



Insights and Outcomes





Foreword

We are Forever Manchester, and we believe that connected communities make stronger, happier communities. We care about those people who care enough to act. We help local people build extraordinary communities, and when advice, encouragement and funding is needed, we are there to provide a hand-up, not a handout, to support them.

Since Forever Manchester was established in 1989, we have delivered over £65 million into local communities, supporting around 1,300 community projects year in and year out.

Explaining the funding part of what we do is relatively straight-forward, and it's also probably the easiest bit to quantify in terms of traditional measurement. Put simply, the money we raise from local people and businesses, or wherever we can get it, is used to fund all types of community activity across Greater Manchester, which we deliver in the form of grants and awards.

But this doesn't even begin to tell our story! As well as promoting and processing our various funding programmes, we also support and guide groups through the funding process, providing help and advice wherever it's needed.

We believe that the most important thing in building a stronger, more connected and resilient community is to involve the people that live there, and to recognise that everyone in that community has unique skills and strengths that, when shared, can bring amazing benefits for all.

So, we chat and listen to local people to learn more about them. We identify, connect and highlight the people, community groups, organisations and physical spaces that already exist in the area and, armed with a better understanding of what people want to get involved in, what skills and talents they have and knowledge of what can be used in a neighbourhood. We then encourage people to come together to create exciting new projects.

We all have the power to create happy, abundant, resilient, thriving communities; the freedom to create our own vision of the future, and the power to make that vision come true.

This report will help us better understand our communities. We can use this information to facilitate conversations with donors, partners and communities. We'd like to thank Forever Consulting for working with us on this valuable and insightful research.

Nick Massey
Chief Executive



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Introduction



About Forever Manchester

Forever Manchester is Greater Manchester’s Community Foundation, the only charity that raises money to fund and support community activity across Greater Manchester. They believe in:

- ∞ Giving everyone the opportunity to be happy
- ∞ Putting smiles on the faces of local communities
- ∞ Supporting local people transforming the lives of others
- ∞ Bringing local people together to create something special
- ∞ Caring about those people who care enough to act
- ∞ Championing local people doing extraordinary things together



Forever Manchester asked Forever Consulting to assess how much of a difference the charity made to local communities in 2023. Forever Consulting provides social and economic research and consultancy services. They are a social enterprise that reinvests all profits into grassroots community activities through Forever Manchester. Even though they support Forever Manchester in this way, they are independent, and so is this report.



Aim of this report

Forever Manchester wanted an ‘Insights and Outcomes Report’ instead of an ‘Impact Report’. This is because the real impact comes from the ordinary people in communities who decide to make a real difference to the lives of local people.

This means it is not just Forever Manchester’s story, but the story of the people and organisations working deep in Greater Manchester’s communities.

This report highlights where the money raised from their generous donors goes and the role Forever Manchester’s approach plays in supporting communities. Forever Manchester is an independent, transparent, and accountable organisation that can be trusted. This report demonstrates this.



Project scope

Forever Manchester provide a wide range of support. This report focuses on some, but not all, of it. The main focus is on the funding of grassroots community projects in Greater Manchester. It also includes an overview of the work of their Community Builders.

Information about how many groups were helped, how many people benefited, and the ways they benefited comes from feedback forms for specific funds.

This report covers the period from 2022 to 2023 rather than the most recent 12 months because we believe in giving all our grant recipients the necessary time to make full use of their funding and to properly evaluate the impact it has made. By allowing a full year for assessment, Forever Manchester gains a clearer understanding of the outcomes achieved and enables deeper insights into what works best.



Supporting Greater Manchester

The UK Prosperity Index (UKPI) ranks the 379 local authorities within the UK across 12 pillars of prosperity (where 1 is the highest rank). The 12 pillars cover 3 areas - Inclusive Societies, Open Economies, and Empowered People. These are seen as the essential foundations of prosperity.

Greater Manchester has 10 local authorities and around 2.9 million people. It has a diverse population including a higher proportion of younger and ethnically diverse communities than the North West and England. The communities of Greater Manchester have a wealth of assets, talents, skills and resources which can be utilised by communities to create more connected, stronger and happier neighbourhoods.



Trafford (7th) and Stockport (95th) rank within the top 25% for education.

This is a building block for prosperous societies; the accumulation of skills and capabilities contributes to economic growth and gives individuals a greater chance to achieve their potential, leading to more fulfilling and successful lives.



Bolton (23rd), Salford (59th), Rochdale (62nd), Wigan (70th) and Trafford (88th) rank within the top 25% for infrastructure.

When an area has good infrastructure, such as reliable communication and easy access to transport, businesses and markets can thrive.



