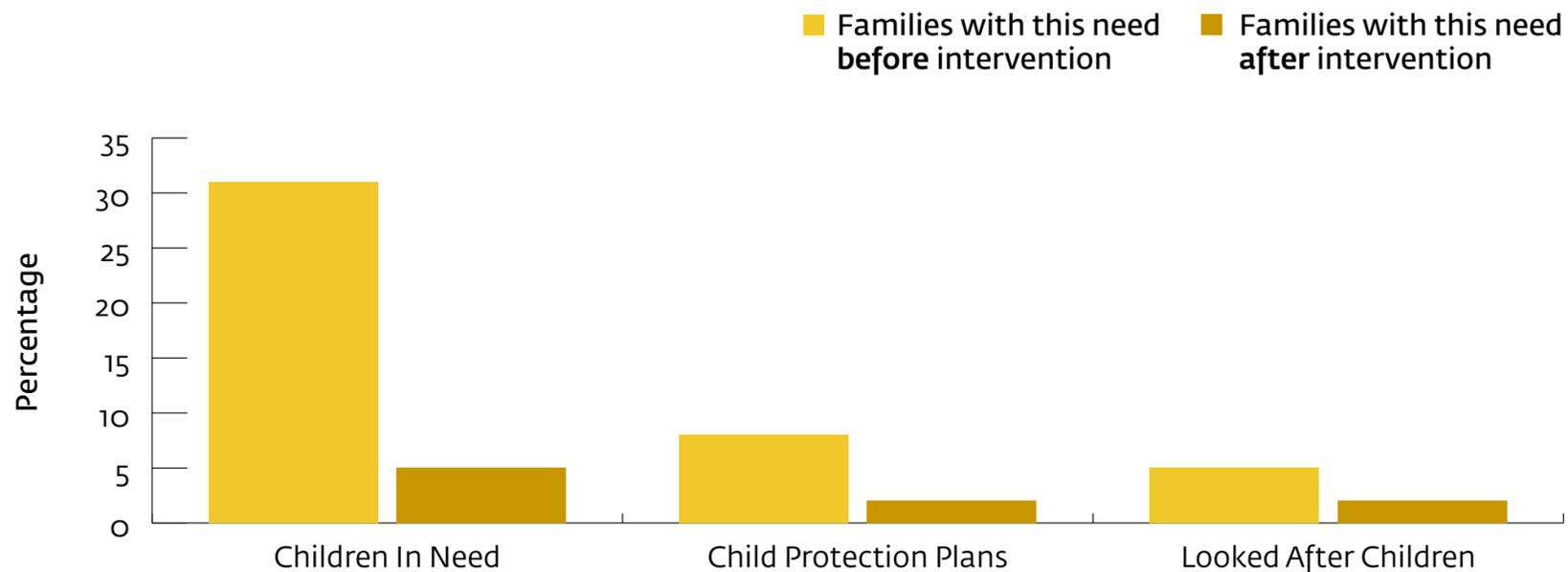
Our offer of Early Help is evaluated on a regular basis to ensure that families continue to make positive progress. Our latest evaluation demonstrates that a key-worker, whole-family offer can make a significant difference to the lives of families, including improving attendance, reducing involvement in crime, and keeping children and young people away from statutory services. Figure 4.9 shows that of the 52% of families who had a child with any unauthorised absence from school in the previous year, on average 87% had seen an improvement in their unauthorised absence 12 months after intervention. Figure 4.10 shows that of the 31% of families with a Child In Need (CIN) in the family, on average 83% of cases were successfully de-escalated by 12 months after intervention.

Figure 4.9:
Early Help impact on education



Source: Manchester City Council. Based on 7,734 families who received support during the period 2015–2020

Figure 4.10:
Early Help impact on Children’s Services



Source: Manchester City Council. Based on 7,734 families who received support during the period 2015–2020

Integrating health and social care

Getting the health and social care basics right is crucial to our city’s success. It has an impact on every one of the Our Manchester goals we’re all working towards for 2025. A key priority of the Our Manchester Strategy is to radically improve health and care outcomes in the city. Manchester has some of the poorest health outcomes in the country, and there are very significant health inequalities within the city.

The Locality Plan, ‘Our Healthier Manchester’, represents the first five years of ambitious, transformational change needed to deliver this vision. The Locality Plan is fully aligned with the Our Manchester approach. This will mean supporting more residents to become independent and resilient, and better connected to the assets and networks in places and communities. Services will be reformed so that they are built around citizens and communities, rather than organisational silos. The Locality Plan is aligned to the Council’s Corporate Plan priority ‘Healthy, Cared-for People’.

Health and Adult Social Care Services within Manchester are delivered through the Manchester Local Care Organisation (MLCO). The MLCO is a public-sector partnership established by Manchester to deliver primary and community-based health and adult social care services, and its role has become even more critical due to the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on many of our communities. It delivers services to adults and children across the city in partnership with Manchester Primary Care Partnership, Manchester City Council, Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust, and Greater Manchester Mental Health NHS

Foundation Trust. MLCO also works with many of the 3,600 voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations working across the city.

Grounded in the Our Manchester principles and the Manchester Strategy, the vision of the MLCO is to work together to support the people of Manchester to:

- Have equal access to health and care services
- Receive safe, effective and compassionate care closer to their homes
- Live healthy, independent, fulfilling lives
- Be part of dynamic, thriving and supportive communities
- Have the same opportunities and life chances – no matter where they were born or live.

The MLCO joins up the care that Mancunians get to help keep them out of hospital, taking a strength-based approach to help them live independently. The introduction of Integrated Neighbourhood Teams is transforming how residents experience their community-based health and adult social care. The integrated teams reduce duplication, meaning that different organisations talk to each other more about the care of patients, citizens and residents. It helps break down boundaries between different organisations and ensures there's a smooth process for helping people in their homes when they are in recovery or dealing with long-term health issues.

Case study: Integrated Neighbourhood Teams

There are 12 Integrated Neighbourhood Teams across the city, each serving a population of around 30,000–50,000 people. On a practical level, they co-locate adult social care and NHS community health staff in teams working together from neighbourhood hubs in the areas where they are based. That allows them to work closely together on a day-to-day basis.

For example, district nursing teams and social workers in Integrated Neighbourhood Teams carry out joint visits to citizens so that their health and care needs can be addressed in one visit. Teams also meet daily so they can share information on people and develop joint plans to meet their needs. Referrals that used to take place between organisations could take days or weeks, but can now be made immediately through the one-team approach.

The teams also work together with other partners – such as GPs, housing providers, pharmacies and the voluntary and faith sector – in multi-agency meetings through the Integrated Neighbourhood Teams. This allows action to be taken around the individual needs of people with all the right people in the room together.

As well as providing day-to-day services, the teams have a role in working with the community to build on existing strengths and tackle health and care issues that are important to each neighbourhood. This model of neighbourhood-based care is built on international best practice – that working in communities in an integrated way improves outcomes for citizens.

The integrated neighbourhood team model has seen strong relationships established in local communities over a number of years. These have come to the fore during the pandemic and allowed quick action to be taken to support communities. Health and social care teams have worked together with the Council's neighbourhood teams and other partners from the community to provide information and support for citizens. The voluntary sector has been a key partner in this work as well – tapping into their local knowledge and networks to meet the needs of communities of interest. This has been seen throughout the pandemic and also during delivery of the COVID-19 vaccination programme; it has included:

- Health and care staff working with places of worship to deliver information sessions on COVID-19 regulations and pop-up vaccination sessions
- Community newspapers developed to share health, care and wider community information with people who have poorer access to digital communications
- Taking an every-contact-counts approach so that health and care front-line staff have the right information to share with people in their interactions with them
- Working to provide information for ethnic minority communities in their own languages.

Impact of COVID-19 and response

Clear evidence has emerged that COVID-19 is having a disproportionate impact on some communities that have already experienced health inequalities in our city. Black, Asian and minority ethnic people, people with disabilities and people in poverty are more likely to contract COVID-19 and have poorer mortality outcomes. The long-term health impacts are not known yet, but it is expected that the socioeconomic impacts and impacts of higher mortality rates not directly linked to COVID-19 will also be within these communities, unless we radically change our approach to health and social care. This makes the need to embed inclusion and address inequality even more critical.

The COVID-19 pandemic presents a unique challenge for the country and Manchester. It also continues to present a challenge for Adult Social Care to undertake its functions of assessment, support planning, monitoring, review and safeguarding (the five core responsibilities of social work within the service) and the commissioning and delivery of care and support through internal services and the social care market within Manchester.

Adult Social Care has played a critical role in supporting vulnerable people across the city to remain safe and as independent as possible, and to continue to live within the community, preventing crisis and the need for more intensive health and social care services. In addition, throughout the pandemic, work has focused on the hospitals delivering discharge-to-assess arrangements, discharging as soon as people are medically fit, ensuring valuable capacity is available in hospitals.

From the outset, Adult Social Care's response plan was structured around clear objectives:

- Continuity of care for vulnerable people assessed under the Care Act
- Minimising risk of harm/fatality
- Protecting the credibility and reputation of health and social care and partners.

Focusing on these three objectives has meant that the service has responded well to the pandemic, including:

- Ongoing support to care providers
- Ensuring supply and provision of PPE
- Testing of citizens and staff
- Recruiting additional support workers to meet capacity gaps
- Undertaking safe-and-well calls to support vulnerable citizens and those not accessing services.

The service has been able to keep a close overview of issues and challenges within social-work teams, in-house provider services and the external care market, which has meant that support provided has been targeted and managed. Only a very limited number of services were paused (within Provider Services), while other services continued to operate throughout the pandemic, adapting to being delivered in a different way.

The Adult Social Care assessment teams have notably conducted welfare calls and visits as necessary to those vulnerable people known and newly referred via the contact centre at various

points during the COVID-19 pandemic. The heightened response was to ensure those contacted were aware of the support available and were able to meet their own basic needs, and if not, measures would be put in place, such as delivery of food parcels.

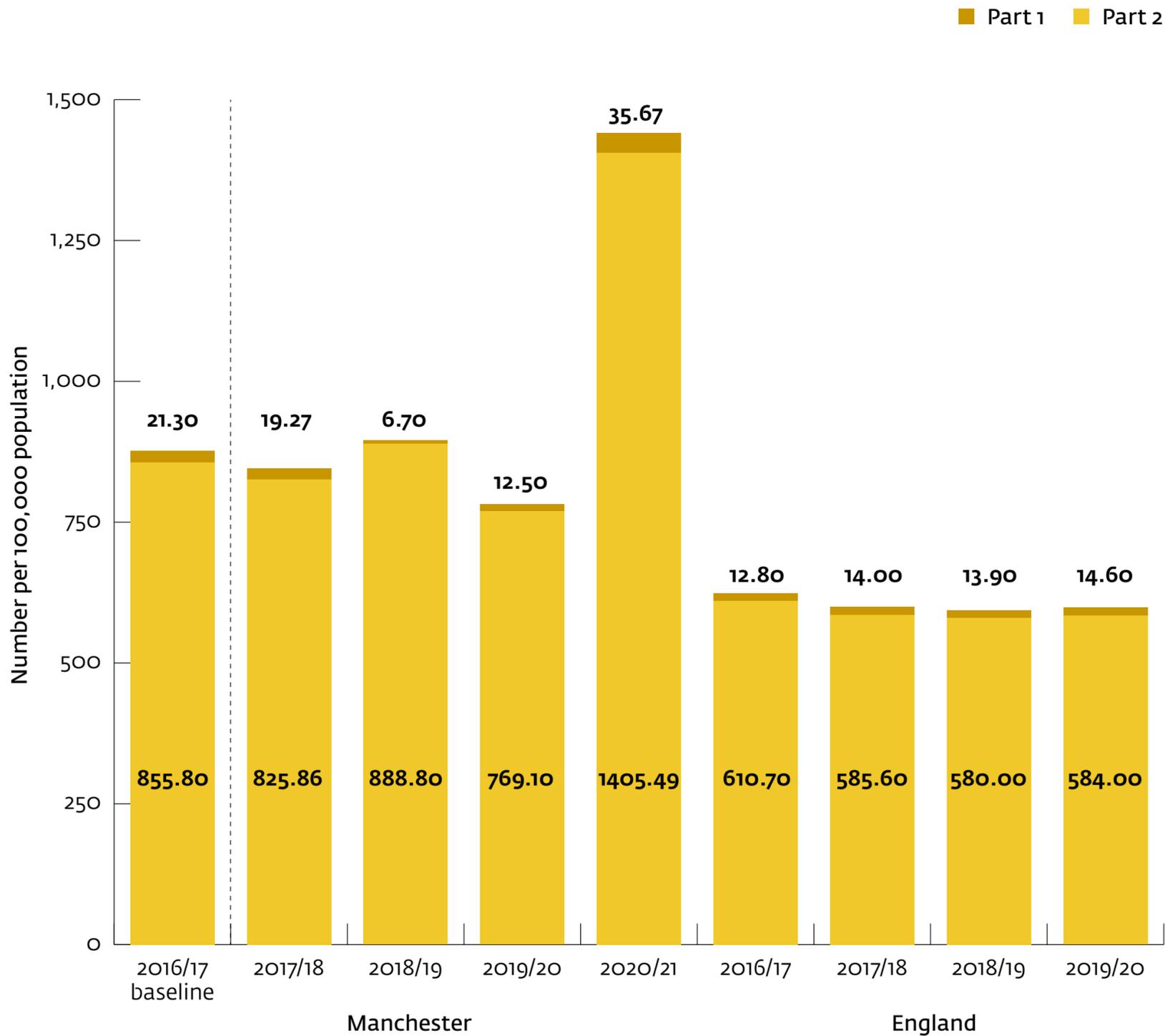
For those living in various supported settings, the combined efforts of the provider services, the assessment teams and public health and quality-assurance colleagues meant that they were updated, felt supported and had access to guidance and support. Health and social care system leaders in Manchester have agreed that in order to achieve the city's ambitions, the Manchester Local Care Organisation should be strengthened with the right resources and responsibilities to enable integrated working at scale and pace. As part of this work, a new section 75 agreement between Manchester City Council and the Manchester University Foundation Trust (MFT) has been developed. This allows the effective delivery of integrated health and adult social care and includes the delegation of responsibility for adult social care to MLCO.

Supporting older people to live independently for longer

New admissions to local authority-supported permanent residential/nursing care

Figure 4.11 shows that the provisional rate of those aged 18–64 admitted to permanent residential/nursing care was 35.67 per 100,000 in 2020/21; this is a substantial increase from the figure of 12.50 reported in 2019/20, and the 2016/17 baseline of 21.30 per 100,000. Provisional figures show that the rate of those aged 65 and over admitted to permanent residential/nursing care was 1,405.49 per 100,000, up from 769.1 in 2019/20.

Figure 4.11: Long-term support needs of younger adults (aged 18–64) (part 1) and older adults (aged 65+) (part 2) met by admission to residential and nursing care homes, per 100,000 population



Source: ASCOF (2A parts 1 and 2), Department of Health, Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework 2019/20

Delayed transfers of care

Prior to 2020/21, delayed transfers of care data was collected, calculated and published by NHS England. However, this is no longer the case, stopping in February 2020 as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. As such, the data for this year is based upon locally collected data and only for MFT (covering North Manchester General Hospital (NMGH), Manchester Royal Infirmary, Wythenshawe and Trafford General Hospital). It should also be noted that from this year, NMGH figures are now included in those for MFT, where previously they were included for data for Pennine Acute Trust.

While figures are therefore not directly comparable due to the addition of data from NMGH, it is still possible to determine trends from the MFT data over time. For March 2021, 28 people were delayed for a total of 604 days. This is considerably lower than both the end of February 2020 (157 people delayed for a total of 4,564 days between them) and March 2019 (48 people delayed for 1,476 days between them). The March 2021 figures are comparatively lower due to cross-partner efforts in discharging people from hospital during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The new Hospital Discharge Guidance was reviewed in July 2021, further embedding the Discharge to Assess model into the integrated health and social care systems and maintaining the ethos that no Care Act assessment or Continuing Healthcare assessment should take place in the hospital setting wherever possible.

To achieve timely, safe and effective discharges requires effective partnership working, and the services have been redesigned to facilitated this, with hospital Discharge to Assess teams working

alongside health colleagues. Assessments previously undertaken in hospital will now take place at home or in an alternative care setting if required. In addition, Adult Social Care’s commitment to support people to return home safely has led to the creation of several apartments across the city to support people to get home safely and with reduced dependence upon residential settings/care.

Improving health outcomes

The Manchester Population Health Plan

(2018–2027) is at the heart of our long-term plan to tackle Manchester’s entrenched health inequalities. The plan contains five priority areas for action to be delivered over the lifetime of the plan. These are:

- Improving outcomes in the first 1,000 days of a child’s life
- Strengthening the positive impact of work on health
- Supporting people, households and communities to be socially connected and make changes that matter to them
- Creating an age-friendly city that promotes good health and wellbeing for people in middle and later life
- Taking action on preventable early deaths.

The plan forms the overarching health and wellbeing strategy for the city, under the governance of the Health and Wellbeing Board, and reflects the ambition of the Our Manchester Strategy. It aims to build on the successes and achievements of the past 20 years, while recognising that the population-health challenges facing Manchester are considerable. The establishment of Manchester Health and Care Commissioning (MHCC), the Manchester Local

Care Organisation (MLCO), and the Single Hospital Service (SHS) offers a real opportunity to break the cycle of health inequalities in Manchester and deliver prevention programmes at scale.

Good progress has been made in a number of areas. Emerging evidence indicates that the pandemic has had a major negative impact on life expectancy, which will counteract the small increases seen prior to the pandemic. Likewise, recent improvements in the mortality rate from diseases considered preventable (cardiovascular diseases, cancer and respiratory diseases) may have been reversed by the pandemic. The proportion of cancers diagnosed early has increased in the city. Fewer Manchester mothers reported being a smoker at the time their baby was delivered. Reducing the under-18 conception rate continues to be a success story, and the number of under-18 conceptions in Manchester has remained below 200 a year since 2017. Fewer children aged 0–5 are being admitted to hospital for dental caries. There has also been a significant reduction in the rate of suicides and injuries of undetermined intent since the three-year period 2009–11.

Despite these improvements, Manchester still has some of the worst health outcomes in the country. There are also significant inequalities within the city; life expectancy at birth is 7.3 years lower for men and 7.8 years lower for women in the most deprived areas of Manchester than in the least deprived areas.

COVID-19 and Manchester’s resident population

COVID-19 has had very significant impacts on people’s health and the social determinants of health in Manchester. Since the first case of COVID-19 in Manchester was identified on 3 March 2020, there have been over 96,000 confirmed cases of

COVID-19 in the city and, sadly, over 1,100 Manchester residents have died from causes directly or indirectly linked to the virus.

Table 4.2 shows that on 31 October 2021, there had been 96,046 Manchester residents with at least one positive COVID-19 test result since the start of the pandemic. This is equivalent to a rate of 17,283 cases of COVID-19 per 100,000 population, compared to a rate of 13,618 per 100,000 across England as a whole.

Table 4.2: Number of COVID-19 cases and rate per 100,000 population for Core Cities, 31 October 2021 snapshot

Core City	Number of cases	Rate per 100,000 population
Birmingham	173,284	15,193
Bristol	68,893	14,788
Leeds	130,992	16,399
Liverpool	84,645	16,913
Manchester	96,046	17,283
Newcastle	50,204	16,363
Nottingham	53,369	15,832
Sheffield	86,010	14,597

Source: [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) in the UK dashboard](#)

Expressing the total number of COVID-19 cases as a rate per 100,000 population gives a fairer comparison of the number of cases in each area. However, it does not take account of the different rates of testing or differences in the age and sex of the local populations.

Over the course of the pandemic, clear evidence has emerged of the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on particular groups, notably Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities, those born outside the UK, disabled people and those at high occupational risk and/or in poverty. These groups were already known to experience poorer health and care outcomes before the pandemic and have also been shown to be more likely to contract COVID-19 and have a higher risk of mortality. For example, it is estimated that Black, Asian and minority ethnic groups account for 45% of the city's population; however, at the peak of the pandemic these groups accounted for approximately 60% of confirmed COVID-19 cases. Many minority ethnic groups are significantly more economically vulnerable than the rest of the city's population and were up to four times more likely to work in 'shut down' industries during lockdown. Nationally, disabled people accounted for some 60% of COVID-19 deaths and learning-disabled people were found to be up to six times more likely to die from COVID-19, trends that were reflected locally. Addressing the needs of high-risk, clinically vulnerable and underserved communities is one of the six key themes of the [Manchester Local Prevention and Response Plan](#).

Manchester Health and Care Commissioning (MHCC) established the COVID Health Equity Manchester (CHEM) group as a vehicle for improving the experiences and outcomes for groups of people known to experience a disproportionate risk of transmission, severe disease and death from COVID-19, including Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities, some people born outside the UK or Ireland, people in specific occupational groups, disabled people, as well as other inclusion health groups (asylum seekers and refugees, gypsies and travellers, sex workers and ex-offenders).

The group has four clearly defined objectives:

- Development and delivery of culturally competent, targeted public-health messages and engaging and involving groups most at risk
- A whole-system approach to protecting people in identified at-risk groups from contracting the virus
- Preventing severe disease or death
- Addressing the immediate indirect consequences of COVID-19 on the at-risk groups.

The group has representation from equality and diversity leads and practitioners from health and care organisations across the city, communications and engagement leads, primary care, local neighbourhood teams, and VCSE organisations.

The strength-based approach of drawing from community insight and intelligence has enabled partners to better develop culturally competent messages and deliver preventative measures swiftly and effectively to communities that do not currently have good access to timely accurate public-health information.

The CHEM group has also been at the heart of the work to develop a Vaccine Equity Plan as part of the COVID-19 vaccination programme. There is evidence of positive progress in vaccine equity, with improved coverage and a narrowing of the gap between the general population and Bangladeshi, African and Pakistani people, people with a learning disability, and patients with a severe and enduring mental illness.

Life expectancy

Public Health England (PHE) has released provisional estimates of life expectancy at birth for 2020 to show the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in England and its regions. These estimates indicate that life expectancy in England in 2020 was 78.7 years for males and 82.7 years for females. Compared with 2019, life expectancy in England in 2020 was 1.3 years lower for males and 0.9 years lower for females. These falls exceed any previous year-on-year changes seen since 1981.

Provisional estimates based on local calculations show that life expectancy at birth for Manchester residents has fallen by 3.1 years for men and 1.9 years for women in 2020 compared with 2019. This confirms what we already know in respect of the fact that there has been greater mortality from COVID-19 in men than women. Provisional data for Manchester residents shows that there were 568 more deaths in men and 295 more deaths in women in 2020 compared with 2019.

National data shows that, for both sexes, life expectancy fell in all of the deprivation deciles between 2019 and 2020. However, it fell by more in the most deprived areas of England. Data from the Indices of Deprivation 2019 shows that over 43% of LSOAs within Manchester rank in the most deprived 10% (decile) of LSOAs in England and just over 59% are in the most deprived 20%. Therefore, it is not surprising that the size of the fall in life expectancy in Manchester is in excess of that seen in England overall. This has had the effect of widening inequalities in life expectancy between Manchester and the national average.

Healthy life expectancy at birth (overarching indicator)

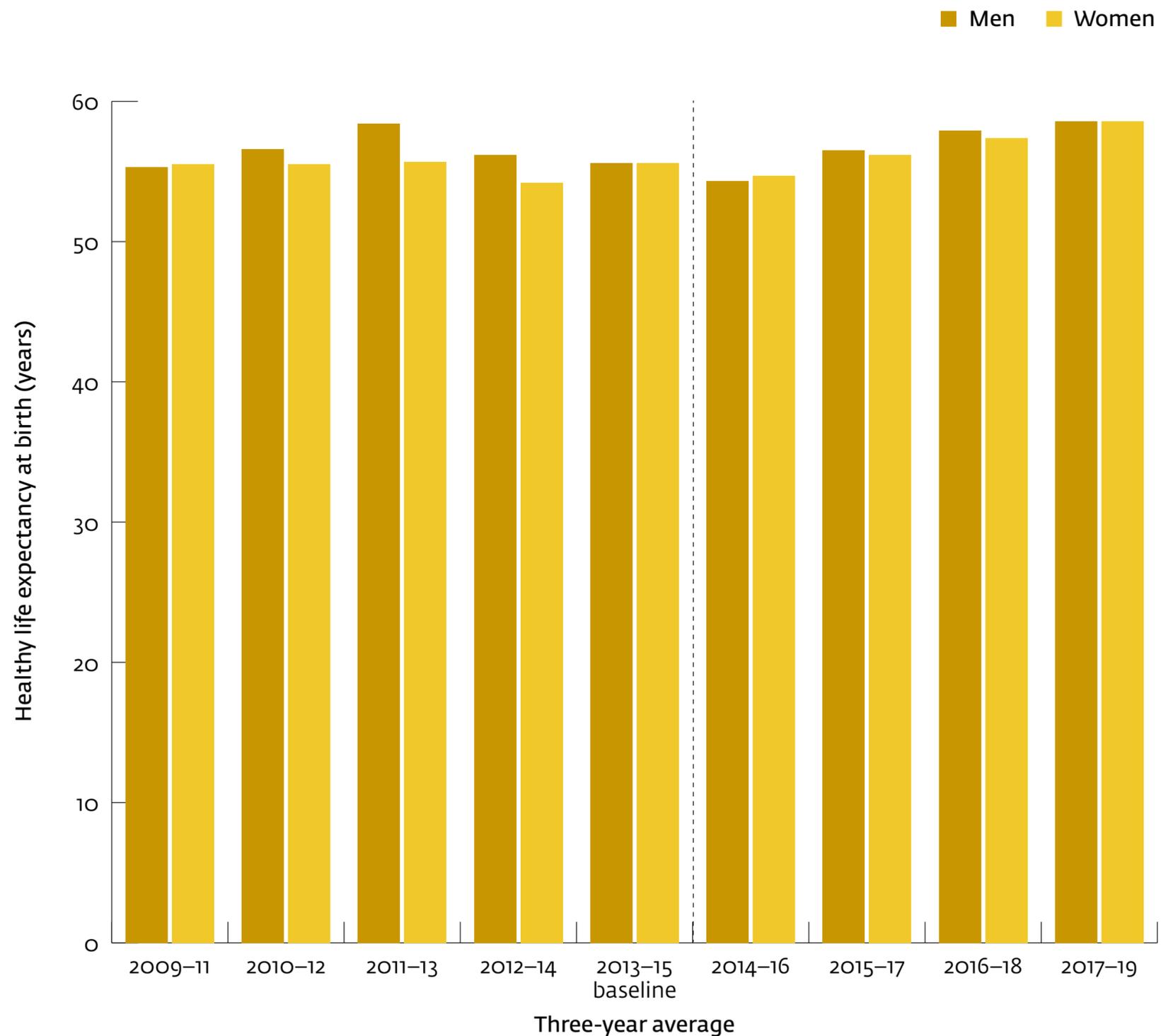
Healthy life expectancy (HLE) is a measure of the average number of years a person would expect to live in good health based on current mortality rates and the prevalence of self-reported good health. Estimates of healthy life expectancy are calculated using health-state prevalence data from the Annual Population Survey (APS), combined with mortality data and mid-year population estimates for each period.

In 2018, the Office for National Statistics (ONS) revised their estimates of healthy life expectancy using a new method. This is designed to address the current weakness of small sample sizes producing somewhat erratic health-state prevalence estimates across the age distribution in areas with smaller populations. The figures in this report may therefore differ from those cited in previous years.

Historical trends show that the improvements in healthy life expectancy (HLE) at birth seen in the early part of this decade did start to level off and fall slightly, particularly among men, but are beginning to take an upward turn again.

According to the latest published data (for 2017–19) in Figure 4.12, HLE at birth in Manchester slightly increased for both men and women compared with the previous three-year period (2016–18). In men, the average number of years a person would expect to live in good health has increased from 57.9 years to 58.6 years, and in women it has increased from 57.4 years to 58.6 years. Statistically, there has not been a significant increase, 0.7 for men and 1.2 for women. The figures compare to a decrease of 0.2 for men and 0.4 for women in England (HLE of 63.2 and 63.5 years respectively).

Figure 4.12:
Healthy life expectancy at birth, 2009–11 to 2017–19



Source: Office for National Statistics © Crown Copyright 2020

The previous data reported an increase in HLE for men in Manchester as greater than that for women. The gap has narrowed in years between men and women, which means that equally they can expect to live longer in good health.

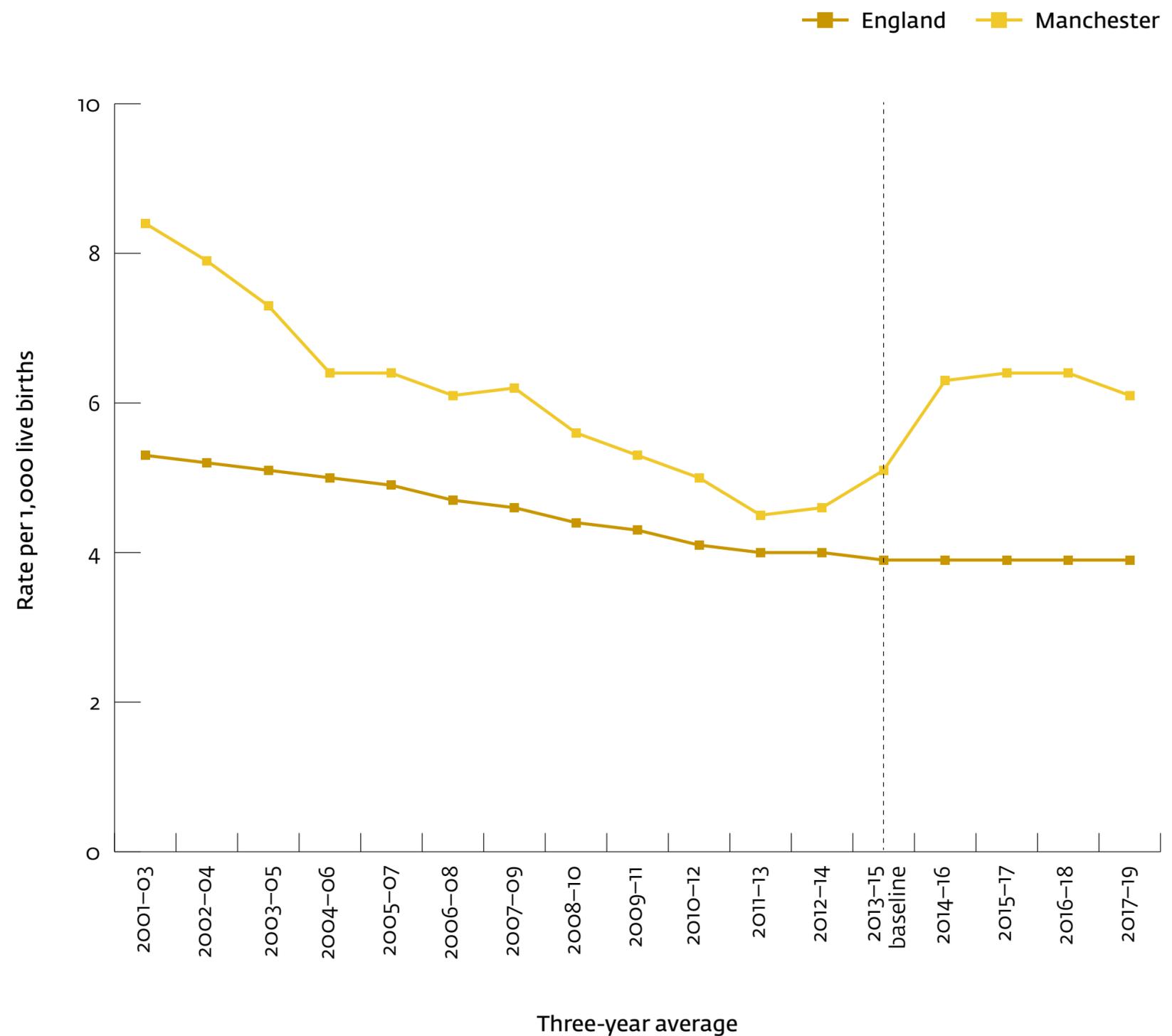
Improving outcomes in the first 1,000 days of a child's life

Infant deaths

Infant deaths (ie. deaths to children aged under one year of age) are an indicator of the general health of the entire population. They reflect the relationship between causes of infant mortality and other determinants of population health, such as economic, social and environmental conditions. Deaths during the first 28 days of life (the neonatal period) are considered to reflect the health and care of both mother and newborn child.

The infant mortality rate in Manchester has fallen substantially since the early 1990s. Between the three-year periods 1999–2001 and 2014–16, the rate fell by 32%. This is partly due to general improvements in healthcare, combined with specific improvements in midwifery and neonatal intensive care. Although there was a worrying increase in the infant mortality rate between the three-year periods 2011–13 and 2014–16, the position has since stabilised, and Figure 4.13 shows the rate has decreased between the three-year periods 2016–18 and 2017–19, from 6.4 to 6.1 per 1,000 live births, resulting in the number of infant deaths falling from 144 to 134. The England infant mortality rate has remained steady at 3.9 per 1,000 live births since the three-year period 2013–15.

Figure 4.13: Infant mortality (number of infant deaths under one year of age per 1,000 live births)



Source: Office for National Statistics © Crown Copyright 2020

Reducing infant mortality is a complex picture of interrelated factors. Some of these factors are modifiable risks, such as maternal smoking, obesity in pregnancy, and parental/household smoking. Others act as protective barriers that prevent infant deaths, including flu vaccination for pregnant women, as well as breastfeeding and safe-sleeping practices (such as putting babies to sleep on their backs in a separate cot or Moses basket in the same room as parents).

In order to try to reverse the trends in infant mortality in Manchester and ensure that those who experience baby loss get the support they need, a multi-agency Reducing Infant Mortality Strategy was launched in 2019. This spans a five-year period (2019–2024), allowing time for longer-term outcomes to be realised. The implementation of the strategy is overseen by a steering group, which includes key partners with a role to play in the delivery of the strategy; they also influence others, such as maternity services, health-visiting services, strategic housing, Early Help, early years, the Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP), safeguarding, and the voluntary and community sector.

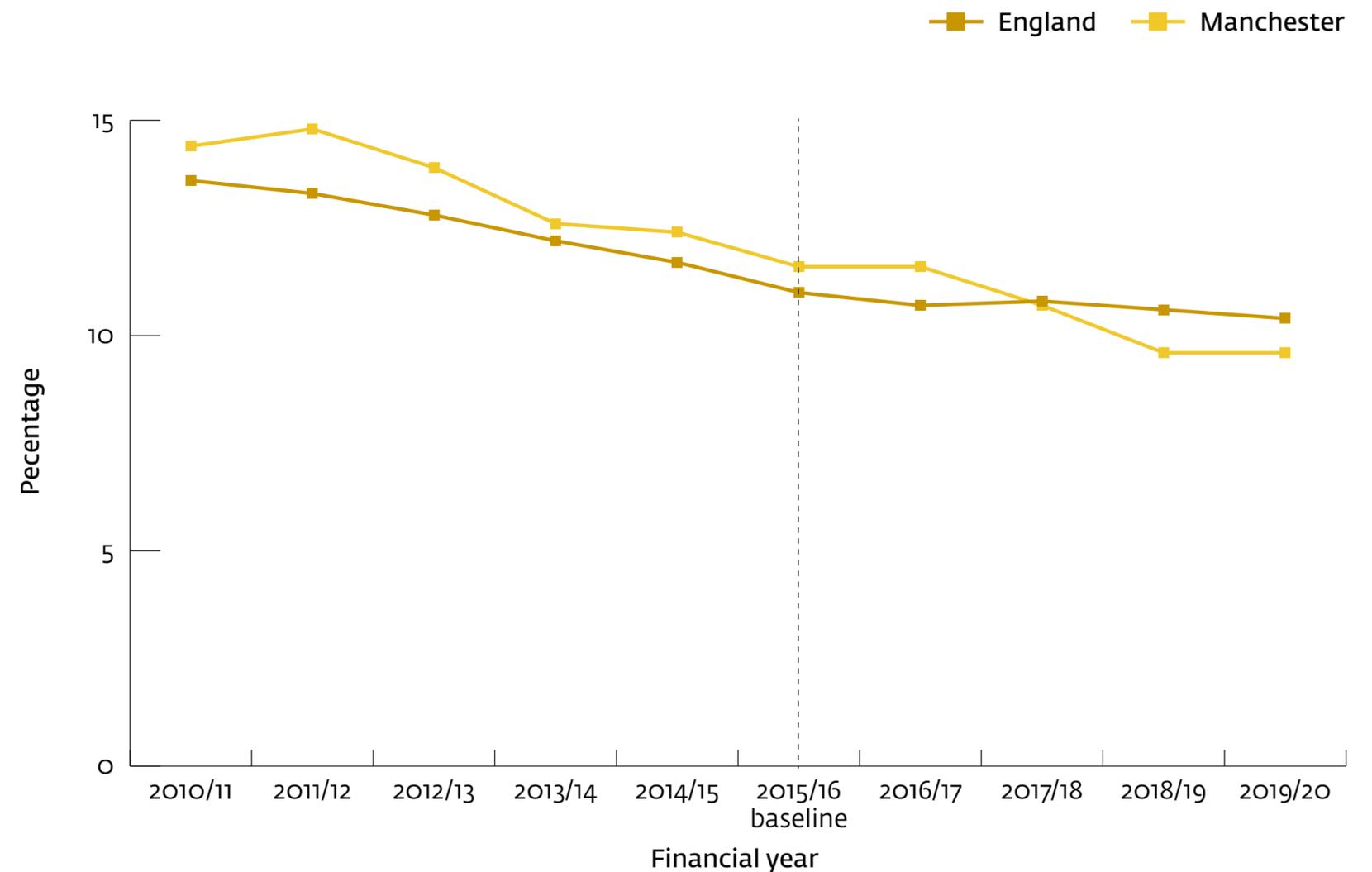
The strategy is a clear indication of the collective commitment of organisations in the city to ensure a reduction in infant mortality. By co-ordinating efforts across the city, we are confident we can start to see a downward trend once again.

Smoking in pregnancy

Smoking during pregnancy can cause serious health problems for the mother and baby, including complications during pregnancy and labour. Smoking during pregnancy carries an increased risk of miscarriage, premature birth, stillbirth, low birthweight, and sudden unexpected death in infancy.

In 2019/20, 9.6% of mothers in Manchester reported they were a smoker at the time their baby was delivered, compared with 10.4% of mothers across England as a whole. The percentage of mothers in Manchester reporting being a smoker at the time of delivery has fallen from a peak of 14.4% in 2010/11, and the local rate is now below the England average (Figure 4.14).

Figure 4.14:
Smoking status at time of delivery
(percentage of women who reported being a smoker at the time of delivery)



Source: NHS Digital © Copyright 2020

A new citywide community-based, nurse-led Tobacco Addiction Treatment Service, called Be Smoke Free, began operating on 1 April 2020. The service will link to primary and secondary care and will work out of 24 community locations, providing face-to-face consultations and support, as well as a direct supply of combination pharmacotherapy. Owing to the COVID-19 pandemic, the service provision was remodelled to see smokers who were most at risk from COVID-19 and hospital admission. Throughout the pandemic, the Be Smoke Free team assessed and supported all patients by phone or video call, offering the same planned 12-week support. Dedicated nurses ensured that all clients still received a personalised package of Nicotine Replacement Therapy by physically delivering medications to all clients' homes on a weekly basis, supporting some of our most vulnerable smokers to shield. Between April and June 2020, the service achieved a 44.4% quit rate for people with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease/coronary heart disease and other long-term conditions (NICE guidance seeks 35% quit rates).

Low birthweight of term babies

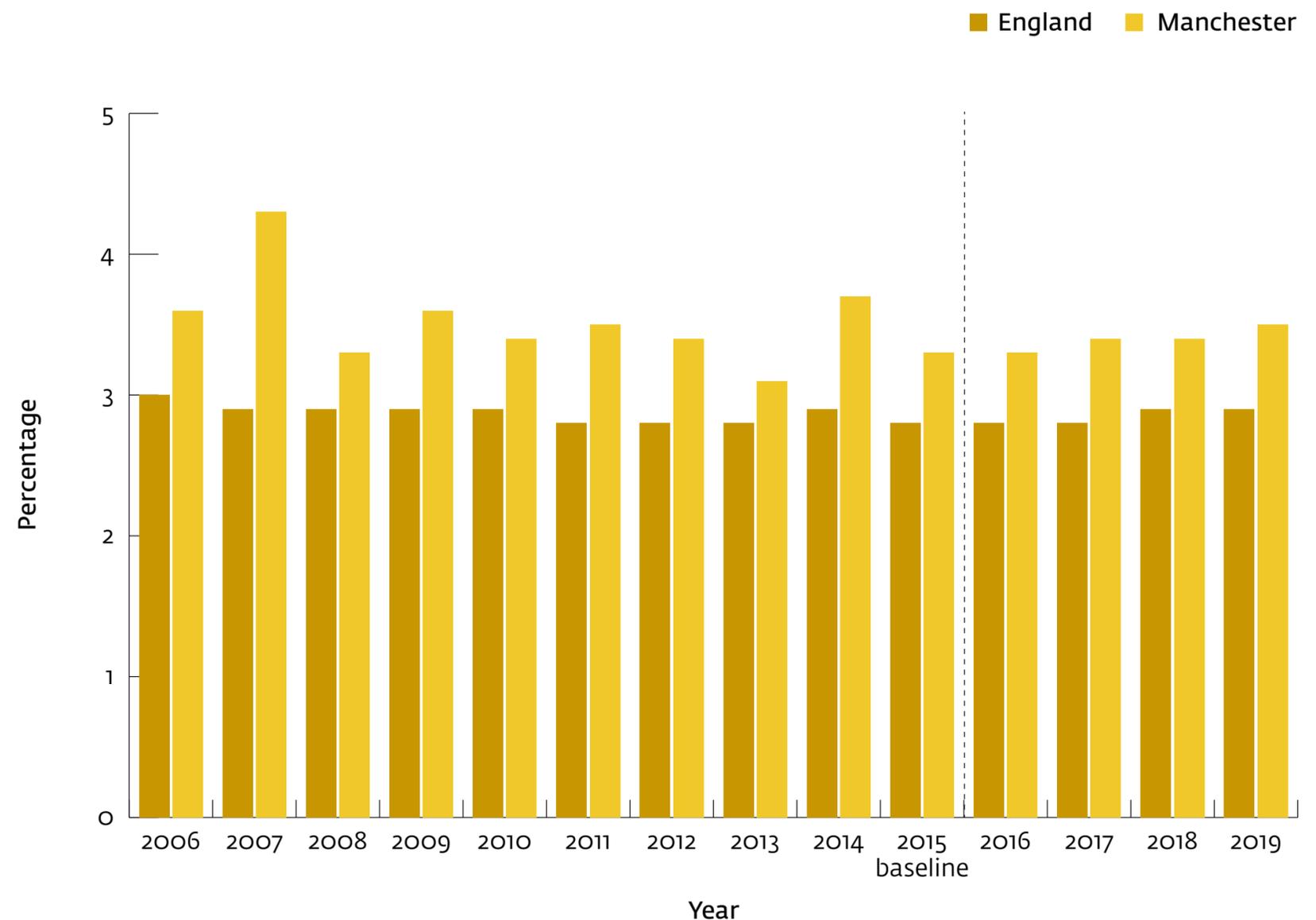
Low birthweight increases the risk of childhood mortality and of developmental problems for the child and is associated with poorer health in later life. A high proportion of low-birthweight births could also indicate poor lifestyles among pregnant women and/or issues with the maternity services.

Figure 4.15 shows the proportion of babies born to term (ie. a gestational age of at least 37 complete weeks) with a recorded birthweight that is under 2,500g. Despite year-on-year variations, historical trends point towards an overall reduction in the proportion of low-weight births of term babies

in Manchester, from a peak of 4.3% of term babies in 2007 to a figure of 3.5% in 2019. In comparison, there has been little change in the England figures, reducing from 3% in 2006 to 2.9% in 2019.

Implementing the Reducing Infant Mortality Strategy should lead to a reduction in low-birthweight babies through a focus on supporting the health and wellbeing of pregnant women, improving quality, safety and access to services, and addressing the wider determinants of health.

