

State of Social Enterprise in Greater Manchester

November 2024

Headline statistics on social enterprise in Greater Manchester, based on data from Social Enterprise UK's latest State of Social Enterprise (2023) research and wider evidence in their Social Enterprise Knowledge Centre.

Economic contribution¹



There are around **6,812** social enterprises in Greater Manchester, creating around **127,600** jobs for the region

They generate around **£68 million** in annual profit, re-investing **£57 million** into achieving their social missions

Last year, **60%** developed a new product or service for their business to deliver, while **23%** reported developing a new product or service for the market



Social enterprises generate around **£3.5bn** in turnover - equivalent to **4%** of city-wide GDP

Financial performance



48% of social enterprises reported making a profit - down from **59%** in 2021 - while a further **10%** reported they had broken even

66% of social enterprises reported that their turnover had increased from the previous year - up from **28%** in 2021

Leadership

62% of social enterprises in Greater Manchester are majority-led by women



Mission and impact

50% of social enterprises here operate in the most deprived areas of the city region



76% believe social and environmental friendliness are equally or more important than cost when buying goods and services



90% pay the real Living Wage to all staff members

81% have a target to reduce carbon emissions over the next three years

¹ Due to outliers within the sample, estimates of aggregated turnover, profit, and employment statistics are calculated as a proportion of the North West based on the estimated number of social enterprises within both the region and Greater Manchester.

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City region distinctions

Tackling deprivation

Many social enterprises in Greater Manchester operate in some of the most deprived local authorities in England. 51% are operating in the most deprived decile, compared to just 22% across the rest of the country.

Health focus

Health is a core mission to a substantial proportion of social enterprises in Greater Manchester. 40% report their core mission as improving physical health, compared to 26% across the country, while 47% aim to improve mental health and wellbeing, compared to a national average of 35%. A larger proportion of social enterprises here also report supporting and employing people suffering from mental health problems.

A social enterprise community

A significantly greater proportion of social enterprises in Greater Manchester generate income through trading with other social enterprises. 79% generate at least some income through trading with social enterprises, while 11% report this as their main source of income, compared to a national average of 4%.

Capital investment

Social enterprises in Greater Manchester place a great emphasis on capital investment to deliver growth. 35% of these social enterprises had invested in new capital assets in the previous 12 months compared to the national average of 18%. Among those expecting to increase their turnover in the year ahead, 31% plan on doing so through further investment into new capital assets.

Growing presence in the public sector

The public sector is a major source of income for social enterprises in Greater Manchester. 37% report trading with the public sector as their main source of income, compared to a national average of 18%, with a large proportion reporting central government as a source of income.

This relationship has only strengthened recently, with 40% seeing an increase in the amount of paid work they have done for the public sector in the previous year. This compares to a national average of 27%.

For full details of the State of Social Enterprise 2023 research methodology, sponsors and partners, see www.socialenterprise.org.uk/social-enterprise-knowledge-centre/the-state-of-social-enterprise. Due to sample sizes, we have been unable to report on certain data in each of these regional reports. Thank you to all the social enterprises who have participated in Knowledge Centre data collection. Thank you to all the social enterprises who have participated in Knowledge Centre data collection. For any queries, contact research@socialenterprise.org.uk.



Case study – The Wigan and Leigh Community Charity (WLCC)

The WLCC was founded in 2013 and began trading in 2014. The initial focus of the organisations was on a neighbourhood level approach to growing, supporting and accommodating social enterprises, plus neighbourhood planning.

In 2019, with the support from the wider Wigan Borough, the organisation expanded to support other neighbourhoods within the community, leading a campaign to establish Wigan Borough as a Social Enterprise Town.

Today, the WLCC maintains a network of over 200 residents, the majority of which are social enterprise leaders. 55 organisations have been directly supported by the WLCC, through the provision of personalised support, advice, and guidance, alongside training and workshop sessions.

Case study – The Business Group and Salford CVS

The Business Group and Salford Community & Voluntary Services (CVS) work together in the social enterprise City of Salford. They bring together a broad range of partners to facilitate initiatives aimed at fostering the growth, sustainability, and collaboration of local social enterprises.

They work together to provide a range of support services within the Salford community. From one-to-one support to assist social enterprises with business planning and strategic development, to providing guidance on how to secure funding and access grants, they help to build networks of social enterprises to enhance community impact.

Through their work in promoting the work of local social enterprises and advocating their role in tackling social and economic challenges in Salford, both the Business Group and Salford CVS play a critical role in amplifying the voice of the sector.