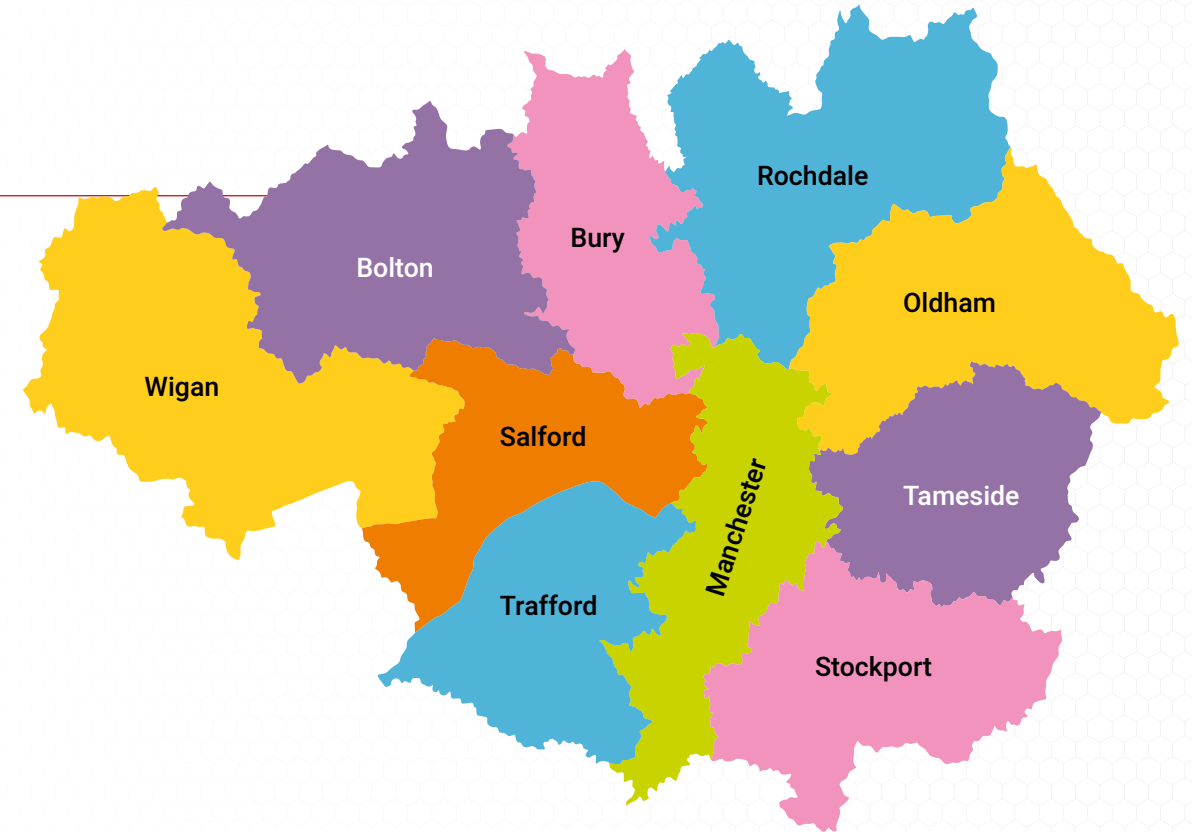
Trafford (38th), Salford (69th), Manchester (90th) and Stockport (100th) rank within the top 30% for economic quality.

This shows how well an economy can create wealth in a sustainable way while involving as many workers as possible. A strong economy relies on producing a wide variety of valuable goods and services and having a high number of people actively working.



Stockport (31st), Bury (53rd), Rochdale (76th), Manchester (91st), Wigan (92nd) and Bolton (98th) rank in the top 30% for natural environment.

This directly affects people's daily lives and can impact future generations' well-being. A well-cared-for environment provides benefits like crops, building materials, wildlife, food, and energy. Clean air, in particular, improves everyone's quality of life.



Insights

Between April 2022 and March 2023, Forever Manchester¹:

Awarded
£1,517,614
to community
projects

Supported
1,418
community
groups

Directly
benefitting
around
219,000
people²

Forever Manchester fund
a wide range of activity but
almost 75% of funding
covers the following:



Financial insecurity & exclusion

- Food and hygiene banks
- Baby bundles
- Information and support



Stronger communities

- Community cafes
- Befriending services
- Celebrations and events



Health & wellbeing

- Mental health support
- Sport, leisure and exercise
- Peer support



Refugees & racial integration

- Social groups
- Cultural gatherings
- Language classes

¹ Source: Forever Manchester Annual Accounts, April 2022 – March 2023. Inclusive of all grants.
² Estimated using data collected from supported groups.

Further Insights

Further examples of community activity funded include...