Figure 4.15: Low birthweight of term babies (live births with a recorded birthweight under 2,500g and a gestational age of at least 37 complete weeks)



Source: Office for National Statistics © Crown Copyright 2020

Hospital admissions for dental decay in young children (0–5 years)

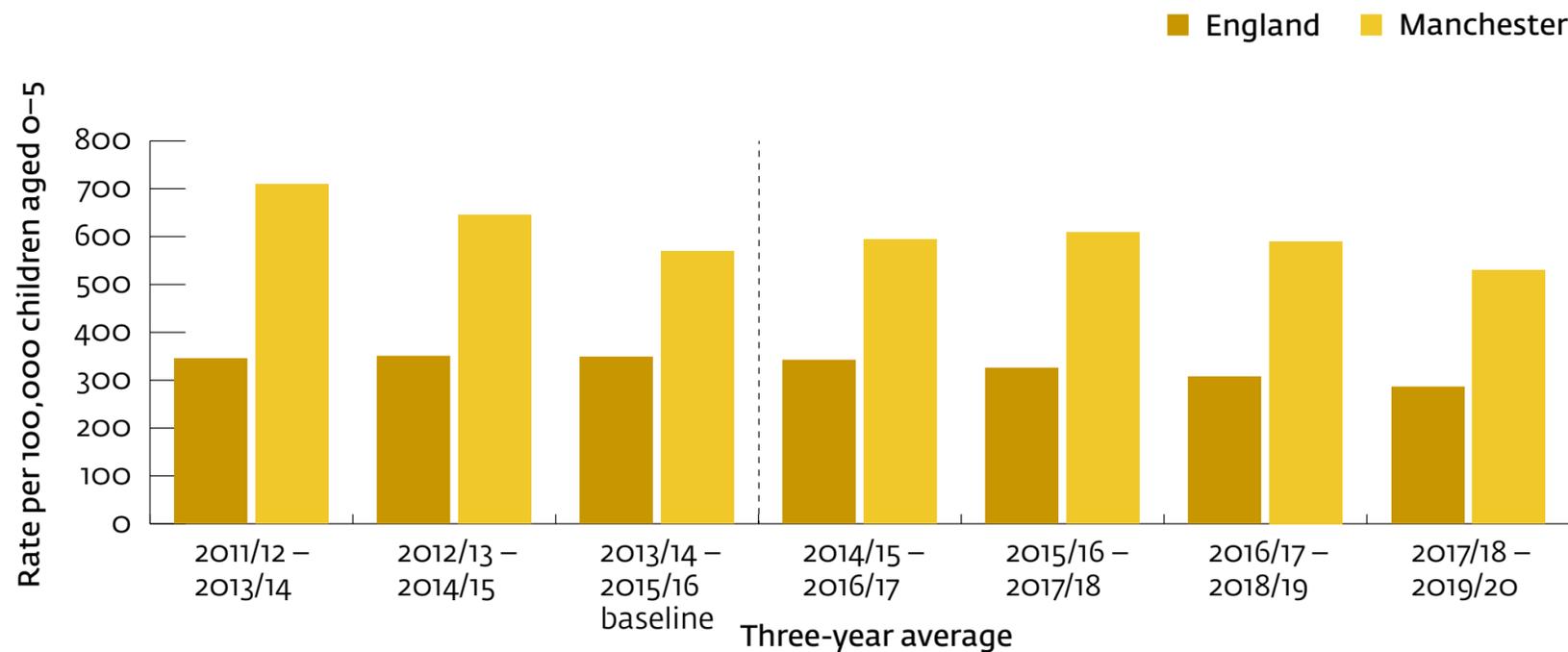
Dental caries (tooth decay) results in destruction of the crowns of teeth and often leads to pain and infection. Tooth decay is more common in deprived communities, and the prevalence of decay is a direct measure of dental health, as well as an indirect measure of child health and diet.

This indicator measures the number of children aged 5 and under who are admitted to hospital as a result of tooth decay. No assumptions can be made about the method of anaesthesia provided for these procedures, but it is likely that the majority of episodes of treatment will involve general anaesthetic. In order to produce more reliable figures, a three-year average is reported.

The national definition of this indicator has been expanded to include five-year-old children and is therefore not directly comparable with the figures included in previous reports, which focused on children aged 0–4 years only.

Figure 4.16 shows the rate of children aged 5 and under admitted to hospital for tooth decay in Manchester fell dramatically from 709.3 per 100,000 in the three-year period 2011/12–2013/14 to 569.6 in the three-year period 2013/14–2015/16, before increasing back up to 608.5 in the three-year period 2015/16–2017/18. The figures have decreased since, reaching 529.1 in the three-year period 2017/18–2019/20. The England rate of admissions remains significantly lower than Manchester and has been reducing since the three-year period 2013/14–2015/16, reaching 286.2 for the latest period. This has significantly been the lowest rate for both England and Manchester.

Figure 4.16: Hospital admissions for dental caries in children aged 0–5 years



Source: Hospital Episode Statistics (HES). Copyright © 2020, Re-used with the permission of the Health and Social Care Information Centre. All rights reserved.

It should be noted that this data may be an underestimate of the true number of hospital admissions for this procedure in young children, because in some instances the Community Dental Service may provide the extraction service in hospital premises. These episodes of treatment may not be included in the published figures.

The Oral Health Improvement Team (OHIT) provides a range of interventions that provide oral-health education alongside the means to improve self-care behaviour for different groups in the population, with a primary focus on children under 11 years of age. The services provided by this team have been significantly disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic in the past 18 months, perhaps more than any other children’s community health provision. The team’s ability to deliver oral-health improvement

interventions that target the most vulnerable groups of children in the city, including deprived communities, Looked After Children, children with special needs and homeless families with children was initially suspended under Government guidance. Oral health work is only slowly being returned in a COVID-compliant way where settings allow, excluding fluoride varnishing and close-contact interventions. The OHIT team have been involved in the distribution of toothbrushing packs to targeted families in Early Years, as well as delivering training to staff working in children’s settings, working within new COVID-19 restrictions.

Access to dental care for children has been challenging given insufficiencies in dental surgery waiting lists and loss of community settings due to COVID-19 restrictions. The Oral Health Improvement Service

has worked to ensure children's colleagues, such as Early Years or health visitors, can refer vulnerable children into community dental treatment.

Other measures of the health of children and young people

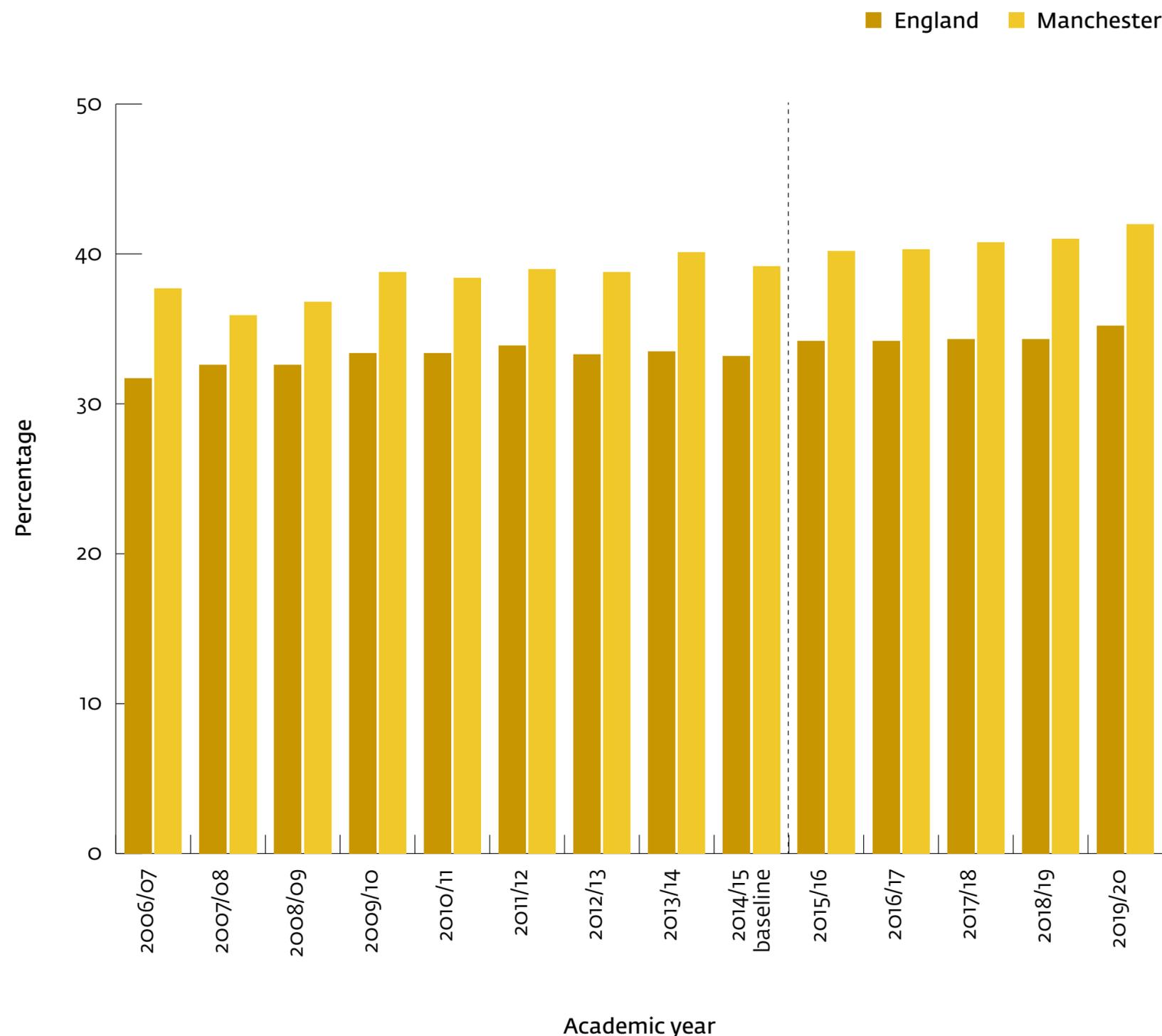
Excess weight in children in Year 6 (10/11 years)

The health consequences of excess weight in childhood are significant and also have implications for levels of overweight and obesity in adulthood. Although no demonstrable evidence has yet been produced, anecdotally, there is a sense that lockdown and home schooling have impacted poorly on maintaining a healthy weight.

The National Child Measurement Programme (NCMP) measures the proportion of children in Year 6 (aged 10 or 11) classified as overweight or obese, though the programme was paused in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Children are classified as overweight or obese if their Body Mass Index (BMI) is on or above the 85th centile of the British 1990 growth reference (UK90) according to age and sex.

The proportion of Manchester children in Year 6 classified as overweight or obese has very slightly increased from 41% in 2018/19 to 42% in 2019/20. Figure 4.17 shows that the rate of overweight or obese children in Manchester and England has remained fairly consistent since the 2014/15 baseline, with England also increasing in the past year, from 34.3% in 2018/19 to 35.2% in 2019/20. The proportion of eligible children who have been measured in both reception year and Year 6 has increased, which means there is an increased likelihood that more overweight or obese children are being identified and referred at an earlier stage to the appropriate services. This means the risk of childhood obesity persisting into adulthood among this cohort of children could decrease.

Figure 4.17: Prevalence of overweight (including obesity) among children in Year 6



Source: NHS Digital, National Child Measurement Programme

The Manchester Healthy Weight Strategy (2020–2025) was agreed by the Health and Wellbeing Board in March 2020, shortly before the global pandemic, and was launched in May 2021 in collaboration with MCRactive.

The strategy has been developed across four key themes, each of which will be developed further through a working group, including the Obesity Safeguarding Pathway. These themes are:

- Food and Culture
- Physical Activity
- Environment and Neighbourhoods
- Support and Prevention.

In line with the Public Health England guidance 'Reducing obesity is everybody's business' (Public Health England 2018) the strategy takes a whole-system approach to tackling obesity across each life course and has been informed by a wide variety of stakeholders. The strategy strives to develop early intervention and behaviour-change while seeking to challenge our obesogenic environments.

Children's weight management, particularly in early years, is a key priority for the Healthy Weight Strategy, as reflected in the commissioned offer for children. Increased investment has been made in the School Nurse Service and the dedicated Healthy Weight Project within Healthy Schools. The service also works with Health Visiting to target children at risk of being obese on entering reception (0–5 years). The School Nurse Service is also commissioned to provide the National Child Measurement Programme (NCMP), which provides feedback for parents and carers of children and young people in

reception and Year 6 who are overweight and obese. It is intended that this service will be fully recovered in September 2021.

Physical activity is also an integral element of reducing obesity and maintaining a healthy weight. The School Health Service implements a number of activities within school settings to keep children and young people active. A new service was commissioned to begin in January 2021. The Under-18s PARS (Physical Activity on Referral Service) will enable health professionals to refer an overweight or obese child to a bespoke healthy weight offer in their own local neighbourhood. The Manchester Population Health Service has worked closely with Buzz (Manchester's NHS Health and Wellbeing Service) and MCRactive to develop this new service.

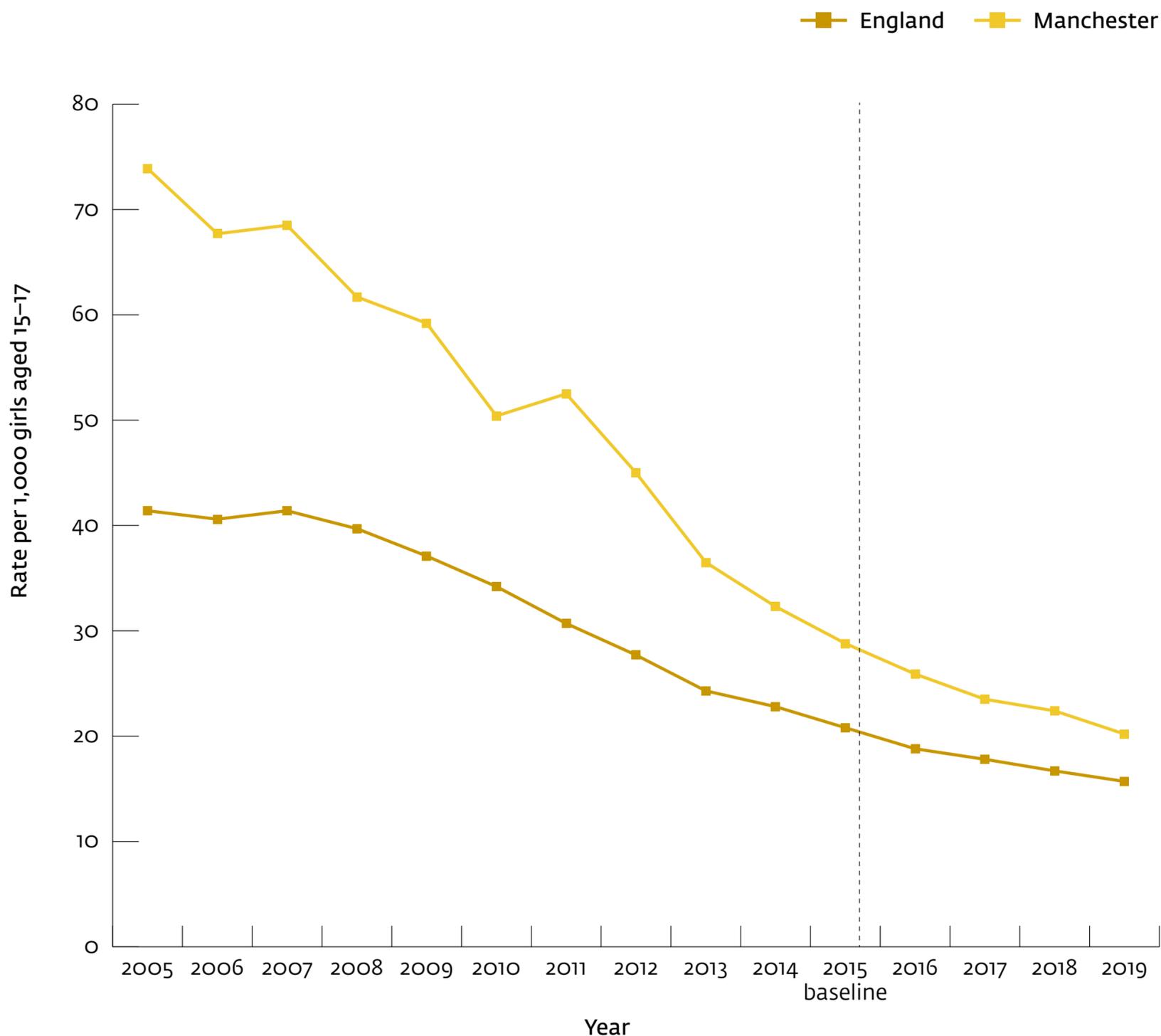
Under-18 conceptions

Most teenage pregnancies are unplanned and, while for some young women having a child when young can represent a positive turning point in their lives, many more find that bringing up a child is extremely difficult. This often results in poor outcomes for both the teenage parent and the child, in terms of the baby's health, the mother's emotional health and wellbeing, and the likelihood of both the parent and child living in long-term poverty.

Figure 4.18 shows that significant progress has been made in reducing the number and rate of under-18 conceptions in Manchester. The under-18 conception rate for Manchester has fallen from a peak of 73.9 per 1,000 in 2005 to 20.2 per 1,000 in 2019 (a reduction of 73%). However, this is still higher than the England rate of 15.7 per 1,000. The number of under-18 conceptions in Manchester fell from 591 in 2005

to 163 in 2019. The number of under-18 conceptions fell below 200 a year for the first time in 2017 and has continued on a downwards trajectory.

Figure 4.18:
Under-18 conceptions (number of conceptions under 18 years of age per 1,000 women aged 15–17 years)



Source: Office for National Statistics © Crown Copyright 2021

In line with the national trend, the proportion of under-18 conceptions ending in abortion has increased over the past decade, up from 40% in 2005 to 50% in 2019.

Over the past few years, we have made significant progress in reducing both the number and rate of under-18 conceptions in Manchester. A commitment to local implementation of the long-term, evidence-based national Teenage Pregnancy Strategy, which was launched in 1999, has been at the heart of this. Nationally, the original commitment to a ten-year strategy allowed for research and deep-dive exercises to be undertaken that identified key factors for success. Our actions have been delivered through a multi-agency approach and co-ordinated through the Teenage Pregnancy Prevention and Support Programme.

Our priorities have included a focus on ensuring consistent messages for young people across a range of different settings, alongside access to accurate advice and information and to dedicated young people’s services. Our locally commissioned sexual-health services have adapted to changes across service areas and a changing demographic and have responded well to emerging issues raised by young people themselves. Over the past few years, the Healthy Schools Team have developed excellent curriculum resources and programmes of work with schools. In September 2020, Relationships and Sex Education became a mandatory part of the curriculum across all schools.

Supporting people, households and communities to be socially connected and make changes that matter to them

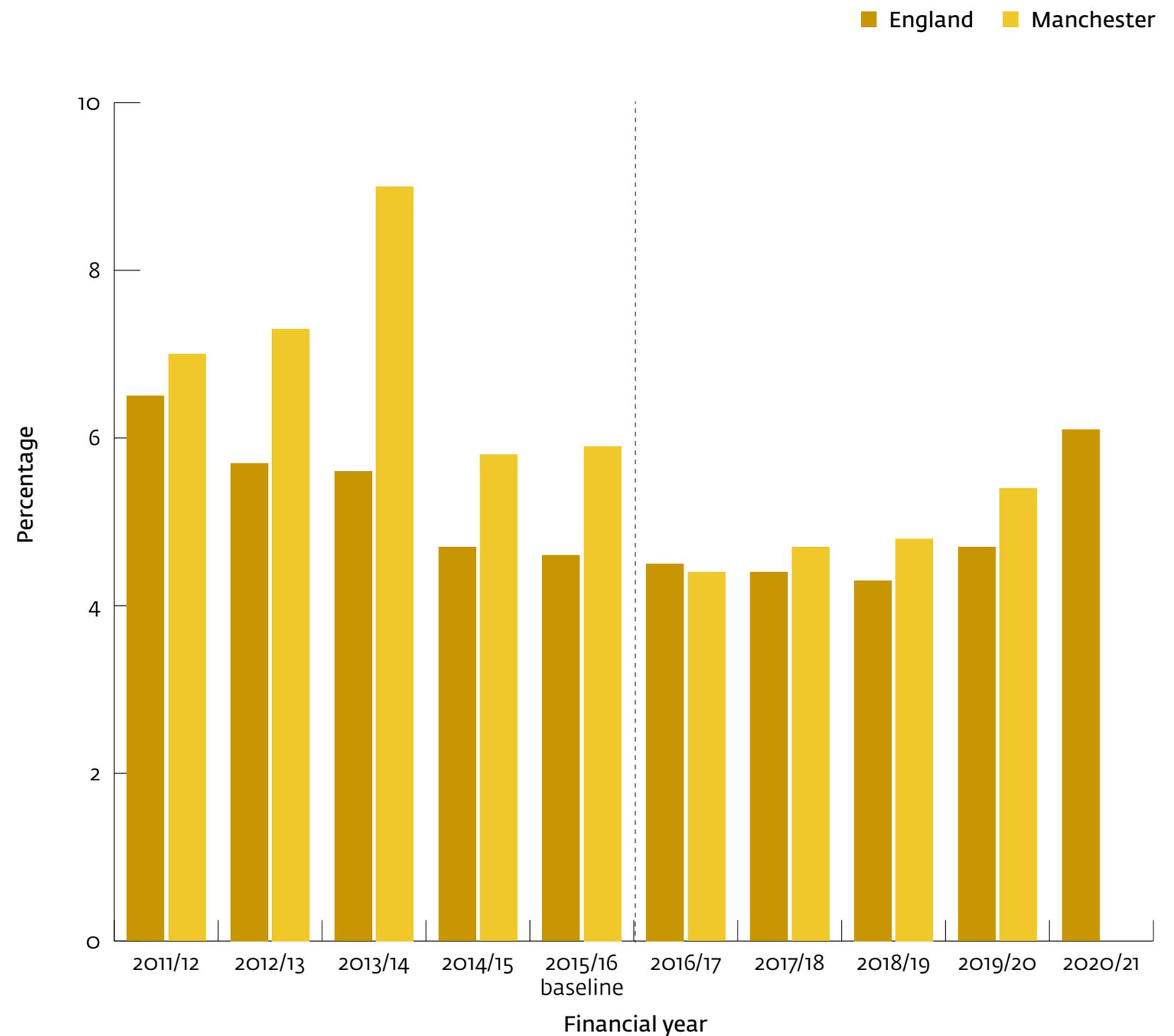
Self-reported wellbeing

People with higher wellbeing have lower rates of illness, recover more quickly (and for longer), and generally have better physical and mental health. Levels of individual/subjective wellbeing are measured by the ONS based on four questions that are included on the Integrated Household Survey:

1. Overall, how satisfied are you with your life nowadays?
2. Overall, how happy did you feel yesterday?
3. Overall, how anxious did you feel yesterday?
4. Overall, to what extent do you feel the things you do in your life are worthwhile?

Figure 4.19 shows the percentage of adults aged 16 and over who rated their answer to the question 'Overall, how satisfied are you with your life nowadays?' as 0, 1, 2, 3 or 4 (on a scale between 0 and 10, where 0 is 'not at all satisfied' and 10 is 'completely satisfied'). These respondents are described as having the lowest levels of life satisfaction.

Figure 4.19: Self-reported wellbeing (percentage of adults with a low life-satisfaction score)



Source: Annual Population Survey , ONS © Crown Copyright 2021. No Manchester rate available in 2020/21 as sample size insufficient.

Individuals in Manchester have lower-than-average levels of self-reported life satisfaction than those in England; in 2019/20, 5.4% of adults in Manchester had a low-life satisfaction score compared with 4.7% of adults across England. However, this comparison should be viewed with caution, as these figures are just an estimate based on data drawn from a survey with a relatively small sample size. In 2020/21, the Manchester sample size was insufficient to publish a low-life satisfaction score, but the England rate increased to 6.1%.

It is important to note that differences in people's wellbeing between areas should not be taken to directly indicate differences in people's views of their local area. This is because there are a number of factors, not just place, that influence personal wellbeing, eg. health, relationships and employment situation.

Healthy people – health and wellbeing support for individuals

Be Well is the wellbeing and social prescribing service for Manchester. The service supports individuals and communities to improve their physical and mental health and wellbeing, increase resilience, live healthier lifestyles, connect with community support, and address the social determinants that impact significantly on health inequalities in Manchester. This has a number of benefits for individuals, communities, and the health and care system, including improved quality of life and mental wellbeing, reducing the likelihood of developing preventable long-term health conditions, working with communities to support good health, and reducing demands on the health and care system.

Be Well is a partnership made up of the Big Life Group, Pathways, Citizens Advice Manchester, One Manchester, Wythenshawe Community Housing Group and Southways and Northwards Housing. The service works with a range of other 'host' organisations to make sure that support is available in convenient community locations, and also works with Primary Care Networks to support their social prescribing delivery. Be Well services operated by the Big Life Group have been active in central and south Manchester since late 2018 and in north Manchester since spring 2020. To date, these services have received over 11,000 referrals (mainly from primary care) and supported 6,000 people to improve their physical and mental health and wellbeing, address the social determinants impacting on their health (in particular remaining in or returning to work while managing health issues), and connect to their local community.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Be Well has been an essential component of neighbourhood support systems for Manchester residents. In the early stages of the pandemic, Be Well adapted its service delivery to ensure that a wider range of organisations could quickly refer people into the service, and that individuals could receive support more frequently if needed. The service also worked with partners across the city as part of a community response team for the most vulnerable, which involved providing support around the delivery of medication and food parcels within communities. Be Well continues to work with other community response services to ensure that vulnerable residents have the support they need, and more recently it has started working as part of citywide programmes to increase the uptake of COVID-19 vaccinations in at-risk groups.

Healthy communities – creating the conditions that support good health

The Greater Manchester Mental Health NHS Trust (GMMH) has provided a health and wellbeing service called buzz since 2016. In 2019, it was redesigned and relaunched with more of a neighbourhood community development approach.

The buzz neighbourhood health workers (NHWs) are providing a valued service that is particularly useful in COVID-19 recovery work to support communities to connect and re-establish community groups and activities. There is an NHW for each of the 12 neighbourhoods in Manchester, and there are additional NHWs in the buzz Age-Friendly and Start Well teams. These buzz teams develop community resources for children, families and people over the age of 50, in partnership with the Population Health teams for Starting Well and Age-Friendly Manchester.

Neighbourhood Health Workers work with local communities to develop community activity with local residents. Projects include gardening, social groups, health-support groups, singing, dancing, cinema clubs, writing groups, cookery and food, exercise, walking football, card-making, and craft and knitting groups. NHWs work in partnership with local community groups and organisations and are part of the prevention programme network in Manchester.

During the pandemic and lockdown, NHWs have adapted to the needs the pandemic created, including making welfare phone calls to vulnerable people, supporting online events, developing wellbeing packs for distribution, running a face covering-making project, supporting food banks, and the vaccination programme.

The **buzz Age-Friendly Manchester (AFM) Team** chair a range of age-friendly networks across Manchester, with an aim of building up a network in each of the neighbourhoods. Projects include placing age-friendly benches throughout Manchester, running dementia-awareness projects, falls-prevention events and age-awareness training for workplaces.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the buzz AFM team have worked on digital literacy and inclusion projects, delivered weekly local radio broadcasts to inform and support older residents, phoned older people to check in and signpost if necessary, and helped produce a guide to staying active during lockdown.

The **buzz Start Well (SW) Team** engage with parents and young people to develop ideas and projects, and they have also been working closely with the Sure Start Centre Managers. Neighbourhood activities include baby yoga, first aid training for parents, and Black, Asian and minority ethnic peer support groups for mothers and separated fathers. During lockdown, the SW Team's work included developing a support and information pack for families and children, and producing activity packs, which they delivered to families.

Long-term mental health problems in adults aged 18+ (GP Patient Survey)

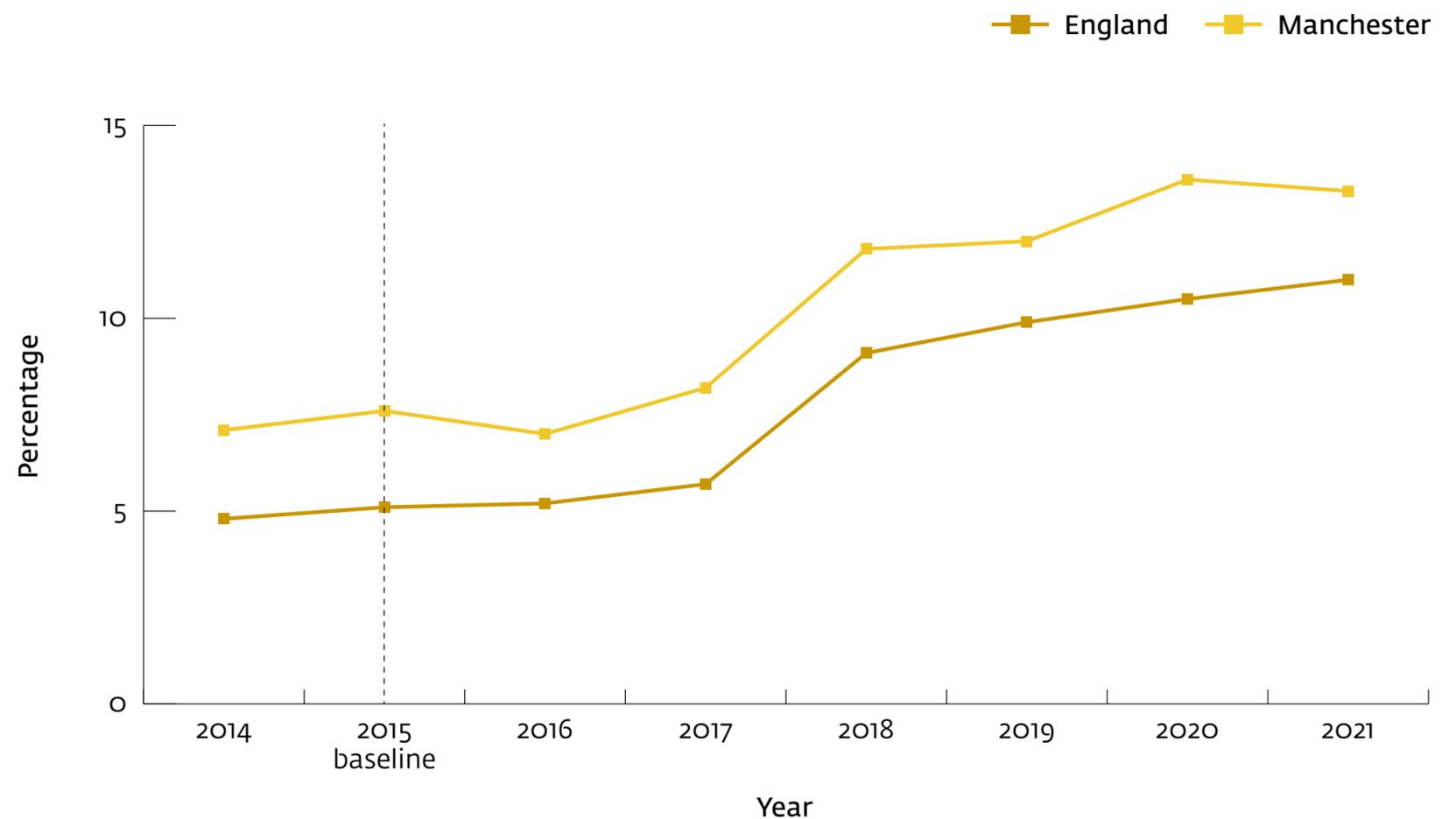
The Adult Psychiatric Morbidity Survey 2014 identified that a significant proportion of people who have mental health problems are not diagnosed. Knowledge of how many people state they have a long-term mental health problem contributes to building up the local picture of prevalence. It may also highlight gaps between diagnosed and undiagnosed prevalence in a local area.

The GP Patient Survey is an independent survey run by Ipsos MORI on behalf of NHS England. The survey is sent out to over two million people across the UK. The survey asks patients about their experiences of their local GP practice and other local NHS services, and also includes questions about their general health. Figure 4.20 shows the percentage of all respondents to the question 'Which, if any, of the following medical conditions do you have?' who answered, 'Long-term mental health problem'. The survey did not go on to ask respondents about the nature of their long-term

mental health problem, so it is not possible to identify a specific mental health condition or to describe the severity of the problem.

Figure 4.20 shows that in 2021, 13.3% of respondents in Manchester said they had a long-term mental health problem compared with 11% of respondents across England as a whole. Survey respondents in Manchester were more likely than those in most other boroughs of Greater Manchester, apart from Salford and Tameside, to report that they had a long-term mental health problem.

Figure 4.20: Percentage of adults aged 18+ with a self-reported long-term mental health problem



Source: Department of Health, GP patient survey

The percentage of respondents saying they had a long-term mental health problem has increased in both Manchester and England as a whole, with a notable increase between the surveys conducted in 2017 and 2018. The reasons for this are unclear and it is hard to tell at this point whether the increase reflects a genuine increase in the prevalence of long-term mental health problems in the population or a greater willingness of respondents to report that they have a long-term mental health problem. It could also reflect a cultural shift in what people are willing to count as a long-term mental health problem.

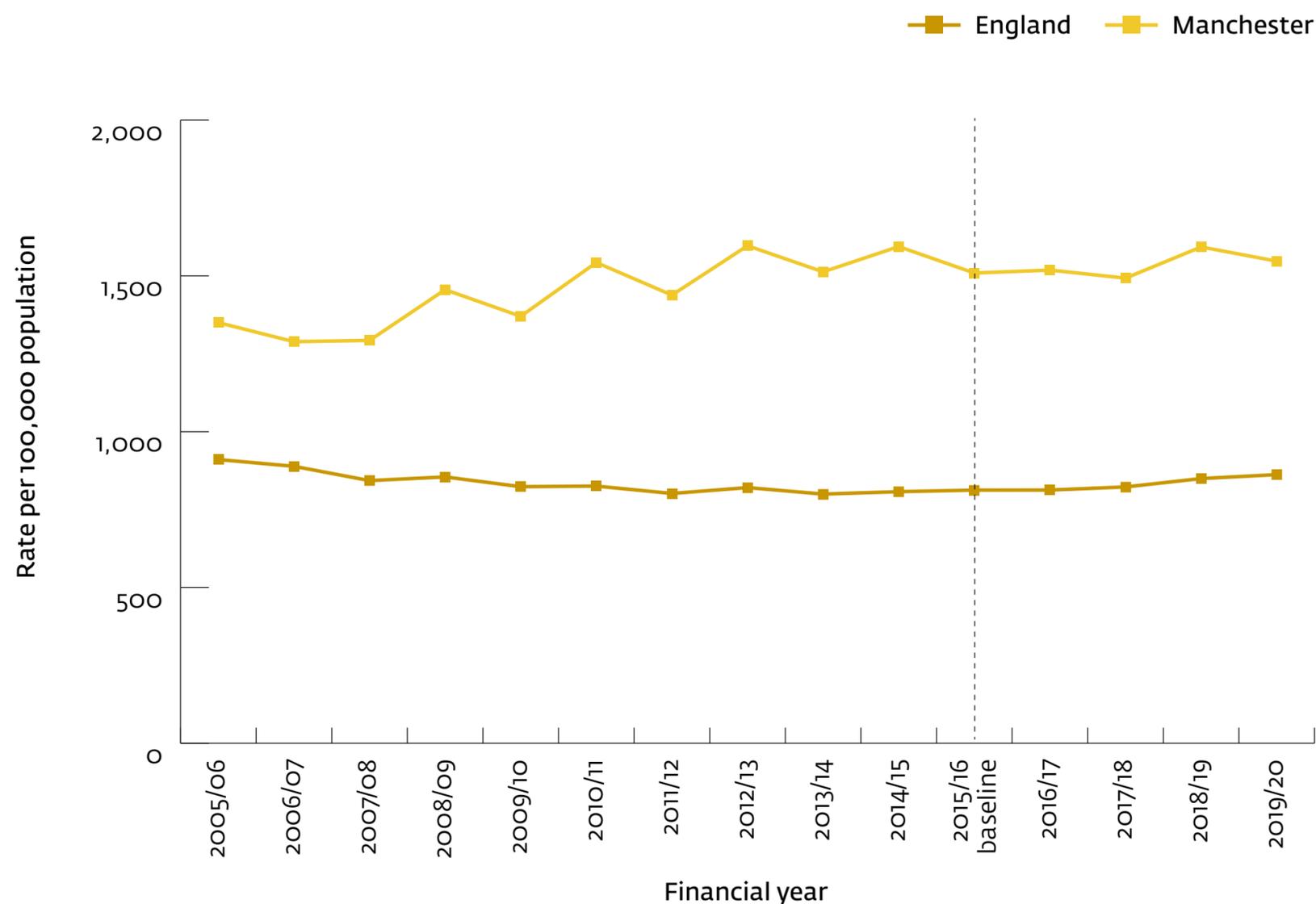
There is clear evidence emerging of the impact of COVID-19 on people’s mental health. A recent report by ONS on [Coronavirus and depression in adults](#) looked at how symptoms of depression have changed before and during the pandemic. The report showed that the proportion of adults experiencing some form of depression has almost doubled compared with a period before the pandemic, and that one in eight adults has developed moderate to severe depressive symptoms during the pandemic itself. Adults who were aged 16–39, female, unable to afford an unexpected expense, or disabled were the most likely to experience some form of depression during the pandemic.

Unplanned hospitalisation for chronic ambulatory care sensitive conditions

Ambulatory care sensitive conditions (ACSCs) are conditions where effective community care and case management can help prevent the need for hospital admission. An emergency admission for an ACSC is often a sign of the poor overall quality of primary and community care.

Figure 4.21 shows the rate of emergency admissions for ambulatory care sensitive conditions in Manchester has risen gradually, from 1,350 per 100,000 in 2005/06 to 1,547.3 per 100,000 in 2019/20. Although the rate has steadied in recent years, and reduced from 1,592.8 per 100,000 in 2018/19, it remains much higher than the national rate.

Figure 4.21: Unplanned hospitalisation for chronic ambulatory care sensitive conditions – indirectly standardised rate (ISR) per 100,000 population



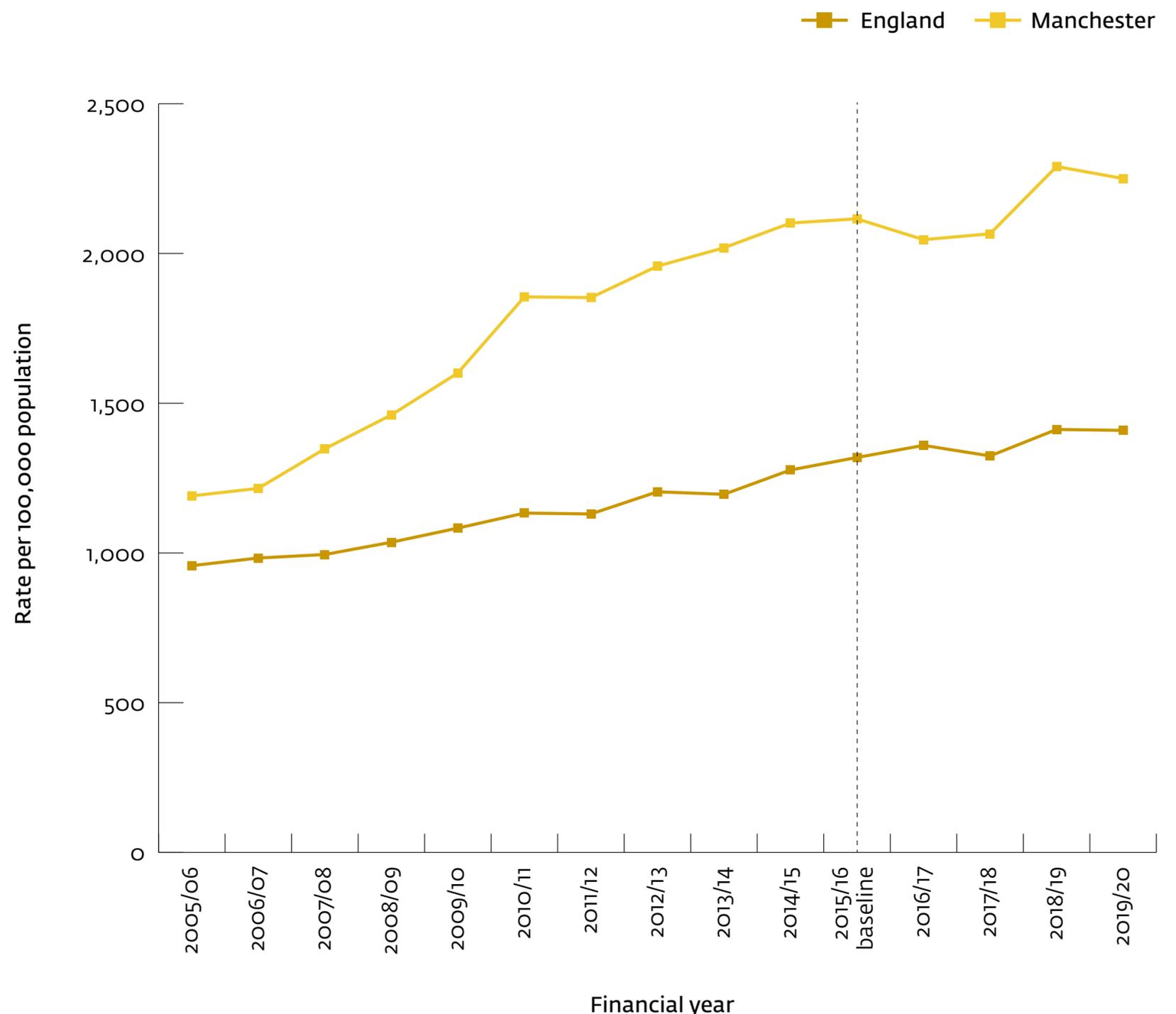
Source: Hospital Episode Statistics (HES), ONS mid-year population estimates, NHS Digital and Office for National Statistics © Crown Copyright 2021

The rate of emergency admissions for acute conditions not usually requiring hospital admission includes conditions that should usually be managed without the patient having to be admitted to hospital, such as ear, nose and throat infections, kidney and urinary tract infections, as well as acute heart disease.

Figure 4.22 shows the rate of emergency admissions for acute conditions not usually requiring hospital admission in Manchester almost doubled since 2005/06, rising from 1,191 to 2,291 per 100,000 in 2018/19, but it has recently reduced slightly to 2,250 per 100,000 in 2019/20. The rate of emergency admissions for these conditions across England as a whole has also increased since 2005/06, but at a lower rate than in Manchester, meaning that the gap between Manchester and the national average has widened.

Joining up the delivery of hospital and out-of-hospital services through the Manchester Local Care Organisation (MLCO) will have an impact on the rate of emergency admissions for both chronic ambulatory care sensitive conditions and acute conditions that should not usually require hospital admission. The development of new integrated models of care will help to keep people out of hospital and support them to live more independently. The MLCO model will help break down boundaries between different organisations operating at a neighbourhood level; it will also ensure that there is a smoother process for helping people in their homes when they are in recovery or dealing with long-term health issues.

Figure 4.22: Emergency admissions for acute conditions not usually requiring hospital admission – indirectly standardised rate (ISR) per 100,000 population



Source: Hospital Episode Statistics (HES), ONS mid-year population estimates, NHS Digital and Office for National Statistics © Crown Copyright 2021

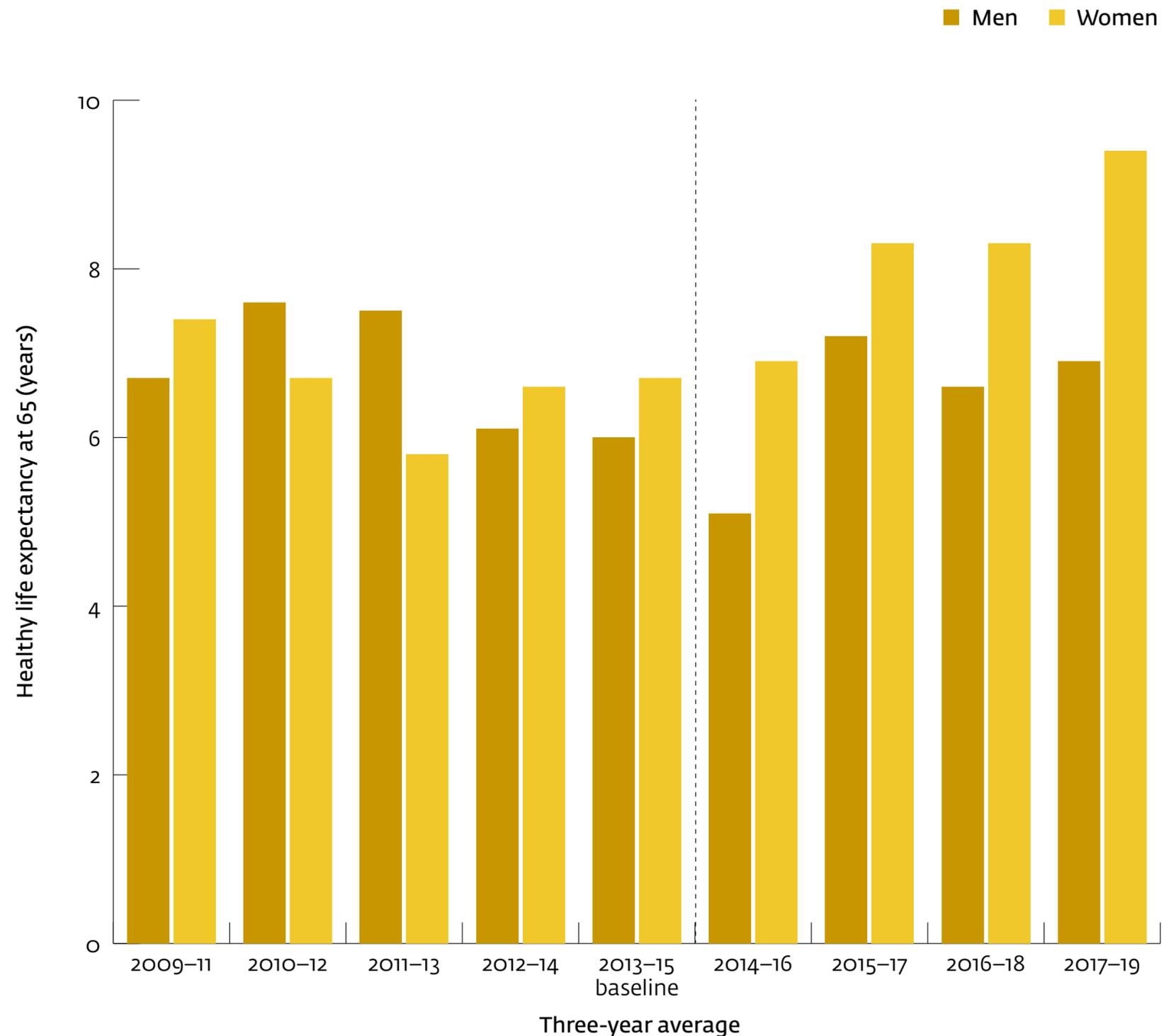
Creating an age-friendly city that promotes good health and wellbeing for people in middle and later life

Healthy life expectancy at age 65

This is a parallel measure to the previously described indicator of healthy life expectancy at birth. It shows the estimated average number of years a man or woman aged 65 in Manchester would live in good health if he or she experienced the rates of mortality and good health among people of that age in Manchester throughout the remainder of his or her life.