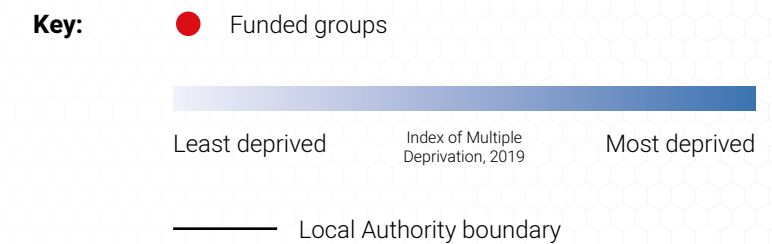
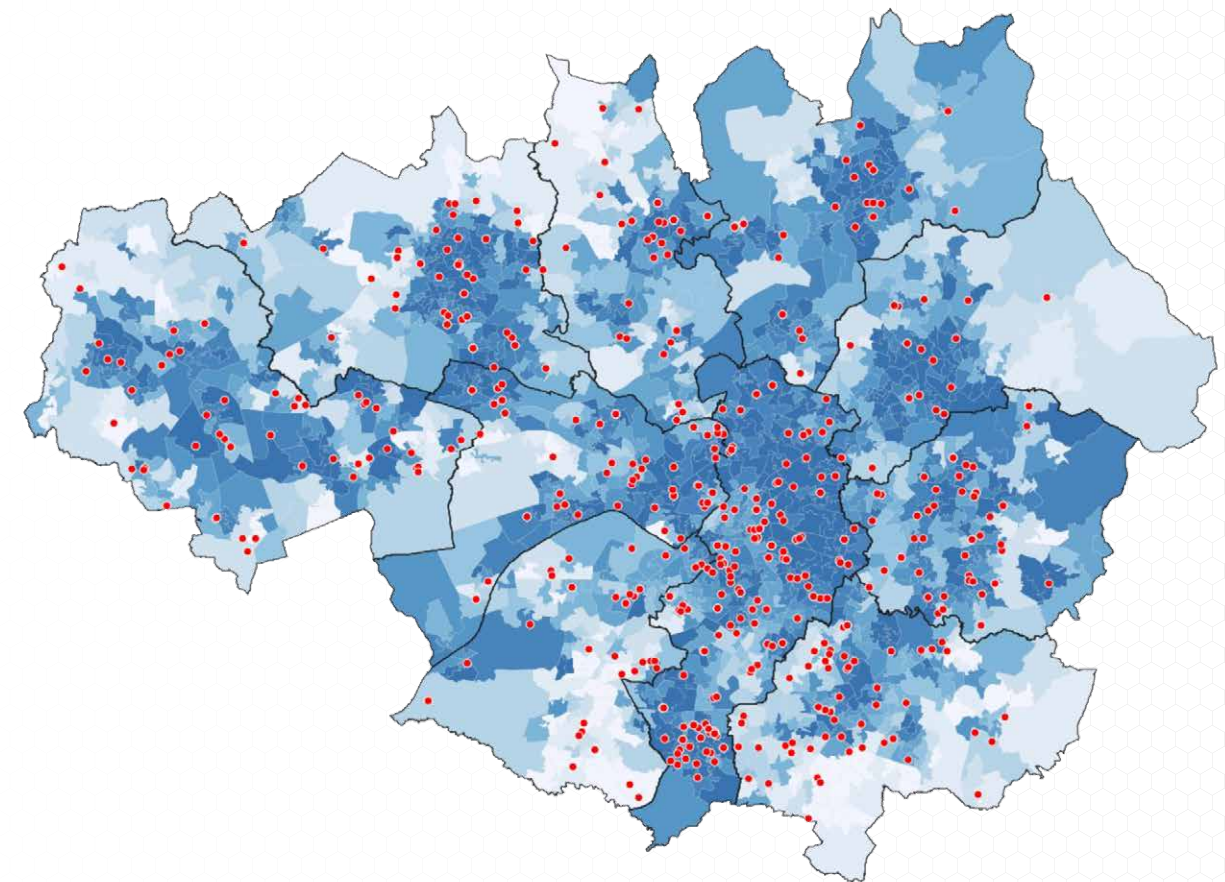


Demographic Reach

Forever Manchester reach a wide range of communities across Greater Manchester, including:

- ∞ Distributing the majority of grants (62%) to organisations within the 30% most deprived areas in England, with 35% distributed to those in the top 10% most deprived areas
- ∞ Supporting areas with lots of children and young people
- ∞ Providing funding to places with many older people (aged 65+)
- ∞ Helping areas with high numbers of people with disabilities
- ∞ Appendix 1 highlights Forever Manchester's reach by age and ethnicity

Grant awards by deprivation levels



Geographic Reach

Forever Manchester awards versus population profile

Local authority (LA)	% total grant value	% total awards	Population as a % of Greater Manchester	Index (1=average)
Bolton	10%	10%	10%	0.96
Bury	8%	7%	7%	1.07
Manchester	18%	25%	20%	1.27
Oldham	4%	3%	8%	0.39
Rochdale	4%	4%	8%	0.55
Salford	9%	11%	10%	1.09
Stockport	11%	10%	10%	1.00
Tameside	8%	9%	8%	1.15
Trafford	7%	6%	8%	0.75
Wigan	11%	10%	12%	0.84
Multi-LA	10%	5%		

Source: Forever Manchester Salesforce, April 2022 – March 2023; ONS, Population Estimates, 2023.

This Index shows how Forever Manchester grants are awarded compared to the population size of the different areas of Greater Manchester.

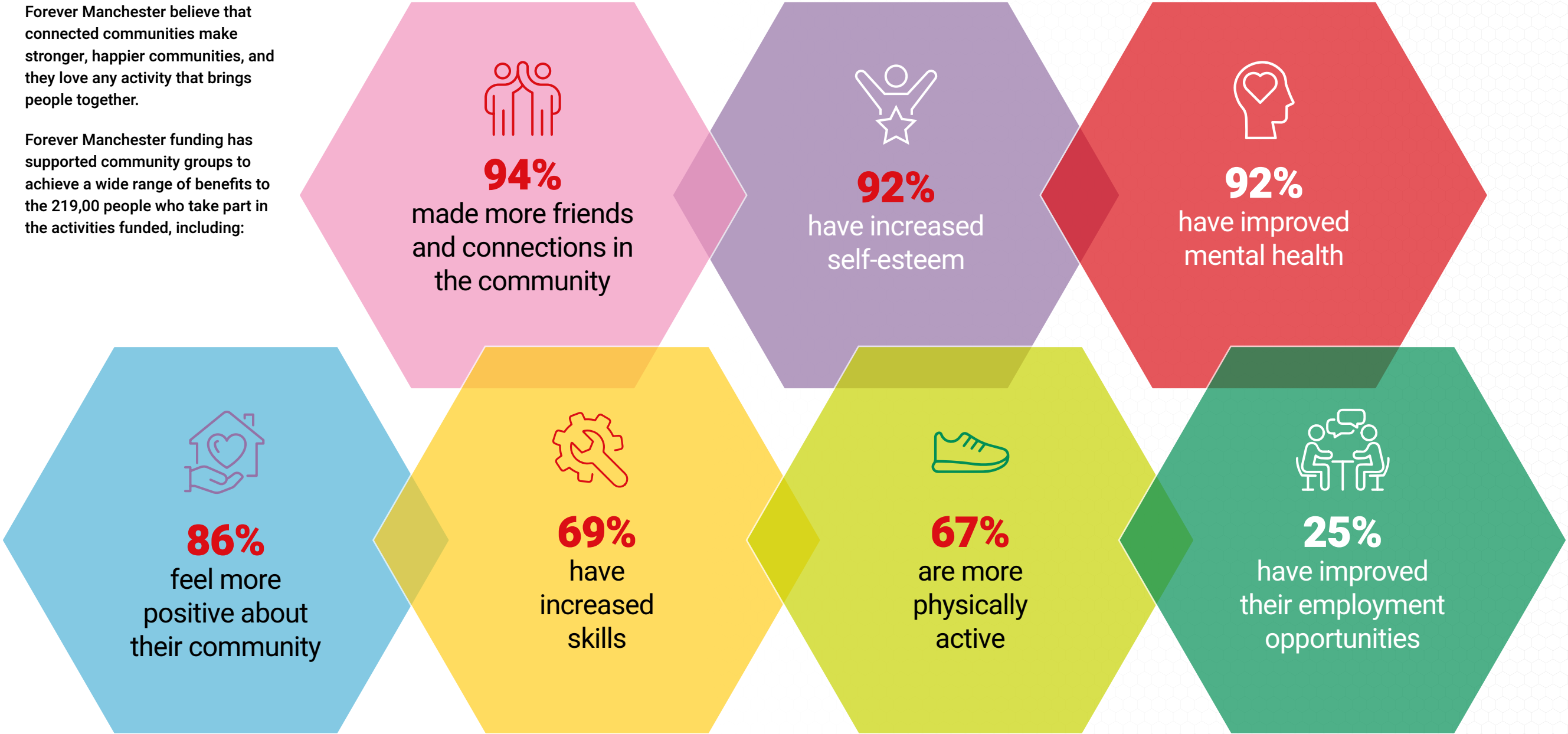
Funding has been distributed across all parts of Greater Manchester, with 10% of funding going to projects that benefit the whole or most of Greater Manchester.



How Individuals Benefit

Forever Manchester believe that connected communities make stronger, happier communities, and they love any activity that brings people together.

Forever Manchester funding has supported community groups to achieve a wide range of benefits to the 219,00 people who take part in the activities funded, including:



Value For Money

For every **£1** invested in Forever Manchester, **£4.77** is generated in social value*.