Figure 4.23 shows that healthy life expectancy has increased (ie. improved) for both men and women since the 2013–15 baseline, particularly for women, from 6.7 years to 9.4 years for the three-year period 2017–19 – an increase of 2.7 years in total. For men, healthy life expectancy at age 65 has remained relatively stable since the 2013–15 baseline, increasing from 6 years to 6.9 years for the three-year period 2017–19.

Figure 4.23:
Healthy life expectancy at age 65: 2009–11 to 2017–19



Source: Office for National Statistics © Crown Copyright 2020

Emergency hospital admissions for injuries due to falls in older people

Falls are the principal cause of emergency hospital admissions for older people and significantly impact on long-term outcomes. They are also a major precipitating factor in people moving from their own home to long-term nursing or residential care. The highest risk of falls is in those aged 65 and above.

Figure 4.24 shows that Manchester has a higher-than-average rate of emergency hospital admissions due to an unintentional fall in people aged 65 and over. In 2019/20, 1,410 older people aged 65 and over in Manchester were admitted to hospital for a falls-related injury – a rate of 2,784 per 100,000 population. This is slightly lower than the rate for the previous year (2,836 per 100,000) but is significantly higher than the rate for England as a whole (2,222 per 100,000 population).

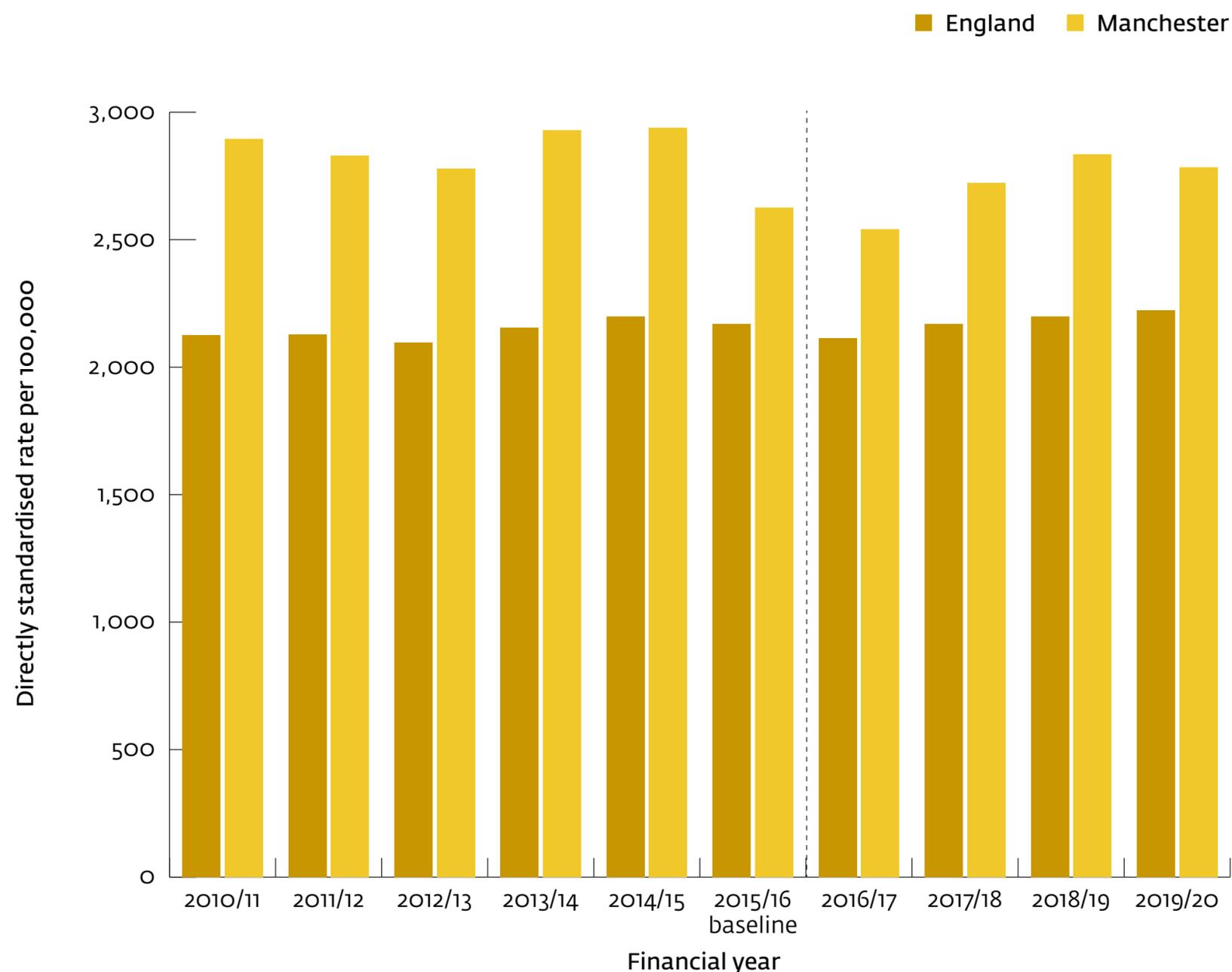
The three Community Falls Services in Manchester have now been merged into one single citywide service, while at the same time maintaining a local delivery model. This has enabled the best practice from each service to be used to shape a model that is now available across the whole city. There is an increased role for the service in supporting and contributing to broader neighbourhood-based falls-prevention work as well as playing an increased role in Manchester’s Fall Collaborative.

Manchester’s Falls Collaborative is unique in that it links practitioners, researchers and commissioners with a common set of objectives and a shared work plan. Since being established in early 2019, the Falls Collaborative has focused on three key workstreams: frailty, prevention, and pathways. These are underpinned by research and innovation

and data and outcomes workstreams. The work of the Collaborative includes the development of a single point of access for those who have fallen, strengthening commissioning and operational

links to broader wellbeing work, developing a multi-agency outcomes framework and a focus on best practice that helps reduce variation in fall-prevention practice.

Figure 4.24: Emergency hospital admissions for injuries due to falls in people aged 65 and over



Source: Hospital Episode Statistics (HES) – National Statistics. ONS mid-year population estimates (based on 2011 Census) – National Statistics. Copyright © 2020, Health and Social Care Information Centre.

Taking action on preventable early deaths

Excess deaths

Excess mortality is a term that refers to the number of deaths above what we would expect to see under normal conditions. This is usually measured by comparing the actual number of deaths occurring each week over a period of time with an estimate of the expected number of deaths based on the average number of deaths recorded in the corresponding week in a previous period. Excess mortality includes not only those who have died from COVID-19, but also those who have died from other causes. In the absence of a clear and agreed definition of which causes of death are directly and indirectly associated with COVID-19, excess mortality is seen as the best measure of the total mortality impact of the pandemic.

In 2020, there were 4,279 deaths registered to people usually resident in Manchester. The average total number of deaths registered each year over the five-year period 2015 to 2019 was 3,543, meaning that there were 736 (or 21%) more deaths in Manchester registered in 2020 than would be expected.

Looking at the place of death, there were 316 excess deaths in hospitals, 131 in care homes and 289 in other settings, such as a person's own home, a hospice, or another communal establishment. In relative terms, deaths in hospital were 17% higher than expected and deaths in care homes were 26% higher.

Manchester saw the third highest level of excess deaths in Greater Manchester (behind Rochdale and Bury) as measured by the percentage difference between actual and expected number of deaths.

However, this measure does not take account of differences in the overall size of the population living in each local authority. For that reason, it is preferable to use the excess death rate (number of excess deaths per 100,000 population) as a means of comparison between local authorities. Based on this measure, Manchester has seen the lowest number of excess deaths in Greater Manchester, relative to the size of the population – an excess death rate of 133.1 per 100,000 population.

Note that this measure does not make any additional adjustments to take account of differences in the composition and health status of the population (age, gender, ethnicity and comorbidities etc) or socioeconomic factors, such as deprivation or occupation. These factors have been shown by ONS to explain some of the relative differences in the risk of death from COVID-19 and other causes.

The contribution of COVID-19 to excess deaths in 2020

In total, there were 3,407 deaths registered between 20 March 2020 and 1 January 2021, of which 703 (21%) involved COVID-19 (ie. COVID-19 was mentioned on the death certificate as a direct or contributing cause of death). Of the 738 excess deaths registered over this period, 95% involved COVID-19.

Deaths involving COVID-19 accounted for 29% of deaths in hospital and 20% of deaths in care homes over this period. In addition, there were 90 deaths involving COVID-19 occurring in other settings, such as the deceased's own home, a hospice, or another type of communal establishment. Deaths involving COVID-19 accounted for 8% of deaths in these other settings.

Overall, deaths involving COVID-19 accounted for 77% of excess deaths in care homes and 32% of deaths in other settings between 20 March 2020 and 1 January 2021. In terms of deaths occurring in hospitals, the total number of excess deaths is less than the number of deaths with a mention of COVID-19, indicating that there were fewer deaths from other causes than expected in these weeks.

ONS have used death registrations data for England, linked to data from the 2011 Census and primary care and hospital records, to compare the risk of COVID-19 mortality among different ethnic groups in both the first and second waves of the pandemic.⁴ [This analysis](#) shows that during the first wave of the COVID-19 pandemic (24 January to 11 September 2020), people from all ethnic minority groups had higher rates of death involving COVID-19 compared to the White British population. The rate of death involving COVID-19 was highest for the Black African group, followed by the Bangladeshi, Black Caribbean and Pakistani ethnic groups.

In the second wave of the pandemic (from 12 September 2020 onwards), the differences in COVID-19 mortality compared with the White British population increased for people of Bangladeshi and Pakistani ethnic backgrounds. Although people from Black Caribbean and Black African ethnic backgrounds remained at elevated risk in the second wave, the level of risk compared with White British people was reduced compared with the first wave. Adjusting for location, measures of disadvantage, occupation, living arrangements and pre-existing health conditions accounted for a

⁴ Office for National Statistics: Updating ethnic contrasts in deaths involving the coronavirus (COVID-19), England: 24 January 2020 to 31 March 2021. Published 26 May 2021

large proportion of the excess COVID-19 mortality risk in most ethnic minority groups. However, most Black and South Asian groups remained at higher risk than White British people in the second wave even after adjustments.

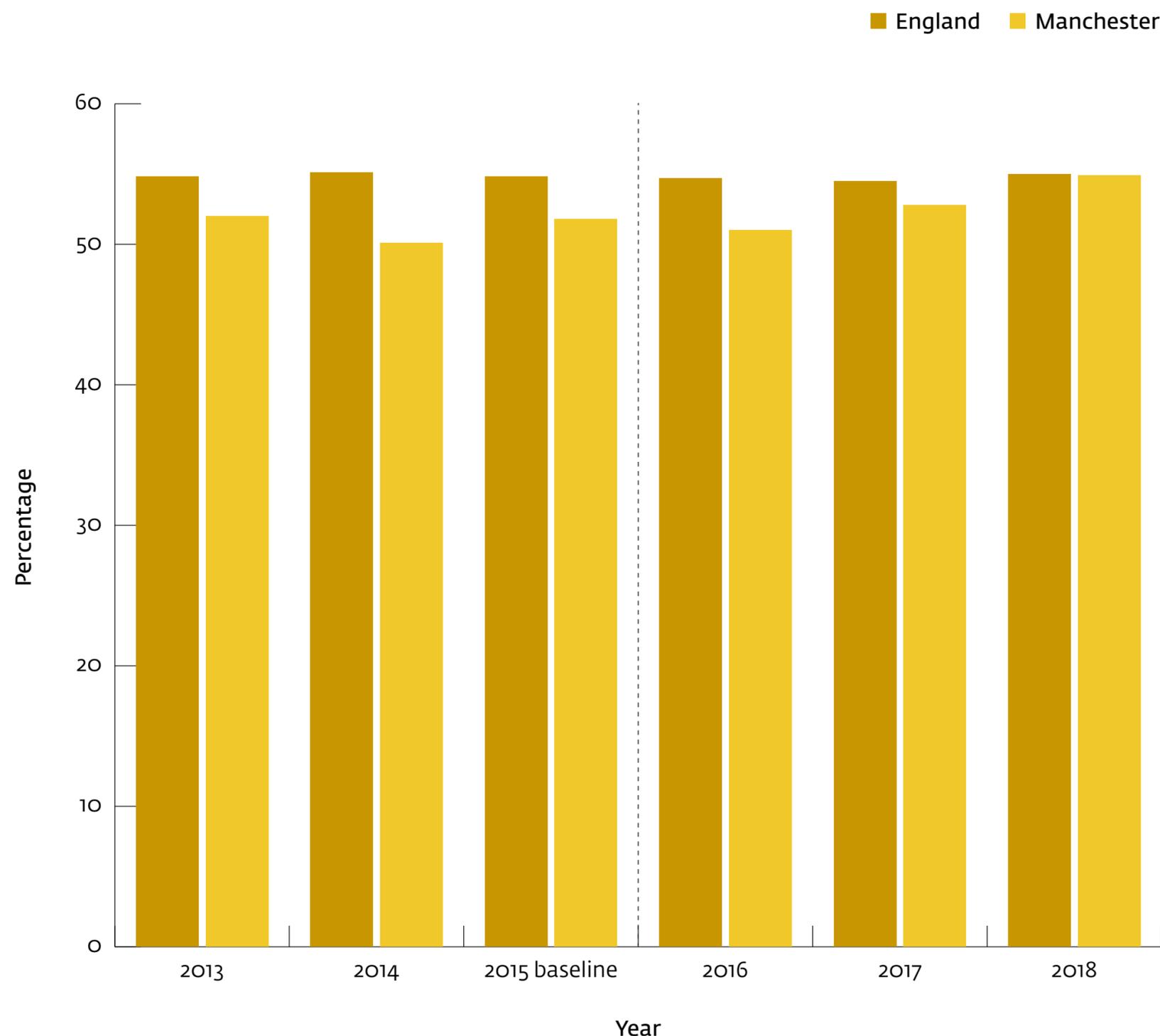
Proportion of cancers diagnosed at an early stage (experimental statistic)

Cancer is a major cause of death in Manchester. Nationally, more than one in three people will develop cancer at some point in their life. Diagnosis at an early stage of the cancer’s development (stages 1 and 2) leads to a dramatically improved chance of survival. Specific public-health interventions, such as screening programmes and information/education campaigns, aim to improve rates of early diagnosis.

This indicator measures the number of new cases of cancer diagnosed at stages 1 and 2 as a proportion of all new cases of cancer diagnosed. Note that this indicator is labelled as an experimental statistic due to the variation in data quality and because the indicator can be affected by differences in the completeness of staging information. In June 2020, the indicator definition changed to include 21 cancer sites (previously the definition was based on 11 cancer sites); data from 2013 has been recalculated based on the new definition and is presented in Figure 4.25. Note that any data published prior to June 2020 is not comparable with the data presented here.

Figure 4.25 shows that in Manchester, over half (54.9%) of new cases of cancer were diagnosed early at stages 1 and 2 in 2018. This represents a gradual improvement since 2013, when 52% of new cases were diagnosed at this early stage.

Figure 4.25:
Early diagnosis of cancer (proportion of cancers diagnosed as stage 1 or 2)



Source: National Cancer Registry, Public Health England, 2019 (experimental statistics)

Rates of early cancer diagnosis in Manchester are now much closer to the England average. The latest figure in Manchester (54.9%) compares with a figure of 63.8% in Bath and North East Somerset Clinical Commissioning Group (the best-performing Clinical Commissioning Group) and an England average of 55%.

There are more new diagnoses of throat and lung cancers made in Manchester each year than there are of any other type of cancer. The survival rate from these forms of cancer is also relatively poor. This is partly due to the late stage at which people present to health services. Improving the rate of early diagnosis for these forms of cancer will therefore have a significant impact on the overall rate of early diagnosis.

The Manchester Lung Health Check (LHC) Programme is a collaboration between the Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust (MFT) thoracic oncology team and Manchester Health and Care Commissioning (MHCC), and is the first local NHS commissioned service of this kind. The service was designed with a strong emphasis on community engagement so that the service could be put at the heart of our local communities for patients with the most need. Clear clinical pathways ensure that patients are managed appropriately to minimise harm and delays. Feedback from participants has shown that people like what has been provided and, importantly, where and how it has been provided. Lung health checks and targeted lung cancer screening is now a key feature of the NHS long-term plan and has been identified as a national priority programme.

The Manchester LHC service has now completed checks on almost 9,000 eligible participants, of whom 4,500 had a baseline scan due to increased risk of lung cancer. The RAPID team at Wythenshawe Hospital assessed 240 people, and 4,300 people have completed a 12-month surveillance scan. Those patients will be scanned at regular intervals to check for early signs of lung disease.

During the first two years of delivery, the Manchester LHC service has identified:

- 150 people with lung cancer (80% at Stage 1 or 2)
- 260 people with symptomatic undiagnosed respiratory disease
- 3,000 people at increased risk of cardiovascular disease
- 180 people with imaging abnormalities that identified underlying health conditions.

Plans are being developed to continue with the Lung Health Check service and to expand into central and south Manchester from 2023 onwards.

COVID-19 has had a major impact on cancer services, including referral, diagnosis and treatment. There was a significant dip in GP attendances between April and September 2020, and over 73,000 fewer presentations to GP practices throughout 2020 compared to before the pandemic. This has led to a significant drop in suspected cancer referrals. In particular, there was a reduction of 33% in suspected lung cancer referrals during 2020. This compares with an 11% reduction for all suspected cancer referrals.

Referrals for suspected cancer are now back to pre-COVID levels, but there is some evidence of continued hesitancy among patients required to attend hospital for investigations, leading to delays in diagnosis and treatment.

National cancer-screening programmes were suspended between the end of March and the end of July 2020. Diagnostic capacity was also significantly affected due to the need to implement social distancing and enhanced cleaning measures. In addition, many patients were choosing to delay their required investigations because of isolation and shielding requirements.

Breast screening – between January and December 2019 there was a 6.2% decrease in breast screening uptake. Between January and September 2020 there was a further 4.1% decrease (an 11.7% decrease in 21 months). These figures were falling even before the COVID-19 pandemic and the first national lockdown started to impact on services. It will be important to consider how to re-engage patients with breast screening services and how to improve access by removing barriers to participation.

Bowel screening – between January and December 2019 there was a 6.2% increase in bowel screening uptake. Between January and August 2020 there was a further 1.8% increase (an 8.7% increase in 21 months). The increase slowed during the early part of 2020, but showed promise that we can get patients to engage with the programme.

Cervical screening – between January and December 2019 there was a 0.9% increase in cervical screening coverage. Between January and December 2020 there was a further 3.4%

decrease. This may be linked to COVID-19 and national lockdowns but is a cause for concern, and there is a need to consider how to re-engage women with cancer screening programmes (including breast) and halt the decline in participation.

The number of patients diagnosed with cancer at Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust fell between April and June 2020, linked to a reduction in referrals, screening and access to diagnostics. At the start of the pandemic, there was also a reduction in the number of cancer treatments performed, including surgery, chemotherapy and radiotherapy; however, as guidance emerged, cancer treatments were restarted in line with national recommendations and the capacity at MFT. Patients were prioritised according to their immediate clinical need and reviewed regularly. Escalation policies were established between primary and secondary care for any patients whose condition was deteriorating or symptoms worsening.

Delays in diagnosis and treatment scheduling has resulted in an increase in the number of patients waiting longer than 62 days for treatment, meaning that patients may receive treatment when their cancer is at a more advanced stage. However, patients were (and continue to be) carefully monitored by their clinical team for any deterioration or change in presentation.

Premature mortality from causes considered preventable

Preventable mortality is based on the idea that all or most deaths from a particular cause could potentially be avoided by public-health interventions in the broadest sense. This indicator reflects Manchester's commitment to reducing avoidable

deaths through public-health policy and interventions, such as those contained in the Manchester Population Health Plan.

Cardiovascular disease (CVD), cancer and respiratory diseases are the major causes of death in people aged under 75 in Manchester. Research indicates that three lifestyle behaviours – tobacco use, unhealthy diet, and a sedentary lifestyle – increase the risk of developing these long-term conditions.

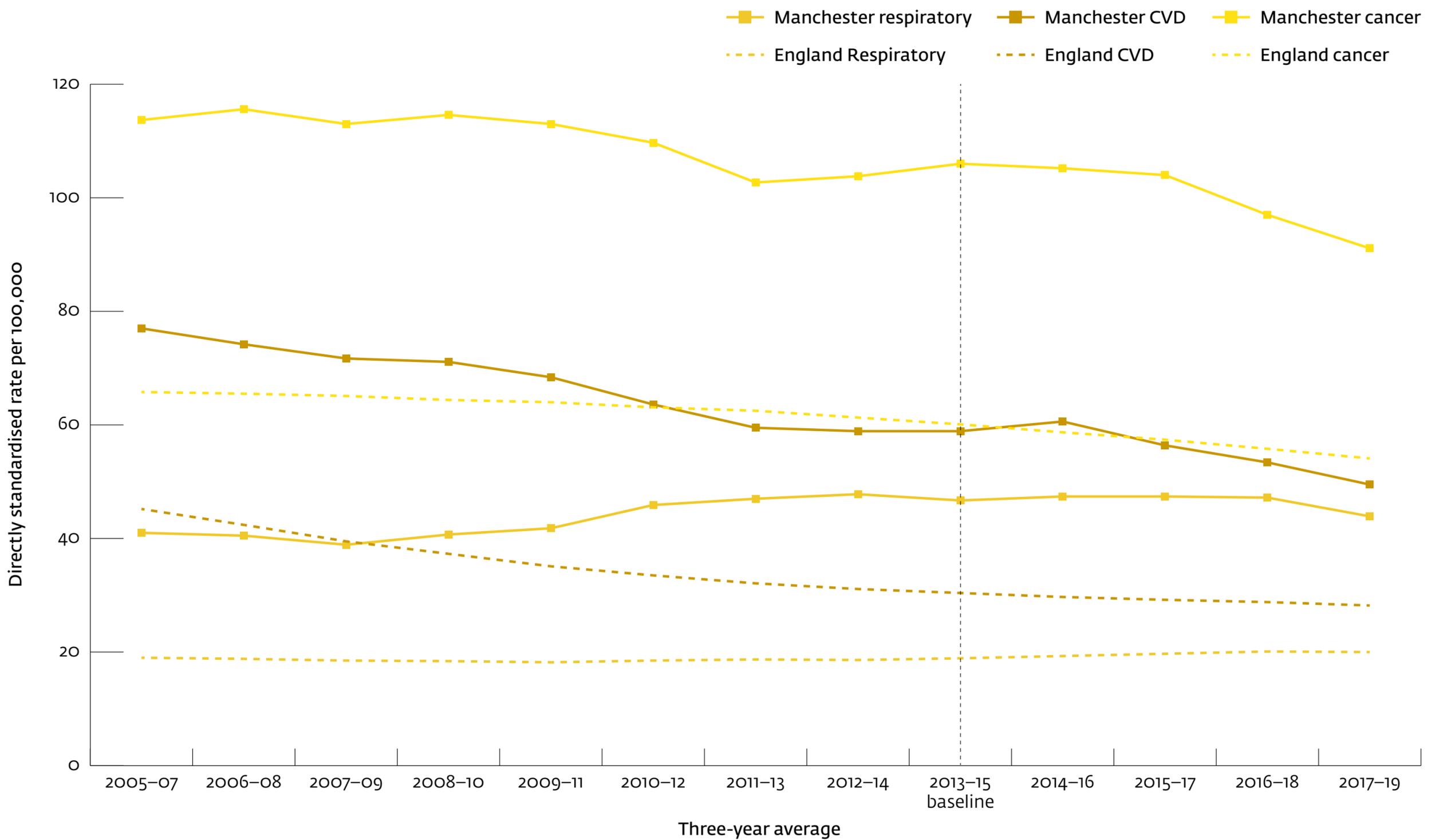
In 2017, an Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) working group was set up to review the definitions of avoidable and preventable mortality used internationally with a remit to create a harmonised definition. The group proposed a new definition of avoidable and preventable mortality, and in 2019 the ONS ran a public consultation to review this definition. As a result of the consultation, it was agreed the ONS would implement the new international avoidable and preventable mortality definition to ensure statistics were comparable. The new definition has been implemented from data year 2001 onwards and is presented in Figure 4.26.

According to the new definition, in Manchester the rate of preventable premature deaths from cardiovascular diseases is the highest in England and the rates of premature deaths from cancer and respiratory disease are the second highest in England. Manchester is also the highest-ranked local authority for overall premature deaths from these diseases compared with other similarly deprived areas, suggesting that deprivation alone is not the key factor in the high rates of premature deaths in the city.

There have been huge gains over the past decades in terms of better treatment and improvements in lifestyle, and this has contributed to a significant fall in preventable premature mortality from cardiovascular disease since the middle of the past decade. However, Figure 4.26 shows that this downward trend has started to flatten out in recent years. Nationally, the decelerating rate of improvement in mortality from cardiovascular disease has been identified as a substantial contributor to the steady slowdown in longevity improvements. The underlying causes are unclear but could include changes in risk factors, such as obesity and diabetes, as well as the diminishing effects of primary and secondary prevention strategies.

Preventable premature mortality from cancer has also fallen, although not to the same extent as cardiovascular disease. In contrast, preventable premature mortality from respiratory diseases (including asthma and COPD) has gradually risen since 2005–07 although, again, Figure 4.26 suggests this increase may be flattening out in recent periods. Smoking and air pollution are both common causes of respiratory disease.

Figure 4.26: Mortality rate in under-75s from diseases considered preventable (cardiovascular disease, cancer and respiratory diseases)



Source: Public Health England (based on ONS source data)

Taking action on preventable early deaths is one of the five priority areas set out in the Manchester Population Health Plan. Key to this work is the delivery of community-centred approaches to detecting conditions early by going to places where people naturally and frequently congregate, and working with people, groups and organisations that are trusted in communities. This includes targeted approaches for NHS health checks and the launch of the Lung Health Check Programme, as well as the promotion of cancer-screening programmes (breast, bowel and cervical) for the groups of people most at risk.

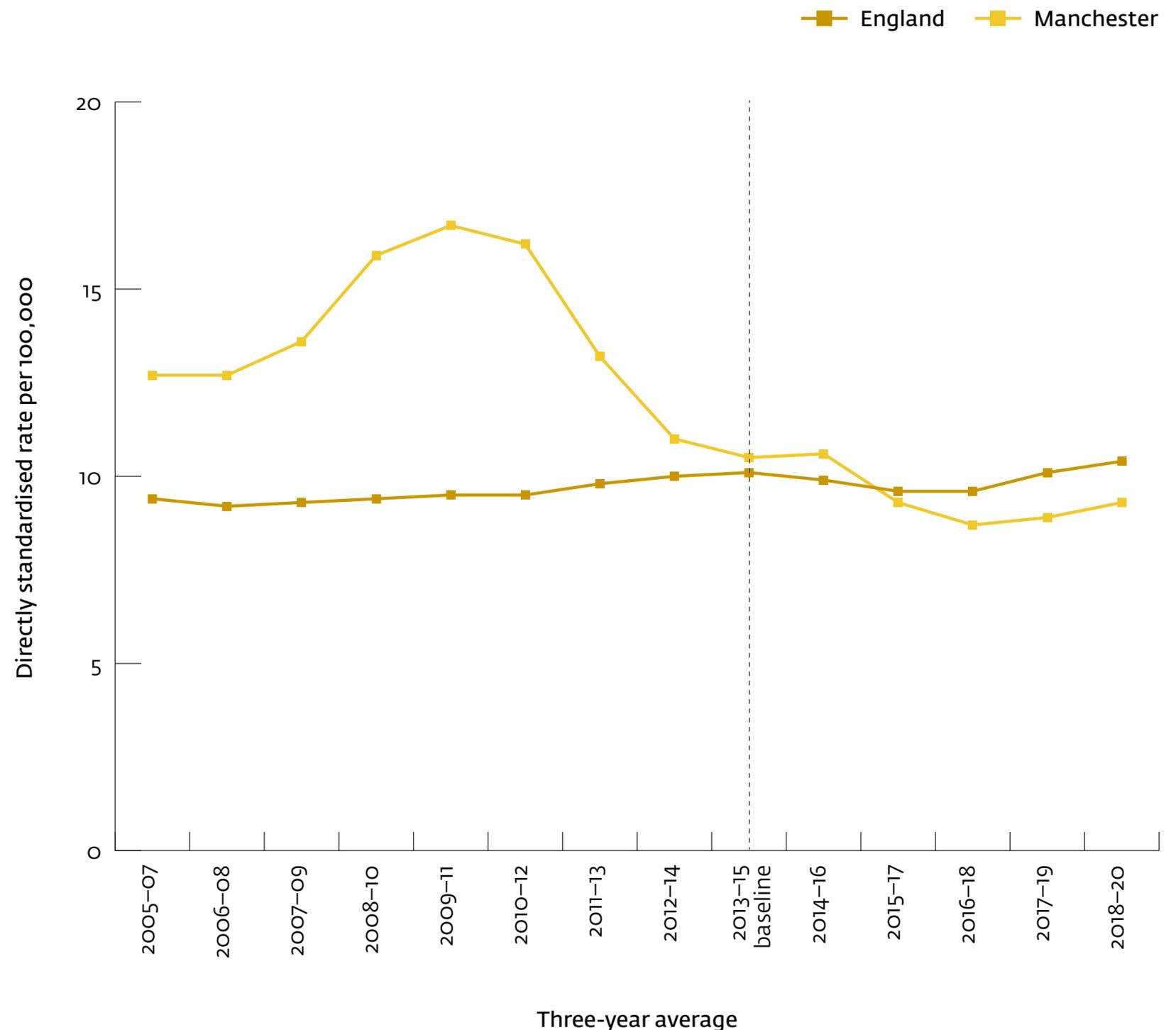
We are also seeking to improve outcomes and reduce unwarranted variation for people with respiratory illness through a system-wide approach to change, which includes improving the timing and quality of diagnosis, better co-ordinated care, and enabling self-care.

Reducing deaths from suicides and injuries of undetermined intent

Suicide is a major issue for society and a leading cause of years of life lost. It is a significant cause of death, particularly in young adults, and can reflect the underlying rates of mental ill health in an area.

Figure 4.27 shows that Manchester has seen a significant reduction in the rate of suicides and injuries of undetermined intent in recent years, from a rate of 16.7 per 100,000 in the three-year period 2009–11, to 9.3 per 100,000 in the three-year period 2018–20; this remains below the England rate of 10.4 per 100,000. Between the periods 2009–11 and 2018–20, the number of suicides fell from an average of 64 per year to 43 per year.

Figure 4.27:
Mortality rate from suicide and injury undetermined



Source: Public Health England (based on ONS source data)

There were 38 suicides registered in 2020, compared to 46 in 2019 and 45 in 2018. It is worth noting that due to registration delays, some suicides in 2020 may not have been registered by the coroner at the time. Also, the COVID-19 pandemic may have had the effect of increasing the registration delay, which may partially account for a lower number of suicides registered in 2020 than those in 2019. Recently, there has been a small increase in the three-year suicide rate, from 8.7 per 100,000 in 2016–18 to 9.3 per 100,000 in 2018–20. Nationally, the suicide rate for England has increased from 9.6 in 2016–18 to 10.4 in 2018–20.

Suicide is often the end point of a complex history of risk factors and distressing events, but there are many ways in which services, communities, individuals and society as a whole can help to prevent suicides. The implementation of the Manchester Suicide Prevention Plan will help to reduce the number of attempted suicides and deaths in Manchester through awareness-raising and training, anti-stigma campaigns, and work done with the rail network and highways to limit access to high-risk locations.

The precise impact of COVID-19 on suicides and people's contemplation of suicide is still not yet clear. The often lengthy delay between occurrence and death registration means that the impact of COVID-19 on suicides will not be seen in the official data for some time. However, the current evidence suggests that the COVID-19 pandemic has had profound and long-lasting psychological and social effects.

National data from the ONS [Opinions and Lifestyle Survey](#) shows that during the lockdown in early 2021 (27 January to 7 March), the proportion of adults

experiencing some form of depression was more than double the rate seen before the pandemic. Younger adults and people living with a child aged under-16 had the largest increases in rates of depressive symptoms compared with pre-pandemic levels. Around three in ten adults aged 16–39 (29%) experienced some form of depression (indicated by moderate to severe depressive symptoms), compared with 11% in July 2019 to March 2020. Rates of depression also doubled among adults aged 70 and over in the same period.

Social isolation, anxiety, fear of contagion, uncertainty, bereavement, chronic stress, and rapid change in people's circumstances (particularly economic) may also lead to the development or exacerbation of depression, anxiety, substance use and other psychiatric disorders in vulnerable populations, including individuals with pre-existing psychiatric disorders and people who resided in high COVID-19 prevalence areas. Stress-related psychiatric conditions, including mood and substance-use disorders, are also associated with suicidal behaviour. All these factors may have increased suicide rates during the pandemic and may increase them post-pandemic.

The latest evidence from the National Confidential Inquiry into Suicide and Safety in Mental Health (NCISH) and the Centre for Mental Health and Safety at The University of Manchester did not find a rise in suicide rates in England in the 12 months following the first national lockdown in 2020, despite evidence of greater distress. However, several caveats apply: these are still early figures and may change; any effect of the pandemic may vary by population group or geographical area; the use of real-time surveillance in this way is new and further development is needed before it can provide full national data.

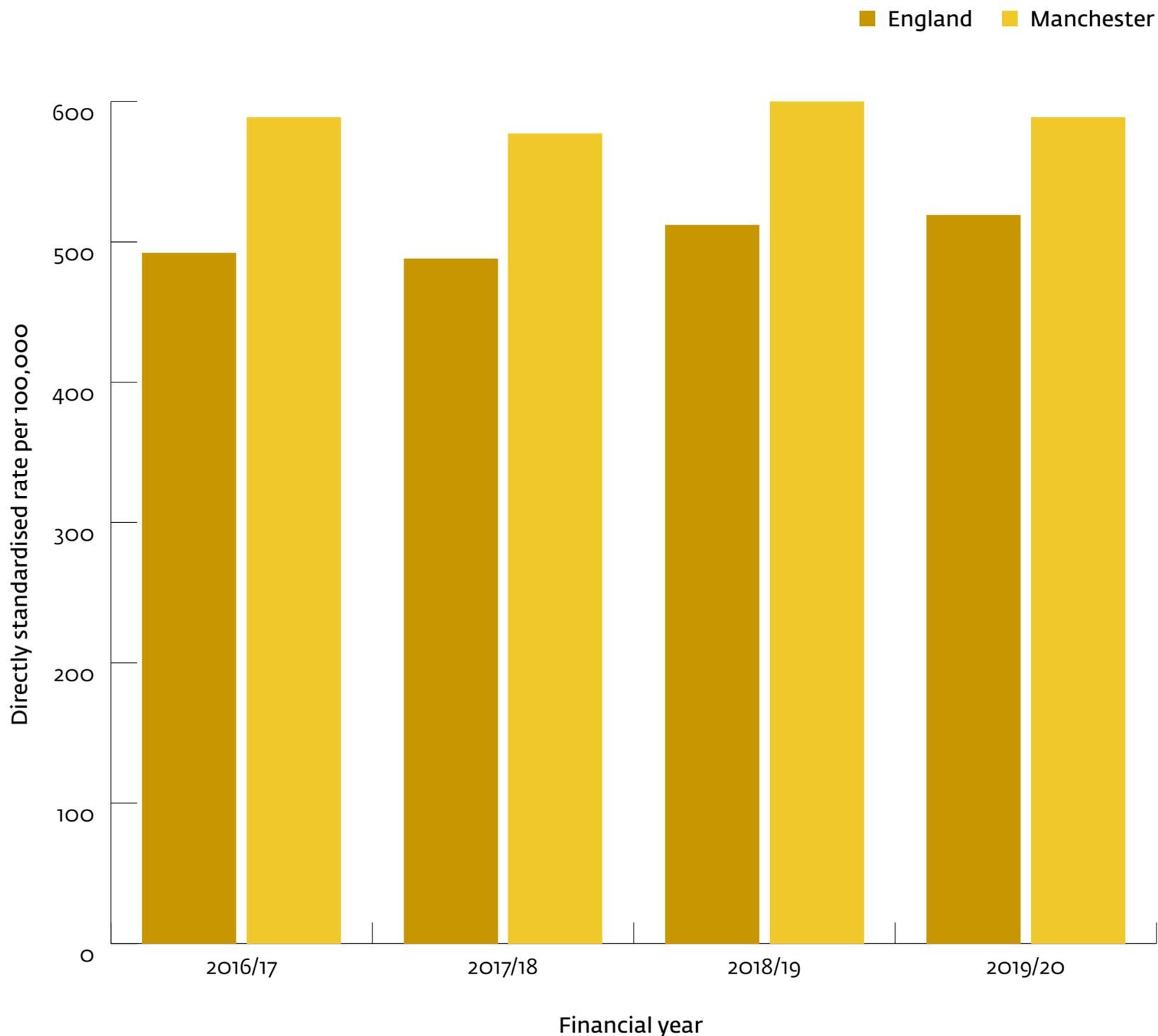
The Manchester Suicide Prevention Partnership continued to meet virtually throughout the pandemic to share data and good practice. Suicide-awareness training has been provided for 45 front-line staff (including those from the Council's Contact Centre, Homelessness and Early Help). This has given them the skills and confidence to talk with residents about suicide, provide them with support, and link them to additional services where appropriate.

Admission episodes for alcohol-related conditions

Alcohol consumption is a contributing factor to hospital admissions and deaths from a diverse range of conditions. Each year, alcohol misuse is estimated to cost the NHS around £3.5 billion and society £21 billion. Reducing alcohol-related harm is one of Public Health England's seven priorities for the next five years. Alcohol-related admissions can be reduced through local interventions to reduce alcohol misuse and harm.

Figure 4.28 shows the number of admission episodes for alcohol-related conditions expressed as a directly age-standardised rate per 100,000 population using a new method. Newly published admission rates are lower than those previously published due to a change in methodology, considering the latest academic evidence and more recent alcohol-consumption figures. Hospital admissions attributed to alcohol have reduced because in general people are drinking less today than they were when the original calculation was made.

Figure 4.28:
Admission episodes for alcohol-related conditions (narrow definition, new method)



Recent data shows a slight improvement in the rate of admission episodes for alcohol-related conditions in Manchester. In 2019/20, the rate of admission episodes for alcohol-related conditions was 589 per 100,000 – a reduction of 2% compared to 2018/19 (600 per 100,000). The gap between the rate of admission episodes for alcohol-related conditions in Manchester and the England average has narrowed. In 2016/17, the rate of admission episodes for alcohol-related conditions in Manchester was 20% higher than the England average; in 2019/20, it was 13% higher.

The evidence in respect of the impact of COVID-19 on alcohol consumption is mixed. Nationally, the volume of alcohol sold during the 17 weeks up to 11 July 2020 reduced to 1.3 billion litres, down from 2 billion litres the previous year. The Public Health England (PHE) [wider impacts of the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) pandemic on population health monitoring tool](#) shows that alcohol intake across the population as a whole has remained about the same during lockdown, with almost half of people reporting they had neither increased nor decreased their drinking. Those aged 18–34 were more likely to report consuming less alcohol each week than before, and those aged 35–54 were more likely to report an increase. However, there was an increase in the proportion of ‘increasing and higher-risk’ drinkers between April and August 2020.

Locally, we will continue to monitor the data on the number of new entrants into either structured alcohol treatment or brief interventions with our service provider, as well as the nationally published data on hospital admissions for alcohol-related conditions.

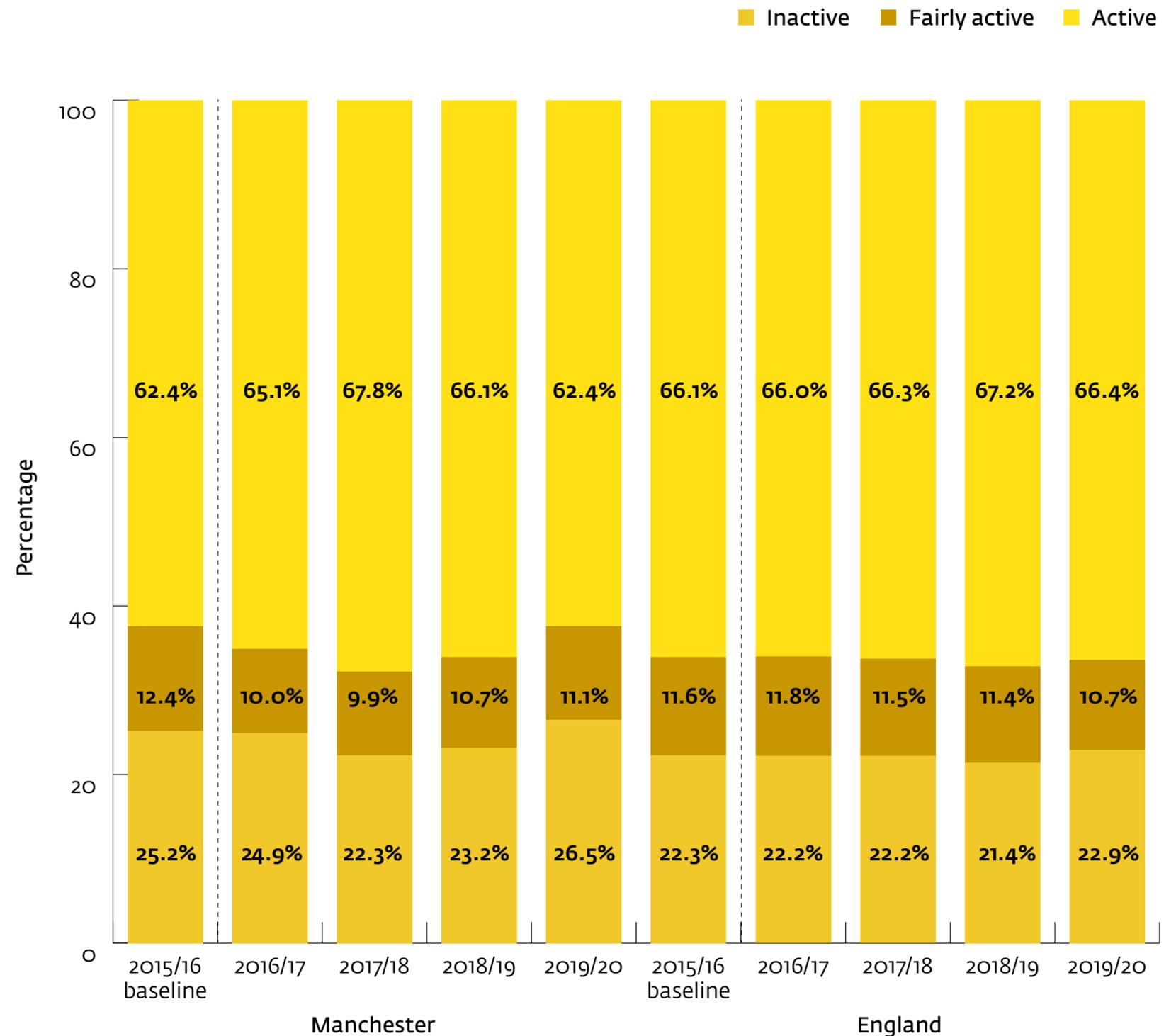
Source: Public Health England (based on Hospital Episodes Statistics and ONS mid-year population estimates).
New method: this indicator uses a new set of attributable fractions, and so differ from that originally published

Physical activity and inactivity

Physical inactivity is the fourth-leading risk factor for global mortality, accounting for 6% of deaths globally. The Chief Medical Officer (CMO) currently recommends that adults undertake a minimum of 150 minutes (2.5 hours) of moderate physical activity per week, or 75 minutes of vigorous physical activity per week, or an equivalent combination of the two (MVPA), in bouts of ten minutes or more.