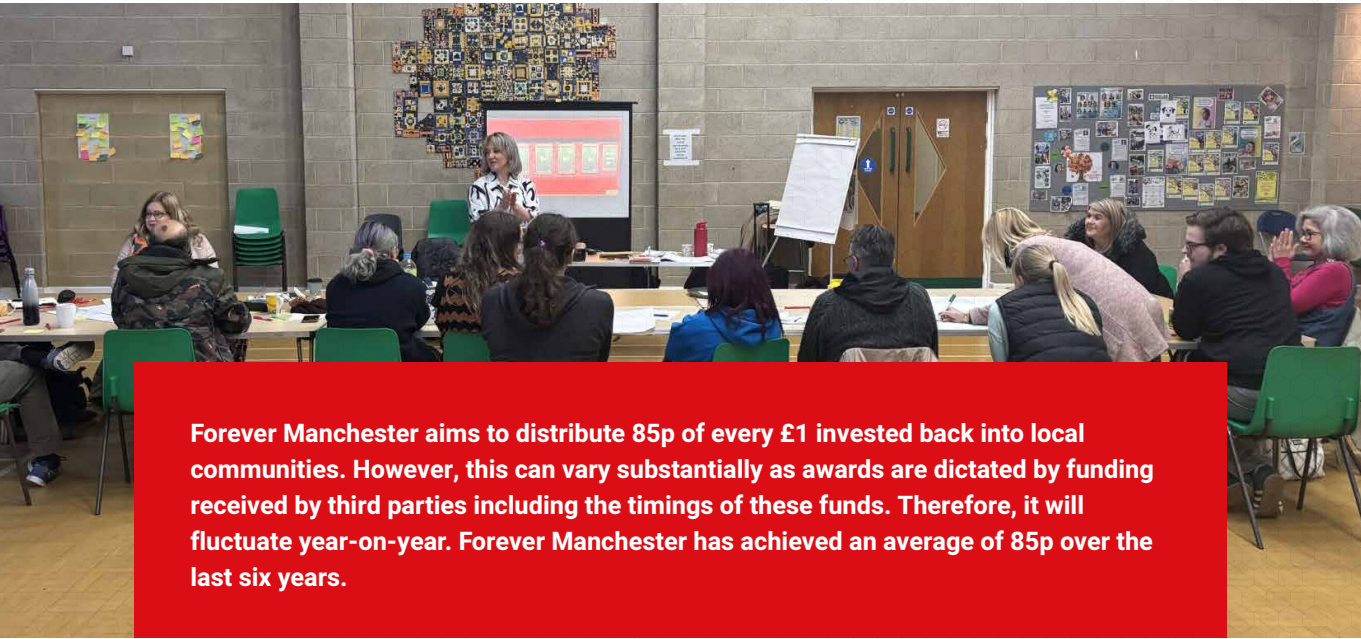
This refers to the positive impact on society. It includes benefits like improving people's wellbeing, creating opportunities for employment, reducing inequality, protecting the environment, or strengthening local communities. Social value focuses on making life better for people, and ensuring long-term benefits for society.



*This was assessed using a Social Return on Investment approach. The methodology is set out in Appendix 2.

Forever Manchester invests significantly in local communities...

For every **£1** invested in Forever Manchester, **89p** goes directly back to Greater Manchester communities.



Forever Manchester aims to distribute 85p of every £1 invested back into local communities. However, this can vary substantially as awards are dictated by funding received by third parties including the timings of these funds. Therefore, it will fluctuate year-on-year. Forever Manchester has achieved an average of 85p over the last six years.

Community Feedback

What Forever Manchester do well

Funded community groups regularly said:

- ∞ Forever Manchester's processes are easy to follow, with simple application forms and straightforward monitoring requirements
- ∞ Staff are helpful and supportive throughout the application process and beyond
- ∞ Communication is clear and helpful, especially about the funding opportunities offered, what groups need to do, and when they need to do it
- ∞ The funding enables them to continue providing valuable support to Greater Manchester communities

93%

of community groups surveyed say they found it clear which Forever Manchester funds were most suitable for them to apply for!

Top 50 most frequent terms used when asked what Forever Manchester do well:



Your organisation excels in providing a smooth and efficient application process... a user-friendly experience from start to finish.

You are easily accessible and responsive to enquiries, questions, and feedback, providing timely and valuable information.

Your dedicated staff members are one of your strengths. They are knowledgeable, supportive, and committed to your mission and vision. They go above and beyond to provide guidance and assistance, ensuring a positive and impactful experience for everyone involved.



Case Studies

Here’s a handful of short case studies illustrating the kind of community projects we’re proud to support. Local action with real impact, driven by people determined to improve not just their own lives, but the world around them.



After successfully protesting their local library’s closure 10 years ago, a group of volunteers created an exhibition in celebration of their victory, engaging new community members and encouraging them to explore future causes to rally around.



Struggling with social anxiety, a self-taught crochet enthusiast found a sense of connection through a local arts and craft group. What started as quiet participation gradually evolved into sharing skills, lasting friendships, and even a part-time role at a local sewing shop.

Following her husband’s passing, a 79-year-old woman became a member of a bereavement club at her local community centre, where she found comfort, support and a renewed sense of confidence. Encouraged by friends from the club, she joined the centre’s yoga group, discovering a newfound passion and becoming a regular participant – enjoying both the physical and emotional benefits.



A local baby bank provided vital support to a woman, who was 20 weeks into pregnancy, fleeing domestic abuse and living in her car. The baby bank delivered essential clothes and equipment, while also assisting her in securing temporary accommodation.



An LGBTQ+ support group provided vital assistance to a woman seeking support with substance abuse and social isolation. The group facilitated one-to-one sessions and community workshops that helped her achieve sobriety and regain her self-worth. She now volunteers herself, using her own journey to support others going through similar challenges.



ABCD Community Builders

Asset Based Community Development (ABCD)

ABCD is a different way of thinking about how to work for change – starting from a place of possibilities, strengths and capabilities as opposed to problems and deficiencies. It operates on the assumption that everyone, regardless of their background, has unique gifts, skills and passions to offer.

Community Development (ABCD) is at the heart of everything Forever Manchester does. While some might think it's just "nice to do" without real benefits, Forever Manchester strongly disagrees.

Forever Manchester believes that ABCD is a solid, evidence-based way to build stronger communities and improve the wellbeing and health of many of the most marginalised people in Greater Manchester.

Since 2011, Forever Manchester has used this method and regularly monitor progress to guide their strategic approach to grant making and supporting the communities they serve.

Recently, Forever Manchester completed 3-year Community Building programmes in Ardwick and Wythenshawe (areas of Manchester) and started new ones in Stockport and Wigan.



People who engaged with Community Builders in Ardwick and Wythenshawe* experienced many positive outcomes including:

- 79% felt more positive about their community and area
- 91% made more friends and connections
- 53% had higher self-esteem
- 75% had better mental health
- 35% found more employment opportunities
- 58% became more physically active
- 43% gained new skills



Additionally, more people reported using their skills and knowledge to help others:

- In Wythenshawe, this increased by 19%, reaching 84%
- In Ardwick, it increased by 45%, reaching 94%

*This data was collected through surveys with 109 people who worked with Community Builders in these areas between summer 2019 and Jan 2023.

Get Involved

Real community helps deepen and refine our sense of inclusion, belonging and place, it brings out the best in us.

Forever Manchester's role is to be the champion of local people who are prepared to do extraordinary things to make our communities thrive, and to make sure that the talents, skills and assets that we all possess get a chance to be put into action.

If you would like to find out more about investing in local communities across Greater Manchester, please get in touch.

I think we'll get along.

Cheers!