The latest Sport England Active Adult Lives Survey covers the period from mid-November 2019 to mid-November 2020, including eight months of restrictions imposed in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. It reveals that the pandemic has had an unprecedented impact on our ability to take part in sport and physical activity. Nationally, there has been a reduction in activity levels and an increase in inactivity over the past year. Figure 4.29 shows that in 2019/20, 62% of adults (aged 19+) in Manchester were classed as 'active' compared to 66% in 2018/19. The proportion of 'inactive' Manchester adults has also increased from 23% to 27%. The proportion of Manchester adults classed as 'active' has been decreasing since 2017/18 and is now well below the England average (66%). It is worth noting that these figures are estimated based on data drawn from a survey with a relatively small sample size.⁵

Figure 4.29: Weekly physical activity (age 19+)



⁵ Broad physical activities include sporting activities, fitness activities, cycling, walking, creative or artistic dance, and gardening

Source: Public Health England (based on Active Lives Adult Survey, Sport England)

The multi-agency Winning Hearts and Minds Programme has been developed in partnership with Manchester City Council Sport and Leisure Service and MCRactive. It involves:

- Investment in community-led initiatives in the most challenging areas in the north of the city to help reduce health inequalities
- Working with communities to identify new ways of encouraging physical activity through the Sports England-funded Tackling Physical Inactivity initiative
- Delivery of community-centred approaches to improve the detection of cardiovascular disease and its risk factors
- Co-production of approaches to improve the physical health of people with severe mental illness.

Case study: Winning Hearts and Minds – supporting our communities through COVID-19

In the first weeks of the COVID-19 pandemic and the arrival of lockdown in the UK, we quickly realised that we couldn't continue as before. We needed to totally reshape our work because we couldn't get out and talk to people in the same way. We also recognised the immediate challenge faced by residents and community groups, particularly those that might be more in need of help, and those who supported them.

It felt very difficult to sit and wait, even just for two or three weeks. We soon realised that we just needed to start helping wherever we could. We didn't plan what we were going to do, especially as we were restricted by being out in the community. However, we knew that the why and the how that drives our work wasn't going to change – they are so important to the core of what we do.

As volunteering opportunities presented themselves, we were able to offer help very quickly. We knew lockdown was hurting our communities and we wanted to help. We also came up with some of our own initiatives, based on what we were hearing from our communities and groups in north Manchester.

Everyone was free to take up the work they felt was needed most, and what suited them best. Some fieldworkers took up full-time redeployment in new Council roles, such as food delivery; some worked full-time on more

typical Winning Hearts and Minds-type projects, such as befriending, and the Activity Packs project; some did a mix of the two.

Taking up such a variety of projects in areas we wouldn't have traditionally worked in gave us some new connections to residents, colleagues, groups and organisations we wouldn't have had contact with before. Every project and redeployment taught us something we didn't see before or already know about our community or sector.

COVID-19 has shown, more than ever before, the impact of health inequalities on our communities, with the most deprived facing much poorer outcomes. The Winning Hearts and Minds work will continue to be essential in how this increasingly complex area is tackled and in how we bring people along this journey with us.

Continuing to be recognised as a pioneering age-friendly city

Age-Friendly Manchester

The Age-Friendly Manchester (AFM) programme aims to improve the way we all age together, so that people in their middle and later life can enjoy a better quality of life and fully participate in all that Manchester has to offer. A part of the Council's Population Health Team, AFM is an active member of the World Health Organization's Global Network of Age-Friendly cities, and on the Steering Group of the UK Network of Age-Friendly Cities and Communities.

The AFM programme, initially called Valuing Older People, has built on the successes of its 15-year existence, being identified as a leading example of the Our Manchester approach in 2015. A cornerstone of the AFM programme is to help increase the social participation of older residents and the communities in which they live.

The programme is underpinned by collaboration and partnership and guarantees older people a leading role. Since 2004 there has been an elected and representative AFM Older People's Board and an Age-Friendly Manchester Assembly of over 100 people aged over 50. Both of these help shape the strategic direction of the programme, acting as consultative bodies, and help shape the design of Council policies.

The wider AFM family includes a diverse range of partnerships, including The University of Manchester; Manchester Metropolitan University; the statutory, voluntary and private sectors; culture; and national and international collaborators. The Age-Friendly Manchester Steering Group meets four times a year

and brings senior representatives together from all these different sectors with responsibility for the successful delivery of the programme's AFM Delivery Plan.

In 2017, following a comprehensive consultation, AFM published [Manchester: A Great Place To Grow Older \(2017–2021\)](#). As the city's ageing strategy, this outlines how the city's systems and structures will work together to improve the health and wellbeing of residents as they age. Progress over the past year includes:

- **Sustaining the voice of older people:** with the outbreak of COVID-19 AFM Older People's Board meetings (which have taken place physically every two months since 2004) came to an abrupt halt. Many Board members either lacked access to digital technology, or the experience to use it. Through phone conversations it was clear that Board members were feeling very isolated and were increasingly concerned about the impact of COVID-19 upon older people and their negative portrayal in the media. At the same time, the Board had lost its ability to speak up on behalf of older people. The AFM team supported Board members to obtain digital devices, gave advice on how to use them, and provided materials. The team also held a number of one-to-one and trial meeting events to get Board members up to speed and confident with videoconferencing. This resulted in the Board reconvening, and it has been meeting on a monthly basis via Zoom ever since.
- **AFM Scrutiny Committee Recovery Report:** moving to a digital platform enabled the AFM Board to articulate their concerns at the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on the over-50s and the negative portrayal and

treatment of older people in the media. This was discussed in a meeting with the Leader and Chief Executive of the Council where the Board was asked to identify its recovery priorities for people in middle to later life in Manchester. The AFM team set out these priorities in a report to the Council's Communities and Equalities Scrutiny Committee, where it received unanimous support. The AFM Recovery Report now forms the basis for the city's recovery plan for the over-50s.

- **Establishment of the AFM Executive:** the AFM Executive is chaired by the Executive Director of Adult Social Services and brings together system leadership from across the city and Greater Manchester with responsibility for overseeing the delivery of recommendations and the accompanying action plan coming out of the report.
- **Equalities Impact Assessment Guidance on age:** the AFM Recovery report made a number of recommendations centred around ageism and age as a protected characteristic. The AFM team has produced guidance on equalities, which considers ageing and the equality characteristics of middle to later life.

Case study: Equality Impact Assessment age-friendly guidance

Activities and projects taken forward to advance age equality in the Council should be underpinned by robust Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs). In order to support Council officers to complete an EIA that focuses on age and ageing as a protected characteristic under the 2010 Equality Act, the Age-Friendly Manchester team has created [age-friendly EIA guidance](#). This provides some insight into the challenges people face when ageing in Manchester and also highlights some of the opportunities for residents to age well and have a happier and successful later life. The guidance will help ensure that services and policies in the city are age-aware and address the specific age-related inequalities that arise as people get older.

The guidance will help officers to adopt and build on best practice and avoid common pitfalls when completing an EIA. It highlights some of the key issues affecting people as they age and presents this thematically for ease of use. The guidance also draws attention to intersectionality, where equality issues and characteristics around age may cross over with equalities considerations around race, gender, disability and sexuality. It ends with a section covering the disproportionate impact that COVID-19 has had on the over-50s, and its effect on people in middle and later life.

The guidance has been produced in conjunction with the Council's Equality Diversity and Inclusion team. It draws on evidence from research collaborations with the city's universities and beyond, as well as older people via formal engagement with the Age-Friendly Manchester Older People's Board and a range of older people's organisations. An appendix provides links to further reading and supporting evidence and features good-practice examples of age-friendly work being delivered across the Council.

The guidance has been adopted as a standard Council equalities document and has generated interest as a good-practice example at a Greater Manchester and national level. It can be used as a tool more widely by anyone whose work might affect older people, or who wants to improve their understanding of the characteristics of ageing.

The impact of COVID-19 on the over-50s

COVID-19 and the resulting restrictions that have been in place during 2020 and 2021 have disproportionately affected older people. The pandemic has had a negative impact on many of the social and economic circumstances that shape experience of ageing and which can lead to inequalities persisting into later life. COVID-19 has led to an increase in physical deconditioning and a decline in mental health among older people, while having a disproportionate impact on unemployment levels among workers aged over 50. Restrictions have also impacted on older people's social connections, particularly among an age group with low levels of digital access, leading to increased loneliness and social isolation.

[A recent report by Ipsos MORI and the Centre for Ageing Better](#) illustrates further the impact lockdown has had on those aged 50–70, revealing dramatic changes to people's lives and their plans for the future. It shows that:

- One in five feels their physical health has worsened since lockdown
- Just under a third (32%) have been drinking more
- Over half have had a medical or dental appointment cancelled
- Over two-thirds (68%) of those who are currently workless do not feel confident they will be employed in the future
- 30% have been volunteering informally.

Age-friendly programme priorities and reset priorities

The Age-Friendly Manchester Older People's Board, working with broader neighbourhood networks and through the wider social networks of individual Board members, has been articulating the experiences of many of Manchester older residents since the beginning of the pandemic. As signs of the lockdown being lifted began to emerge, the AFM Board looked again at the age-friendly programme's priorities and identified ten reset priorities:

1. Tackling health and other inequalities in later life
2. Age-Friendly Services: reapplying an older people's focus on whole-population services across design, delivery and commissioning stages in recognition of the fact that many older people's needs have changed, and how we deliver services in the post COVID-19 era will need to be rethought
3. Age-Friendly Places: relaunching and expanding the Ageing in Place Programme (AiPP) across all 13 neighbourhoods, underpinned by the Age-Friendly Neighbourhood model, creating lifetime neighbourhoods with a range of age-friendly housing
4. Developing an additional focus on the most vulnerable and isolated over-70s as restrictions begin to be lifted
5. Extra effort in offering social and emotional support for Manchester's 'non-vulnerable' older people
6. Adopting a system-wide approach about how services communicate with older people, including a communications campaign to counter the ageist narrative about older people that was evident during the first stage of COVID-19
7. Responding to the economic impact on older workers and a social-inclusion offer for those who may never be able to work again
8. Digital inclusion: enabling those who have no access to or experience of using IT to gain the means and skills to connect digitally to services and social networks
9. Financial inclusion, including benefits maximisation, eg. pension credit and support to move to a more cashless economy
10. Relaunching the AFM governance, partnership and engagement structures virtually

A paper describing the views and insights of older people in more detail was presented at the Communities and Equalities Scrutiny Committee on 3 December 2020. The report identified five key recovery priorities that need to be addressed if Manchester's older people are to be able to contribute to and benefit from Manchester's post COVID-19 recovery.

These are:

1. **Ageism** – tackle ageism and inequality experienced in middle to later life by taking a more systematic approach to using Equalities Impact Assessments; developing a Council age-friendly communications strategy and communication standards; and developing an age-friendly approach to commissioning, service development and service delivery.
2. **Care homes** – work with the Care Homes Board to develop a model that connects care home residents to their fellow neighbours and the opportunities and activities available locally.

3. **Neighbourhoods** – via the Team Around the Neighbourhood develop 12 age-friendly neighbourhoods, where people can age well, that are easy to get around, and that are supported by a vibrant voluntary sector and robust age-friendly service standards. Using an equalities approach to develop a set of age-friendly service standards with libraries, parks and the Neighbourhoods Service.
4. **Employment** – address the disproportionate unemployment impact of COVID-19 on workers aged over 50, with targeted employment support, volunteering and quality-of-life support. In line with this, the Council has a commitment to become an age-friendly employer.
5. **Our Manchester Reset** – ensure the voice of older people and the AFM Older People's Board inform the Our Manchester Reset and its strategic delivery.

Working alongside the AFM Older People's Board and the AFM Executive, the Age-Friendly Manchester team will work to support lead officers across these five key areas to deliver on the recommendations in the report.

Conclusion

The past 18 months have had a huge impact on the city's residents, children and families. While the full scale of the social and economic impact of the pandemic is still not fully clear, emerging intelligence is indicating that COVID-19 has had and will continue to have an immeasurable impact on the city's children and families, plunging many more into poverty. The Council and its partners have worked tirelessly to understand the full scale of the challenge in order to reduce the risks and mitigate the impact where possible, and this will continue as we move into the recovery phase.

Despite the impacts of the pandemic, progress continues to be made for residents of all ages in meeting the Council's priorities, and working towards the delivery of the Our Manchester Strategy vision.

Although overall incidences of homelessness have decreased slightly, the number of people engaging with homelessness services has increased as a result of the pandemic. However, there are significant pieces of work being taken forward by the Council and its partners to help meet this challenge. There will be a continued focus on prevention and relief of homelessness, enhancing advice and support, and improving access and transition to settled homes and making homelessness as brief as possible.

While the number of people in the city who have no contact with employment and skills provision is still significant, whether they are out of work due to a health condition or in work that does not offer good terms and conditions, people are being supported into work through targeted interventions. This

work has been able to continue throughout the pandemic due to investment and adaption, which stands us in good stead in terms of being able to react positively to meeting the needs of Manchester residents in the future.

Children's Services continue to focus on reducing the number of children and young people going into care by using evidence-based interventions. These support families to remain together and where possible prevent the need for children to go into care, or where they do go into care, ensure a timely return home. Our teams are working closer with health, school, police and other colleagues in neighbourhoods and localities to place a greater focus on prevention and early support, avoiding problems starting in the first place for children or families, wherever possible.

The introduction of Integrated Neighbourhood Teams is transforming how residents experience their community-based health and adult social care, which has proved crucial during the pandemic. Intervention, prevention, reablement and services that better serve people's needs in the community have supported vulnerable people. This has prevented crisis and the need for more intensive health and social care services, also ensuring safe discharge from hospital as soon as people are medically fit so that hospital capacity is optimised.

The move to integrated teams, with community-based health and social care staff working collaboratively within MLCO, is crucial to our city's success. It has an impact on every one of the Our Manchester goals we're all working towards for 2025.

Chapter 5: A liveable and zero-carbon city

Strategic overview

The Our Manchester Strategy 2016–2025 set out the future Manchester our whole city is building together. In 2021 the Strategy's priorities were reset to 2025, refocusing on the challenges. We are heading for a zero-carbon future, with protected parks, and residents recycling right and wasting less; we need more affordable housing and faster climate-change action. COVID-19 set us back, but it also highlighted strengths and chances for progress, and communities came together. More residents now use the green space on their doorstep and support local businesses.

Despite the challenges associated with the COVID-19 pandemic, Manchester's residential pipeline continues to deliver, and more new homes were built in 2020/21 than in any year since 2008. Indeed, there is no evidence the pandemic has diminished demand for housing in the city; the void rate remains around the lowest it has ever been, and evidence from the lettings market shows the city remained resilient over the past year – particularly compared to Central London.

With demand continuing to outstrip supply, there remains very limited availability of stock, particularly for some of our lower-income and more vulnerable residents. As a result, we are seeing growing numbers of residents living in poor-quality private-rented properties, on the Housing Register, or in temporary accommodation. COVID-19 magnified the challenges faced by many of our residents, and

highlighted the links between housing inequalities and health outcomes. Increasing the delivery of housing – and affordable housing in particular – is a key priority for the city and will be a fundamental part of the city's recovery following the pandemic.

The climate crisis remains a key priority for Manchester, and great work is ongoing across the city to both mitigate and adapt to climate change. One of the five headline priorities the city will refocus its efforts on in the refreshed Our Manchester Strategy is the goal of becoming a zero-carbon city. While progress is heading in the right direction, the city is not yet de-carbonising at the required pace – collective action from everyone is required and the time for urgent action is now. The Council is taking action to reduce its own carbon footprint; last year the Council's direct emissions fell by 21% compared to the previous year, keeping the Council within its allocated carbon budget.

During 2020, Manchester met the national legal limits for all its air pollutants, while national and local COVID-19 lockdowns impacted on local air quality to varying extents. During the first national lockdown from 23 March 2020 there were marked reductions in NO₂ levels at urban and roadside automatic monitoring locations in Manchester due to lower volumes of traffic, and Oxford Road levels were 58% lower than modelled 'business as usual' concentrations. Despite the pandemic, progress under our Contaminated Land Strategy has been made, with the highest area of land being remediated since our records began.

There is concern about domestic abuse, particularly high-harm, high-risk cases, although we have secured additional funding to commission additional services to enhance capacity, focusing on early intervention and prevention. We are refreshing our Community Safety Strategy, and our new strategy for 2022–2025 should be published in early 2022. Serious violence is a concern (nationally as well as locally). COVID-19 has impacted on many areas, particularly service delivery and mental health, and recovery from the pandemic and its future impact is a concern.

Manchester's parks saw a significant increase in visitors as they became more important than ever during the lockdown. Visitors reported that using parks helped their physical and mental wellbeing. Two new Friends Groups were formed during the pandemic, and 17,500 volunteer hours were recorded to help keep the parks litter-free.

Many cultural organisations, including libraries and galleries, curated diverse, high-quality and popular online programmes during the pandemic, and in many cases reached higher visitor figures than face-to-face events. Libraries were classed by the Government as an essential service, primarily to support digitally excluded residents who were disproportionately disadvantaged by the pandemic. Libraries also set up two initiatives to support digitally excluded residents to become confident online users in their own homes. MCRactive continued to deliver the city's Sport and Physical Activity Strategy (2019–2028).

Leisure Centres, including swimming pools, stayed open whenever guidance allowed and provided activities online when facilities had to close. While not yet at pre-pandemic levels, take-up of our leisure offer is recovering at a faster than predicted rate.

Volunteers and voluntary-sector organisations became more important than ever during the pandemic, supporting vulnerable residents and helping the city to recover. The Council invested in the VCS sector, for example delivering the COVID-19 Impact Fund, which distributed £745,000 to support the mental health and wellbeing of priority resident groups and a further £50,000 to support victims of domestic violence and abuse.

Analysis of progress

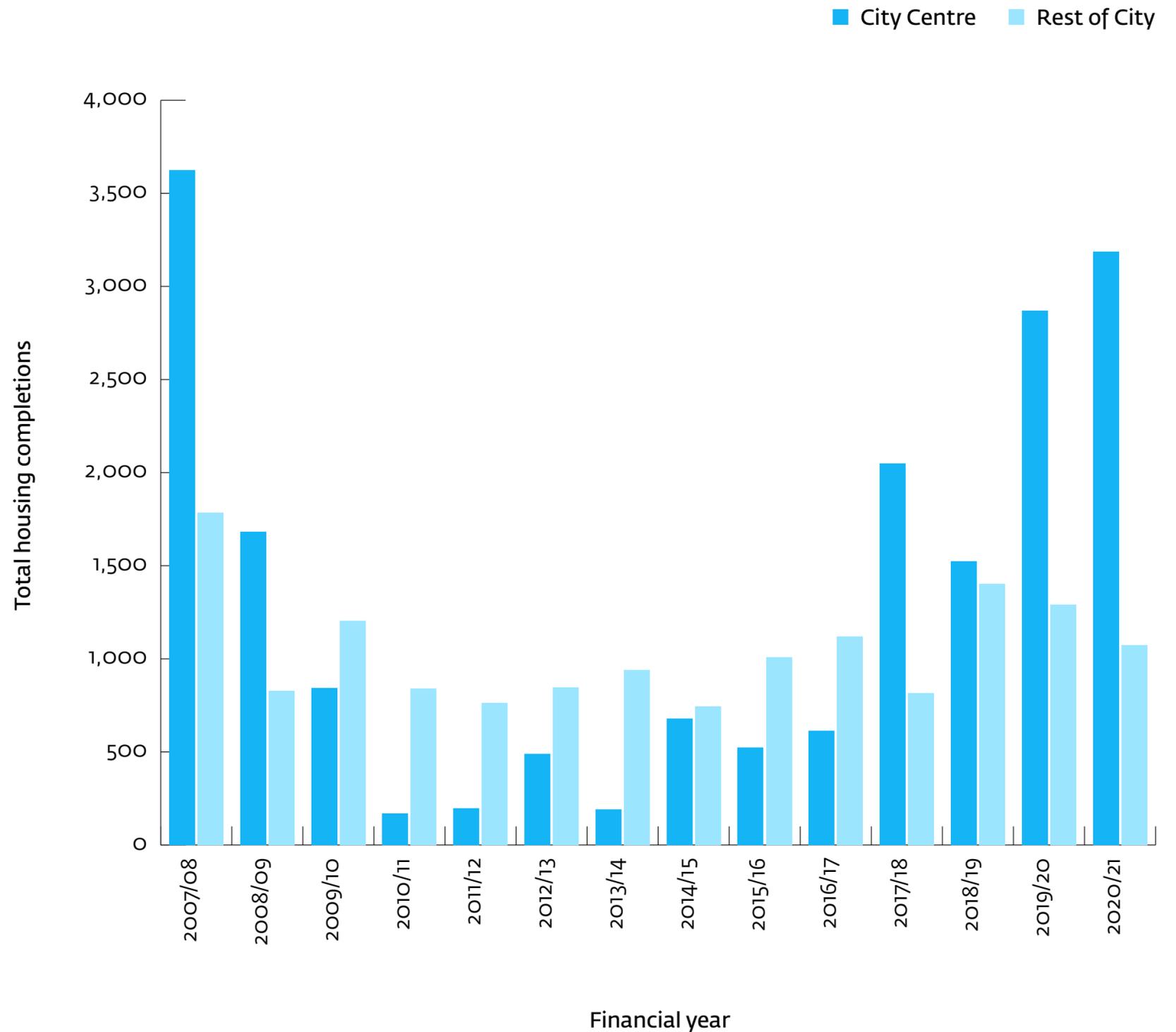
A diverse supply of good-quality housing affordable to everyone

Housing delivery

The residential pipeline in Manchester is continuing to deliver large numbers of new homes for our residents. In 2020/21, there were 4,260 new homes built in the city, including 3,187 in the city centre and 1,073 across the rest of Manchester. This brings the total number of new homes completed since April 2015 to 17,499 – 55% of the Residential Growth Strategy target.¹

¹ 32,000 new homes between 2015 and 2025, including a minimum of 6,400 new affordable homes

Figure 5.1: Housing completions 2007/08–2020/21



Source: Manchester City Council tax records (2007/08–2013/14), Manchester City Council Residential Development Tracker (2014/15–2020/21)

Despite initial fears that the pandemic would result in the widespread extension of delivery timescales, the majority of developments this year have completed to schedule, including the final two towers at Renaker’s Deansgate Square (662 homes), Glenbrook Property’s Manchester Waters development at Cornbrook (280 homes), and 135 homes at The Former Stagecoach Depot on Princess Road.

The evidence suggests that the pandemic has also not affected the long-term demand for new homes in Manchester. Indeed, during 2020/21, construction began on some 2,000 new homes across the city, including at New Victoria (520 homes) and Viadux (375 homes). Outside of the city centre, construction began on the redevelopment of the Grey Mare Lane Estate, which is set to deliver some 290 new homes (including 124 of re-provision) and the retrofit of 169 homes.

Added to this, since the start of 2020, planning applications have been submitted for 9,400 new homes. This includes Downing’s Co-Living scheme at First Street (2,204 bed spaces) and the Far East Consortium’s first development in the New Town neighbourhood, which will deliver 634 new homes (including 32 for shared ownership).

Increasing the delivery of new affordable homes

The delivery of new affordable homes continues to expand, increasing housing options for some of our most vulnerable residents. In 2020/21, 446 new affordable homes were completed across Manchester – the highest figure for any year since 2011. Of these, 141 were for social rent, 100 for affordable rent, 164 for shared ownership and 41 Rent-to-Buy homes. This also includes two Extra Care schemes at Brunswick PFI (60 homes) and Elmswood Park (102 homes).

Table 5.1:
Manchester Affordable Pipeline (2015–2025)²

	Social rent	Affordable rent	Shared ownership	Other Includes all Rent to Buy and Discounted Market Rent schemes	Total
Affordable completions (2015/16)	34	87	34	–	155
Affordable completions (2016/17)	14	156	84	–	254
Affordable completions (2017/18)	20	180	97	–	297
Affordable completions (2018/19)	56	136	141	5	338
Affordable completions (2019/20)	27	88	131	191	437
Affordable completions (2020/21)	141	100	164	41	446
Total affordable completions (2015/16–2020/21)	292	747	651	237	1,927
Total affordable homes under construction	327	141	145	133	844
Total Registered Provider Pipeline (2020/21–2024/25) Includes all schemes where a planning application has been submitted/a site has been identified	934	1,104	812	112	2,962
Remaining Pipeline Includes all Local Development Vehicle sites	181	886	716	–	1,783
Total	1,734	2,878	2,324	482	7,516

Source: Manchester City Council Expected Completions List

² Includes all Government-defined affordable tenures (correct on 5 May 2021)

A total of 1,927 new affordable homes were built between April 2015 and March 2021 – representing some 30% of the minimum 6,400 target by 2025 set out in the Residential Growth Strategy. In addition to this, 844 affordable homes are currently under construction and expected to be completed over the next few years. However, it is clear that the pace of delivery needs to increase in the years to 2025 if we are to meet our target.

The overwhelming majority of affordable homes that have been built since April 2015 have been delivered through the Affordable Homes Programme (AHP). This is set to remain an important element of the pipeline with the announcement of £7.4 billion new funding as part of the AHP 21–26 programme. However, current forecasting suggests this alone will not be enough to meet the growing demand for affordable housing in the city.

With this in mind, the Council is working with developers and Registered Provider (RP) partners to bring forward a series of large-scale, multi-tenure developments across a series of key locations in the city. 2020/21 saw the first planning applications submitted for Victoria North (formerly known as the Northern Gateway), which will deliver 244 new homes, including 100 new homes for social rent in Collyhurst.

Alongside this, the Manchester Life Development Company, in partnership with Great Places, has announced plans for Phase 3 of the redevelopment of Ancoats and New Islington. Plans include two schemes, including the refurbishment of the Grade II-listed Ancoats Dispensary, delivering over 100 new affordable homes. In Miles Platting and Newton Heath, Your Housing Group are

progressing plans to deliver over 1,100 new homes at Jackson's Brickworks – around half of which are set to be affordable, and ENGIE Services Ltd have submitted planning to build 410 new homes (including 114 affordable homes) on the Former Manox Works site.

While this move towards larger, multi-tenure developments represents significant progress towards meeting demand from our lower-income residents, current forecasting suggests that a further level of delivery beyond this is required. In response, the Council has progressed plans over the past year to create 'This City' – a local housing delivery vehicle – which is set to deliver a pioneering accessible-rent product across the city, including on sites in and around the city centre.

Resilient private-sector lettings market despite COVID-19

Despite sustained levels of development and the impact of COVID-19, there is no evidence of an increase in the number of residential properties remaining empty for long periods of time. Currently, only 1% of properties in the city centre and 0.5% across the rest of the city have remained empty for over six months. This trend for continued record low void rates is in stark contrast to the period following the 2008 financial crash, when the void rate exceeded 6% in parts of the city.

Evidence from the lettings market suggests that demand for accommodation to rent in Manchester has remained resilient over the past year, particularly in comparison to London. According to data from Rightmove, average two-bed rents in the city centre fell by some 2% during the past 12 months – much less than the estimated 15% fall in Central

London (according to Hamptons International) – before recovering slightly in the last quarter to £986 per calendar month.

There has been a slight correction in average city centre rents linked to the increased availability of stock that has come to the market as a result of the impacts of the pandemic. The neighbourhoods that have experienced the largest falls are areas popular with international students (Oxford Road North – 10.6% fall in 2020/21; Deansgate and Spinningfields – 10.3% fall in 2020/21) and neighbourhoods with large numbers of short-term lets (Northern Quarter – 7.7% fall in 2020/21).

Outside of the city centre, average two-bed rents have increased by 6% during 2020/21. However, this is a result of activity in the lettings market becoming increasingly focused in higher value markets in Didsbury and Chorlton during the pandemic. Indeed, in north Manchester average two-bed rents increased by just 1.6% to £655 per calendar month.

In April 2020 following a five-year freeze, the Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rate in Manchester was reassessed to bring it back into line with the 30th percentile of rents across the city. Following the change, the LHA now covers the rent of 58% of households in Manchester compared to some 40% prior to the increase. This is particularly important in light of the increasing number of claimants needing support with housing costs as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Of some 9,500 new LHA claimants in Manchester during 2020/21, over 70% have been able to cover their rent via Universal Credit or Housing Benefit alone without the need to top up – potentially preventing them slipping into rent arrears or other debt-related issues.

While this increase in the LHA rate improves the affordability of the private-rented sector for some of our most vulnerable residents, we know that issues around quality and management persist. In 2020, we published a refreshed [Private Rented Sector Strategy](#) and are currently in the process of updating our Housing Strategy; both look at improving conditions in this part of the market. A key aspect of this has been the expansion of the Selective Licensing scheme, which requires landlords to ensure their properties meet certain quality and safety standards.

Challenges in the sales market

The pandemic has impeded the sales market in Manchester; just 4,436 sales were recorded in the city in 2020/21 – the lowest number of recorded transactions since 2012/13.

The biggest reduction in transactions has been in the city centre, where significant constraints on the supply of suitable accommodation to buy (linked primarily to cladding and fire-safety concerns) led to just 870 sales in 2020/21 – a 75% reduction on 2019/20. While the announcement of an additional £3.5 billion Building Safety Fund in February 2021 was welcome, it still failed to address issues in buildings under-18 metres and is not able to be used to fix a number of widespread issues, such as timber walkways and balconies.

The result is that the city centre sales market is becoming increasingly polarised between the secondary market and new-build stock. In 2020/21, new-build properties accounted for over 40% of total sales-market activity in the city centre – up from some 20% in 2015/16. The secondary market has traditionally represented the more affordable

part of the city centre market, and while it continues to remain subdued, average prices continue to increase, driven by new-build premiums. As a consequence, over the past 12 months, average sales prices across the city centre have increased by 13% to £256,650.

Outside the city centre, average prices have risen by 7.6% to £213,000 – predominantly driven by increases in higher-value markets, including Chorlton (18.5% annual growth) and Didsbury East (9.6% annual growth) linked to changes to Stamp Duty Land Tax (SDLT). These reforms increased the level from which SDLT is charged from £125,000 (£300,000 for First Time Buyers) to £500,000 for owner-occupiers, and investors were only charged the additional 3% levy up to £500,000.

Despite this, most of the city's housing market transacts well below the values impacted by the reforms, with just 4% of sales in the city in 2020/21 over £500,000 and therefore able to realise the maximum £15,000 savings compared to 50% of sales in Greater London. As such, the only areas that appear to have benefited from the changes are the already high-performing south Manchester markets, where traditionally the majority of sales have been to movers.

In Harpurhey and Clayton and Openshaw, for example, over 57% and 37% of sales in 2020/21 respectively were under £100,000. At this level, the evidence continues to show that owner-occupiers are outcompeted by investors at the lowest price points.

According to the latest estimates, some 60% of sales under £100,000 were to investor landlords,

suggesting that increasing the supply of entry-level open-market sale homes does not increase home ownership – a major challenge for the city.

Increasing options for home ownership

The changes to SDLT appear to have therefore failed to impact the First Time Buyer (FTB) market in the city. The latest available data suggests that over 80% of FTB sales in Manchester are below £300,000 and were therefore exempt from SDLT prior to the changes. Alongside this, the COVID-19 pandemic created new difficulties for prospective FTBs, not least the reduced availability of 90% and 95% Loan to Value (LTV) mortgages, meaning buyers required larger deposits, which can be out of reach for many Manchester residents wanting to buy.

However, there have been recent moves to address this issue both from the Government and the market. In March 2021, the Government announced a 95% mortgage-guarantee scheme to try and increase the number of higher LTV mortgages available to prospective buyers. It is still too early to fully understand the impact this will have on sales-market activity; however, anecdotal evidence from agents suggest it has boosted demand, with some reporting enquiries increased by around 50% in the weeks following the announcement.

Evidence suggests that a greater range of mortgages are returning to the market – in March 2021 there were 3,842 products available (74% of pre-COVID-19 levels) and the number of higher LTV mortgages was growing for the first time since August 2020, with 146 new 90% or 95% mortgages becoming available. Alongside this, in April 2021, Nationwide announced they were lifting their borrowing limit on mortgages from 4.5x income to

5.5x income – potentially beginning to address what has historically proved a significant obstacle to Manchester residents wanting to buy.

Diversifying the city centre housing market

Widespread reports throughout the pandemic have suggested that COVID-19 will lead to an exodus from UK city centres as people place a higher value on larger properties and outside space. While there is currently no evidence of this move away from city centre living in Manchester, anecdotal evidence from agents suggests some residents are looking for larger properties to accommodate work space (opting for a two-bed property instead of a one-bed, to convert the spare bedroom into an office).

Alongside this, the city centre resident profile is evolving, as increasing numbers of residents are choosing to stay in the city centre for longer. According to latest MCCFM forecasts, the number of residents aged over 35 living in the city is expected to almost double over the next ten years to some 38,000, and the number of over-50s is expected to increase by more than 50%.

This raises significant questions around how the city centre can diversify to provide a greater range of housing products, including homes targeted at families and older persons. The strength of demand for these products is evidenced by the continued success of developments such as Urban Splash's houses in New Islington, where a further 40 homes were completed in 2020/21 (including four for shared ownership).

There is also a growing need for greater delivery of affordable housing in and around the city centre. Over the past 12 months, Clarion have progressed

plans for a 66-home shared-ownership scheme on Store Street, and Great Places are working in partnership with Manchester Life to deliver over 100 affordable homes across a number of sites in the Back of Ancoats.

While more is still needed, future additional delivery of affordable housing in and around the city centre is constrained by the availability and prohibitively high values of land in the area. As such, public land in the Eastern Gateway provides a key opportunity to increase the delivery of affordable homes in the city centre, and 'This City' is delivering a pioneering accessible-rent product that will be affordable to some of our lowest-income residents.

Looking forward

Increasing the delivery of housing – and affordable housing in particular – will be a key part of the city's recovery following the pandemic. Demand for housing from the most vulnerable in the city has not diminished following the crisis; if anything, demands from our most vulnerable residents have become even more acute, with the numbers of people on the housing register and in temporary accommodation continuing to grow.

However, the potential for future delivery is constrained by the increasing scarcity of land, as opportunities for large-scale development sites in central locations become harder to find and, in many instances, require significant levels of investment in infrastructure and remediation.

Over the past 12 months, a number of large-scale developments in Manchester have succeeded in bids to the Brownfield Land Fund, including Collyhurst Village (139 homes) and Silk Street

(69 homes). Bringing opportunities such as this forward is only made possible by continued access to funding. Without this investment, the city will be limited in its ambition of increasing scale and density in the core of the conurbation and will be unlikely to deliver on its priorities of building much-needed homes for residents while at the same time making progress towards its zero-carbon ambitions.

Delivering greenhouse gas reductions to meet our zero-carbon ambitions

Zero-carbon 2038

The transition to a zero-carbon city will help the city's economy become more sustainable and will generate jobs, many highly skilled, within the low-carbon technologies and services sector. This will support the implementation of the [Our Manchester Industrial Strategy](#) and the [Manchester Recovery and Investment Plan](#). It will help to tackle fuel poverty by reducing energy bills and drive positive health outcomes through warm, healthy homes and the promotion of more sustainable modes of transport and improved air quality.

Becoming a zero-carbon city will help to make the city a more attractive place for people to live, work, visit and study, and a zero-carbon transport system will create a world-class business environment to drive sustainable economic growth.

In July 2019, the Council declared a Climate Emergency recognising the need for the Council and the city to do more to reduce our CO₂ emissions to mitigate the negative impacts of climate change. It also recognised our commitment to be at the forefront of the global response to climate change and to lead by example.

The responsibility for developing and facilitating delivery of a citywide strategy to fulfil this commitment is devolved to the Manchester Climate Change Partnership (the Partnership) and Manchester Climate Change Agency (the Agency). In February 2020, the Partnership and Agency published the [Manchester Climate Change Framework 2020–25](#) as the city's high-level strategy for tackling climate change.

The Framework's aim is that: 'Manchester will play its full part in limiting the impacts of climate change and create a healthy, green, socially just city where everyone can thrive.'

The Framework's implementation is championed and facilitated by the Agency and Partnership, primarily through existing organisations and networks. Highlights of the past year include:

- Zero Carbon Communities Programme – this will be Manchester's largest community-focused climate change programme. Phase one will run from May 2021 to May 2022 as '[In Our Nature](#)' and will support six communities in Hulme, Levenshulme, the Northern Quarter, Moss Side, Rusholme, and Miles Platting and Newton Heath. All wards across the city are looking at the actions they can take forward within existing resources and developing local plans to support this.
- Manchester Climate Change Youth Board – The Youth Board brings together 13–28 year olds from across the city who are passionate about tackling climate change. Members of the Youth Board sit on the Partnership to represent the city's young people, and the Agency has appointed a Youth Champion to drive forward their priorities for 2021, including launching a Climate Wheel and manifesto.

- Zero-Carbon Business Programme – A Zero-Carbon Business Working Group has been established and a new programme is in development, intending to launch in January 2022. Work is being supported by Manchester's participation in the City-Business Climate Alliance (CBCA), an initiative of the C40 Cities network, CDP and UNBCSD, where Manchester is one of only eight cities selected to participate, alongside Dallas, Durban, Lisbon, New York, Stockholm, Tel Aviv and Vancouver.³
- The Agency has developed a list of [15 Actions](#) for every individual and organisation in the city to take.
- [Race to Zero](#): In December 2020, Manchester became one of the first 500 cities globally to join this initiative.
- Zero-Carbon Cities project: Manchester is leading this EU-funded work to support six European cities to set emission targets in line with the latest science and the Paris Agreement.
- The Agency published [Manchester's climate risk: a framework for understanding hazards and vulnerability](#). This document establishes an evidence base and structure for more detailed climate-risk assessments for the city and its stakeholders. Funding has been secured from UK Research and Innovation to take forward this work via secondment from Manchester Metropolitan University.
- Additional resources have been secured for the Agency to increase its ability to inspire and co-ordinate positive climate action across the city.

³ www.manchesterclimate.com/news/2020/07/transformative-city-business-partnerships-city-business-climate-alliance-cbca

- The Manchester Climate Change Partnership has grown to over 60 members from ten sectors, and has responsibility for over 20% of Manchester's direct CO₂ emissions; it also has reach into the remaining 80% through their staff, students, customers, tenants, football fans, theatre-goers, worshippers, and others.

- The Partnership appointed a new chair, Mike Wilton, in November 2020. Mike is the Office Leader for Arup Manchester, an employee-owned global engineering and design consultancy. Mike has been part of several of Manchester's regeneration projects over the past 30 years.
- [A summary of the action plans of Partnership members](#) is available on their website.
- Expansion of the Partnership is a key goal for 2021, and applications for new members opened in summer 2021 on www.manchesterclimate.com
- The Partnership has several subgroups and working groups that lead on particular issues and initiatives:

Property: currently working on the development of a roadmap for all new developments to be zero-carbon from 2023.

Culture: the Manchester Arts Sustainability Team was established in 2011 and has recently been part of an EU-funded project, C-Change, to promote its work and support replication in five European cities.

Sport and leisure: Manchester City Football Club is currently considering the establishment of a new sport and leisure group.

Corridor Manchester: a zero-carbon group has been established to facilitate joint working by the Corridor partners.

Social housing: Manchester Housing Providers Partnership established a zero-carbon group in 2019 to facilitate joint working.

Faith: the Our Faith Our Planet group was established in 2018.

- The Partnership and Agency produce annual reports that detail all progress in the year and these are available from www.manchesterclimate.com/progress.
- They also report to the CDP-ICLEI Unified Reporting Platform, which is considered international best practice for cities to report progress on climate change. Manchester has reported to this Platform since 2019 and is one of 812 global cities and 33 UK cities to report in 2020.
- A review of the Climate Change Framework 2020–25 has highlighted the need for further work to provide the city with a clear set of actions, with smart targets, that will reduce emissions by the required amount by 2025 and ensure that the city stays within its carbon budget and remains on track for its 2038 goal. Work will be carried out in 2021 to develop a version 2.0 of the Framework.

The adoption of a science-based carbon budget for Manchester, as articulated in the Climate Change Framework and following analysis by the Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research, is a demonstration of the city's commitment to positive action.

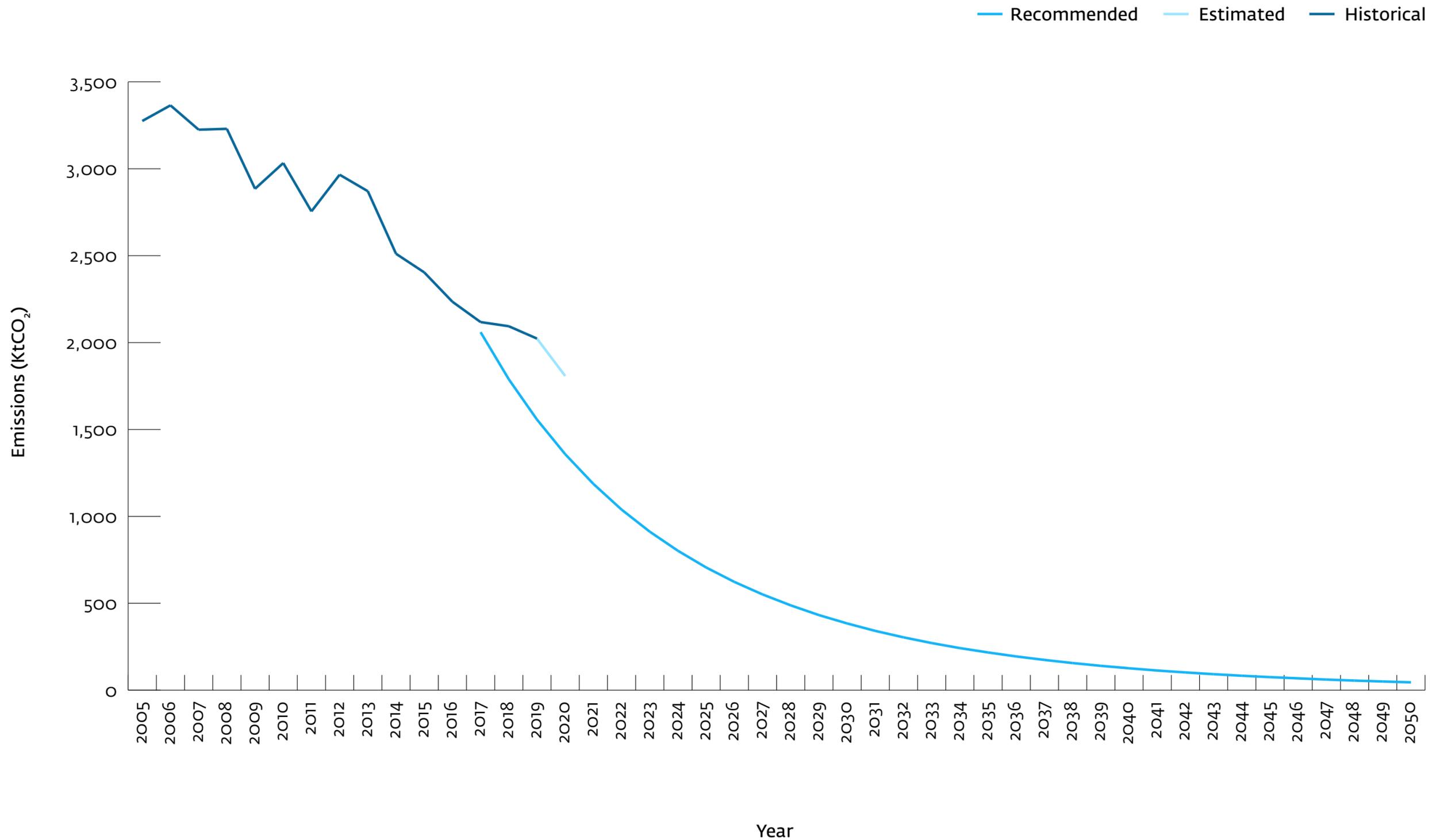
The city's carbon budget is 15million tonnes of direct CO₂ emissions for the period 2018–2100. Direct emissions come from the energy used in buildings (for heating, lighting, electrical appliances and equipment) and transport.

According to the latest report from Manchester's Climate Change Agency, Manchester's direct CO₂ emissions fell by 3% in 2019 and by 11% in 2020.⁴ While this data shows progress in the right direction, including emissions being 45% lower in 2020 than in 2005, the city is not yet decarbonising at the required pace.

Figure 5.2 shows Manchester's actual direct CO₂ emissions from 2005–2019 with estimated emissions for 2020 based on the national trend. The figure also shows the recommended emissions pathway related to the Manchester carbon budget and the target to reach zero-carbon by 2038. The emissions trend between 2018 and 2020 shows that Manchester is not following the recommended pathway, meaning that the carbon budget is being used at a faster rate; 86% of the five-year budget (2018–2022) has already been used and so it will almost certainly be exceeded.

⁴ The estimates provided here are based on the latest provisional statistical release for UK territorial energy-related CO₂ emissions (international aviation, shipping and land-use CO₂ emissions removed for consistency with local data) at the time, which covers 2019 and 2020. This analysis applies the year-on-year percentage change for these emissions at the national level to the latest local authority emissions data for Manchester. Therefore, this assumes that in 2020 Manchester followed the national trend in CO₂ emissions

Figure 5.2:
Progress in reducing direct citywide CO₂ emissions

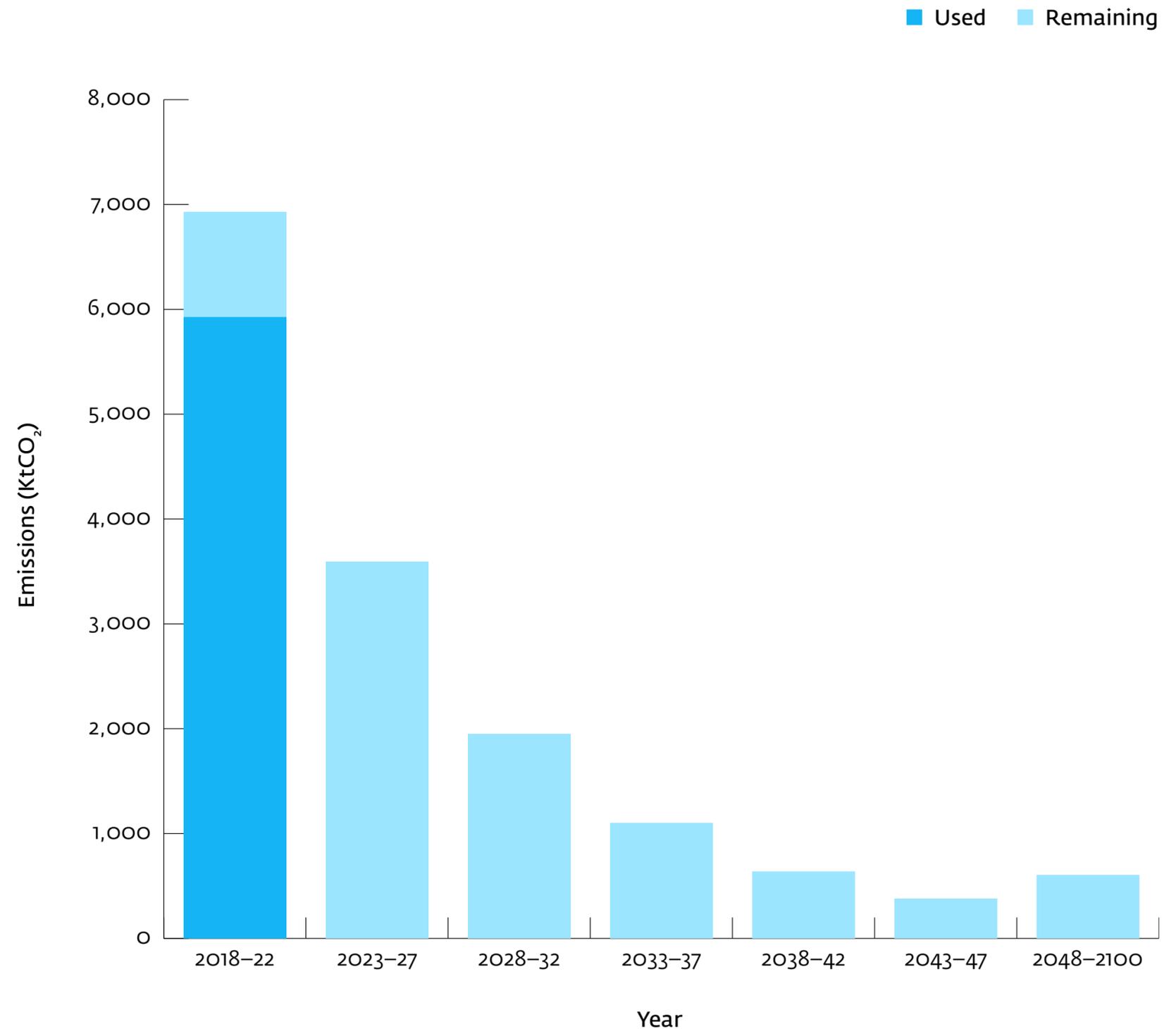


Source: The University of Manchester research, Manchester Climate Change Agency Annual Report

Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, 2020 is a highly irregular year for emissions data. According to the provisional data from BEIS, UK emissions fell by 11% in 2020. The biggest contributor to this reduction is transport, which had the largest proportional (20%) and absolute (24MtCO₂) decline across the UK as a whole. This sector has strong potential for a rebound if transport demand is not shifted to active travel and public transport modes once COVID-19 restrictions are lifted.

Figure 5.3 shows Manchester's carbon budget to 2100 split into interim budgets. If one interim budget is exceeded, a faster rate of emissions reductions will be needed in future years. Given performance to date, it is expected that the city will need to reduce its direct emissions by 16% per year to stay within the carbon budget to 2038.

Figure 5.3:
Manchester's carbon budgets by interim period



Source: The University of Manchester research, Manchester Climate Change Agency Annual Report

Manchester City Council actions and emissions

Manchester City Council has a key role to play in enabling the city to stay within its carbon budgets and reach its zero-carbon goals. In March 2020 it launched a detailed five-year [Climate Change Action Plan \(CCAP\)](#) for 2020–25.

The action plan includes ‘top-down’ or strategic interventions that will enable the city’s residents and businesses to take positive climate action.

Examples of these from 2020/21 include:

- The first of the walking and cycling routes supported by the Greater Manchester Mayor’s Challenge Fund was completed in Manchester – improvements to the Princess Road and Medlock Street roundabout create a safer environment for cyclists and pedestrians.
- 2km of district heat transmission network was installed for the Civic Quarter Heat Network (pipes, power and communication cables) along with completion of the Tower of Light.
- £7.8million funding was secured from the Social Housing Demonstrator Fund, to retrofit hard-to-treat concrete construction homes in Beswick, in partnership with One Manchester.
- An additional 10% environmental weighting was introduced to the Council’s procurement processes, helping to reduce our consumption-based emissions and supporting local suppliers to reduce their carbon emissions.

- 74 city centre traders at the Arndale and Church Street markets have committed to use consumables that are recyclable, compostable and biodegradable as part of their licensing agreements. Twenty-one caterers across the city’s parks have also committed to reducing and eliminating single-use plastics.
- The Council has planted over 1,000 trees, over 1,100 small hedge trees and four community orchards.
- The ‘sponge park’ at West Gorton opened, creating a new community park that showcases nature-based solutions to climate change adaptation. The natural flood alleviation measures were tested by Storm Christoph and proved effective at diverting excess rainwater into swales.
- Over 300 residents across 32 wards attended community events focused on climate action, and £52,000 from the Council’s Neighbourhood Investment Fund supported 41 climate-action projects.

In addition, the Council is taking action to reduce its own carbon footprint; a key target in the CCAP is to reduce direct emissions by 13% each year and by 50% by 2025. Direct emissions are related to the Council’s buildings, street lighting, operational fleet, waste collection fleet and business travel.

Last year, the Council’s direct emissions fell by 21% compared to the previous year, keeping the Council within its allocated carbon budget. Key projects include:

- A £6.3million capital investment to implement energy-efficiency measures in the Council’s estate over a two-year period (April 2020 – March 2022), which will save 1,300 tonnes of CO₂ per year once fully operational.

- £19.1million secured from the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme (PSDS) to support further measures to drive energy savings, decarbonise heat, and increase renewable energy generation capacity in Council buildings. It is targeting to save 1,800 tonnes of CO₂ a year.
- A new Low-Carbon Build Standard, developed to reduce the carbon impact of new-build developments and retrofit projects delivered by the Council.
- A three-year programme to retrofit Manchester’s street lights with LED light bulbs was completed and emissions are now over 80% lower.
- £9.8million investment was made into decarbonising waste collection and improving air quality by purchasing 27 Electric Refuse Collection Vehicles to replace just less than 50% of the waste fleet.

Case study: Reducing the carbon footprint of the Council's estate

A large-scale programme of work has been delivered to reduce the carbon footprint of 11 of the Council's most energy-intensive buildings.

A range of energy-efficiency measures have been installed, including pipework insulation, building management systems and 9,000 LED light fittings. Nine of the buildings have had solar panels, or photovoltaics (PV), fitted on their roofs, generating 2.5 megawatts of renewable energy.

A £6.3million capital investment funded this work, and the improvements will generate £700,000 of savings each year via reduced operating costs. Overall, these measures have a nine-year payback period and will reduce CO₂ emissions by over 1,300 tonnes each year.

In addition, energy-saving measures have been included in the refurbishment of the Town Hall (due for reoccupation in 2024), which will deliver a 40% energy reduction and up to 25% carbon savings (compared to 2009 usage). Measures to be implemented include:

- Insulating the roof and all heating pipework
- Removing and repairing windows to reduce air leakage
- Connecting to the Civic Quarter Heat Network and replacing the heating system
- Using natural ventilation to reduce cooling requirements

- Fitting LEDs throughout, including heritage luminaires and external lighting
- Installing a new building management system with zone controls.

Innovative solutions to reducing CO₂ emissions have also been explored. A novel heating-and-hot-water technology is being piloted in partnership with HydroZero, a UK company, at Gorton Library.

Traditional approaches to reducing or removing gas in heating can be costly, often requiring significant changes to a building's fabric and heat-distribution system. This pilot uses hydrogen and plasma to produce heat via an electrochemical reaction and has significant potential to provide a viable alternative to gas in the future.

External funding has also been secured to support the installation of more energy-efficiency and renewable-energy measures over the next few years.

A £5million European Regional Development Fund project called Unlocking Clean Energy in Greater Manchester will fund solar roofs, solar car ports and battery storage at the National Cycling Centre in 2021/22, and at Hammerstone Road depot in 2022/23. These measures will deliver over 400 tonnes of CO₂ savings.

£19.1million from the Government's Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme will pay for a series of energy-efficiency and renewable-energy measures, with a focus on decarbonising heat, in up to 13 Council buildings, including the Aquatics Centre (in 2021/22). Together, these improvements will reduce CO₂ emissions by around 1,900 tonnes each year.

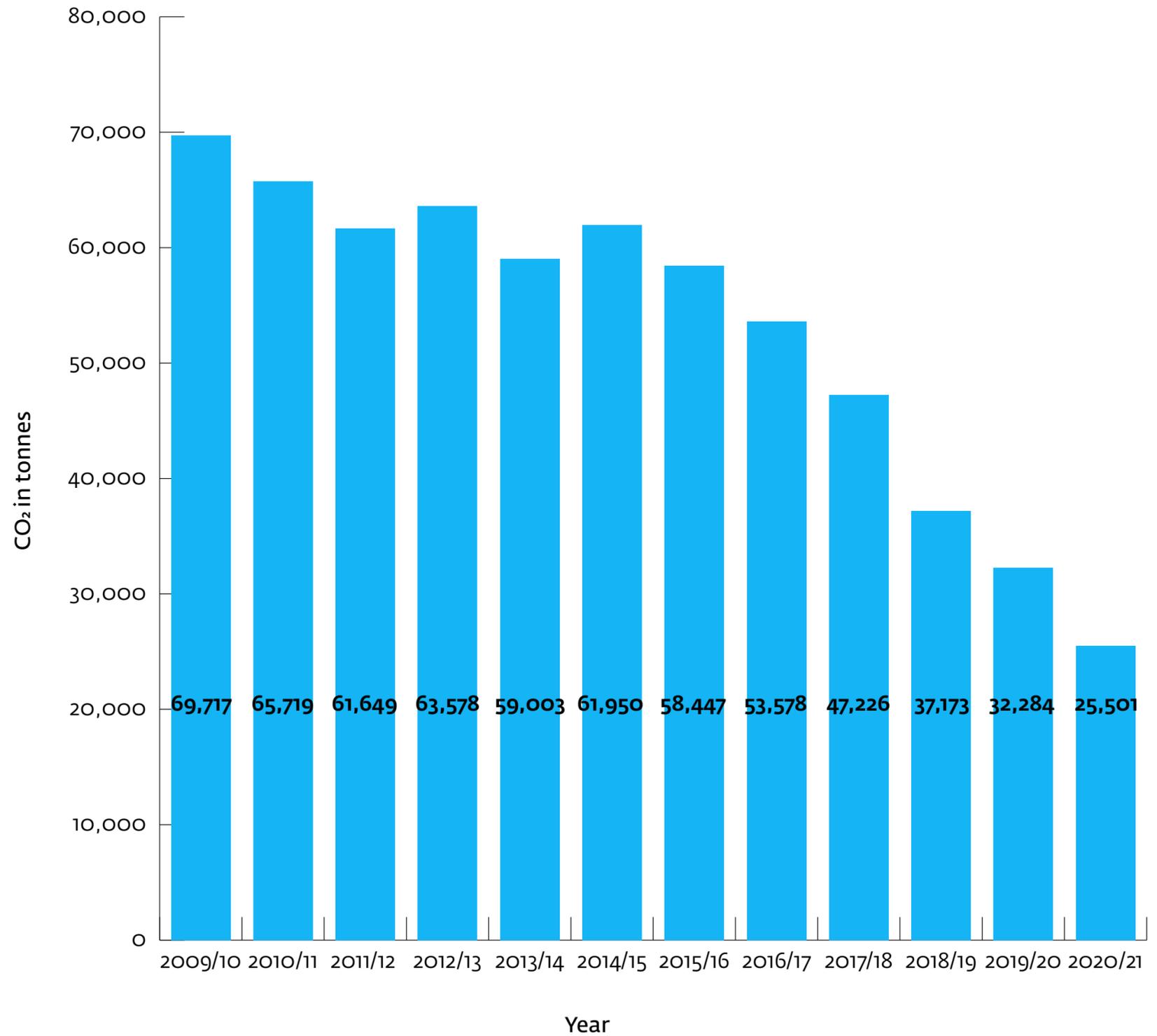
Figure 5.4 shows the Council's total emissions over the past 12 years; a clear downward trend is visible and emissions in 2020/21 are 63% lower than in 2009/10.

More detail on delivery of the [CCAP can be found in the quarterly and annual progress reports](#), which are now published on the Council's website.

As is clear from the examples provided here, the climate crisis remains a key priority for Manchester and much great work is going on across the city to both mitigate and adapt to climate change. The consultation on the refresh of the Our Manchester Strategy reinforced this point and one of the five headline priorities on which the city will refocus its efforts is the goal to become a zero-carbon city: 'We will achieve our zero-carbon ambition by 2038 at the latest, via green growth, sustainable design, low-carbon energy, retrofitting buildings, green infrastructure, and increasing climate resilience.'

Achieving this goal will require collective action from everyone – from local and national government, the private sector and our communities and residents – and the time for urgent action is now if we are to ensure Manchester plays its full part in limiting global warming to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels, in line with the Paris Agreement.

Figure 5.4: Total Council emissions



Source: Manchester City Council

Air quality

Air pollution is associated with a number of adverse health impacts and is recognised as a contributory factor in the onset of heart disease and cancer. It can disproportionately affect the most vulnerable in society: children, older people, and those with heart and lung conditions. Overall, the effect that man-made air pollution in the UK has on mortality is estimated to be in the range of 28,000 to 36,000 deaths annually.⁵

In 2008, the Government passed the European Ambient Air Quality Directive (2008/EC/50) into UK law. This sets legally binding limits and target values for concentrations of major air pollutants, including nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) and particulate matter (PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}).

NO₂ is primarily caused by the combustion of fossil fuels, particularly diesel, in transport. PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5} are also linked to the combustion of fossil fuels, including from domestic burning, as well as from the wear and tear of machinery associated with transport, and dust from construction work. Many of the sources of NO₂ are also sources of PM, and therefore measures to address NO₂ are likely to have some impact on PM levels; however, it should be noted that the replacement of the vehicle fleet with electric vehicles (EVs) may not result in significant improvements, as EVs produce PM from road, tyre and brake wear.

The Council and its partners are working to achieve the following objectives:

- Improving air quality across Greater Manchester, making the city a more attractive place to live, work and visit, leading to a stronger economy.
- Ensuring that residents can access job opportunities and other services in a safe and clean environment, enabling everyone to contribute to the success of the city.
- Reducing congestion and air pollution, improving perceptions of the city, and reducing carbon emissions.
- Investing in and maintaining the city's transport infrastructure, helping to drive growth.

During 2020, Manchester met the national legal limits for all its air pollutants; however, the COVID-19 pandemic has affected air quality, and this will be discussed later in this chapter.

There are two permanent monitoring stations in the city monitoring NO₂ and PM₁₀: Piccadilly Gardens and Oxford Road. Table 5.2 shows NO₂ and PM₁₀ measurements at these sites from 2015. These are part of a network across Greater Manchester. In Manchester, the stations are supplemented by over 40 NO₂ diffusion tubes in order to give a widespread picture of pollution levels.

Table 5.2: Annual mean concentrations of NO₂ and PM₁₀ (µg/m³)

Year	Manchester Oxford Road NO ₂ (µg/m ³)	Manchester Oxford Road PM ₁₀ (µg/m ³)	Piccadilly Gardens NO ₂ (µg/m ³)	Piccadilly Gardens PM ₁₀ (µg/m ³)
2015 (baseline)	66	28	39	20
2016	66	27	40	20
2017	65	27	36	20
2018	62	30	35	21
2019	59	26	36	20
2020	36	18	27	15

Source: [Air Quality England](#)

5 [Committee on the Medical Effects of Air Pollutants \(COMEAP\) 2018](#)

The data presented in Table 5.2 shows that concentrations of NO₂ have fallen at the Oxford Road and Piccadilly Gardens sites since 2015. During 2020, both sites met the legal annual mean limit of 40µg/m³ (microgrammes per cubic metre of air) for this pollutant, as did all the diffusion-tube monitoring sites. All tube sites also showed a decrease from the previous year.

The legal annual average limit for PM₁₀ is also 40µg/m³, and Table 5.2 demonstrates that concentrations of PM₁₀ have reduced at the Oxford Road site over recent years and remained relatively stable at Piccadilly Gardens, although reductions were noted in 2020. Neither site has exceeded the legal limit for this pollutant since the baseline year.

It should be noted that PM_{2.5} is also monitored at the Piccadilly Gardens site and the legal annual average limit for this pollutant is 25µg/m³. The result for the year 2020 was 8µg/m³, representing a decrease from 12µg/m³ measured in 2019.

National and local COVID-19 lockdowns affected local air quality to varying extents during 2020. During the first national lockdown from 23 March 2020 there were marked reductions in NO₂ levels at urban and roadside automatic monitoring locations in Manchester due to lower volumes of traffic, and Oxford Road levels were 58% lower than modelled 'business as usual' concentrations. This reduction was less than expected from observed traffic reductions, as Manchester was also a receptor of pollution transported from continental Europe and the south of the UK during this period. There is also evidence that solid-fuel burning in domestic fires and stoves went up initially during the first lockdown, leading to local

impacts on PM. Further details of the effects of the pandemic on Manchester's air quality are included within a Defra report '[Estimation of changes in air pollution emissions, concentrations and exposure during the COVID-19 outbreak in the UK](#)'.

Long-term monitoring trends indicate that there has been an improvement in air quality across the city, but it is likely that during business-as-usual circumstances parts of Manchester will still remain above the annual limit for NO₂. Such areas are known as Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) and are determined using a combination of monitoring data and computer modelling.

The current AQMA was declared by the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) in May 2016 and is focused on the busiest parts of the road network, including areas where routes converge, such as the city centre. The AQMA was set at a precautionary 35µg/m³, below the legal annual mean limit of 40µg/m³, and can be viewed on the [Defra AQMAs interactive map](#).

An [interactive map](#) has been produced using recent modelling carried out by Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM) to indicate stretches of road likely to have NO₂ levels in breach of legal limits beyond 2020 if no action is taken.

In order to make further progress in tackling poor air quality, the GMCA published an [Air Quality Action Plan 2016–21](#) (AQAP) in December 2016. The plan is structured around three themes:

- Reducing traffic by encouraging alternative travel modes

- Increasing efficiency by making the most appropriate use of roads and vehicles for different tasks
- Improving vehicles by encouraging fewer polluting vehicles to be used.

Objectives contained within the plan are being met in Manchester by a range of measures, including the installation of 'bus gates' on Portland Street and Oxford Road, planning controls for new developments, taxi and private hire vehicle (PHV) emission controls, a Clean Air Zone (CAZ), and a new air-quality website www.cleanairgm.com.

Further details of measures taken under the AQAP are included below:

- Continuing with planning-development requirements, including air-quality impact and exposure assessments, and mitigation, such as electric-vehicle charging points (EVC), boiler-emission standards, and travel plans.
- Summary EVC best-practice recommendations produced as a working document for Planning and Environmental Protection officers: the Council is working to publish this online as a guidance document for developers.
- The Council submitted monthly reports to TfGM for the Planning Development cumulative impact database.
- Work continued to improve taxi emissions; further details are available in the Greater Manchester Licensing Network's September 2020 report '[Greater Manchester Minimum Licensing Standards](#)'.

- Green infrastructure (GI): [IGNITION, Grow Green and Protecting Playgrounds](#) are examples of GI projects undertaken in Manchester during 2020.
- Delivery and servicing plan work and implementation continued: deliveries during off-peak times, load consolidation, and personal deliveries not allowed.
- The Council's waste contractor, Biffa, replaced almost half of the city's diesel refuse-collection vehicles with emission-free electric alternatives.
- Development of city centre local business consolidated waste-management schemes.
- Anti-idling actions continued, school engagement projects undertaken where possible by Council neighbourhood teams, and compliance work carried out by resolving isolated idling incidents informally in accordance with the Council's Enforcement Policy.
- The Council continued to promote flexible working, working from home, and locations that result in reduced travel time.
- Several teams have fleet EVs, and this number is increasing when vehicle-lease contracts end.

Further actions by the Council:

- Working with TfGM and other Greater Manchester districts to produce an EVC Infrastructure strategy to be adopted in summer 2021, and provide further charge points in Manchester
- Working with TfGM to implement the eHubs programme in Ancoats, Chorlton and Whalley Range, co-locating electric car club vehicles with e-cargobikes to provide alternatives to private car travel

- City Centre Transport Strategy and Car Parking Strategy approved; major car parks returned to the Council from NCP, and Car Park of the Future work underway to repurpose them to comply with GM2040 Right Mix, contributing to air-quality and carbon-budget targets
- Pedestrianisation of city centre areas with air-quality monitoring and development of Chorlton to Manchester cycleway with air-quality monitoring
- Continued work with schools over sustainable travel, school/play street closures and green infrastructure initiatives
- Continued to promote air-quality issues and sustainable travel via staff communications, schools engagement and university projects, and to the public via Council web pages
- Actively participated in 2020's Clean Air Day/Week, including promoting awareness of air pollution and measures the public can take to reduce their own exposure and impacts.

Additional measures taken outside of the AQAP include the launch of a domestic stoves and fireplaces campaign in autumn 2020, including social-media promotion and the creation of an informative [Clean Air Greater Manchester](#) webpage. The campaign seeks to educate Manchester residents of smoke-control rules covering the district, the impact of such appliances on indoor and outdoor air quality, and how to reduce these impacts.

All ten Greater Manchester local authorities have worked together to develop a joint [Clean Air Plan](#) (CAP), which includes a Clean Air Zone (CAZ), due to be in place from spring 2022.

In addition to the ongoing actions outlined above, the city is required to submit an [Annual Status Report](#) (ASR) to Defra each year. This demonstrates the progress of the implementation of the measures in the Greater Manchester AQAP and any resultant improvements in air quality.

Improvements in air quality across Manchester have been observed over the long term and, temporarily, legal limits were met during the COVID-19 lockdown of 2020. However, the measures proposed in the CAP are required to secure permanent compliance and ensure that everyone in Manchester can breathe cleaner air and enjoy pollution-free neighbourhoods.

Contaminated land

Much of the brownfield land within the city's boundary has a long history that reflects Manchester's industrial heritage. It is now recognised that this land provides a resource and opportunity for the city as part of its ongoing regeneration. An important aim of the Council's [Contaminated Land Strategy](#) is to support a strategic approach to regeneration, and to promote and assist with the safe reuse of brownfield sites.

The Contaminated Land Regime is underpinned by Part 2A of the Environmental Protection Act 1990. Currently, most of our contaminated land work is based around the National Planning Policy Framework. As such, no negative impact has been seen as a result of COVID-19; in fact, the numbers of hectares of land remediated in 2020 were the highest since our records began.

The work of the Environmental Protection Team aims to contribute to the Our Manchester Strategy by:

- Improving brownfield/distressed land across Manchester to make the city a more attractive place to live, work and visit, which will lead to a stronger economy
- Ensuring that residents can access job opportunities and other facilities in a safe and clean environment, enabling everyone to contribute to the success of the city
- Making land safe for both the environment and people; this will improve perceptions of the city, and help to provide new housing and green spaces in neighbourhoods
- Investing in and improving the city's green infrastructure to drive growth.

Where necessary, and supported by the Neighbourhood Services' Environmental Protection Team, sites identified as requiring detailed assessment can be reviewed and remediated through the planning-development process. According to our current records, 541 hectares of potentially contaminated land has been remediated under the planning regime during the past year (January 2020 to December 2020; data based on validation reports being received and approved). This figure is made up of 51 planning sites and includes some large-scale sites.

The largest sites are Block 14 Circle Square (Former BBC site, Oxford Road); a new school at 836 Wilmslow Road; an extension at King David High School, Eaton Road; the World Logistics Hub at Manchester Airport; and the redevelopment of the old St Mary's Hospital (Manchester Royal Infirmary), Oxford Road.

Table 5.3 shows that there has been a year-on-year increase in the area of land remediated since 2017/18.

Table 5.3:
Area of land remediated under planning applications

Year	Hectares
2017/18	15
2018/19	25.5
2019/20	44
2020 (Calendar year)	541

Source: Manchester City Council

In terms of sites that are in the planning system, extensive remediation work has been agreed or is in the process of being agreed for the former Mayfield depot in the city centre to create a new urban park, a new Arena on the Etihad Campus, the redevelopment/remediation of the Jackson's Brickworks former landfill site in Newton Heath and Miles Platting ward, and the former Manox chemical works site for residential use.

The Environmental Protection Team works closely with other Council departments, such as Corporate Property and Regeneration, to provide project-support technical advice as required. The team also helps respond to preplanning enquiries from private consultants and developers for planned developments. Projects the team has been involved with and continues to have a role in include Victoria North, HS2 and former landfill sites' redevelopment portfolios through the Landfill Project Board.

The work we do through the planning regime ensures that the Our Manchester objectives are being achieved as brownfield and derelict land is remediated to create safe and attractive places for people to live and work, improving the overall image of the city. Future projects, such as the new Mayfield Park, will also create more green space within the city centre.

Despite COVID-19, progress under our contaminated land strategy has been made, with the highest area of land being remediated under the planning regime since our records began. This demonstrates continued progress and reflects the commitment towards realising the aims and objectives of the Our Manchester Strategy and corporate priorities.

Recycling more of our waste, and clean, litter-free neighbourhoods **Recycling more of our waste**

The Council is committed to increasing the amount of waste recycled by providing services that meet the needs of residents. Following the successful delivery of new refuse bins to over 157,000 households in 2016, recycling rates increased significantly. 2017/18 was the first full year of service change; this recycling rate was maintained in 2018/19 and 2019/20, but is forecast to fall in 2020/21 (provisional figures) (see Table 5.4). This is due to the COVID-19 pandemic and is in line with the national trend, which has led to residents spending more time at home and so producing more waste that goes into their refuse bins.

The priority during 2020/21 was to empty residents' bins as more waste and recycling was presented for collection. The amount of recycling rejected at the tips also increased significantly, from 286 tonnes in

2019/20 to 3,403 tonnes in 2020/21. This was because of several factors, including changes in the market for pulpable recycling, changes in resident behaviour, and changes in the process carried out by the disposal contractors due to enacting contingency plans. The Government’s waste strategy is expected to be published in early 2022, following which the Council will bring forward its own refreshed waste strategy.

Table 5.4 shows the amount of residual waste collected from all households has decreased from 519kg per household per year in 2015/16 to 472kg per household per year in 2020/21 (provisional figure).

Table 5.4:
Percentage of household waste recycled – refuse produced per household

	Refuse kg per household per year	Recycling rate	Kerbside organic tonnage	Kerbside dry recycling tonnage
2015/16 baseline	519	32%	24,776	26,213
2016/17	471	36%	29,503	29,643
2017/18	438	39%	30,771	31,045
2018/19	409	40%	30,834	30,971
2019/20	417	40%	30,851	31,239
2020/21 (provisional)	472	37%	30,772	31,700

Source: Waste Data Flow

In 2018/19 and 2019/20, work was undertaken with apartment-style properties to encourage households to recycle more, as recycling rates within this sector have been low (approximately 15% in March 2018). Investment focused on providing more recycling facilities, improved signage, and other materials to make it easier for residents to recycle. Targeted communications and engagement with

this sector helped residents to understand what materials can be recycled and why it’s important that they make the effort to do so. Following an exercise in 2017/18 to understand the residual and recycling quantities collected from each apartment building, adjustments were made to ensure there is equity in provision of residual and recycling capacity across property types. Recycling rates

have risen to 20% in March 2020 following the implementation of the project. This rate was maintained in March 2021.

During 2020/21, projects to improve recycling in areas with passageway containers continued. The project involved refurbishing containers and replacing old frames with new locking posts to maintain site safety and improve cleanliness of the sites. As recycling from these sites was collected along with recycling from four-bin households, no data was available to measure the recycling rate baseline. Owing to pressure on rounds caused by COVID-19 as more waste and recycling was presented for collection, passageway recycling started to be collected separately in October 2020.

In response to changes in the international recycling markets, it’s more important than ever that the city ensures that domestic recycling is not contaminated with incorrect materials, particularly in the pulpable (card and paper) stream. Targeted campaigns were carried out during 2019/20 focusing on rounds that had high levels of contamination. During 2021/22, projects will be implemented to educate residents on the materials that go in the blue bin.

Becoming a cleaner litter-free city

The standard of street cleansing in an area makes a significant contribution to the perception of that area, its appeal, and its status as a neighbourhood of choice. Therefore, effective and efficient cleansing services are essential to the creation of these neighbourhoods of choice. In order to maintain clean streets, it is also important that residents, businesses and visitors to the city are supported and challenged to take responsibility for their surroundings. During 2019/20, 51 solar-

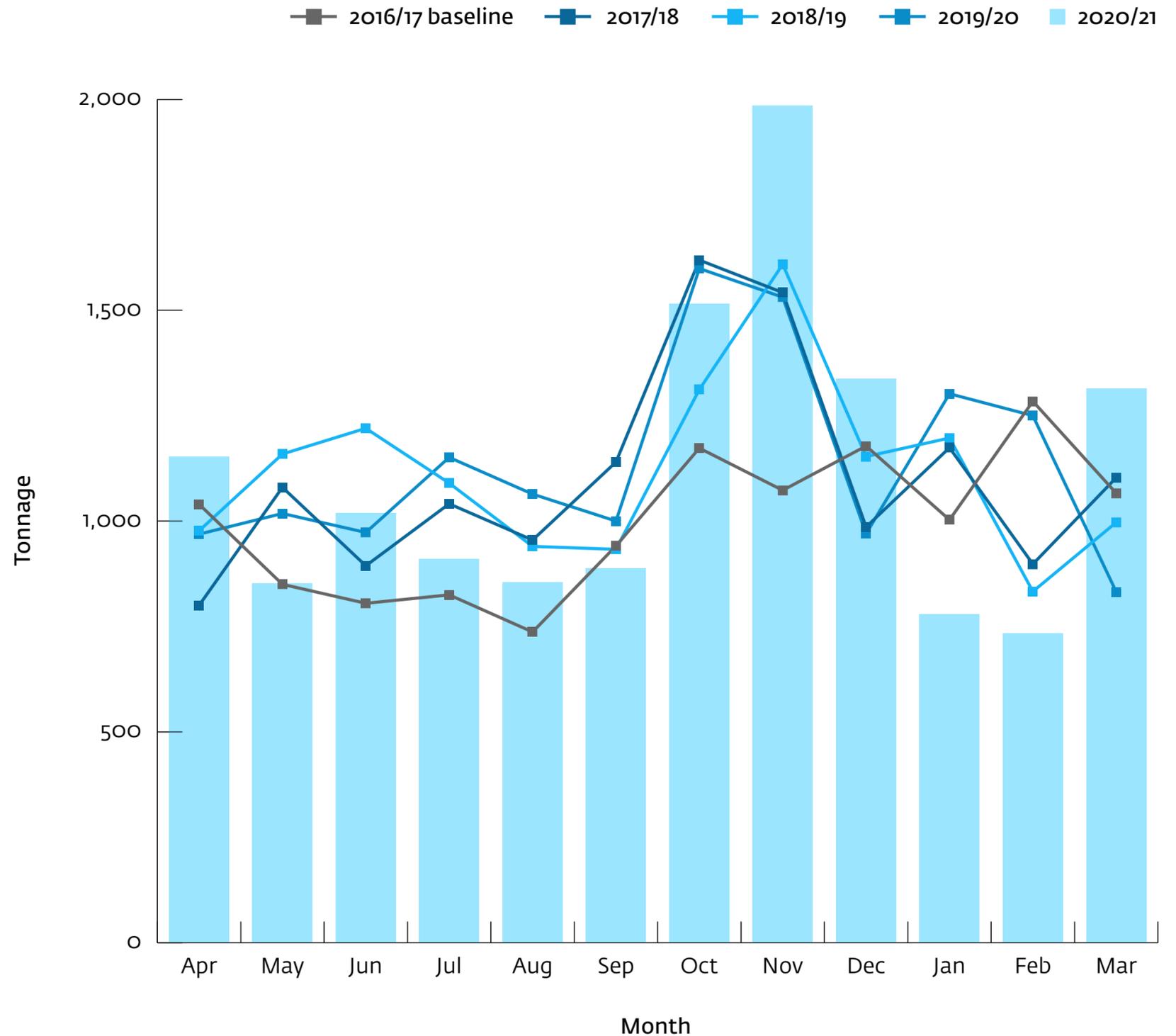
powered 'smart' compaction bins were installed in the city centre in high-footfall areas. In 2020/21, footfall fell as shops were closed during the various lockdowns due to COVID-19, leading to a reduction in street-cleansing tonnages collected because streets were cleaner.

One of Manchester's key priorities is to ensure the city is clean and well maintained, and that residents are supported to take pride in, and responsibility for, their surroundings. Within this context it is a priority of the city to ensure that all waste is disposed of in a regulated manner via waste disposal and recycling facilities, and to stop all incidents of fly-tipping from occurring.

There are over 1,600km of public highways in Manchester; the street-cleansing service is responsible for the cleansing of public rights of way, passageways, central reservations, open spaces and recycling sites. There is also the challenge of cleansing a busy city centre that operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week, as well as a number of vibrant local district centres.

Figure 5.5 illustrates the tonnage of street-cleansing waste collected during 2016/17–2020/21. 2016/17 data is used as a baseline for the Our Manchester Strategy, as this data is more reliable than ever before due to separate collection teams rather than generic cleansing teams.

Figure 5.5:
Street-cleansing tonnages 2016/17–2020/21



Source: Weighbridge data: Viridor, Suez and Redgate Holdings

Officers continue to work closely with communities and partner agencies to address littering and fly-tipping hotspots through a process of enforcement and education, together with a programme of direct action in partnership with the local community. Guidance is given to local residents and businesses on their environmental responsibilities, and enforcement notices are issued to those who persist in non-compliance. One of the main aims of this work is to deter fly-tipping. Fly-tipping is a criminal activity and is an offence punishable by prosecution. However, in order to effect a prosecution, very strong evidence is required, including witnesses, who must be willing to give a statement informing the Council of who was responsible (or provide a vehicle registration number). Ideally, there should also be evidence in the fly-tipped waste itself to corroborate the statements.

The fly-tipping investigation and enforcement team, in partnership with Biffa, was set up in late 2016/17 with teams focused in the north, south and central areas of the city. This team is proactively investigating fly-tipping and collecting evidence that is passed to the compliance team to take enforcement action against the perpetrators.

The challenges associated with prosecution mean that other interventions are needed to complement the formal enforcement procedures. These measures, undertaken with our agencies and partners, will aim to ensure overall compliance and a reduction of incidents of fly-tipping. They include:

- Regular, intensive monitoring in hotspot areas
- Action days alongside other Council departments and partner agencies to try to reduce dependency on the Council, encourage greater ownership of areas, and achieve behavioural change

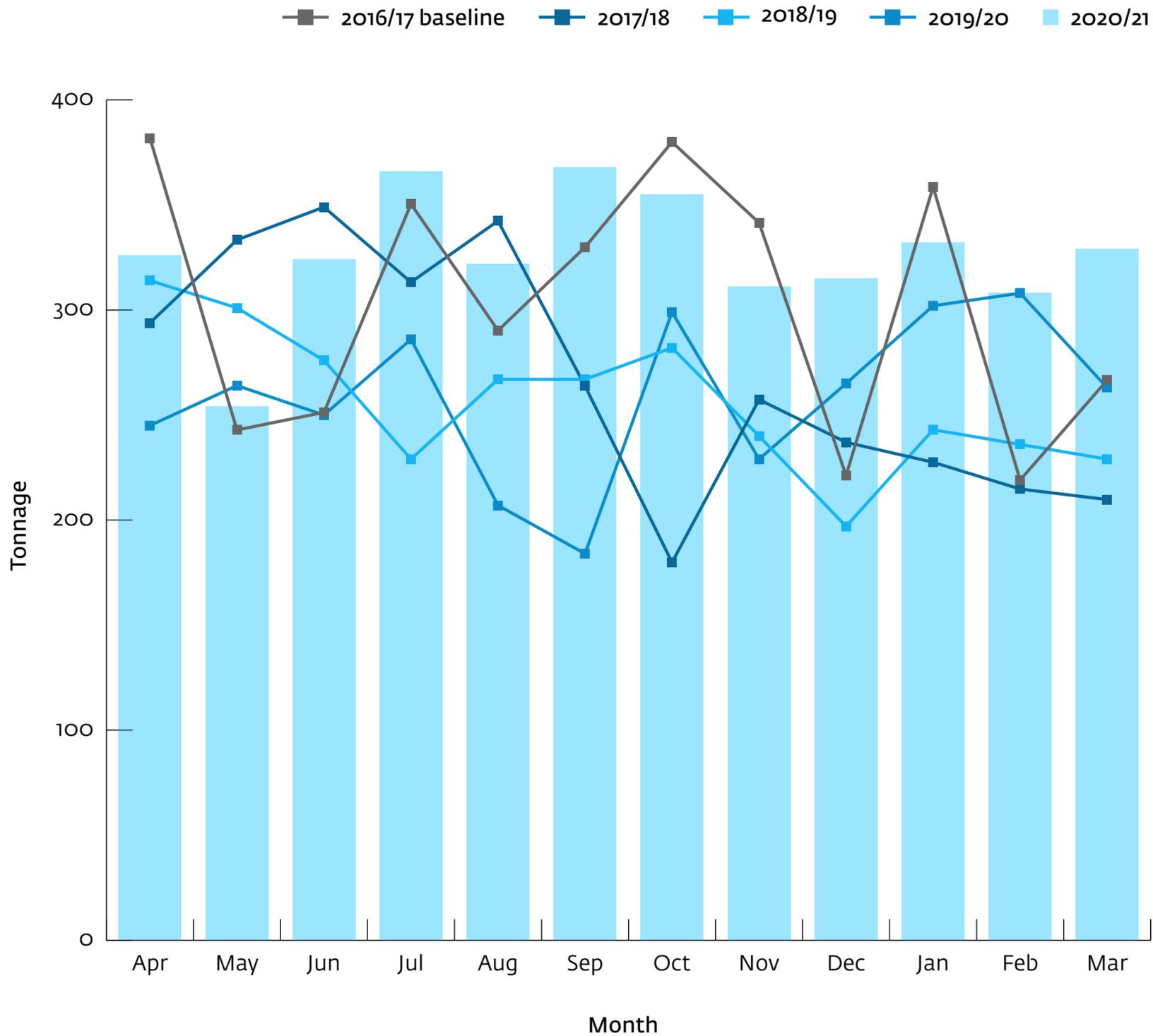
- Advice/education and information given across a wide range of topics, including recycling, tenancy advice, responsible dog ownership, and mediation
- Advisory signage, eg. signs on alley-gates warning against fly-tipping
- Proactive visits to businesses to check they have commercial-waste disposal contracts.

Fly-tipping tonnages fell from an average of 302 tonnes per month in 2016/17 to 259 tonnes per month in 2019/20, a 15% reduction. In 2020/21, tonnages increased to an average of 326 tonnes per month; some of this material is thought to be side waste in passageway areas, as waste produced by households increased during the pandemic. 2016/17 was the first year that accurate tonnages on fly-tipping were recorded, as in previous years fly-tipping had been collected with ground waste or other street-cleansing material, such as litter-bin waste. These tonnage figures give us a baseline for future years so we can monitor the Our Manchester Strategy, but the 2020/21 data may be less reliable than previous years because of strains on the operations due to COVID-19. Figure 5.6 illustrates the tonnage of fly-tipping collected during 2016/17 to 2020/21.

During 2021/22, the visual environment will continue to be a key priority for the city. Examples of planned actions for this year include:

- Closer ties and more integrated working with Registered Social Landlords and housing companies
- Increasing the number of businesses with an obligation to have a designated person responsible for waste management, and a clean premises business plan to include the external areas of the building
- Taking enforcement action against those businesses not willing to take responsibility for litter related to their premises and land
- Continuing to investigate fly-tipping in alleyways and educate and enforce on the perpetrators of alleyway dumping.

Figure 5.6:
Fly-tipping tonnages 2016/17–2020/21



Source: Weighbridge data: Redgate Holdings

Community involvement in tackling litter

In 2019, thousands of volunteers participated in the Great British Spring Clean in Manchester, highlighting the numerous social and environmental benefits of litter-picking. Despite the cancellation of the event in 2020, there has been a huge surge in the number of people getting involved in tackling litter. People spending more time in their communities have noticed the impact of litter and been motivated to start litter-picking. Others, who were already actively involved in cleaning up their communities, have been able to increase their activities and inspire others to join. Throughout the pandemic, the Keep Manchester Tidy partnership has continued to promote community involvement. This included trialling COVID-19-safe litter-picking drop-in stations, which have now become popular for delivering litter-picking events. Keep Manchester Tidy has responded to every request for equipment and support, enabling hundreds of volunteers to become involved in tackling litter across the city. In addition, our Keep Britain Tidy Litter Hero Ambassador began launching local Facebook groups linked to the main Keep Manchester Tidy Facebook group. These local groups provide a platform for people to share experiences, ask questions, and celebrate litter-picking success. They have also helped solo litter-pickers feel more connected at a time when group events have not been possible. Some of these groups have been so successful that they have attracted hundreds of members in a matter of weeks. It is Keep Manchester Tidy's ambition to continue to support what has become known as 'Manchester's Litter Army' and to unite residents, schools, businesses, organisations and community groups to work towards achieving a litter-free city.

Safe and cohesive neighbourhoods

Introduction to the Community Safety Partnership

Manchester's Community Safety Partnership (CSP) comprises Manchester City Council, Greater Manchester Police (GMP), offender management services, Public Health, Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service, housing providers, the Greater Manchester Combined Authority, universities, and voluntary and community organisations. These partners work together to tackle crime and antisocial behaviour, protect people with vulnerabilities, and change offending behaviour.

Through public consultation and crime and antisocial behaviour audits, the CSP identifies local priorities and develops community safety strategies. The current Community Safety Strategy (2018–2021) contains the following five priorities:

- To tackle crime and antisocial behaviour
- To keep children, young people and adults with vulnerabilities safe
- To protect people from serious harm
- To reduce the crime impact caused by alcohol and drugs
- To change and prevent adult-offender behaviour.

Underlying themes run throughout these priorities, including building community cohesion, early intervention, and tackling serious crime. The CSP is reviewing and refreshing the strategy during 2021 and will launch its new Community Safety Strategy in 2022.

Key issues and interventions

This section focuses on some of the issues that have a significant impact on people living, working, and

visiting Manchester and how the CSP addresses these issues, including responses to the impact of COVID-19. Following a change in IT systems in July 2019, and as a result of the complexities involved in implementing these new systems, Greater Manchester Police has not made crime and incident data publicly available at local authority level or below. GMP is working to rectify this issue and to provide this data over the coming months. Data is available internally and within the CSP to inform decision-making, but external sharing is dependent on further improvements in accuracy.

Victim-based crime

Victim-based crime is a broad category that includes offences of violence against the person, sexual offences, acquisitive crime, and criminal damage.

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on levels of recorded crime, both locally and nationally. Across Greater Manchester, offences reduced by 8% between 2019/20 and 2020/21, and by even more in Manchester itself, mainly due to the impact the city centre and its night-time economy normally has on crime statistics. The pandemic led to bigger reductions in theft and robbery offences than other kinds of crime. More generally, crimes against the person reduced less than crimes against property, while offences flagged as domestic abuse in Manchester saw a small increase. There were also signs, particularly in the early months of lockdown, that young people were experiencing increased exposure to domestic violence. Table 5.5 shows that overall, police-recorded crime for Greater Manchester has been reducing since 2017/18.