Nick Massey

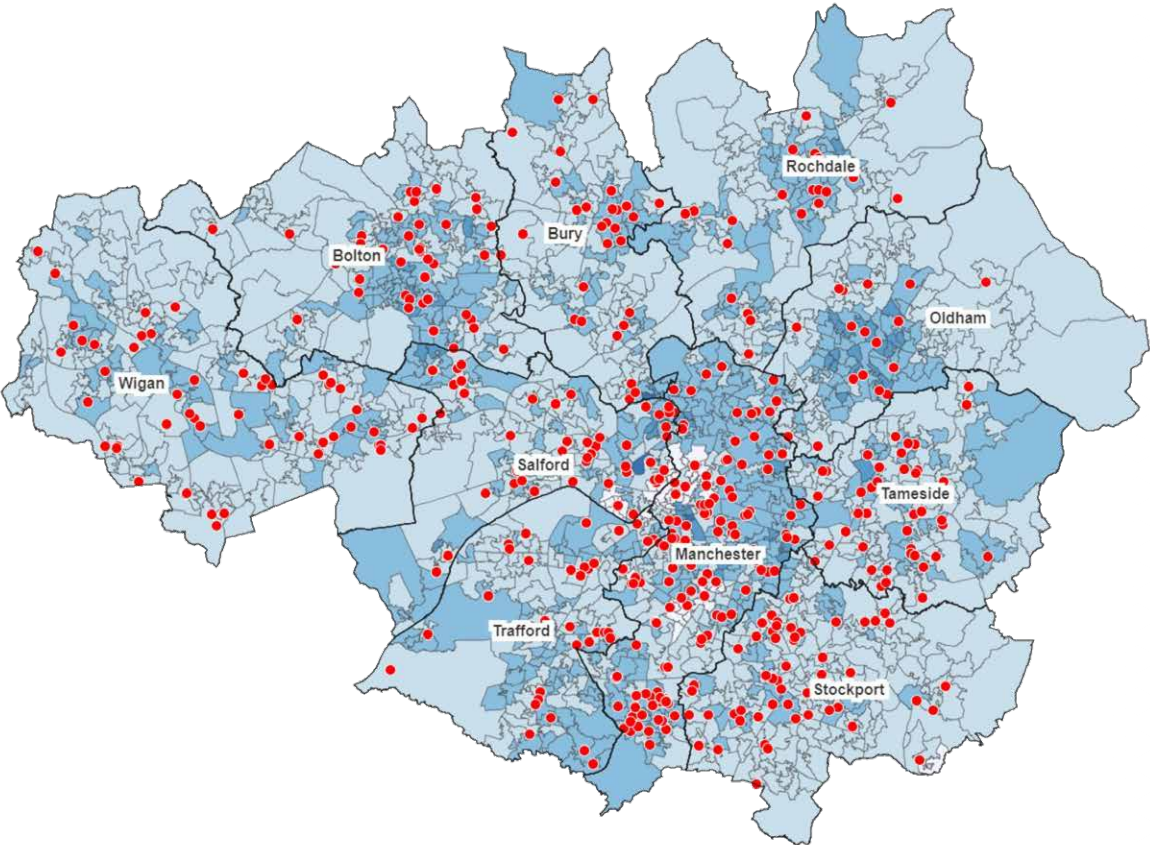
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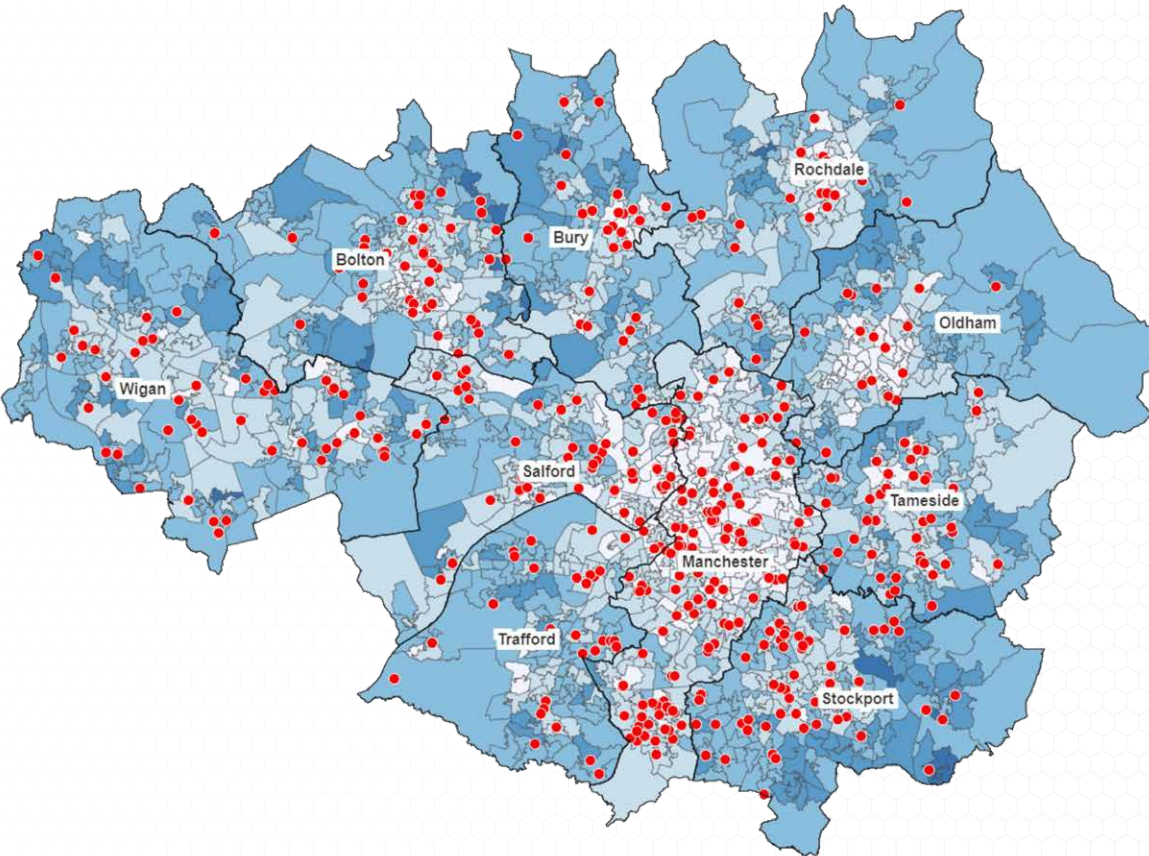
W: www.forevermanchester.com