Table 5.5:
Police-recorded crime, Greater Manchester, 2016/17–2020/21

Offence group	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Criminal damage and arson	37,592	40,695	35,198	32,353	29,276
Drug offences	4,184	4,801	5,432	6,362	8,714
Miscellaneous crimes	5,215	7,733	8,161	6,718	8,158
Possession of weapons offences	1,727	2,864	3,843	3,654	3,570
Public-order offences	24,438	50,178	43,208	31,932	34,727
Robbery	4,699	6,947	7,605	6,790	4,388
Sexual offences	6,823	9,472	9,530	8,894	8,778
Theft offences	115,697	122,870	122,462	114,856	79,183
Violence against the person	67,105	94,113	98,242	88,621	99,217
Total	267,480	339,673	333,681	300,180	276,011

Source: www.gov.uk/government/statistics/police-recorded-crime-open-data-tables
Following the implementation of a new IT system in July 2019, Greater Manchester Police have not been able to supply data to local authorities.

More recently, recorded crime in Manchester and in Greater Manchester has started to increase in response to an HMICFRS report published in December 2020, An inspection of the service provided to victims of crime by Greater Manchester Police. This inspection found that GMP had 'failed to record more than one in every five crimes reported by the public and more than one in every four violent crimes'.⁶

While the pandemic and procedural changes have both led to fluctuations in levels of recorded crime, other underlying factors have remained relatively constant. Domestic abuse and other crimes against the person are more likely to happen in more deprived neighbourhoods; some ethnic groups continue to be overrepresented in the criminal justice system, while Manchester also sees other risks of crime and antisocial behaviour in relation to its extensive student population. Breaches of lockdown restrictions in student areas and large gatherings in open spaces around the city centre both led to some increases in reports of antisocial behaviour during the pandemic.

Serious violence

In response to national increases of serious violence, the Home Office launched the Serious Violence Strategy, emphasising the need to adopt a public-health approach to tackle and prevent serious violence. This involves focusing on a defined population and generating long and short-term solutions, with and for communities, based on data and intelligence and evidence of effectiveness to tackle the problem.

⁶ www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmicfrs/news/news-feed/greater-manchester-polices-service-to-victims-of-crime-a-serious-cause-for-concern

As a part of the response, several Violence Reduction Units were established across the country, including in Greater Manchester. The Greater Manchester Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) agreed priorities are detailed in the Greater Manchester Serious Violence Action Plan.

At a local level, Manchester's approach to tackling and preventing serious violence is directed by the Public Health Approach to Serious Violence Group. Since February 2019 it has developed a better understanding of the picture of serious violence in Manchester, identified best practice, and prioritised actions.

Factors in serious incidents are many and varied, but include domestic abuse, ongoing feuds between individuals, road rage, disputes over drugs or money etc, victims assaulted while they were being robbed, and police officers or security guards assaulted when attempting to detain offenders.

The Public Health approach in Manchester concentrates on three key areas, particularly focusing on young people either at risk of or involved in serious violence:

- Early intervention and prevention
- Support and protection
- Disruption and enforcement.

Early intervention and prevention

Activity and interventions have been commissioned by the CSP, supported by Young Manchester, that build upon the work undertaken in previous years. These include detached youth work, targeted youth provision to support detached activities, and targeted one-to-one sessions for young people.

In 2020, the Greater Manchester Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) commissioned a programme of work around community-led approaches. A key focus of the programme is ensuring that young people and stakeholders in a place come together to identify strengths, challenges and ideas, and then work together to co-design projects and activities. Manchester is taking part in a pilot that is testing a community-led approach to tackling serious violence in Moss Side, Hulme, and Rusholme. The project aims to maximise the contribution of the VCSE sector in leading place-based responses to violence, affecting young people in areas most in need of help and achieving better outcomes for residents. The project has commissioned Hideaway, a central Manchester-based youth provider, to be the lead delivery partner for this pilot.

Domestic violence and abuse continue to play a dominant role in incidents of serious violence and the lives of the victims and children. Evidence shows that intervening early and offering trauma-informed support to children witnessing or experiencing domestic abuse is key to addressing the impact of domestic abuse and the problems of serious violence in our communities. Interventions offering support to children and young people who are, or have suffered, domestic violence and abuse have been commissioned, offering a support package tailored to a child's needs, including therapeutic one-to-one counselling and group-work sessions.

This early intervention and prevention methodology has brought together a range of agencies to develop a co-ordinated approach to prevent young people from being drawn into the criminal justice system. In line with findings from research undertaken in

Manchester, this will be shaped by young people with a view to agreeing a citywide partnership approach to keeping young people safe.

Support and protection

Manchester's Complex Safeguarding Strategy 2020–2023 sets out the continuing commitment to tackle and prevent the exploitation of children and adults, while ensuring that services are also joined up. The response to complex safeguarding in the city plays an important part in responding to and preventing serious violence. The Complex Safeguarding Hub provides a dedicated focus in relation to child sexual exploitation, child criminal exploitation, county lines, serious and organised crime, and threats to life. Daily governance meetings, mapping, joint risk assessments, and information-sharing across Greater Manchester Police, social care, and health systems are part of daily business.

The Complex Safeguarding Social Work team carry out assessments concerning young people at risk of being exploited, and deliver bespoke interventions based on principles of trusted relationships and trauma-informed interventions. The team work closely with partners to develop joined-up safety plans for young people, and support young people to realise their aspirations and achieve positive outcomes.

The Community Safety Partnership commissioned RECLAIM to develop the report 'Listening to the experts'. This asked young people about what they need to stay safe from violent crime. It asked what they need to:

- Feel safe
- Be respected and understood

- Have a positive future
- Feel supported and listened to.

The findings from this report have underpinned the subsequent approach from the CSP, with young people's voices key to service design and delivery.

Disruption and enforcement

Policing operations place officers on the streets in identified locations and times to target offenders and engage with those at risk of being drawn into crime. This work has been connected to the Council's early help and safeguarding services to ensure that young people identified on the street are referred for appropriate help and support.

These operations have highlighted the importance of identifying young people with vulnerabilities in the city centre. This approach has seen some positive outcomes where young people stopped in the city have been connected to support services to address some of the underlying issues drawing them into the city centre.

Domestic violence and abuse

The city's Domestic Violence and Abuse Strategy is being reviewed and refreshed. Extensive research, data analysis and consultation has been undertaken, and it is anticipated that the Strategy will be launched in autumn 2021.

Domestic abuse continues to cause significant risk and harm to victims and children across Manchester. Both the volume and risk profile of victims and perpetrators have increased year on year; emerging aspects of the agenda have grown in concern, and the pandemic has had an added impact on demand for support and services. The Council and partners

have worked extensively and collaboratively to understand new and emerging aspects of the agenda, and to respond swiftly, flexibly and creatively to the impact of the pandemic. Some examples of that work have included:

Child to Parent Violence and Abuse (CPVA) support programme

Research carried out during 2019 highlighted the need for interventions and support to tackle this emerging and damaging issue that, despite being significantly underreported, still results in a significant number of calls to the police concerning incidents where a young person was the perpetrator and a parent or carer the victim. The Council commissioned delivery of a nationally accredited programme by Talk Listen Change that will work with approximately 150 children, young people and families over a two-year period, and provide over 750 professionals with knowledge and training on the issue.

Drive

The aims of Drive are to:

- change the way agencies respond to high-harm, high-risk perpetrators of domestic violence and abuse
- reduce the number of new and repeat victims
- reduce the harm caused to victims and children
- reduce the number of serial perpetrators of abuse
- intervene earlier to protect victims and families.

A key element is behaviour change for those identified as suitable for inclusion in the programme. Victims and children also receive ongoing specialist support. Manchester has been chosen as the latest

site for a two-year pilot of the programme. It is anticipated that 150 perpetrators will be subject to the intervention during 2021/22.

Priority Move-on Project

The pandemic saw increasing numbers of victims of domestic abuse needing to flee and seek safe accommodation and support. Refuge and outreach service providers faced challenges in meeting demand and maintaining services but worked creatively with Council departments, housing providers and community organisations to find solutions. One such solution has been the Priority Move-on Project, in which Manchester Women's Aid worked proactively with a range of partners, including Manchester Move, registered housing providers, and a range of charities, donors and volunteers, to identify suitable accommodation and set up moves for victims and families. This gave them the stability and security at the earliest opportunity while also freeing up vital emergency bed space at the refuge. Between the beginning of the pandemic in March 2020 and the end of March 2021, the Project delivered moves into safe, affordable and appropriate accommodation for 106 victims and 65 children, more than double the throughput achieved during the same time period in 2019/20. The Project will continue in 2021/22.

Communications and engagement

The pandemic meant that there was a need to ensure that those who needed advice, services and support around domestic violence and abuse were able to access it in as many ways as possible. Account of the added difficulty for victims of being in lockdown with the perpetrator had to be made. This challenge was met in several ways, including:

- A co-ordinated programme of social media messaging and messages broadcast on local community radio stations
- A pharmaceutical network giving information about local domestic-abuse services to more than fifty community pharmacies in the city
- Training colleagues undertaking neighbourhood response work and the Test and Trace programme, enabling them to promote availability of support and services.

This communication and engagement work will continue through 2021/22.

Antisocial behaviour

The CSP continues to take a partnership approach with people who may beg and/or cause antisocial behaviour. Since 2020, Coffee4Craig, Riverside, Mustard Tree, St. John Ambulance, and the Big Life Company have received funding from the CSP for their involvement in the Street Engagement Hub. Practical support and advice on a range of issues is provided by the Hub for people who beg and/or engage in antisocial behaviour and may be homeless or sleep rough.

Following the outbreak of COVID-19 in March 2020 the focus of the Hub shifted to securing emergency accommodation and providing support for people rough sleeping as part of the 'Everyone In' programme. Manchester City Council and GMP worked with partners including GMCA and voluntary-sector organisations to engage with people on the street and support them into accommodation. During this time the complex and multiple needs of some people decreased due to the wrap-around support they received. Since

September 2020, the Mustard Tree has supported and hosted the Hub. Activity continues to take place in the city centre and now across Manchester's neighbourhoods to positively engage and support vulnerable people.

Tackling antisocial behaviour during COVID-19

Following the lockdown in March 2020, antisocial behaviour practitioners nationally reported an increase in reports of antisocial behaviour. The Council's Antisocial Behaviour Action Team's (ASBAT) case numbers more than doubled during 2020/21 compared to 2019/20, largely as a result of delivering the agreed Greater Manchester approach to intervene when house parties and gatherings occurred in residential properties in breach of COVID-19 regulations. The approach involves three stages: advice, warning, and enforcement action through working with Greater Manchester Police and Manchester's housing providers. The work over the past year led to the team delivering 1,800 interventions, including advisory letters and joint home visits with GMP to issue warnings. Most interventions were informal, resulting in compliance. However, eight cases involved serious and persistent breaches and disregard for warnings and therefore resulted in the Magistrates' Court granting the Council ASB Premises Closure Orders. These orders are effective because they can be tailored to prohibit access to specific people or all persons to stop antisocial behaviour continuing at an address.

Public Space Protection Orders

Following consultation, the City Centre Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) was made in July 2020 for a period of three years. COVID-19 restrictions resulted in a delay to the implementation of the Order, but it is now in place and police officers

have used the Order to address street drinking. The partnership approach to antisocial behaviour in the city remains a staged one, involving awareness-raising, warnings, offers of support, and enforcement when appropriate.

A Public Space Protection Order in the area surrounding the Marie Stopes Clinic on Wynnstay Grove, Fallowfield was granted in October 2020. Officers have engaged with interested parties to raise awareness of the Order, and while there have not been any reported breaches following its initial implementation, this was during a period of lockdown, which will have had an impact on the activity. Officers continue to engage with key stakeholders and visit the area regularly.

Community cohesion

Manchester prides itself on being an inclusive and welcoming city, celebrating its diversity and working hard to build more cohesive communities. Over the past 18 months, the city has seen several challenges that have tested our understanding of and approach to building integrated and cohesive communities. The impact of Brexit, changing communities and neighbourhoods, the COVID-19 pandemic, protests and campaigns such as Black Lives Matter, far-right protests and campaigns, the Manchester Arena Inquiry, and our renewed programme of work on race equality and preventing youth violence in the city all demonstrated the need to review our approach and framework for delivery.

A time-limited Manchester Community Cohesion Task Group has been established to develop a separate Community Cohesion Strategy for the city that is intrinsically linked to the city's Our Manchester Strategy but sets out a more explicit

approach and set of priorities for delivery. The development of the strategy will involve engagement with key stakeholders.

Hate crime has been monitored on a weekly basis since the first lockdown in March 2020. During this period there have been fluctuations in reports of hate crime, reflecting some of the changes in places of congregation from areas such as the city centre to parks, for example. To respond to this, training was offered to front-line park staff to support victims and raise awareness of how to report hate crimes.

Greater Manchester Hate Crime Awareness Week (HCAW) 2021 went ahead in February despite the national lockdown. Owing to restrictions, most activities and events were virtual or online. Events included:

- CARISMA: round-table discussion about hate crime and prejudice broadcast on Radio Africana during HCAW.
- Future Directions CIC: week-long series of events raising awareness and showing people how to report hate crime, including online training sessions and videos hosted on social media. All resources were developed by and for people with learning disabilities to ensure they were fully accessible and reflected real lives.
- LGBT Foundation: Virtual panel event to raise awareness and provide advice and information.
- Manchester Youth Council: wrote and recorded short films to celebrate diversity and hosted online meetings for young people.

The Greater Manchester Plan to Tackle Hate Crime was also launched with joint commitments from partners and all ten districts to address hate crime across Greater Manchester.

Case study: RADEQUAL's Creative Change Project

As part of Manchester's RADEQUAL campaign and grant programme, Manchester Youth Zone delivered the Creative Change project that focused on building community resilience to hateful extremism. The project was delivered across the North Manchester Youth Partnership with young people aged 13–19 and their families, in collaboration with the MAD theatre company and Sociological. It was delivered in wards of high deprivation where young people identified as being vulnerable to messages of hate; 45 young people were involved in the project from various youth groups. The young people designed and delivered engaging and interactive session plans to their peers, which aimed to address and challenge the issues of prejudice, hate and extremism within their communities.

The project was redesigned following COVID-19 risk assessments, to ensure that young people were able to get the most out of the learning and activities on offer. For example, the sessions with the MAD theatre company and Sociological were delivered face to face with social distancing in place. These sessions explored what constitutes hateful extremism within a local context, including discussions on local incidents and personal experiences. During these sessions the young people created drama pieces, videos and interviews to myth-bust and promote critical thinking around hateful extremism.

The young people co-ordinated an online event that connected different neighbourhoods and brought communities from four of the city's wards together to showcase the session plans and activities delivered. The final event for the project was delivered online and was attended by 75 young people and their family members. The event gave an opportunity to promote reporting mechanisms for hate speech and terrorist content online. These young people will continue to use the resources produced to act as ongoing role models and champions for RADEQUAL messages tackling hateful extremism.

For more information about RADEQUAL or to get involved, access www.makingmanchestersafer.com/mms/homepage/22/radequal

Improving the quality of parks, green spaces, rivers and canals

In the face of a global pandemic, the value of the Council's Parks Strategy became more evident than ever before, and the Government regularly called for people across the nation to make use of parks to boost their physical and mental wellbeing.

Manchester's Park Team and more than 100 voluntary groups that they support have worked tirelessly to provide safe access to the green lungs of the city. The number of people visiting parks has risen by more than 30% and the pressure to keep them clean and safe has risen accordingly, with 147,000 bags of litter collected from parks last year.

The Government's advice that parks could be used for exercise was certainly taken to heart by the people of Manchester; the service observed an increasing number of visitors to the city's parks, which culminated in record numbers of young people and families participating in school-holiday activities in parks.

New partnerships were formed as the service worked with others to find new ways of delivering in an outdoor setting. In the summer of 2020, some 200 children with special educational needs and their families accessed a varied programme of activities in Manchester's parks, including Treetop Trek and boating. Overall, parks provided safe spaces for 60% of the citywide activities for young people to take place, and over 11,600 young people engaged in park activities throughout the summer.

The success of the summer was clear to see. All the young people interviewed by City in the Community reported that parks improved their physical wellbeing after lockdown, and a further 71% said engaging in park activities had helped them recover socially.

Significant increases in cycling, walking, roller-skating, jogging and tennis have also been observed, with court bookings up by over 10,000, from 5,906 in May to September 2019, up to 15,241 for the same period in 2020. The Love Exploring App also expanded to include two more parks – Fog Lane and Hulme Park. The eight parks that now feature the digital experience have attracted 9,500 users walking in excess of 12,350km, while hunting for dinosaurs and dancing skeletons during Halloween.

While the digital offer has been a huge success, the service also supported families to make use of self-led trails and activities. Despite eight out of nine days of rain in the October half-term, 4,500 visitors completed the Halloween trail in Wythenshawe Park. The new Xplorer Trail in collaboration with My Wild City saw 116 families on its first day at Boggart Hole Clough too. Lightopia returned to Heaton Park for the second year and saw in excess of 115,000 people visiting the park over 32 evenings.

Partners have stepped in to deliver beyond our parks and into the heart of communities by providing free school meals and donations of plants and equipment to provide activity for the children of key workers.

There has been an incredible appetite to return safely to active volunteering in Manchester's parks, and despite the challenges in meeting face to face, the service has supported the development of two

new Friends groups in the city, as well as an army of litter-picking volunteers, who together have logged a massive 17,500 hours of volunteering.

Attractive and vibrant neighbourhoods: culture, libraries, leisure, sport and volunteering

In addition to good-quality housing in places that are clean and safe, our communities are reliant on the other public amenities such as libraries, and cultural and leisure facilities to really make a vibrant neighbourhood of choice. A key commitment is to invest in cultural and sports facilities for the benefit of the city's residents and to improve the city's international attractiveness.

Investing in our facilities; recognising our strengths

Manchester has a dynamic, creative scene and a vibrant history of cultural innovation, with major cultural institutions sitting alongside a rich mix of smaller organisations. The sector's year-round offer usually includes permanent attractions, annual and one-off events, as well as many learning, training, participation, volunteering and employment opportunities. The sector plays a key role in delivering both economic and social impacts in Manchester. However, this year, due to the pandemic, the city's museums, galleries, theatres, arts centres, festival and events were all forced to close and cancel activities. This crisis has severely affected the cultural sector's income generation and programming output. Cultural sector businesses, especially those in the night-time economy, were the last industries to reopen following the easing of restrictions and will continue to face challenges into next year and beyond.

Venues in music and the performing arts have been particularly affected, as those businesses often generate income from ticket sales for performances, events and festivals, as well as catering and hospitality. Freelancers working in the creative sector have also been very negatively affected, as they do not have the organisational support many other employees have.

A [Manchester Culture Recovery Plan](#) has been developed by the city's Director for Culture in collaboration with the Council and partners from the sector. A COVID-19 Culture Recovery Board, chaired by our Executive Member, has been established to lead the city's response to the pandemic and aid the sector's recovery.

The Manchester Cultural Impact Survey gathers data from cultural organisations in the city to create an annual picture of the economic and social impact of the sector and its reach across residents, schools and communities. The annual survey is open for any cultural organisations in the city to complete, but it is a requirement for organisations funded by the Council's Strategic Cultural Investments and Cultural Partnership Agreement grants. The most recent Cultural Impact Survey, completed by 47 organisations, is about activity during 2019/20. The survey will provide pre-pandemic levels of activity and income generated by the city's cultural sector and will help forecast the likely impact of COVID-19 on the sector. Most of the city's major cultural institutions provided information, including the biennial Manchester International Festival, and it was the first year that Manchester Libraries contributed to the survey, recognising libraries as cultural institutions. Headline results are that the participating organisations:

- Generated an estimated £283.2million in Gross Value Added (GVA) for the city
- Employed Manchester residents as over one third of their workforce (38%)
- Engaged 3,916 volunteers (including volunteer board members), who collectively volunteered 186,192 hours at a value of £2.4million
- Reached 5.4million people as audience members through 8,900 productions and commissions
- Engaged 740,000 participants in cultural and creative activity, with some activity taking place in every ward across the city
- Engaged 184 out of 187 Manchester schools (representing 98% of all schools in the city), which provided cultural participation opportunities for their pupils.

During the pandemic, companies were forced to postpone or cancel exhibitions, events and project plans. Many cultural partners reacted quickly to the challenge of the suspension of face-to-face activity by seeking alternative ways to deliver their programmes online or in different ways. Alternative COVID-secure projects and special initiatives during lockdown have demonstrated some creative approaches to maintaining relationships with audiences, participants and artists, as well as supporting more vulnerable people to engage, be creative and connect remotely.

Some partners showcased performances through digital channels, including through the GMCA-supported United We Stream initiative. These included Manchester Jazz Festival's Jazz Unlocked in May, the Manchester Histories Festival DigiFest in September and Manchester Literature Festival in October.

Many cultural organisations continued to engage participant groups during the pandemic. For instance, The Men's Room stepped in to support homeless people by staffing the emergency accommodation put in place, and other companies provided creative activity packs for vulnerable people who were required to isolate and shield. Odd Arts sent 200 creative packs to their members, mainly people in care with additional needs, refugees and asylum seekers; they also visited young people's houses to offer drama sessions on their doorstep.

During this difficult year, cultural organisations have supported freelance creatives through advice, personal support, resource and funding information, and also offered paid commission opportunities. Community Arts North West (CAN) specialise in working with creatives with little access to opportunities, eg. those on a low income, or from new migrant communities. They also adapted their artist-support programme CanDo Creatives so that 18 artists benefited from training to improve their employability, career development and business resilience.

HOME, Manchester's centre for contemporary theatre, film, art and music, wanted to support artists to make work despite the lockdown; their programme, Homemakers, consisting of five fully funded digital commissions, produced new work made by artists in their homes. Work ranged from video performances and interactive games, to handwritten fantasy scenarios and silent Gothic horrors, all to be enjoyed and interacted with from home. The series has been extended, and there are now more than thirty commissions from artists in the UK and abroad.

Manchester International Festival's Remote Residencies supported 35 Greater Manchester artists, 16 from Manchester, to develop new work that they presented on their own digital channels or as part of MIF's online programme, MIF LIVE. MIF also held international Weekly Online Drop-ins throughout the pandemic, offering a space for artists and freelancers to share experiences, exchange ideas and support one another.

[Greater Manchester Artist Hub](#), brings together 13 of the performing arts organisations and venues in Greater Manchester to offer support to independent practitioners, artists and companies. Since April 2020 they have offered regular one-to-one advice sessions and engaged with local groups, such as the Freelance Task Force and Disabled Artists Networking Community (DANC), to better understand what artists' needs are. In its first year, the Hub offered advice, training and support to more than 500 local creative freelancers as the pandemic unfolded.

This year, cultural organisations have also responded to the global calls for racial equality and an end to racism. Young Identity, Manchester's premier spoken-word collective, in partnership with Contact and Manchester Literature Festival, held a Black Lives Matter One Mic Stand on-line event of poetry and music. This had an estimated 12,000 views and raised money for the Black Minds Matter UK health charity. Organisations are working together to take action to increase diversity within the cultural workforce. For example, [HOME have committed to being anti-racist and pro-equality](#) through the way they work and the work they make and present, and Contact is reviewing all the organisation's policy to ensure that they are actively anti-racist.

The Manchester Cultural Education Partnership is collecting and providing resources for educationists about Black history, diversity, migration and the British Empire.

UNESCO Manchester City of Literature co-ordinated activity across the sector for a number of events this year. For example, this year’s annual International Mother Language Day celebrations, held online, were a vibrant mix of activities, events and workshops held by many different organisations, including libraries, universities, publishers and museums. Despite not being able to hold face-to-face events, the celebrations were Manchester’s biggest yet.

Events

The Events sector was one of the first to lock down in March 2020. Many parts of it were the last to be released from restrictions, and the ecology of event organisers, venues, supply chain and workforce in the city will have to be rebuilt over several years.

The Council’s approach during the pandemic has been to support event organisers to cancel, reschedule or reset their events to meet the changing restrictions across the period. While 80% of the planned events were cancelled in 2020 or rescheduled to 2021, some were able to move content online where viable (eg. Manchester Jazz festival, Caribbean Carnival and Windrush Day) and others were able to remodel so that they could still take place.

Manchester’s approach enabled elite international sports activities to take place behind closed doors – cementing our reputation as a city of sport in the most challenging of circumstances. The city hosted national and international athletes for the Müller British Athletics Championships, Manchester

International Swim Meet and the World Para Powerlifting World Cup. The Council also supported the organisers of the 50 Windows of Creativity art trail and the Lightopia lighting festival at Heaton Park, providing publicly accessible, COVID-secure events for over 200,000 attendees.

The position for Manchester’s festivals and the Events sector remains precariously insecure, and the ability to rebuild a sector that provided the city with a significant economic and social advantage before the pandemic is a key priority as we move through the recovery phase. The vision, principles and aims set out in the Manchester Events Strategy 2019–29 remain intact. The delivery of the strategy needs to be reviewed in the light of the pandemic and the necessity to align our approach with the city’s cultural and economic recovery strategy. We need to use festivals and events to help bring back local, national and international awareness of pride in, and engagement with, Manchester’s culture, leisure and visitor economy, and to build it back better than before. Manchester will continue to offer a vibrant, stimulating environment for people to live, work, study and play by investing in our cultural and sporting offer, providing the platform that will enable the creative sector to rebuild.

Libraries

The city’s library service continued to improve the lives of residents in 2020/21, despite visits to libraries inevitably falling due to COVID-19 restrictions. Following their closure at the start of the first lockdown, libraries reopened on 4 July – the first date that national guidelines allowed. Initially, eight libraries opened, and this increased to 21 in April 2021. Customers used the libraries for

free internet access and to borrow and return books. The libraries proved a lifeline to customers at a time when the ability to visit other venues was limited. Libraries stayed open during the third lockdown as they were classed an essential service, partly as a reflection of the importance of libraries offering free internet access to digitally excluded people. Since July 2020, approximately a quarter of all visits have been to access the internet. The Books to Go service for housebound residents was the first library service to resume in June 2020 and has continued delivering reading material ever since. The range of services offered by libraries has increased as COVID-19 restrictions eased, and Central Library has hosted a number of pilot COVID-secure activities.

Libraries continued providing access to reading material and information. The increased use of electronic resources has been exceptional (see Table 5.6), even when libraries reopened in July 2020, and people have once again been borrowing books. Libraries will continue to invest in both hard copy and electronic resources.

Table 5.6:
Increase in use of electronic resources

Type of electronic resource	2019/20	2020/21	Annual percentage increase
Ebooks	95,000	156,000	64%
Eaudio books	75,000	140,000	87%
Emagazines	75,000	104,000	39%
Enewspapers	98,000	248,000	153%

Source: Manchester City Council

Throughout the pandemic, libraries have offered a diverse online programme of events and activities for all ages, mostly via the libraries Facebook page. Weekly Storytimes have proved extremely popular, as have author talks, quizzes, LEGO clubs, virtual reading groups, and archives memory boxes. In 2020/21 there were over two million engagements with Manchester Libraries and Archives social media platforms. The Chorlton Book Festival was delivered online in 2020 and received higher attendance figures than would normally be received in person. As face-to-face events become possible again, we are now offering a blended programme of virtual and physical events.

Libraries are the primary community venue for internet access. Their role in tackling digital exclusion has increased further during the pandemic. Over 25% of library visits during this time have been to use the free internet. Moreover, we have increased our role with digital inclusion outside of libraries. Digitally excluded people suffered disproportionately during the pandemic, as they were socially isolated and cut off from services. We developed and implemented two new initiatives to support digitally excluded people, both of which are sustainable when the pandemic is over. The first was a digital-support telephone service that benefited over 900 people lacking skills or confidence to use the internet; by the end of the year, the second will have donated more than 1,000 internet-connected devices to Manchester residents previously without access to the internet, with support offered from a Digital Champion. Further details about these schemes are provided in the '[A connected city](#)' chapter.

Libraries have continued to develop services for children and families during the pandemic to ensure children continue to read despite the reduced access to libraries. Working with Read Manchester, there has been a full programme of book-gifting. In 2020/21, 26,000 books and 5,000 magazines were gifted through foodbanks and Sure Start centres. Also, all 7,000 year 6 pupils in the city received a copy of Ross Welford's 'The kid who came from space'. In summer 2021, we were a part of a national pilot that increases schools' involvement in the annual Summer Reading Challenge. This involves 16,000 children being given automatic membership to the challenge as well as a library card. There was a full programme of activities and events for children and families in the libraries this summer.

In 2021, we have successfully been awarded Libraries of Sanctuary status from Manchester City of Sanctuary. This important award recognises the warm welcome the library service gives to asylum seekers and refugees in its engagement with them, as the service helps to produce an increased understanding from the wider community.

We were a key partner in the inaugural Festival of Libraries in 2021. The festival, organised by Manchester City of Literature, involved almost 100 events across Greater Manchester. Manchester Libraries delivered five events, four of which were online, as well as a Sunday Funday, which was its first major event since March 2020.

We received £500,000 over three years from the British Library to be the north west hub of the Unlocking the UK's Sound Heritage project. The project, which runs until summer 2022, is digitally preserving and making available thousands of at-risk

sound recordings. Many of these recordings are oral histories that provide a fascinating insight into the lives of residents of Manchester and the north west.

Manchester Art Gallery

The forced closure of Manchester Art Gallery from March to August 2020 and November 2020 to March 2021 was the first time the gallery had closed its doors to the public in its 200-year history. In the 11 weeks it was open (from 20 August to 4 November 2020), there were over 18,000 visitors. One visitor said: "The welcome I received was superb. Friendly, informative, concise. As my first experience of any kind of culture since March, I couldn't have wished for better. I never appreciated art quite as much as I did today. I may have cried with joy."

Exhibitions such as Derek Jarman's PROTEST! and the British Art Show 9 have been rescheduled to October 2021.

The gallery created an unplanned 'rapid response' exhibition of Grayson's Art Club, with Swan Films and the artist Grayson Perry. A special episode on the making of the exhibition in Manchester was shown on Channel 4 and had national impact when it was broadcast to millions across the UK. The exhibition finally opened to rave reviews and fully booked slots in May 2021, and has been extended to October 2021.

The gallery has been able to continue the work with INIVA on a curatorial traineeship opportunity to diversify the gallery-sector workforce. It also created new relevant content for more people across the city, working with the artist Jade Montserrat to produce a new display Constellations: Care and Resistance.

We partnered with Population Health Manchester, the Council's Performance, Research and Intelligence team and Key Stage 2 pupils from Unity Primary (Cheetwood) to explore how art can support children to mitigate against the effects of lived trauma.

The gallery expanded its digital and community programmes to help people across the city during the pandemic. Highlights included:

- **Incredible Years:** Weekly parent and baby sessions in the gallery delivered in partnership with CAPS Manchester (Children and Parents Service). One parent remarked that her baby had never seen another baby before, another that this session was the first time in ages she hadn't felt isolated
- **Baby Boxes:** 485 activity packs for new parents and their babies, and 140 packs for parents and toddlers, created by the gallery and issued by outreach health workers at Martenscroft Sure Start
- **Becoming a Mum:** Perinatal art therapy courses for new mothers who have suffered isolation and mental ill health from the experience of giving birth during lockdown
- **Survivors Manchester:** Art and mindfulness sessions on Zoom in partnership with Survivors Manchester (a charity that supports male survivors of sexual abuse and rape)
- **Uncertain Futures:** A collaborative artwork about the work inequalities faced by women over 50, with artist Suzanne Lacy and 100 Manchester women; it includes a focus on economic and racial inequalities highlighted by COVID-19

- **Art of Resilience:** An initiative that has developed a new model using creativity and compassion to support the long-term wellbeing of Manchester's children.

Leisure

Manchester Active Limited (MCRactive) are a not-for-profit organisation established and overseen by Manchester City Council. They are responsible for driving sport and physical activity across Manchester, inspiring and encouraging everyone to lead a more active and healthier lifestyle. The Council contract MCRactive to deliver the city's [Sport and Physical Activity Strategy 2019–28](#).

During the past year, keeping Manchester residents active and healthy was a greater priority than ever before. Because of the COVID-19 restrictions, the team at MCRactive found new ways to support residents through online activity, pushing remote provision into Manchester's front rooms, gardens, and balconies! More than forty weekly live streams or on-demand classes were delivered each week during lockdown periods.

Linking into the city's ambition to support more walking and cycling for active lives and cleaner air, MCRactive delivered many Let's Walk workshops for residents, key partner organisations and independent groups. These promoted the increase in walking resources, including 11 new walking trails on the 'Love Exploring' app and as part of the 'New Footsteps, New Discoveries' campaign. The focus on walking and recreational cycling during 2020 helped Manchester residents to stay fit and healthy when limited activities were available.

In a continuation of the Befriending service, four partner community organisations were supported in applying for the Tackling Inequalities Fund, totalling £28,000. Additionally, following the murder of two young people from Moss Side in July 2020, funding was secured to support The African Pot (TAP) project in helping to take ten young people out of the area to take part in activities such as quad biking, hiking and archery.

A COVID-19 response Rest and Relaxation Centre at Manchester Regional Arena was established. Many staff and partners, including MCRactive, GLL, OCS, F3, Manchester City Football Club, and the Council with a steer from MHCC, played a role by volunteering and making it a collective success. The centre had 7,000 visits from NHS and key workers across Manchester and the project received a Special Recognition Award from the High Sheriff of Greater Manchester. Additional leisure assets have been and continue to be utilised as COVID-19 Testing Centres, such as the Etihad Campus, Denmark Road and Belle Vue Leisure Centre. In addition, the Tennis and Football Centre was mobilised as a Mass Vaccination Centre for Greater Manchester.

MCRactive's Sport and Health teams, along with the team at Winning Hearts and Minds, made every effort to maintain vital connections with people in Manchester, from the creation of a pen-pal and befriending scheme, to distributing activity and food packs to vulnerable people in the community. In addition, a small team took the responsibility from the Council to make calls to over 2,000 clinically extremely vulnerable residents who had asked the city for more assistance.

Guidance given by MCRactive staff led to clubs applying for Sport England emergency funding, which benefited over fifty clubs. Additionally, grant funding was accessed from the Council where sports clubs own or lease building premises. The financial support secured was in excess of £500,000.

During periods of lockdown, the educational swim programme continued, achieving outstanding buy-in from schools. In September, 78% of the schools returned following consultation over the summer period, when we worked with all five pool operators (GLL, Everyone Active, Love Withington Baths, Broadway Community Development Group and Wright Robinson High School) to ensure the sessions could be delivered safely.

When restrictions were partially lifted to allow access to the public, Manchester Leisure Centres adapted to become COVID-secure. Leisure Centres were permitted to open to the public between August and October, and in December, before lockdown restarted in January 2021. Residents were keen to get back to physical activity and over 440,000 visits were recorded during this period. Leisure Centres reopened on 12 April 2021.

While many sporting events had to be postponed, Manchester was pleased to welcome the Harlem Globetrotters to Manchester for an exhibition and to provide some training at the National Basketball Performance Centre. Alongside the current Children's Laureate Cressida Cowell, the HSBC:UK National Cycling Centre welcomed Dermot O'Leary to host the World Book Day organised by Read Manchester and Manchester Libraries. The event saw over 1,000 local children from 15 schools attend. It was also fantastic to enhance the delivery of sport and

physical activity engagement across the city. Examples included the offering of free health checks and activity programmes to help Manchester City fans improve their health and wellbeing, adding east Manchester to the citywide programme of nine regular weekend park runs for adults and children, and promoting the Manchester 10K with the creation of a unique Bee Wave for our City, supporting the We Love MCR local charity and a world-record attempt to boot!

Investment continued into various projects across the city to improve the provision and landscape for physical activity during lockdown. As part of the legacy of the 2019 Cricket World Cup, the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) invested nearly £200,000 into Manchester parks and playing fields by installing 17 Non-Turf Cricket Wickets into 15 parks and playing fields, from Heaton Park in the north, to Wythenshawe Park in the south. The Council also invested more than £1million in the outdoor athletics track at Manchester Regional Arena, achieving first-class accreditation and a visit from Blue Peter. This was achieved alongside further improvements completed during lockdown at the Wythenshawe Park track, Whalley Range, Debdale Outdoor Centre, and Denmark Road Sports Centre.

Investment was also identified to support the installation of an interactive football wall at Platt Fields Park and helped install a new green gym at Greenbank Park. The Council secured several significant long-term investment programmes approved as part of the budget in 2020/21, including Abraham Moss New Build (£2.7million), House of Sport/RFL Headquarters (£5.65million), Regional Athletics Arena Track Replacement (£1.218million), MAC refurbishment (£31million), and Ghyll Head Outdoor Learning Centre (£1.277million). The

investment will protect the existing benefits generated from each facility and will support to deliver growth both financially and in local participation while making a significant contribution to Manchester's carbon-reduction ambition.

In preparation for Tokyo 2021, our National Sporting Centres remained open for elite training as early as possible to support GB Taekwondo, GB Paralympic Swimming and British Cycling athletes. The city delivered several world-class COVID-safe international events, including the Müller British Athletics Championships and Manchester Squash Open, welcoming athletes from across the country and 64 of the world's best male and female squash players. The city also successfully hosted the Manchester Open International Swim Meet in February 2021, and for the second year running the Para Powerlifting World Cup and the Youth World Cup were held as the latest in a string of international tournaments in the city.

Parks Tennis reopened in May 2020, resulting in an almost fourfold increase in tennis-court bookings during 2020/21 over the previous year; more than 25,000 were recorded, compared to just over 7,000 in 2019/20.

In 2020, supporting Manchester's digital-transformation ambition and investment in leisure assets, saw the successful launch of the [MCRactive website](#) and [Providers Portal](#), a unique shared data platform managing sport and physical activity information and inspiration. This platform will become the home for all activity providers to advertise and promote their opportunities online, providing a one-stop-shop for residents to find information on becoming healthier and happier.

Increasing volunteering across the city

Manchester's Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) sector has been integral to the city's response to the COVID-19 pandemic. VCSE groups and organisations have had to work in extremely difficult circumstances to support the health and wellbeing of Manchester residents. Alongside their efforts, staff and volunteers from across all sectors and walks of life have stepped forward to support their friends, neighbours, colleagues and communities.

The recent State of the Manchester VCSE Sector report (Macc et al, 2021) identified that Manchester's VCSE sector comprises 3,871 voluntary organisations, community groups and social enterprises that make a difference to Mancunians' lives every day; this number increased sharply in response to the pandemic. VCSE services and initiatives are delivered by some 162,000 volunteers giving around 481,000 hours each week, valued at £242million per annum (based on a Real Living Wage of £9.50 per hour).

Volunteer Centre Manchester (VCM) is operated by Macc and has continued to connect and support the city's resident-volunteering effort. Between April 2020 and March 2021, Manchester VCSE organisations received 7,331 volunteer applications via VCM. This included specific opportunities for residents to support the response to COVID-19. There were more than 2,500 registrations for marshals at vaccination sites and 300 to support surge-testing efforts.

Seventy-eight Council employees used volunteering leave during 2020/21, including 46 employees who had never done so previously; 758 employees gave a

combined total of 7,748 hours of volunteering leave between October 2017 and March 2021. Last year saw 155 staff voluntarily redeployed to new roles to support the Council's pandemic response.

Manchester Volunteer Inspire Programme

(MCRVIP) has continued to support volunteering in the city, bringing all Council neighbourhood volunteering opportunities in libraries and galleries, parks and green spaces, neighbourhoods and events into one place since its launch in 2019. However, when the country went into lockdown in 2020, MCRVIP reacted quickly, and in May it relaunched with a focus on COVID-19 volunteering. Volunteers supported residents with food requests, collecting supplies and medication, supporting Digital Inclusion, Active Manchester, Keep Manchester Tidy, Read Easy Manchester, Friends of Parks groups and Good Neighbour groups. The pandemic has again highlighted how our communities succeed in joining together to provide support for one another with a strong response to the request for volunteers.

The Our Manchester Voluntary and Community Sector (OMVCS) grants programme funds 63 VCSE organisations and completed its third year. Originally designed to run three years, the programme has been extended due to the pandemic.

Formal monitoring activities were suspended in March 2020, recognising the pressures faced by funded organisations. Monitoring resumed later in the year, with information received showing that in the period October to December, organisations had supported 28,066 people, with 1,625 volunteers contributing 31,834 hours of time. Over this period, funded groups reported £1.6million of additional funding invested in their organisations. The North

Manchester Together work continued, and over the summer of 2020, 'COVID-19 Recovery Grab Bags' were given to local VCSE organisations to assist them in reopening safely. An assistive grants programme was launched in September 2020 and has matched nine north Manchester groups with local mentors to work with them on agreed development objectives to strengthen their organisations.

Work with Black, Asian and minority ethnic voluntary and community organisations and leaders commenced in 2019. A number of engagement events had taken place prior to March 2020, with the aim of using feedback to inform proposals for funding. COVID-19 had temporarily delayed this work, but proposals are now being developed based on the feedback and themes provided, which will include re-engaging with Black, Asian and minority ethnic organisations and leaders.

The Population Health Targeted Fund was launched in April 2020 in partnership with Manchester Health and Care Commissioning (MHCC). £2.1million of MHCC funding has been invested in a number of VCSE partnerships, funding 81 organisations. Despite the pandemic, these organisations have been delivering activities to improve outcomes in the first 1,000 days of a child's life and to support older people to be as healthy as they can be.

The Council continues to invest in its relationship with the VCSE sector through its VCSE infrastructure support service contract, which is held by Macc. The contract is jointly commissioned with MHCC and began in October 2019 for three years (with a two-year option to extend). Work this year has been focused on supporting the VCSE sector's response to COVID-19.

The Neighbourhood Investment Fund (NIF) is also available to communities for events or activities focusing on making neighbourhoods better places to live. In 2020/21, £640,000 was awarded (£20,000 per ward) to 384 projects across the city, with a variety of purposes and aims. These included supporting established or new community groups in delivering local projects and getting ideas off the ground, activities focused on encouraging groups of residents back into employment or training, projects helping to improve the environment and increase recycling, and other events/activities that are important to neighbourhood and citywide priorities.

The COVID-19 crisis presents a significant challenge to the VCSE sector, and its long-term impact on the viability, diversity and strength of Manchester's VCSE sector remains to be seen. A Manchester Funding Partnership was formed in June 2020 to look at the best way to support Manchester's VCSE sector. The work of the partnership has focused on intelligence-gathering, data-sharing and opportunities to align funding. In January 2021, Manchester City Council launched a COVID-19 Impact Fund, which distributed £745,000 to support the mental health and wellbeing of prioritised resident groups and a further £50,000 to support victims of domestic violence and abuse. This included investment from Manchester Health and Care Commissioning (MHCC) and the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.

The Council has worked in partnership with MHCC, One Manchester and Young Manchester to invest over £1million in a [COVID-19 Recovery Fund](#). The Fund is aimed at enabling voluntary-sector organisations to work together to strengthen

their support for Manchester residents. Activities could include training with partners to access new funding, leadership development support, collaboration that supports the development of shared systems, and peer-to-peer work, all of which will benefit residents and communities.

Conclusion

The city's ambition to create safe and enjoyable neighbourhoods with affordable housing, and to become zero-carbon by 2038 using green energy, growth and design, and more climate-resilience is stronger than ever. More walking, cycling, green transport, and accessible digital technology for everyone is the Council's aim. Manchester can only achieve a vision this ambitious if everyone works together. Building on our city's strong history of partnership working has never been so important, and finding new ways to meet the challenges our communities face has never been so vital. Our determination to create a shared future where all can live fulfilling, happy and healthy lives has never been so strong.

Chapter 6: A connected city

Strategic overview

For a city to be successful it needs to be well connected – internationally, nationally and locally. The level of a city's connectivity is determined by its capacity to connect people with one another, as well as to goods, services and places. Historically, people needed to be in the same place to connect, but modern technology is increasingly enabling these connections to happen virtually. This chapter considers physical connectivity brought about by transport, but also digital connectivity.

Connections are necessary so that people can access work opportunities, education and services, and so that businesses can access markets and their customers. It is only through excellent connectivity that the economy can continue to grow, educational standards can increase, and the city can become more equitable and liveable.

The chapter takes account of the Greater Manchester 2040 Transport Strategy and is structured around the relevant themes contained in the Our Manchester Strategy, creating a city that is:

- **Connected** – considering connectivity by mode of travel and by virtual links
- **Integrated** – using connections between these modes to enable door-to-door journeys
- **Sustainable and thriving** – managing how demand is met, and how technological opportunities are exploited to ensure that carbon emissions are reduced while enabling the city to grow

- **A place to live and innovate** – ensuring that people are put at the centre of the ways we manage, maintain and develop our streets, and how we accommodate and support innovation.

The COVID-19 pandemic has forced society into making immediate and drastic adaptations to the way people live and travel. These changes have had the biggest impact in cities, where everyday activities are only possible because of the connectivity described above, the proximity of large numbers of people to one another, and the connections they make. In the long term, society may return to something broadly similar to the pre-COVID world, but we are currently in a transitional period in which strict lockdown measures have intermittently been imposed and then lifted, so 'normal' is not entirely possible. Our period of recovery will continue to depend on three things: making public transport safe to use so that people can remain connected to the economic and cultural life of the city; enabling people to actively travel¹ safely and easily; and connecting people remotely through digital technology.