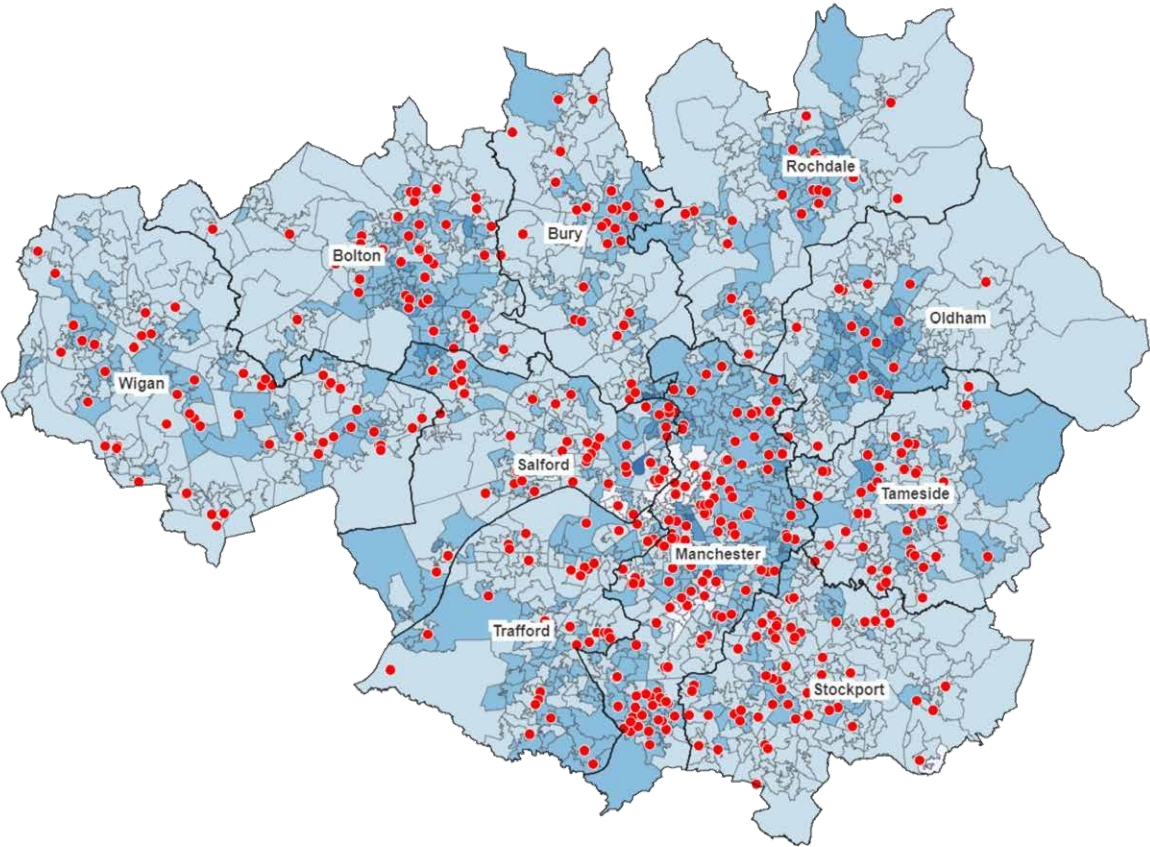
Appendix 1: Population Aged Under 20



Appendix 1: Population Aged 65+



Appendix 1: Ethnically Diverse Communities



Appendix 2: Value For Money Methodology

Value for money

Value for money was assessed using a Social Return on Investment (SRoI) approach. This means defining, quantifying and monetising benefits and comparing them to the costs to determine how much social value was created for every £1 invested. It was conducted in line with the Cabinet Guide to Social Return on Investment (2012), and other relevant guidance.

Costs

Costs are based on the total amount awarded to community groups between April 2022 and March 2023. The total value of the funds reviewed for this report was £327,621.

Benefits

Groups funded by Forever Manchester complete a feedback form about the outcomes they achieved with the funding. Some of these outcomes were given monetary values, including:

- More friends and connections in the community
- Increased self-esteem
- Better mental health
- Feeling more positive about community and area
- Increased skills
- More physically active
- Increased employment opportunities

Monetary values were assigned to each outcome using reliable and widely recognised sources including the HACT UK Social Value Bank and the Office for National Statistics.

Adjustments

The total (gross) benefits were adjusted to account for additionality and to derive net impacts. This means estimating the level of impact that would have occurred anyway without the activities funded by Forever Manchester. The following factors were applied:

- Deadweight: how much of the outcome would have happened anyway
- Displacement: how much of the outcome was displaced from elsewhere
- Attribution: how much of the outcome was created by Forever Manchester versus the contribution of other organisations or people
- Drop off: how much the outcome decreases over time

Valuations were applied to each adjustment based on relevant benchmarks taken from several accepted sources.

All values were calculated using 2023 prices.





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