Manchester has already joined the growing list of cities around the world to have accelerated plans to make their city centres more people-centred and less reliant on the use of private motor vehicles. In the early stages of the pandemic, we closed some streets to cars and widened pavements to aid social distancing in both the city centre and our district

¹ Examples of active travel include walking, wheelchair, cycling, skateboard, scooter, etc

centres, on an experimental basis at first. These physical adaptations of our built environment have been brought forward on an accelerated timescale but are very much seen as the future direction for how we are aiming to enable connectivity in a more sustainable, zero-carbon and people-friendly way. As we move to a post-lockdown world, we will need to retain the ability to be flexible and adapt to changing circumstances and responses to the pandemic.

Digital connectivity has become even more central to creating a connected city due to the effects of the pandemic. Having access and using online information and services now depend to an even greater degree on being digitally included, so our analysis of Manchester as a connected city now extends deeper into the progress made and challenges that remain around digital inclusion.

Analysis of progress

Manchester already benefits from strong connections but is continuing to make improvements through sustained investment in infrastructure. It is essential that Manchester has world-class connectivity to realise the city's ambitions for economic growth and prosperity.

Working collaboratively with Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM), we are taking a strategic approach to planning our city's transport network. In 2016, residents and businesses were consulted on the [Greater Manchester 2040 Transport Strategy](#),

which was first adopted in 2017. A substantially refreshed 2040 Strategy was adopted in early 2021, along with a five-year delivery plan of infrastructure priorities. For Manchester, we are building on this strategic approach with the adoption of a refreshed City Centre Transport Strategy, published in March 2021. This prioritises walking as the main way of moving around the city centre and aims for 90% of morning peak journeys to the city centre to be made by sustainable modes by 2040.

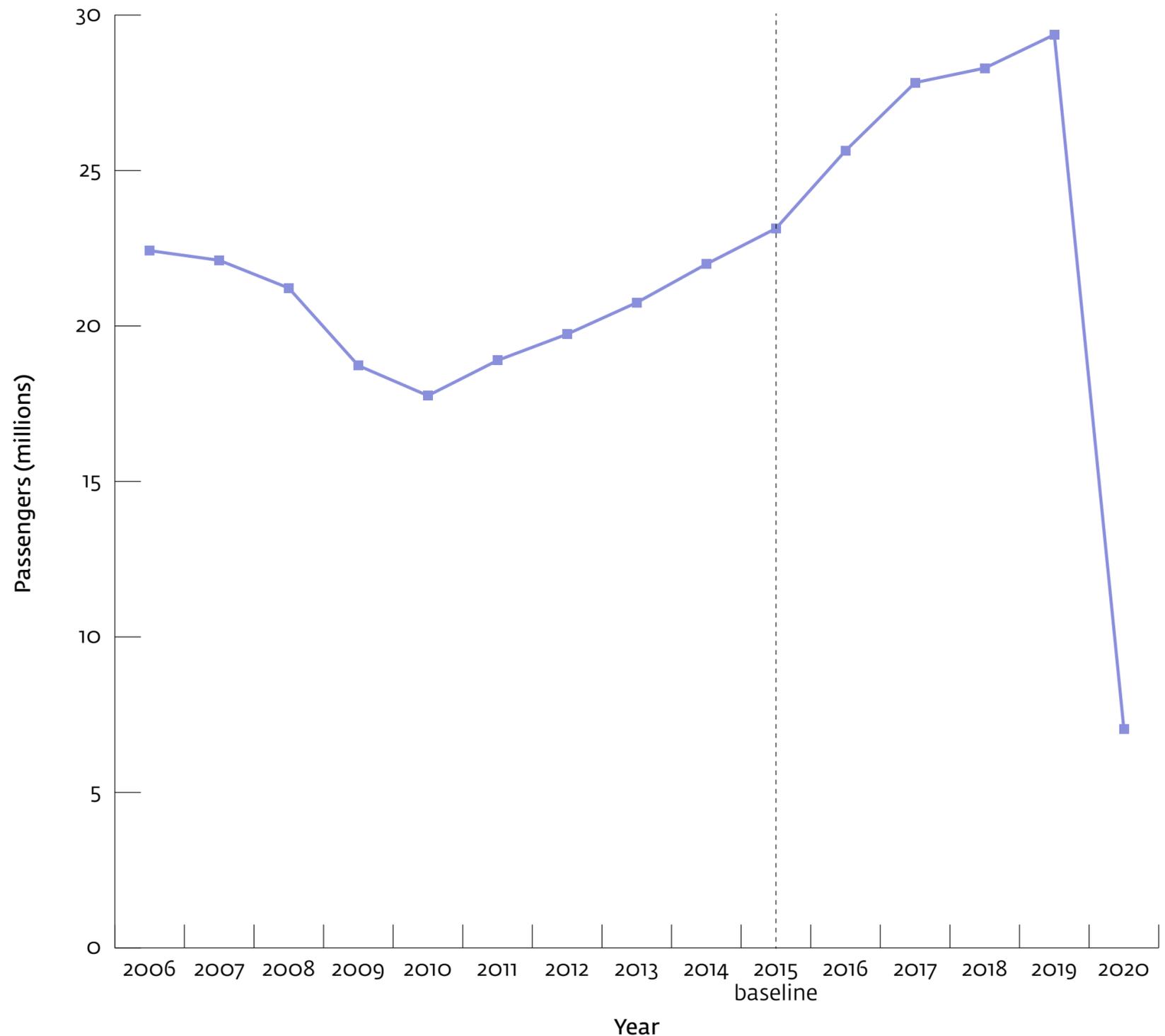
Connections by air

Manchester Airport

Manchester Airport provides national and international connectivity; it is the third-busiest airport in the UK in terms of passenger numbers and is the only two-runway airport outside the south east of England. Figure 6.1 shows that passenger numbers at Manchester Airport were continuing to grow, with a rise of 6.3million passengers since 2015, increasing to 29.4million passengers in 2019. However, air traffic has been severely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, which significantly reduced passenger numbers to just over 7million during 2020, a 76% reduction compared to 2019. Monthly passenger figures from Manchester Airports Group reported reductions of 99% in April 2020, and 87% in December 2020 compared to the same periods in 2019. These figures are a reflection of world trends.

The Airport is currently undergoing a £1billion transformation programme, which is due to be completed in 2024. This work will significantly increase the size of Terminal 2, and also involve other improvement and enhancement work, maximising the capacity of the Airport to be able to carry 55million passengers a year. The first phase of work, the extension to Terminal 2, opened in July 2021.

Figure 6.1:
Number of passengers travelling through Manchester Airport

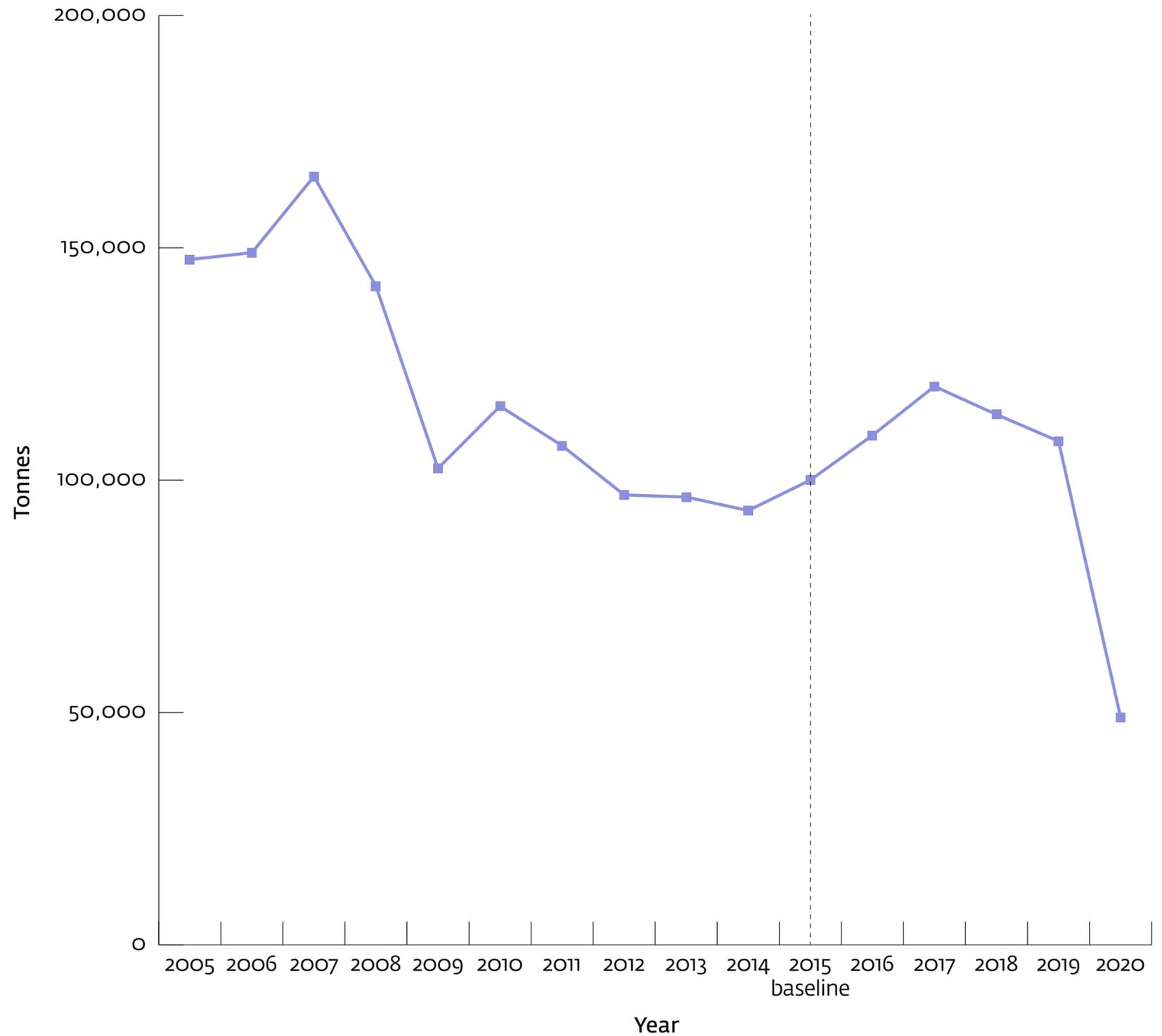


Source: Civil Aviation Authority © Crown Copyright 2021

Air freight

The World Freight Terminal located at Manchester Airport includes a dedicated cargo freight facility providing a base for approximately fifty freight-forwarding firms. Figure 6.2 shows that a significant decline in freight tonnage was experienced between 2007 and 2009. This was mainly as a result of the global recession and a spike in oil prices. Following the recession, the industry has shown signs of recovery and ongoing stability. The COVID-19 pandemic significantly impacted on freight movements in 2020, although the 45% reduction compared to 2019 is not as significant as the reduction seen in passenger numbers. Monthly cargo tonnage figures from Manchester Airports Group reported reductions of 90% in April 2020 and 45% in December 2020 compared to the same periods in 2019.

Figure 6.2:
Amount of freight through Manchester Airport



Source: Civil Aviation Authority © Crown Copyright 2021

Connections by rail

HS2

Work to develop the second phase of the High Speed 2 (HS2) rail line, connecting Manchester and the Airport with Birmingham and London, has been progressing over the past year. Phase 2 has been split into two phases. Phase 2A will be from Birmingham to Crewe, the Hybrid Bill for which gained royal assent in February 2021, enabling construction to begin. Phase 2B is Crewe to Manchester. The Hybrid Bill for this section has not been submitted yet, but is expected to be submitted in 2022.

The route will approach Manchester through a 16km tunnel, emerging at Ardwick, where the line will continue to its terminus at Manchester Piccadilly. It is planned that a major new station will be constructed at Manchester Piccadilly, supporting the regeneration of the surrounding area. A further station is planned to serve Manchester Airport. Discussions and work on HS2 in 2020 and 2021 have been centred around the format of the Piccadilly station and how it can best enable regeneration of the surrounding area, as well as the optimal service for both HS2 and Northern Powerhouse Rail.

Construction is due to start on the line to Manchester in 2033, and the scheme is expected to be completed in late 2038.

Northern Powerhouse Rail (NPR)

Plans for high-speed rail links connecting Manchester to the other cities of the North of England are being developed by Transport for the North (TfN) – the UK's first statutory subnational transport body. Formed in 2018, its role is to make the case for

strategic transport improvements across the North of England in order to improve connectivity and drive economic growth.

The preferred route was agreed by leaders in the North in March 2021, and the plan has now been submitted to the Government for consideration. Further targeted studies, a shortlisting process and the development of business cases will take place through 2021 and 2022 to help make the case for long-term funding through the Department for Transport.

Highway connections

The strategic and key-route road networks are essential to the economy of the city and wider region, and support the movement of people and freight locally and across the country.

Strategic road network

An efficiently operating M60 is important to Manchester, as it not only distributes traffic throughout the city, but also provides a means of travelling around rather than through Manchester for longer journeys. Several projects continue to be progressed by Highways England with the aim of improving connections by road: the Manchester North West Quadrant Study is looking at ways to ease congestion and make journey times more reliable between junctions 8 to 18 of the M60. The A57 Link Project is looking at improving connectivity between Manchester and Sheffield. This particular journey has the worst per-mile journey time between any pair of UK cities, with particular issues of congestion and community severance. Further improvements to the region's major roads are being actively considered by the Department for Transport, Highways England, and Transport for the North. A

key challenge for Manchester in its role in influencing and liaising with Highways England and DfT will be to ensure these projects can be aligned with our target of net zero-carbon by 2038.

Key route network

Within Manchester, the Manchester and Salford Inner Relief Road (MSIRR) is vital for distributing traffic around the city centre, and significant investment is now planned to improve this route. Improving this route will result in less traffic diverting from the key route network onto less suitable routes.

During 2020, improvements were completed on the MSIRR along Great Ancoats Street and at the junction of the Mancunian Way and Princess Parkway. The total investment of all improvements is in the region of £30million; this will not only improve the flow of traffic around the MSIRR, but also improve access across the MSIRR into the city centre for cyclists and pedestrians.

There is limited scope to increase the extent of the highway network; however, work is underway to improve the operation of the network to reduce congestion and increase its capacity.

Highway network five-year investment plan

Manchester's highway network includes over 1,350km of road length, 2,600km of footway length, and more than 350 bridges and structures. Based on the latest valuations, the total highway asset has an indicative gross replacement value of more than £2.7billion, making it the Council's most valuable asset. Our ability to offer a reliable and resilient highways system is not only important for existing businesses, but is also a determining factor

in attracting new businesses, particularly those with a time-critical need for logistics and commercial transport links.

The current five-year (2017–2022) £100million highway investment programme is underway, with the primary goal of improving the condition of Manchester's roads, footways and drainage, as well as supporting maintenance of the bridge network.

During 2020 the following work was carried out:

- **Carriageway Surfacing Programme** – 149 sites, total area 346,511 square metres
- **Challenge Fund** – three sites (Kingsway, Ashton Old Road and Oldham Road), total area 153,540 square metres
- **Footways** – 62 sites, total area 89,102 square metres
- **Preventative** – 150 sites, total area 221,941 square metres.

The annual road condition GEIST surveys have reflected this work, showing an improvement in the percentage of the road network beyond mid-life grading (in 'poor' condition) from 25% in 2017 to 18% in 2020. £18.8million was invested in this programme during the financial year 2020/21, and £66.1million has been invested since the programme started in the financial year 2017/18. The resident satisfaction of highway conditions improved by 9% between 2018 and 2020 (national NHT survey). The satisfaction levels for 2020 were 52%, an increase of 1% since 2019, which is the same as the national average. Since the start of the programme, the number of reported drainage gully faults and complaints has fallen by 47%.

The following milestones were achieved in 2020:

- The Medlock Street roundabout congestion reduction scheme has been completed, including cycling and walking improvements.
- The eagerly awaited road-widening and pedestrian-improvement project at Hyde Road was completed.
- The Great Ancoats Street project, which will make access across the busy road safer for pedestrians and cyclists, was completed.
- School safety improved during the year, with the completion of 77 out of 81 school-crossing improvements across the city.
- The A6 Stockport Road bus-layby widening scheme was completed.
- The Airport City Green Bridge scheme over the M56 motorway connecting the Airport to Wythenshawe was completed.
- The first phase of the walking and cycling scheme through Chorlton was completed, including the construction of the first CYCLOPS junction within the UK.
- In excess of 54,371 new LED street lights have been established within the street lighting PFI.
- Social-distancing measures were established at 11 locations within the regional centre and several district centres.

An integrated transport system

Integrated transport systems should allow for combining several different modes of transport across a journey to provide a seamless end-to-end service. It also means ensuring that timetables are planned in a way that makes them fully co-ordinated, including integrated travel information and route

planning, and ensuring that ticketing systems are integrated across different modes and routes. Integrated journeys can include elements that are active, and when integrated with virtual connectivity, time spent travelling can become more productive. An integrated network is more resilient, more accessible, provides greater choice and should be easy to use. It should also be efficient in terms of time, cost, comfort, safety, accessibility and convenience, resulting in increased economic and social benefits. Investment in such a system should result in a higher uptake in active modes of travel (walking and cycling) and public transport, and reduce congestion and pollution.

The Park and Ride schemes help to reduce journeys by car that would otherwise add to congestion within Salford and Manchester, as car journeys can be connected with Metrolink and rail trips, reducing the need to travel the full distance by car. Within Manchester, there are three Park and Ride schemes attached to Metrolink stops; these have 373 car parking spaces. Two further sites just outside the city boundary at Sale Water Park and Hollinwood provide an additional 521 spaces. A further 139 Park and Ride spaces are provided at five railway stations within the city. Worsley Park and Ride provides access to Manchester by bus rapid transit and has 230 spaces.

In March 2021, the Mayor announced that powers contained in the [Bus Services Act 2017](#) would be used to introduce a system of bus franchising in Greater Manchester. This would see the introduction of a unified brand across the city region for buses, with simplified, integrated ticketing across bus and Metrolink. Private operators would run services to a specification on fares, timetables and routes set

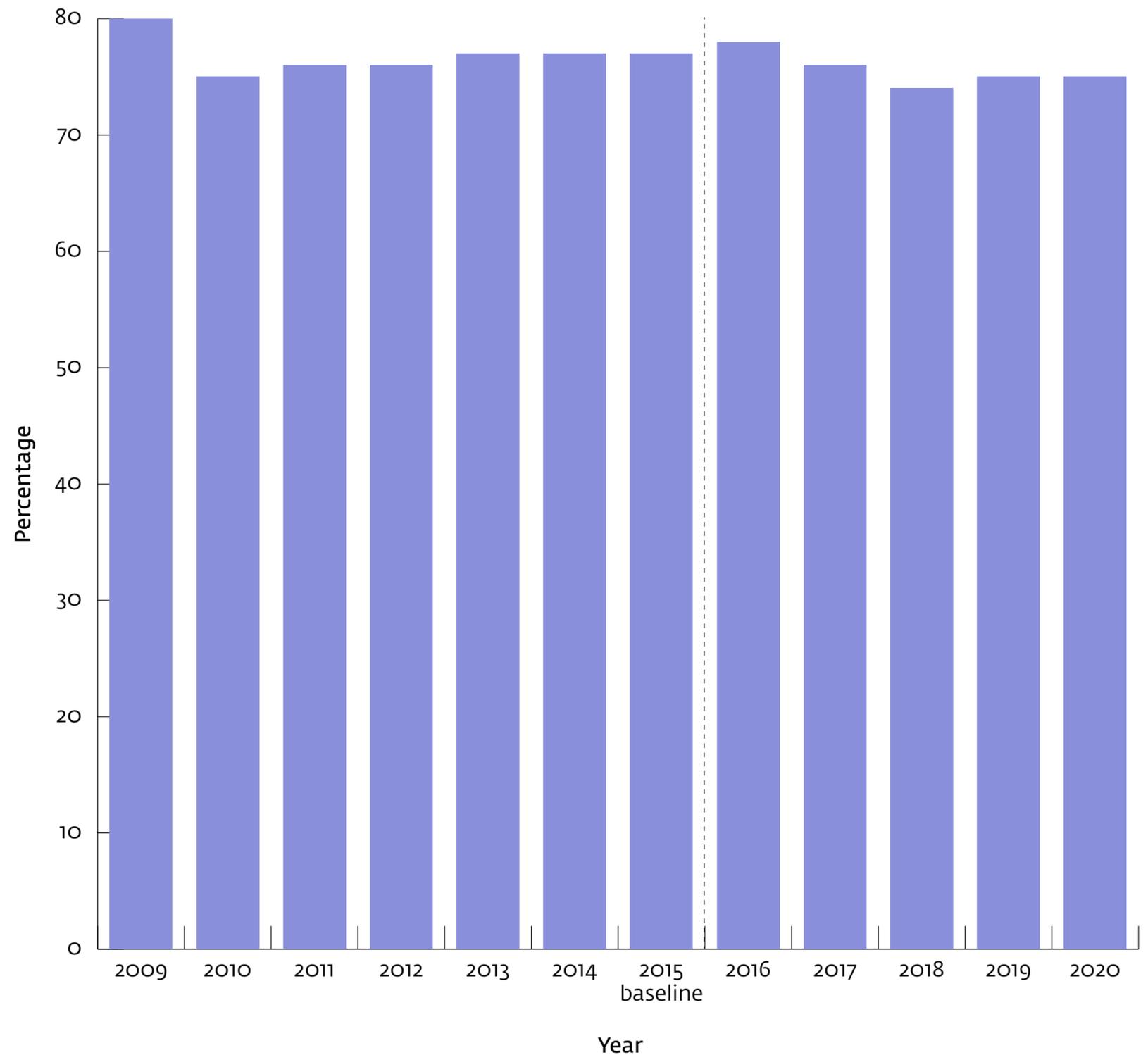
by TfGM. The system would be introduced in phases, with anticipated completion by the end of 2024.

Car Clubs provide access to a car without needing to own one and may be a way of supporting a more sustainable transport network as part of the wider transport mix. It is proposed to increase the number of Car Club vehicles across the city, adding electric vehicles to the Car Club fleet, and expanding the number of locations from which they are available. The current fleet operating in the city includes 47 vehicles operating from 42 locations. A number of new bays are expected to become available during 2021 as part of the network expansion, and a further eight electric Car Club vehicles are to be provided through the eHubs project as part of a pilot scheme.

Encouraging walking and cycling, and the use of public transport

Currently within Greater Manchester, 88% of trips are shorter than five miles, and more than half of them are made by car. Although the percentage of single-occupancy cars travelling into the city centre during the morning peak time is reducing, as shown in Figure 6.3, car ownership overall is increasing (there was a growth of 14% in licensed cars in the city between 2015 and 2020: from 141,800 to 161,600).²

Figure 6.3: Percentage of single-occupancy car journeys into Manchester city centre (7.30–9.30am)



² Department for Transport vehicle licensing statistics

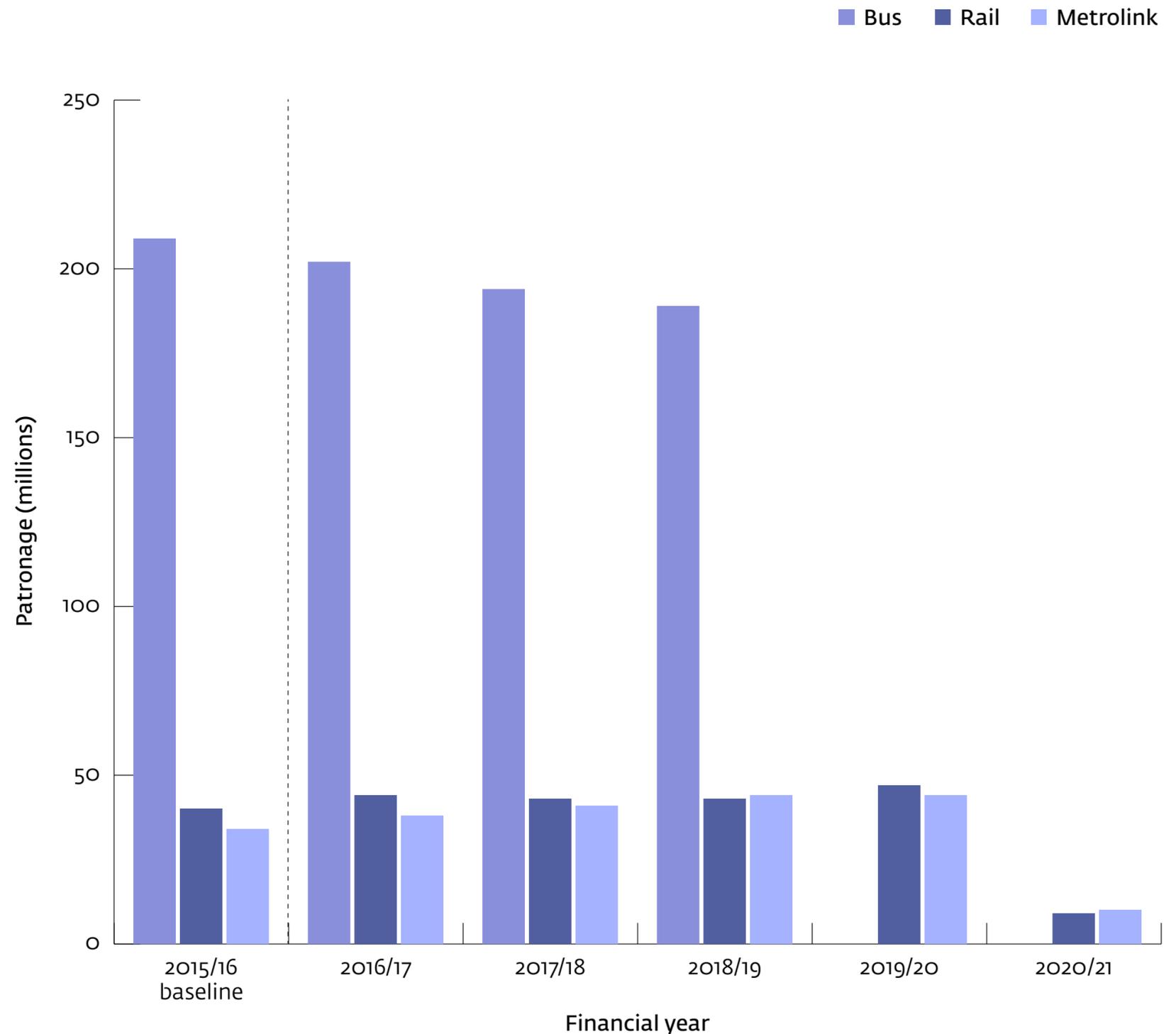
Source: TfGM © Crown Copyright 2021

Figure 6.4 shows public transport patronage across Greater Manchester. The figures for 2019/20 and 2020/21 are effectively incomparable with previous years due to the effects of the pandemic. Figures for rail have been rebased to 2015/16 due to a change in data collection to include passenger journeys boarding and alighting in Greater Manchester to or from destinations outside Greater Manchester, to give a truer picture of rail patronage. Therefore, the previous data going back to 2002 has not been presented here.

Over the past ten years, rail and Metrolink use has increased significantly, while bus use has been slowly declining. A number of measures to support the continued growth of rail travel and Metrolink, and reverse the decline in bus travel, are described below. However, the extent to which patronage rebounds across all public transport modes will depend on measures to increase public confidence in the safety of travel, as well as improvements to infrastructure and services.

The data presented in Figure 6.4 is incomplete due to the limitations of collecting data under lockdown conditions. The pandemic prevented collection of the usual Continuous Passenger Sampling Surveys, therefore bus usage is missing from 2019/20 and 2020/21. As the data shows, patronage on rail and Metrolink collapsed in 2020/21 due to Government advice against public transport travel for all but essential journeys, as well as various lockdown periods with different restrictions, and working from home.

Figure 6.4:
Public transport patronage across Greater Manchester



Source: TfGM © Crown Copyright 2021. Bus data is unavailable for the years 2019/20 and 2020/21

Bus travel

Bus travel is supported by the Council and TfGM in the following ways:

- **Investment in Bus Priority infrastructure** on key routes into the city centre, including the Leigh Guided Busway, Rochdale Road, and the Oxford Road Corridor. Recent work included the reconfiguration of the Portland Street/Chorlton Street/Charlotte Street traffic signals, which improved pedestrian-crossing facilities and reduced bus-journey times along Portland Street. This was achieved by removing a stage from the traffic signals.
- **Greater Manchester Infrastructure Programme:** Work to identify a pipeline of new bus-priority measures is underway with TfGM and district colleagues. This includes planning for bus priority on key corridors across Manchester, including at Princess Road, Chester Road, Wilmslow Road, Bury New Road and Oldham Road.
- **City Centre Transport Strategy and related bus planning and improvements:** Quality Bus Transit and Streets for All corridor analysis to develop bus-priority measures for A6 (through Salford), A6 (to Stockport), A56, A57 and A664 through Victoria North/M62 Northeast Express Bus Corridor.
- **Commissioning consultants to help produce a City Centre Bus Routing Plan** to ensure that the Council can effectively integrate bus transport into the overall management of street and other urban space in the city centre. This will support planning and infrastructure provision for bus operators to meet the CCTS targets for bus patronage

In March 2021, the Mayor announced that powers contained in the [Bus Services Act 2017](#) would be used to introduce a system of bus franchising in Greater Manchester. This followed two rounds of consultation in 2020 and early 2021, the second of which re-examined the proposed franchising scheme and other options in the light of the effects of the pandemic. Bus franchising will be introduced in three phases across Greater Manchester, with the full network franchised by the end of 2024.

The Council is working collaboratively with TfGM on its Local Bus Strategy to ensure the right strategic framework informs decision-making on buses.

It is also working on a Bus Service Improvement Plan to ensure that bus reform results in the Our Network vision set out in the Greater Manchester 2040 Transport Strategy are realised. Both will be published later in 2021. In addition, recognising the importance of buses to the city centre and our future transport strategies, we are undertaking work on routing and other infrastructure planning for buses into and within the city centre.

Metrolink

The Metrolink network has expanded to become the largest light rail network in the UK. Services now run on seven lines to 99 stops, covering nearly 105km. The network is currently undergoing significant improvements, and further developments are planned for the future:

- Legal powers exist to extend the Airport Metrolink extension through the completion of a western loop, which would connect the existing line to the new Terminal 2 and then to the proposed HS2 station, to Wythenshawe Hospital, and then back to the existing line. The current intention is to deliver the link to

the new Airport terminal first, with the further extension following the construction of HS2. TfGM is currently producing a business case for this proposal.

- Proposals have been announced to extend the Metrolink network to Stockport using a tram-train system, whereby tram services share lines with trains. The new line would extend from the existing Metrolink stop at East Didsbury to the new transport interchange in Stockport. This scheme is in the early development stage, with a possible construction start date of 2025.
- TfGM has committed to developing options by 2025 for a Metrolink station at Sandhills, to support the development of sustainable neighbourhoods of up to 15,000 homes in the Victoria North area to the north of the city centre. Work is ongoing to develop options.
- TfGM is in the process of acquiring 27 new trams; six are now in operation and the other 21 are due to be in service by mid-2022.

The Council is working collaboratively with TfGM on its Rapid Transit Strategy to ensure that decisions on investment in Metrolink and bus rapid-transit infrastructure and services are made according to a coherent strategic framework. The Strategy will be published later in 2021.

Walking and cycling

There is great potential to increase the number of shorter journeys being made on foot or by bike. In order to improve health and access to jobs, and to alleviate pressure on our public transport system, levels of walking and cycling will need to continue to increase. There is a strong case to support walking and cycling in Manchester, and increasing the share

of trips for these active modes has the potential to reduce car use, use our highway network more efficiently, and create more space on public transport. In addition, active modes improve the mental and physical health of our residents, reduce our carbon emissions, and improve air quality.

Greater Manchester's Cycling and Walking Commissioner published the [Made to Move](#) document at the end of 2017. This document sets out 15 steps to be taken to create a genuine culture of cycling and walking within the city. The first step in this process is the production of a detailed Greater Manchester-wide walking and cycling infrastructure plan known as a Local Cycling and Walking Investment Plan; this will be produced in collaboration with the district authorities, and is now known as the [Bee Network](#). The Greater Manchester Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP), [Change a Region to Change a Nation](#), was published at the end of June 2019.

In order to implement and develop the Bee Network, initial funding of £160million was made available through the Mayor's Challenge Fund (MCF). This is available for all Greater Manchester councils to apply for by submitting qualifying schemes. The programme will deliver improvements to the highway network to make it easier and more attractive for people to take shorter journeys on foot or by bike. Manchester has secured programme entry for more than £79million of projects in the Mayor's Challenge Fund (MCF) programme. Nine bids have been agreed (up to April 2020) for the programme entry stage for funding within the Manchester district; these were submitted by the Council and all projects are on track to be delivered by spring 2022. Included are the following schemes:

- **Chorlton Cycleway** – A 5km route partly funded by the MCF and the Cycle Cities Ambition Grant (CCAG). Work on the first phase of this scheme was completed in the summer of 2020, and work on some of the further phases commenced early in 2021. The city's second CYCLOPS junction has now opened on Stretford Road, in addition to the UK-first junction at Royce Road, which opened in spring 2020. Detailed design options are being prepared for the rest of the route, which should be complete by December 2021.
- **Levenshulme and Burnage Active Neighbourhood** – An active neighbourhood scheme that includes a series of signalised and minor junction upgrades, parallel crossings, modal filters, and investment in streetscapes to encourage local trips on foot or by bike. The scheme is partly funded by the MCF and Manchester City Council. The initial six-month trial of 14 filters was successful, with only one needing to be moved. This will inform the implementation of a permanent scheme. Further measures are being considered for Burnage, and researchers at The University of Manchester have provided traffic-counting and air-quality monitoring to inform locations for interventions.
- **Princess Road/Mancunian Way roundabout improvements** – Full junction upgrade, including removing the existing subways, and creating protected cycle tracks, pedestrian paths and a signalised crossing. Partly funded by MCF and local contributions. Work was completed on this project in the winter of 2020.
- **Northern Quarter** – Project to enhance the 'on foot and by bike' experience from Manchester Piccadilly to Manchester Victoria stations via the Northern Quarter. Funded partly by MCF and CCAG. A number of temporary measures

were implemented in the area as part of social-distancing measures, some of which are being made permanent. More detailed design work is ongoing for other phases of the scheme, which should be completed by May 2022.

- **Rochdale Canal** – The project includes improvements to the canal towpaths, improved access under a low bridge at Butler Street, and various other improvements to access/egress points and adjacent routes. Work will commence in late summer 2021.
- **Northern and Eastern Gateway Connectivity** – A parallel route to Great Ancoats Street providing a safe and convenient cycle link to the north of the MSIRR, including two more CYCLOPS junctions and segregated lanes to facilitate east-west movement. Public consultation took place in spring 2021 and construction is anticipated to complete in spring 2022.
- **Beswick Active Neighbourhood** – The project is to develop a network of streets that are not only safe, but also feel safe. This is to encourage the local community to confidently take to their bikes and walk more often; the project includes a filtered neighbourhood approach. Construction commenced on-site in January 2021, with Phase 1 already completed.
- **Oldham Road (Inner Radial)** – The project will add segregated cycleways to both sides of Oldham Road, from the Intermediate Relief Road to the North Manchester Connectivity project below. MCF funding has been secured to develop this scheme further.
- **North Manchester Connectivity** – This scheme provides a link (via Oldham Road) from the city centre to the north east of Manchester along

Lightbowne Road. It was submitted jointly by Manchester City Council, Rochdale Borough Council and Oldham Council. Funding is currently being sought for further development of this scheme.

Three further schemes submitted by other parties located within Manchester have also secured programme entry for MCF funding. These are:

- **Metrolink Cycle Parking** – Enhancements to the tram stops along the Bury line at Bowker Vale, Crumpsall, Abraham Moss and Queens Road to support integrated travel. This is a TfGM project.
- **Manchester Cycleway** – Improvements including additional lighting, better access points, and section widening to the existing Fallowfield Loop Cycleway and Stockport Branch Canal route. This is a Sustrans/TfGM project. Public consultation was carried out in spring 2021 and the results will be carefully analysed and considered in the final designs.
- **Manchester Cycle Hire** – This project will introduce a docked cycle hire scheme with 1,500 conventional bikes and 300 e-bikes, initially to the city centre around Manchester, Salford and Trafford. This is a TfGM project and is due to be delivered in autumn 2021.

Manchester was also awarded approximately £5.5million across two tranches of Active Travel Fund submissions from DfT. Tranche 1 was spent on temporary social-distancing measures in the city centre in summer 2020. Tranche 2, which aims to create more permanent schemes, is being invested in two schemes:

- **City Centre Active Travel** – Measures to deliver the City Centre Triangle of walking and cycling improvements on Deansgate and Whitworth

Street (the third side of the triangle will be delivered by the Northern Quarter MCF scheme detailed above).

- **Wythenshawe Active Travel** – A scheme to provide segregated lanes and other measures connecting the Airport with Wythenshawe Hospital. Public consultation was carried out in spring 2021, and the results are being carefully analysed and considered in the final designs. The scheme may have a funding shortfall, which will require further commitments.

During 2020/21, TfGM and Living Streets worked with 113 primary schools in Greater Manchester to encourage walking to school. Fifteen of the schools are located in Manchester. Overall, active modes of travel increased by an average of 26% across Greater Manchester, and in Manchester schools there was an increase in active journeys from 70% to 76%. Walk to School and Walking Buses Routes is a TfGM and Living Streets programme promoted to all schools by Manchester City Council. Neighbourhood Teams engage with schools to provide 'walk to school' resource packs. A total of 8,430 pupils from 20 Manchester schools have signed up to take part in the programme and established 'walking bus' groups.

The Bikeability scheme has provided funding for the Council to carry out cycle training in schools. Between 2016 and March 2020, 18,287 cycle-training places had been delivered – 4,715 of them in 2019/20. However, due to the pandemic the number of places provided during 2020/21 significantly reduced to 819. The Cycle Training Session programme in schools was impacted during 2020/21. We are currently working with Bikeability to provide venues for a series of summer-holiday sessions, with particular emphasis on those pupils leaving year 6 to go to high school who were not able to receive training last year.

School Streets

Road-safety concerns are commonly named by parents and guardians as the main reason for reluctance to support children to walk, cycle and scooter to school. School Streets is an opportunity to make it safer and easier for children to get to school actively. A School Street is a road outside a school that has a temporary restriction on motorised traffic at school drop-off and pick-up times. The restriction applies to school traffic (exempting Blue Badge holders) and through traffic.

The key aims of holding a School Streets session are to:

- Enable schools to restrict traffic to enable a car-free and safer pick up and drop off
- Help to boost the number of children walking, cycling and scootering to school each day
- Increase awareness of air pollution and improve air quality around schools.

To date:

- Fourteen schools have held School Streets road closure sessions, including seven on Clean Air Day (8 October)
- 5,667 pupils have taken part in School Streets sessions
- A further 11 schools (4,237 pupils) have expressed interest in holding trial School Streets sessions
- Evaluation and sharing of experience and knowledge with and between schools will continue to further improve the School Streets process and delivery arrangements

- Of the further ten schools that have expressed an interest, many felt that because of the current increased workload and uncertainty around COVID-19 they would like to defer any School Streets trial to allow further time to communicate with residents and parents.

Cleaner air and reduced emissions

Our transport system is a major source of emissions and contributes to poor air quality; these emissions damage our health by polluting the air we breathe and contribute to climate change. Reductions in these emissions are subject to legal limits, and the Government has mandated a number of cities, including Manchester, to produce Clean Air Plans. These are aimed at reducing concentrations of roadside nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) emissions to legal levels in the shortest possible time.

All ten Greater Manchester local authorities have worked together to develop a joint [Clean Air Plan](#). This includes:

- A Government-mandated category C charging Greater Manchester-wide Clean Air Zone, to secure compliance with NO₂ legal limits on local roads in the shortest possible time, and by 2024 at the latest
- Multimillion-pound funding support for Greater Manchester businesses and organisations to upgrade eligible non-compliant vehicles.

Following a review of all the information gathered through the eight-week public consultation in 2020 – as well as wider data, evidence and modelling work – the final Clean Air Plan has now been published. The plan was approved by the ten Greater Manchester local authorities in July 2021. Information

and documents about all aspects of the Clean Air Plan can be found at www.cleanairgm.com

Initially, from May 2022, the Clean Air Zone will cover HGVs and buses; LGVs, coaches, taxis and private-hire vehicles will be included from May 2023. Vehicles in these categories will be subject to a daily charge to enter the Clean Air Zone, the boundary of which will be the ten Greater Manchester districts.

The Clean Air Zone does not include cars, because modelling showed that this would not bring forward the date at which NO₂ levels were within the legal limit. This is because privately owned vehicles are typically parked up and not in use for over 95% of the time. Including private vehicles would also have disproportionately affected those people who are least able to invest in a newer, cleaner vehicle.

Electric vehicles

The Government aims to ban the sale of new petrol and diesel cars by 2030. Increasing the use of electric vehicles is a key way in which we can reduce our carbon and air-pollution emissions. The number of plug-in cars and light goods vehicles (LGVs) licensed within Manchester saw a sixfold increase in growth between 2015 and 2020, increasing from 139 to 881. This still remains at a very low level, making up only 0.5% of the total number of cars and LGVs within Manchester, below the UK average of 1%.

This is currently supported by provision of the Greater Manchester public-charging network known as Be.EV. The Be.EV network went live in July 2013 (under GMEV branding), and membership grew from a very low base to 2,946 members by March 2021. In 2018/19 there was an average of 5,485 individual charging sessions, but this has

dropped to 4,806 for the period October 2020 to March 2021, which again may be due to the influence of the pandemic and the general reduction in travel.

The current Be.EV network includes 159 double-headed 15kw fast-charge points and three 50kw rapid chargers (one of which is restricted to buses) across the region. The network is currently under review, and in the short term the number of fast-charge points will be reduced to 118 before proposals to expand the network are put in place. The Be.EV network has predominantly focused on public car parks and destination locations, although it does include a small number of on-street locations, including two in Chorlton. The Council is working with TfGM to develop plans to expand the network further to support a range of vehicles, including taxis.

There are currently proposals to expand this network, including funding through Early Measures as part of the Clean Air Plan for an additional four double-headed charge points within Manchester. Further funding is providing three double-headed charge points for the sole use of taxis/private-hire vehicles, which are expected to be installed in 2021. A further four double-headed charge points are also to be provided through the eHubs pilot project during 2021 for the sole use of the Car Club. There are proposals for a further 30 double-headed charge points to be installed in Manchester as part of the Be.EV network, but funding has yet to be committed to this project.

The Council's Facilities Management Team have recently replaced their fleet of diesel vans with electric vans and reduced the fleet by two vehicles. This change will bring an 80% reduction in the fleet's carbon emissions every year – approximately

12 tonnes. The Council's Fleet Services Team have provided support for this change along with funding from the Triangulum Project – an EU initiative supporting innovation to develop frameworks bringing cutting-edge technology to Europe's cities. The Council is also in the process of purchasing 27 electric refuse vehicles, which it hopes to charge overnight using power generated from solar panels installed at the Hammerstone Road depot. Eleven of these vehicles are currently operational, and the remaining 16 are expected to commence operating by the end of 2021.

Through the eHubs pilot project it is hoped to deploy 25 e-cargo bikes for hire within the city in 2021.

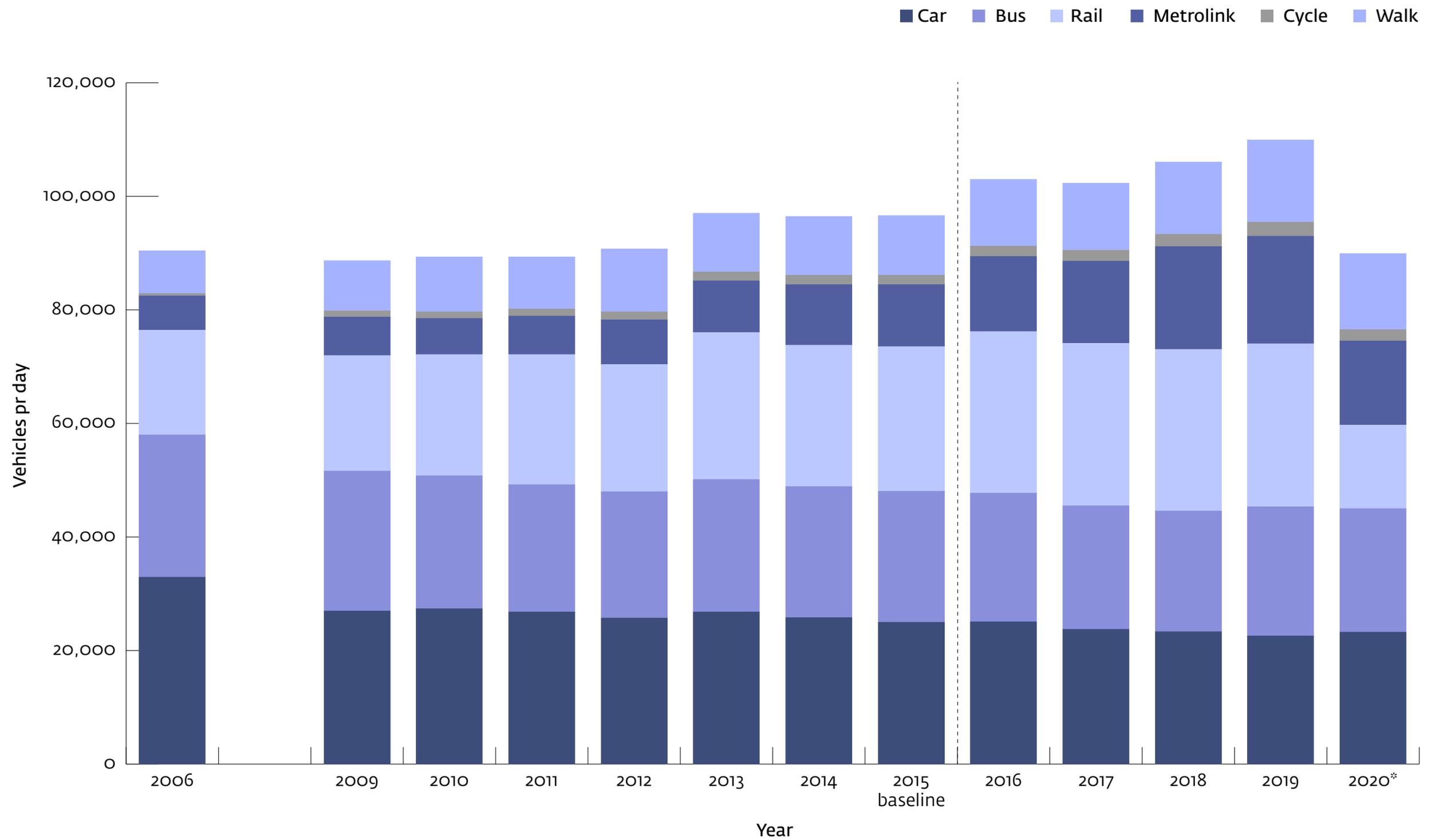
Automated vehicles

In 2017, a consortium – including the Council and TfGM – secured funding for £3.7million to trial a driverless electric shuttle service at Manchester Airport, and the use of autonomous vehicles between Stockport Railway Station and Manchester Airport in platooning formations of up to three vehicles. If platooning and electric-vehicle technology become widely adopted, it would reduce congestion, improve air quality, and reduce the impact of transportation on climate change. In the short term it would deliver a novel and improved passenger experience at Manchester Airport, helping to boost Manchester's reputation as a leader in technology and transport innovation. It is hoped that the widespread introduction of autonomous vehicles will make our roads safer. The trials are due to take place in 2021.

Modal shift to sustainable modes

Travel demand to and from the city centre has grown significantly in recent years, reflecting increases in the number of jobs and the resident population; this is discussed in more detail in the '[A thriving and sustainable city](#)' chapter. There has been a 14% increase in the number of morning peak-hour trips into Manchester city centre between 2015 and 2019, with 4% year-on-year increases noted in 2018 and 2019. However, due to the pandemic there was an 18% decrease in journeys across all modes between 2019 and 2020. Figure 6.5 shows that trends in trips into the city centre vary across different modes of transport. Note that the 2020 TfGM surveys were undertaken in February and March 2020 and some, in particular the rail surveys carried out in mid-March, were significantly affected by measures taken to combat the pandemic.

Figure 6.5:
Trips into Manchester city centre (7.30–9.30am) by various modes of transport



Source: Manchester city centre cordon count, TfGM © Crown Copyright 2021
 Note: No data is available for 2007 and 2008 *Counted in February/March, which includes a period at the beginning of the COVID-19 lockdown

Since 2015, the following trends have been noted in travelling into the city centre:

- **Car travel** has seen the most significant decline in recent years, the number of trips falling by 9% between 2015 and 2019; a 3% annual rise in 2020 has contributed to an overall reduction of 7% since 2015. Car travel's share of city centre trips fell from 26% to 21% in 2019 but rose again to 26% in 2020.
- **Bus travel** has declined by 6%; a 2% reduction was noted between 2015 and 2019, followed by a further 4% reduction in 2020. Overall, bus travel's share of city centre trips fell from 24% to 20% in 2019 but rose again to 24% in 2020.
- **Rail travel** increased by 13% between 2015 and 2019, but a 49% annual reduction in 2020 has contributed to an overall reduction of 42% since 2015. Rail's share of city centre trips was 26% in 2019 but reduced to 16% in 2020.³
- **Metrolink trips** increased by 73% between 2015 and 2019, but a 22% annual reduction in 2020 has contributed to an overall increase of 36% since 2015. Metrolink's share of city centre trips has increased from 11% to 17%.
- **Walking and cycling trips** increased by 27% and 19% respectively between 2015 and 2020. Walking trips into the city centre have increased from 11% to 15%, while cycling trips into the city centre remain at 2%. Although starting from a low base, cycling trips into the city centre increased from 1,648 in 2015 to 2,477 in 2019, but reduced to 1,954 in 2020. Further work on the walking trips is

needed to determine how many are made by people parking outside the city centre and walking in, and how many are made by those who live nearby and walk into the city centre.

Pre-pandemic changes are likely to have been driven by a range of factors, including:

- Improvements in public transport, particularly on the Metrolink network, which has expanded significantly in the past ten years. The decline in bus travel is of concern, but recent investments in Manchester's Bus Priority infrastructure should go some way to reverse this trend in the future.
- Changing patterns of where people live and work. There have been increases in the city centre workforce and population, and more people now live in locations where public transport and active travel are attractive commuting options.
- Increasing journey times on the road network, which are likely to have made commuting by car and bus a less attractive option. While car traffic into the city centre has reduced, elevated journey times may be due to disruption from major roadworks in and around the city centre, alongside the rise of online deliveries, which have added to congestion. TfGM figures show that there have been increases in freight traffic in the past five years, including a 4% increase in van and HGV trips into the city centre.

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a huge impact on the use of public transport and on highway usage. It remains to be seen how long-lasting these changes will be, and we have already seen significant increases since lockdown measures eased. TfGM figures for the whole Greater Manchester network

show that at the lowest point of demand, in mid-April 2020, compared to the early March 2020 pre-lockdown baseline:

- Metrolink usage was down 97%
- Bus usage was down 96%
- Rail usage was down 95%
- Highway usage was down 73%.

Since those mid-April lows, usage has rebounded to differing degrees across different modes. By 30 June 2021, highways usage had almost returned to pre-pandemic levels, rising to only 4% below the pre-lockdown baseline. Metrolink, rail and bus usage has trended upwards in a very gradual way, with passenger numbers still below the pre-lockdown baseline: -55% on Metrolink, -34% on buses, and -55% on rail.

The extent to which public transport can regain mode share is likely to be dependent on a range of factors, including confidence in hygiene and cleanliness, the effectiveness and adoption of face coverings by passengers, and overall prevalence of COVID-19 in the community, as well as messaging and communication from public bodies and transport operators.

The initial messaging during spring 2020 was to avoid all non-essential use of public transport, which was successful in deterring passengers. Temporary revenue support funding was provided for Metrolink and bus operators in order to partially offset the almost total absence of fare revenue. Service frequency was cut severely, with a phased return to normal timetables currently underway. It is too soon to forecast how long it will take for

³ TfGM rail surveys undertaken in mid-March were significantly impacted by measures taken to combat COVID-19

public transport usage to return to pre-COVID-19 baseline levels. Greater Manchester districts and TfGM are considering various scenarios in assessing options and implications regarding key strategies, such as Places for Everyone, TfGM 2040 Transport Strategy, and the Council’s Climate Change Action Plan. A recovery scenario in which public transport’s mode share remains indefinitely lower than pre-COVID-19 levels and in which private-car trips are increased would be significantly damaging for air quality, congestion, place-making, road safety and carbon reduction; and the strategic policy direction for Greater Manchester remains to continue to shift to more sustainable transport.

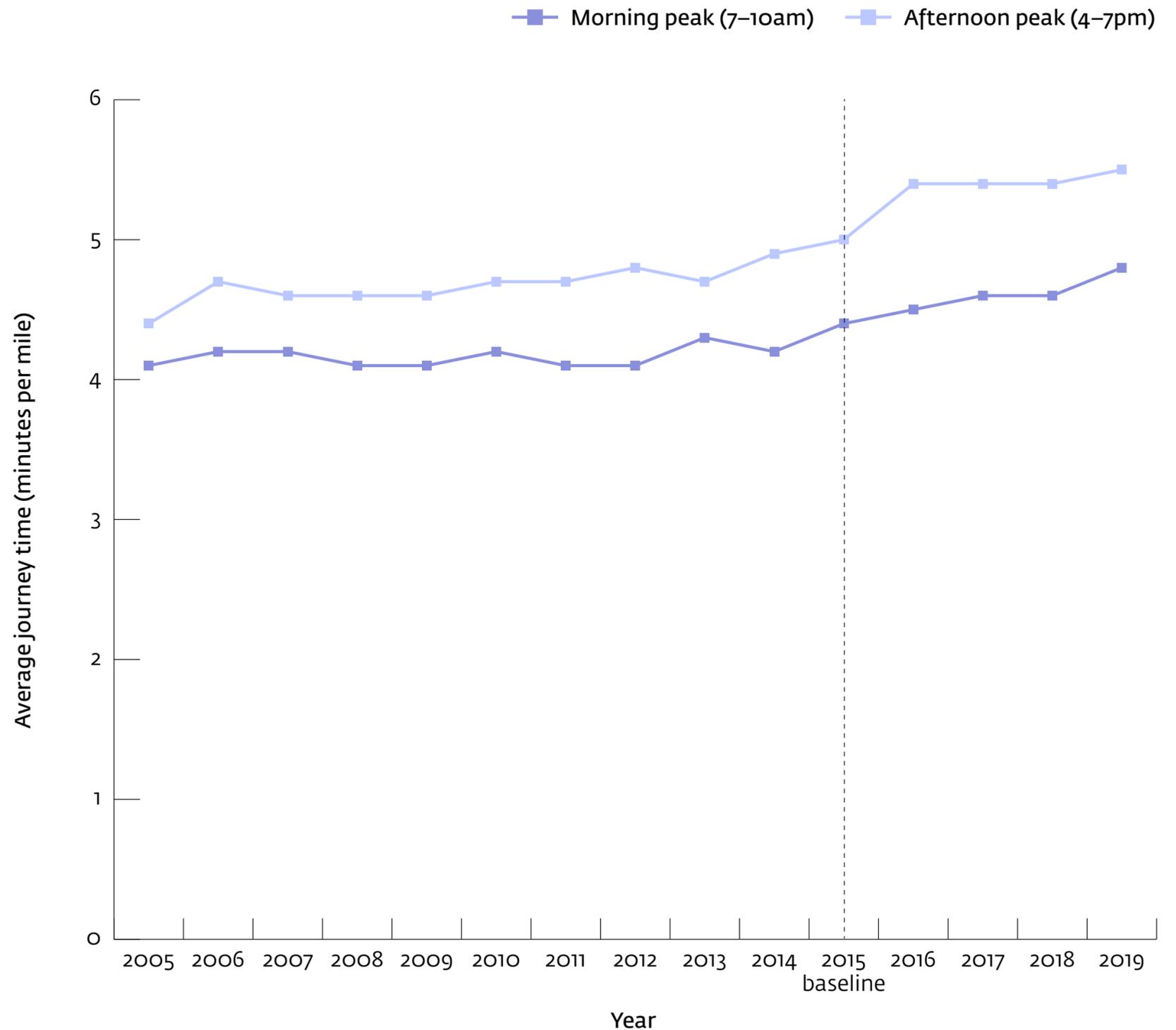
Congestion

Figure 6.6 shows that average journey times on our network of A and B roads had been gradually increasing since 2005, with a greater increase in the afternoon peak, although this growth has stabilised since 2016. Journey times are an indication of the level of congestion on our roads.

It is assumed that most of the increase is due to more vehicles on the road and the amount of construction work underway across the city. The growth in delivery traffic is thought to be a major contributor to the additional traffic levels. Construction work is often an inevitable consequence of living in a successful and thriving city. Work is presently underway to improve the operation of the Manchester and Salford Inner Relief Road (MSIRR).

With increased congestion, the average speeds on A and B roads are reducing, albeit only marginally, from 15mph in the morning peak (7–10am) and 14mph in the afternoon peak (4–7pm) in 2005, to 12mph and 11mph respectively in 2019.

Figure 6.6:
Journey time rates for A and B roads (average minutes per mile)



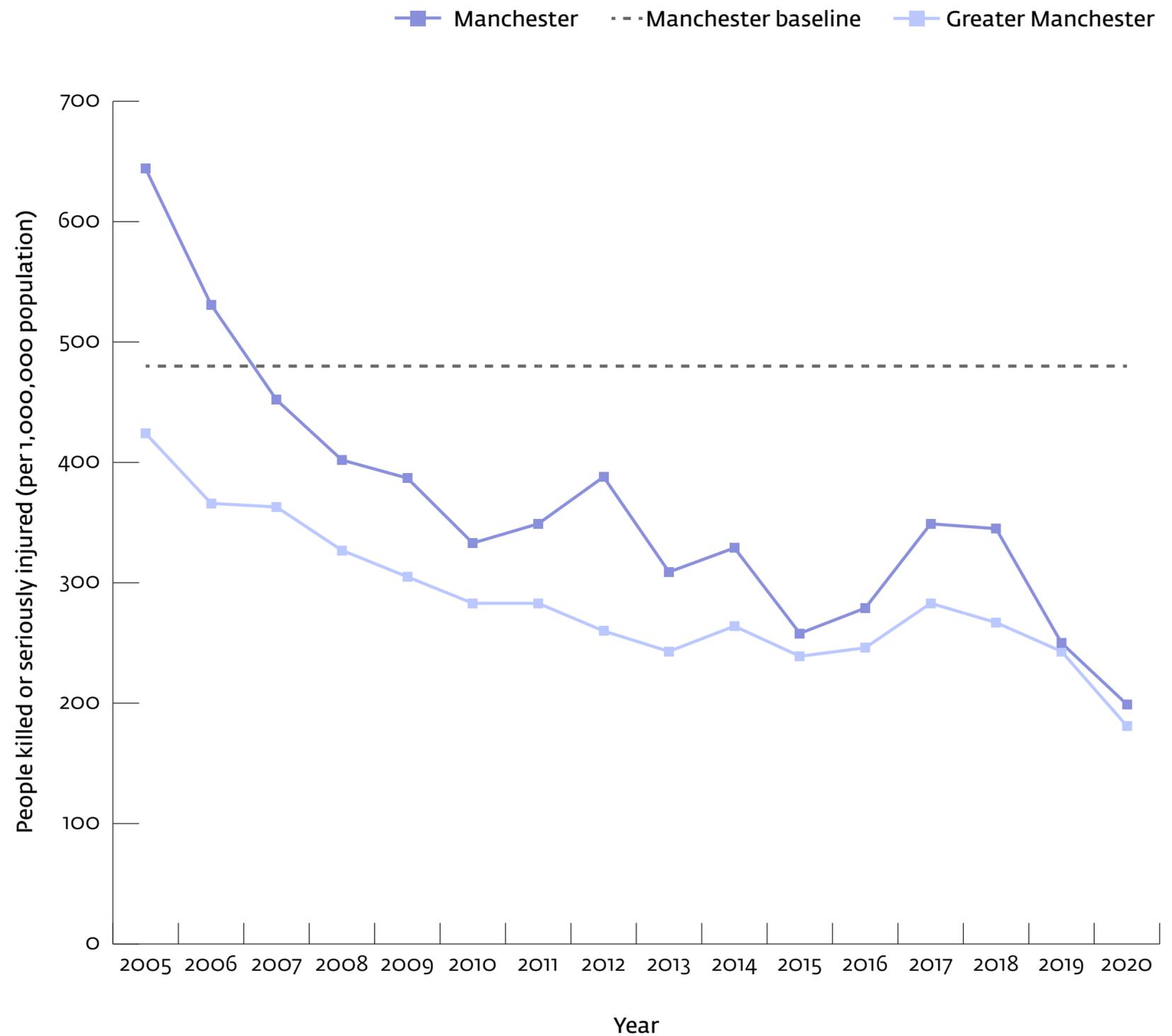
Source: TfGM © Crown Copyright 2021

The COVID-19 pandemic and resulting lockdown measures resulted in highway usage reducing by 73% from the pre-lockdown baseline. However, private motor-vehicle trips have risen more quickly and more significantly than public-transport trips as lockdown measures have eased, and on 30 June 2021, traffic levels were only 4% lower than the early March 2020 pre-lockdown baseline.

Road safety

The Council works in close partnership with TfGM and Greater Manchester Police to improve the safety of our highway network, including investment in infrastructure to reduce accidents, and targeted enforcement operations to prevent dangerous driving. The data shown in Figure 6.7 suggests that road safety in Manchester was moving in the right direction, with a 60% decrease in the rate of people being killed or seriously injured on our roads between 2005 and 2015. However, between 2015 and 2018 there was a marked increase of 34%, with a rate of 345 per one million population killed or seriously injured in 2018, equating to 188 people. The rate has reduced significantly since, reaching 199 per one million population, equating to 110 people killed or seriously injured on Manchester’s roads in 2020. Figures remain below the Manchester baseline figures of 480 per one million population or 222 people killed or seriously injured (based upon an average of the five years 2005 to 2009) and is now slightly above the Greater Manchester rate of 181.

Figure 6.7: Killed or seriously injured casualty rate on roads (per 1,000,000 population)



Source: TfGM © Crown Copyright 2021. During 2020, traffic flows on highways have been affected by COVID-19 restrictions, impacting the number of reported injury collisions

Becoming a digitally inclusive city

Manchester is already one of Europe's fastest-growing technology cities. The city has a strong and resilient digital sector, acknowledged as 'the UK's second technology city', consistently outperforming 'all cities outside of London' (The Data City, 2019). This is significant, not only in terms of the scale of the sector, but also in terms of its scope in covering both established and emerging technologies and providing a talent pool of digital and creative skills supporting consistent growth across all parts of the sector. The recent Tech Nation report 2021 'UK Tech for a Changing Nation' demonstrates the strengths of certain parts of the sector in Manchester, including Service Design, eCommerce, Cyber Security, AI and Data Science, as well as in advanced materials. In 2021, Manchester was named as a prime location to start and scale a financial technology (FinTech) firm, ranking 34th globally in the Global FinTech Index by Findexable. The Government commissioned the 'Kalifa Review of UK FinTech' to publish its findings in 2021 and identified Manchester and Leeds as a 'Pennines' FinTech cluster with the highest cluster count outside of London.

It is of fundamental importance to our future success that everyone in Manchester is equipped with the skills and technology to make the most of our rapidly digitising world. Over the past year this has become increasingly more important as people have relied on reliable broadband connections to work, learn, access vital services and socialise from home due to the restrictions that COVID-19 has imposed on the lives of everyone.

Fast and reliable digital connectivity is needed not only to support and underpin growth across all sectors of the economy, but also to address socioeconomic

challenges, transform public services, and drive social inclusion. The many benefits of the city's digital expansion must be made available to all residents and businesses, not only through greater investment in the introduction of full-fibre and 5G coverage across the city, but also by ensuring access to this is taken up where it is available.

In order to encapsulate the cross-cutting contribution that improvements to reliability and accessibility of the city's digital infrastructure could make to achieving Manchester's ambition to be a leading international city, work has begun to develop a Digital Strategy for the city based around four pillars:

- **Smart people** – ensuring that everyone can gain and sustain the skills, aspirations and confidence to fully participate in the digital world, providing the basis for Manchester becoming an inclusive, diverse, successful and ethical smart city
- **Digital places** – digital neighbourhoods providing access, connectivity and support for all residents and businesses, and digitally enabling enhanced health and wellbeing
- **Future prosperity** – enabling the digital economy and ecosystem to grow, continue to attract new digital businesses and sectors, and support a resilient and inclusive economy
- **Sustainable resilience** – using digital imaginatively for innovation to meet zero-carbon goals and create open and inclusive connectivity with enhanced digital infrastructure as a utility, not just a commodity.

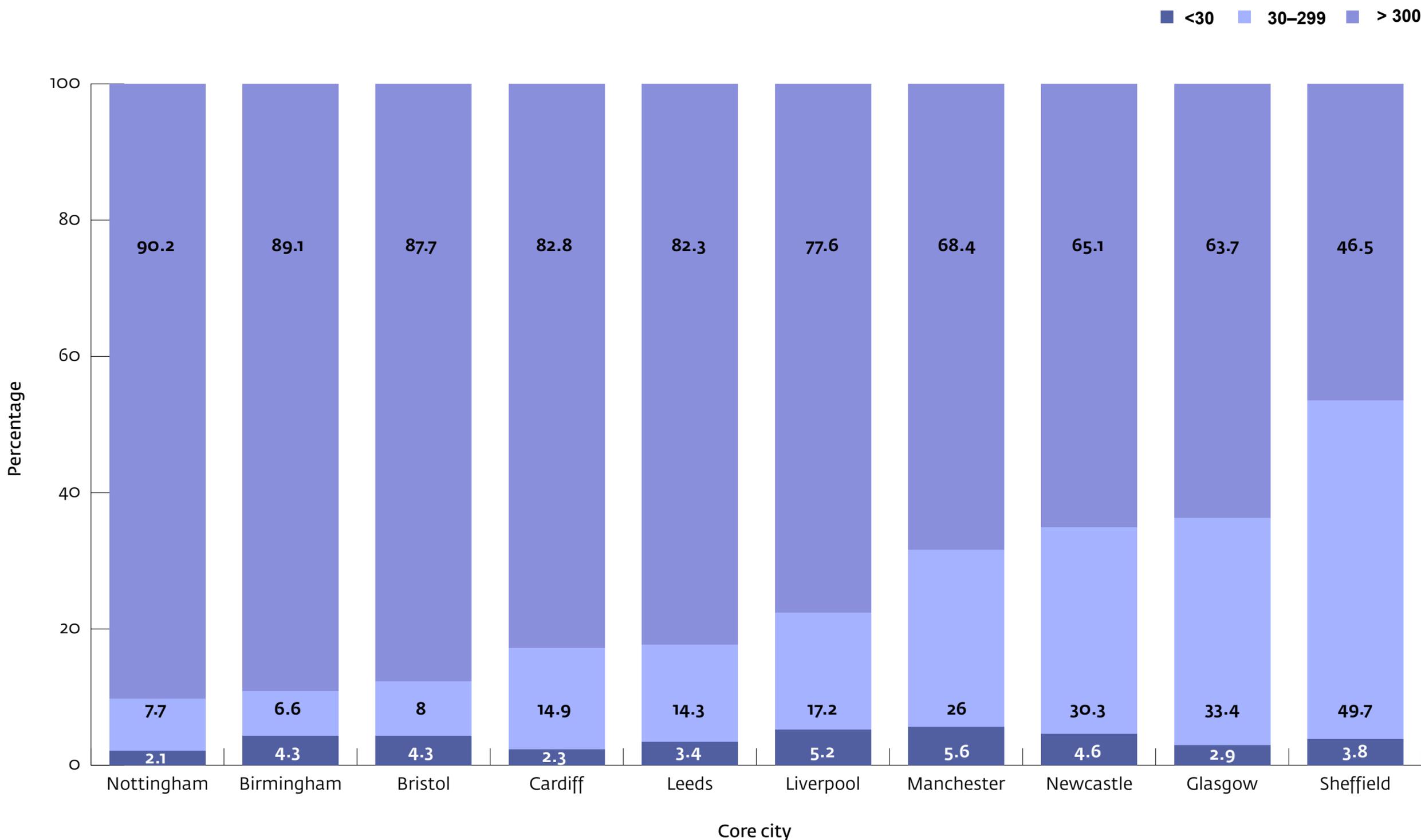
Digital infrastructure

According to Ofcom, consumers are upgrading to higher-speed broadband packages but do not always take the fastest packages available to them, estimating that around 60% of premises in the UK that are able to receive superfast broadband (>30Mbit/s) actually take up a superfast or faster service. Although 94.4% of premises in Manchester have access to superfast broadband, only 73.5% of them have an active broadband service that delivers a download speed higher than 30Mbit/s. However, this has increased from 66.1% in 2019.

Figure 6.8 shows that ultrafast broadband (>300Mbit/s) was available to 68.4% of Manchester's homes and businesses in 2020. This compared well to the UK average of 58%, but Manchester was lagging behind other Core Cities such as Nottingham, where 90.2% of homes and businesses had available speeds of more than 300Mbit/s.

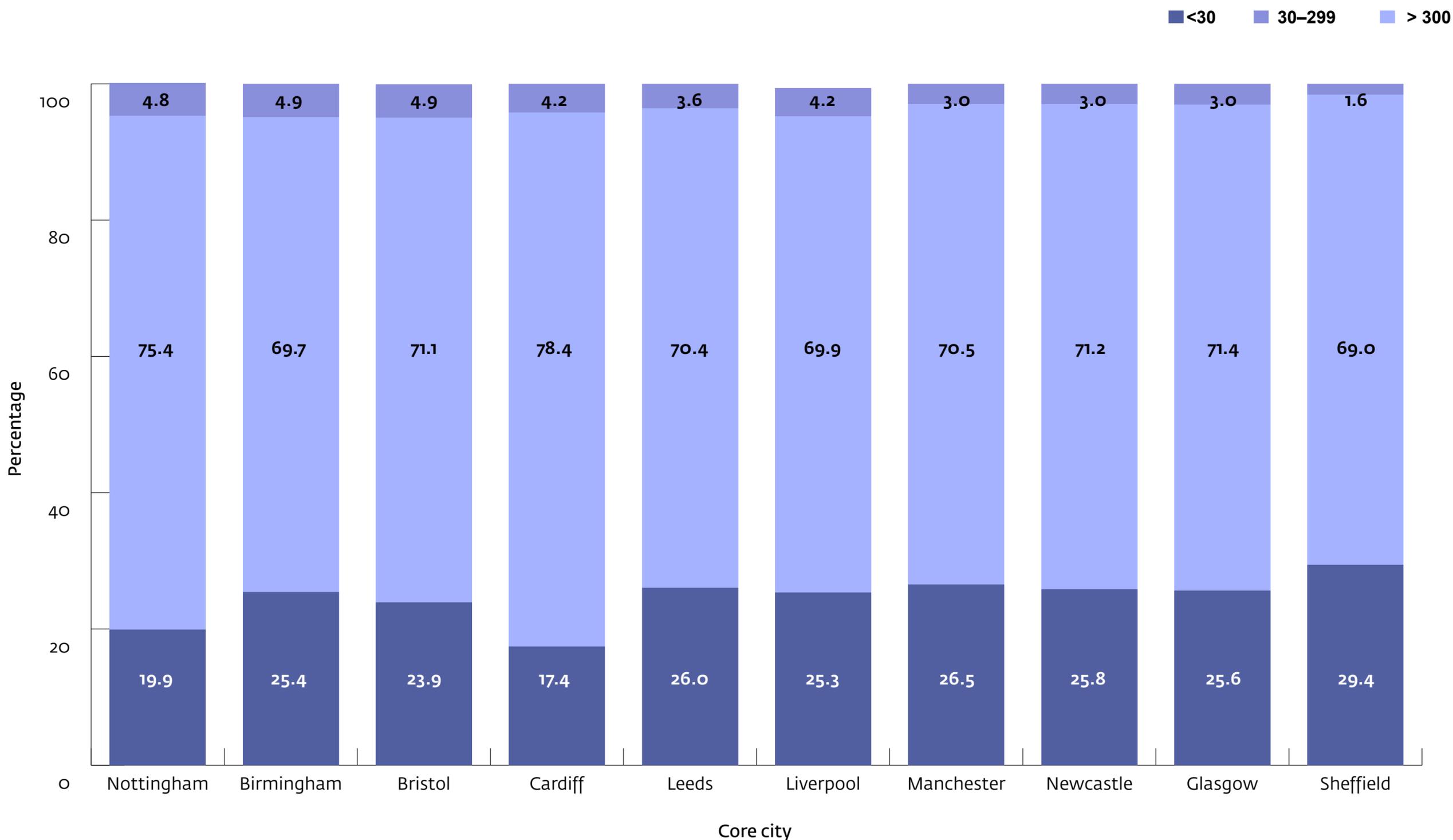
However, Figure 6.9 shows that only 3% of homes and businesses in Manchester signed up to an ultrafast broadband service in 2020. In addition, 26.5% of the city's residential and SME premises have failed to take advantage of the superfast broadband speeds available to them. A similar picture is reported across all Core Cities, despite superfast and ultrafast broadband availability being much higher.

Figure 6.8:
Fixed broadband coverage by speed (Mbit/s), 2020



Source: Ofcom 2020 Connected Nations report

Figure 6.9:
Fixed broadband take-up by speed (Mbit/s), 2020



Source: Ofcom 2020 Connected Nations report

Progress has been made in Manchester over the past five years; the take-up of superfast/ultrafast broadband by residential and SME premises has more than doubled, increasing from 34% in 2015 to 73.5% in 2020. Average download speeds have also improved, rising from 28.6Mbit/s in 2015 to 72.8 Mbit/s in 2020; and more premises are taking up the opportunity to connect to services providing speeds of 300 Mbit/s or above, rising from zero in 2015 to 4,944 in 2020.

Alongside increasing the availability of ever-faster broadband speeds, there is a need to ensure that the take-up of these ever-faster speeds is maximised in order to secure the city's status as a leading digital centre; this includes ensuring that the broadband packages being offered are affordable for all consumers, and investigating why the current take-up rate of ultrafast broadband is so low.

This will be assisted by the Greater Manchester Combined Authority's (GMCA's) appointment of Virgin Media Business in March 2020 to deliver its £23.8million Local Full Fibre Network Programme, which aims to deliver up to 2,700km of new fibre-optic broadband infrastructure serving 1,700 sites across the city region. Despite the challenges of COVID-19 (work was due to start as the UK's first national lockdown was announced), rapid progress has been made and it is estimated that the work delivered a local economic benefit of £11.8million.⁴ The work has also supported local employment, with 75% of the workforce working on the delivery of the full-fibre network being based in Greater Manchester. Also, Virgin Media Business have

⁴ <https://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/news/greater-manchester-digital-infrastructure-investment-delivers-12m-economic-benefit-in-first-year/>

contributed to the establishment of the Greater Manchester Technology Fund, which supported over 1,300 digitally excluded young people with the technology and connectivity to continue learning from home when their schools and colleges were closed during the year.

Further investment in full-fibre broadband and the development of a 5G network is needed for all businesses, not just those in the digital and tech sectors. It has the potential to deliver productivity and innovation benefits for existing businesses, accelerate the growth of new business start-ups, and enable the city to remain at the forefront of innovation. Manchester's digital innovation and its growing digital and tech sectors are discussed in more detail in the '[A thriving and sustainable city](#)' chapter.

Digital and social inclusion

Digital exclusion exists where a person lacks one or more of the following: access to the internet, skills/confidence to use the internet, or motivation to go online. Being digitally excluded can result in residents having to pay more for life essentials, difficulty accessing health and wellbeing services, increased feelings of loneliness or social exclusion, a lack of voice and visibility, less access to employment and learning opportunities, and an increased risk of falling into poverty – resulting in further widening of the social-inequality gap.

The impact of COVID-19 has meant that the scale of the digital divide and the importance of tackling the challenge to grow a fair and more inclusive society have had national recognition. The challenge of reducing this level of digital exclusion can only be met by continuing to adopt a more holistic Our Manchester approach.

The majority of those who are digitally excluded or have low-digital skills are also socially excluded, experiencing a number of interrelated barriers. Therefore, the Council has used an Our Manchester approach to create the Digital Inclusion Action Plan with external partners and different teams within the Council to reduce the levels of digital exclusion. The action plan co-ordinates the delivery of a diverse programme of activity across eight workstreams – building on existing action and creating new approaches where there are gaps to drive digital inclusion across the city.

Over the next 12 months the action plan will support the digital inclusion team to:

- Create stronger, more targeted key messages and support organisations to better promote their offers of support
- Develop a deeper understanding about the scale of digital exclusion in the city and residents' digital capabilities, aiming to build better intelligence to deliver more data-driven interventions
- Build the capacity of community organisations delivering digital skills and inclusion support
- Learn from existing device and Wi-Fi schemes and use this intelligence to inform more innovative, green, scalable and sustainable solutions to reduce digital poverty
- Continue to grow and influence a more holistic approach to support families to become digital citizens
- Better embed the agenda across the Council with other key resident support services

- Showcase the Council's pioneering approach to tackling exclusion to other key stakeholders locally, regionally and nationally.

Progress against some of the Digital Inclusion Action Plan workstreams is detailed below.

The Manchester Digital Inclusion Working Group

There has been a diverse range of key stakeholders involved in delivery of the action plan, with specific stakeholders leading on workstreams that align to their organisational priorities, including MHCC and Citizens Advice.

The cross-sectoral Digital Inclusion Working Group now has more than seventy members who meet every two months to share resources and learning and to gain a better understanding of resident barriers to collaboratively improve access to provision. The majority of members are third-sector organisations that are at the heart of positively engaging with residents to be online, including Yes Manchester, Shelter, adult learning providers, registered providers, healthcare partners, and private-sector businesses. The group has been crucial in helping to deliver the action plan, so far supporting the Census, informing the Manchester Digital Device Scheme, and supporting the delivery of digital skills and inclusion support, despite being heavily impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Manchester Digital Exclusion Index

The Council has developed the Manchester Digital Exclusion Index. This is to ensure we have data and local intelligence on the extent of digital exclusion in the different neighbourhoods across Manchester – previously data was only available at a national level. The Digital Exclusion Index will be available to use by the Council and its partners during 2021.

Case study: Yes Manchester

Paul had been unemployed since 2016, having left his previous role to act as a full-time carer for a family member. Following a change in circumstances, Paul felt that he was ready to return to work; however, he soon realised that the process for applying for a job had changed dramatically over recent years, and that he was going to need some help.

In February 2020, Paul visited the Job Centre, which referred him to Yes Manchester in Higher Blackley for support. The Yes Manchester team helped Paul to explore various pathways and employment options, helping him to create a new CV and build a tailored action plan to help him achieve his goals and get back on track.

Being a first-time IT user, Paul was enrolled on the ESF-funded Digital Champions programme at Yes Manchester for one-to-one digital skills support and training. The programme taught Paul basic computer skills, and with the confidence gained he was able to independently search for work and apply for jobs online. Paul also successfully completed the Learn My Way computer basics course for beginners. Programme leader Marika commented: "It was a long pathway for Paul, but he was learning something new every day, and made fantastic progress."

When Yes Manchester centres were forced to close due to the first COVID-19 lockdown, Marika kept in contact with Paul through regular telephone calls. Paul did not have internet access or a smart device at home; however, with thanks to the Good Things Foundation and the Devices Dot Now free-device initiative, Marika was able to secure a free tablet and Wi-Fi access for Paul, allowing him to continue his learning from home.

Over the following months, Paul continued to develop and grow his digital skills and confidence, receiving interview skills and employability support from the wider Yes Manchester team. After much perseverance, in October 2020 Paul successfully secured a full-time job as a warehouse operative. This was a huge achievement for Paul. He now feels happier, healthier and less stressed, and enjoys his new working life and meeting new people. The progress Paul has made since his first appointment at Yes Manchester has been fantastic to see, and testament to his hard work and determination.

Case study: Manchester Digital Exclusion Index

The Manchester Digital Exclusion Index helps to mitigate the challenge of evidencing digital exclusion in Manchester. The index pulls together a number of different data sets that either directly or indirectly demonstrate levels of digital inclusion across households in the city. These data sets are used as metrics (of which there are 17 across nine categories, including age, language, phone usage, internet usage, deprivation, internet knowledge, and health), which together create a 'digital inclusion score' for each ward and Lower Super Output Area (LSOA) in Manchester. The higher an LSOA's score, the more at risk its population is of digital exclusion. Multiple scoring methods have been used to reflect the diversity of the data sources, and the appropriate weighting required for each metric, making the model extremely robust and unique, compared to others regionally and nationally.

The index is presented as an interactive map and interface that show each area of Manchester as having a particular level of digital exclusion and an accompanying score. The map shows the city both on ward level and LSOA. Alongside the map the index also provides a breakdown of metrics for each area, thus showing which particular metrics are contributing most towards an area's digital-exclusion score.

Key findings so far include:

- 25% of Manchester LSOAs are within the highest-scoring groups on our Digital Exclusion Index (32–43) with a very high risk of being digitally excluded
- Three out of the top five highest-scored wards are within north Manchester (Miles Platting and Newton Heath, Harpurhey, Clayton and Openshaw) and two are in the central area of the city (Gorton and Abbey Hey, and Longsight)
- Data shows there is a strong link between digital exclusion and neighbourhoods with communities that have English as a second language and/or low skills.

The index will serve as a tool for partners across the city to identify need, specific challenges and barriers. In particular, it will be helpful to our third-sector organisations, which are at the heart of tackling the digital-exclusion challenge. The index will enable partners to adapt and direct service provision as appropriate, as well as tailor their service for particular demographics. Furthermore, the index will allow all partners to demonstrate the challenges they are facing, and as a result will assist them in attracting additional resources towards their service.

As the challenge of digital exclusion is extremely complex and ever-changing, we will be testing the tool with a number of key partners, including Health (through working with our Integrated Neighbourhoods Teams (INT) and Manchester Health and Care Commissioning), community-based learning providers (through the Digital Inclusion Working Group) and Housing (with One Manchester).

The index is a complex tool, and we will continue to develop this tool and model over time. We will regularly update the metrics to ensure the most up-to-date data is provided, thus allowing key partner organisations and decision-makers to work more effectively with residents who most require digital-inclusion support.

Supporting residents who have internet access but are without the skills or confidence to use it

Many residents don't have the skills and/or the confidence to use the internet effectively. The Council's COVID-19 Response Hub promoted digital support as one of its services, so the Work and Skills team and Libraries launched a digital-support telephone service to provide that support for those who made contact.

We developed a service that involves residents receiving digital support over the phone from a Digital Champion on things such as how to turn on a device, setting up an email account, making video calls, doing online shopping, and accessing health information. Support is given by Libraries staff, the Work and Skills Team, MAES, Citizens Advice, Yes Manchester, and other UK online centres. We have also recruited more than seventy volunteers so far, from a combination of MCRVIP and Macc. Most residents access the service themselves by texting 07860064128, but referrals can be made by partner organisations. Diversity is at the heart of this service and we have been mindful to ensure that our volunteers come from a range of backgrounds, and we can offer support in up to 25 languages.

Over 900 residents have been supported through this initiative since May 2020, and the model that has been developed is sustainable, as libraries (for whom digital inclusion is a key priority) continue to manage the service and provide staff to support it. Members of the working group also continue to staff the service, and additional volunteers are continuing to be recruited. There is now also a volunteer training programme led by Manchester Adult Education Service; the five-hour course offers a blended model of live meets and guided independent

tasks. This course has been established to ensure all volunteers have the same basic understanding and to provide them with the opportunity to develop their skills, knowledge and approaches so they can become a confident volunteer digital mentor.

Through early analysis of the intelligence coming through the evaluation process of the device scheme led by MMU, we have been able to identify a number of trends. For example, the largest number of referrals initially came from those contacting the Council for food support and the most popular referral route is now through the text number. In addition, referrals are most common from areas of the city where digital exclusion is most prevalent – the more deprived areas of the city where the overall majority of residents are presenting with a health condition.

Case study: The Resonance Centre, Longsight

The Resonance Centre is a holistic wellbeing centre in Clayton, which saw the need for digital inclusion and realised that the only way to assist people during the pandemic was digitally. They felt a strong need to deliver activities in all possible ways to support residents with physical and mental-health concerns. They quickly established a timetable of free classes, which they delivered via Zoom. This gave people the opportunity to not only take part in a beneficial activity for at least one hour a day, seven days a week, but also the chance to be part of a growing online community. Ultimately, this ensured that people felt both supported and connected to one another throughout.

The classes offered by The Resonance Centre included vinyasa, Yin Yoga, meditation and pranayama, as well as art, plant-based cooking, a book club and a weekly 'mindset meetup'. All the sessions proved extremely beneficial to those who took part, and in some cases the online timetable became quite pivotal in many people's daily lives, providing a sense of consistency and self-care for their new routine. However, this action alone did not benefit members of our community who were not already digitally included. Therefore, The Resonance Centre felt it was important to take their work with digitally excluded residents further and began working alongside the Council's Digital Buddy volunteer programme to offer digital-skills support.

Since summer 2020, the centre has taken referrals for residents in need of digital assistance, and continues to provide one-to-one support via telephone and in person where needed. This work has proved invaluable, particularly for elderly or more vulnerable residents, as many people would simply be unable to get online, send email, access Zoom, or use a tablet without some in-person support.

To date, The Resonance Centre has delivered over 1,000 classes to hundreds of online participants. It has also given personal support to more than a dozen local residents, helping them connect to their families, friends, GPs, energy providers and the outside world.

The Resonance Centre's help and provision over the past 12 months has attracted additional funding for its ongoing work, and it now looks forward to opening a new Digital Inclusion Hub inside the centre in summer 2021.

Supporting residents without home access to the internet

The pandemic has highlighted and increased the disadvantages felt by residents without access to the internet at home. We have increased the number of residents with home access to the internet through donating internet devices to priority residents. It is expected that between October 2020 and December 2021 a minimum of 1,000 internet-connected devices will have been donated.

To be eligible for a device, residents have to be aged over 19, be a resident of Manchester and have no fit-for-purpose internet access at home. They also have to meet one or more of the following: be disabled, have a long-term health condition, be over 65, or have low income. Each resident was allocated a Digital Champion, who acts as a one-to-one 'buddy' to the resident, offering personalised digital-skills support.

The MMU evaluation also assessed the digital capabilities of recipients and the success of the initiative. Volunteers reported that residents who had never used the internet now use it numerous times a day and that the scheme really supported links into advice services and increased support. Several residents who were reporting they were 'not at all confident' at using the internet reported they were 'fairly confident' after only a couple of weeks.

The success and significant impact of this pilot project has led to further funding. The Council, One Manchester, MHCC, MHCLG and Citizens Advice have already contributed to the extension of the scheme and provided additional resources into workstreams focusing on health and advice.

We are now moving into phase two of the device scheme and had supported over 2,000 residents to access data and/or Wi-Fi by August 2021.

Conclusion

Political priorities, environmental concerns, changes to social expectations, and technological advances, are all transforming the way people connect. The likely scale of transformation that will be seen over the coming years is starting to become more apparent within Manchester. The pandemic has further highlighted the need to ensure connectivity – both physical and digital – for all our residents and communities.

Changes are still needed to tackle congestion, reduce journey times, improve air quality, and reduce emissions. Although more needs to be done and significant further investment is needed, progress is being made, such as the continuing trend of more people travelling into the city centre by sustainable transport. Major infrastructure investments in rail and rapid transit are long-term projects requiring cross-boundary co-ordination delivered by Government funding. The Council will continue to work collaboratively with partners and lobby the Government to prioritise the right investments in Manchester's connections across the North of England to the wider world.

Transport is one of the key elements of the city's response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Economic and social recovery will only be possible if safe ways can be found to enable people to move around on public transport; beyond that it may be necessary to accommodate our residents' changes in behaviour, eg. by enabling safer walking and

cycling into and around district centres. Digital connectivity may become even more important as home working becomes more prevalent and the city's growth sectors adapt to and create a different spatial structure. However, we are in the early days of scientific understanding of the SARS-CoV-2 virus, even as we navigate the second year of restrictions, and should be wary of making assumptions about the long-term impacts at this stage.

Although Manchester offers good transport connectivity and continues to increase capacity, it is very important that the network serves people's changing needs, and that public transport in particular is affordable and accessible, so that all residents can benefit fully from living in a truly connected city.

The city's credentials as an aspiring global digital city and the continuing strength of the digital and tech sector may be adversely affected by the availability and take-up of superfast/ultrafast broadband by residential and SME premises which, although improving, is still lower than many other major UK cities. While work in this area is ongoing, a particular challenge regarding the provision of digital infrastructure is ensuring all residents can access it both physically and financially. Not only is it necessary to improve connectivity throughout all the city's neighbourhoods, but also to ensure that this provision is affordable so that all residents have the ability and the digital devices to be able to access it. However, simply providing access is not enough, as digital disengagement is a complex problem involving cultural, social and attitudinal factors. Only when all this is addressed will digital exclusion be reduced and inclusive growth be supported, enabling all residents to benefit fully from living in a truly connected city.

New services and strong delivery models have been developed with an Our Manchester approach to tackle the digital-skills divide. This has supported us to make great steps within a short period of time towards reducing the numbers of those unable to access the internet. Since May 2020 we have supported over 1,260 residents to become and remain digital citizens at a crucial time. It is clear that we still have a long way to go, and it is now essential we sustain efforts through more co-ordinated approaches.

The Digital Inclusion Action Plan provides a cohesive plan of action for the next year, and the range of funding streams supports the sustainability of citywide co-ordination and partnership work. Through this plan we have committed to:

- Better understanding the complexity of the challenge at local level through use of the Digital Exclusion Index
- Tapping into residents' motivations through a range of skills provision, and ensuring that pathways into learning opportunities are strengthened for those most in need
- Building on what is already working well
- Sustaining and centralising projects around connectivity and access
- Sharing positive stories and experiences of residents' digital learning journeys, and the impact being digitally enabled has had on them
- Raising further investment to sustain and grow our approach.

It is essential for us to take a more holistic approach to tackle the digital divide by embracing the ideas of digital connectivity being a utility and digital skills for all, both during the pandemic and in the future.