



Greater Manchester 5YEP Partnership

Date: 22 January 2026

Subject: Q3 PROGRESS REPORT - 5 YEAR ENVIRONMENT PLAN (5YEP)

Report of: Mark Atherton, Director Environment, GMCA

Purpose of Report

The report provides the usual update on progress of the 5 YEP Partnership for the third quarter of 2025/26 (Oct – Dec. 2025) and key milestones for the fourth quarter (Jan. – Mar. 2026).

Recommendations:

The Partnership is recommended to:

1. Note and comment upon the progress outlined in this report
2. Note the latest detailed updates set out in:
 - a. Detailed Performance Report Against each 5YEP Objective/Action (Annex A)
 - b. The metrics dashboards available online at:
<https://public.tableau.com/views/GMCA-5YEP-2025-30/5YEPContentsPage>

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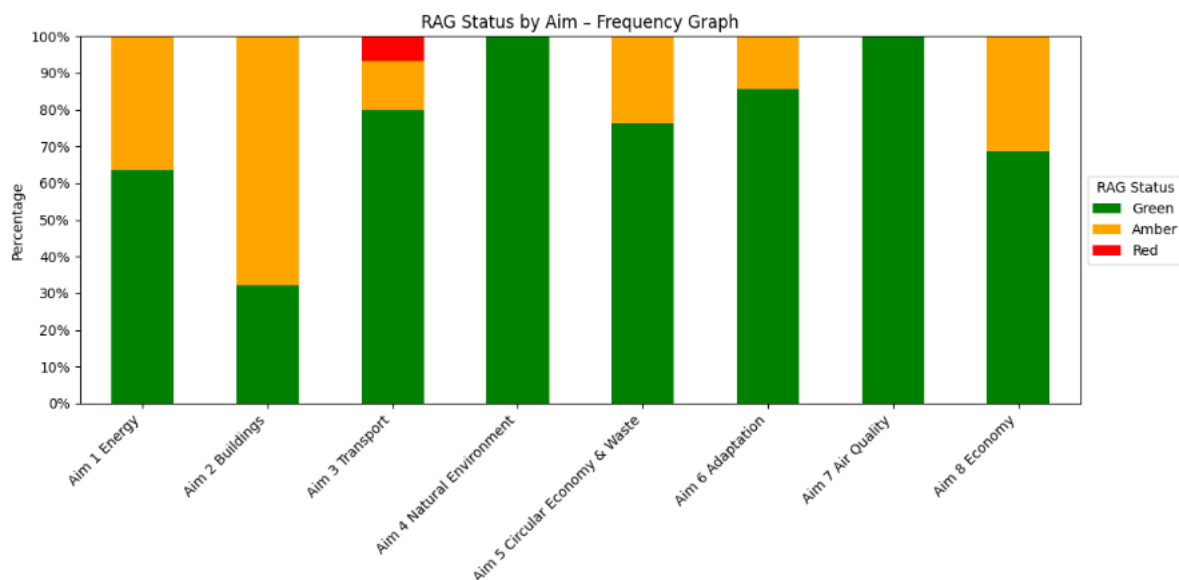
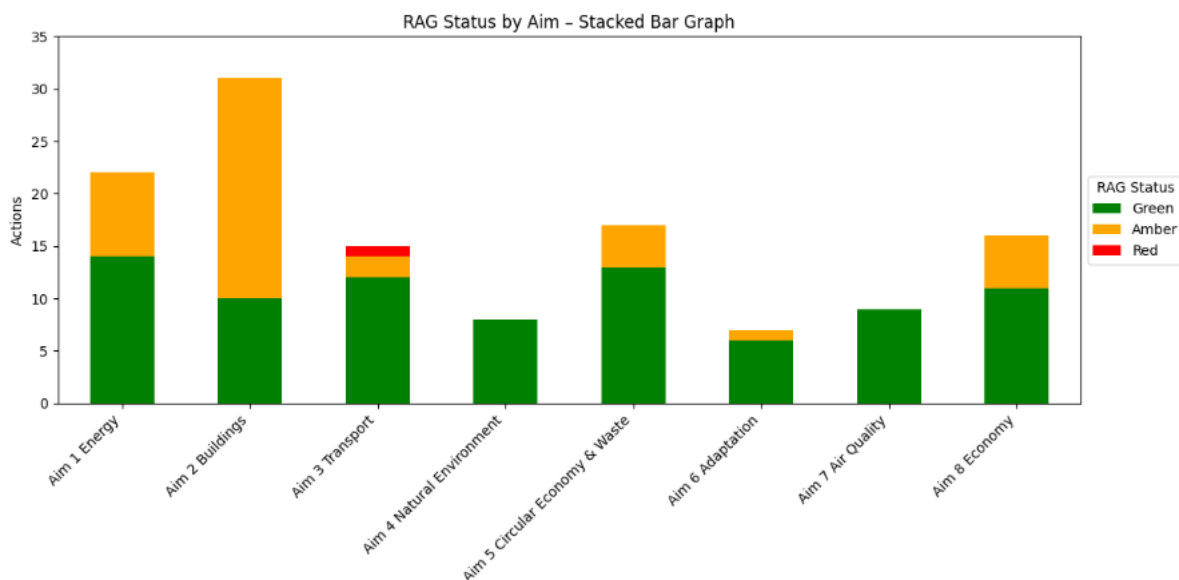
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1. Overview of Progress

The update below provides a summary of key progress across all areas within the 5 Year Environment Plan for Q3 of 2025/6, together with an assessment of key challenges. The annexed tables (Annex A) contain a full account of this year's 5YEP enabling actions in their entirety.

General Summary

- Strong momentum across most Aims - most actions are on track.
- Key delivery mechanisms (e.g. Retrofit Portal, BNZ Task & Finish groups) are now operational.
- Challenges remain in local energy markets, cooling integration, estate data, Metrolink renewals, and Business Asset reuse platform launch.



A Note on “Red Actions”;

One “Red Action” can be found within the Report. It belongs to Aim 3, Transport. This is a reduction of 1 action (or 50%) since Q2. The action is “10.2.5, Complete Metrolink city centre track renewals, tram management system server renewal, fibre optic network renewal, and customer-facing asset renewals (lifts etc).”; which is behind schedule as a result of previously stated external forces.

2. Progress by

Aim 1 – Energy

Progress:

- Financial offers (Pineapple, EBIS) for social housing retrofit being considered with Registered Providers.
- Low Carbon Heat Industry Group launched; strong sector engagement.
- Levelised Cost of Carbon (LCoE) study on 25 sites: small solar not viable, large solar constrained by grid, some wind sites promising.
- Schools PV: more installs completed, Phase 2 model in planning.
- Energy planning tool discovery underway; seeking alignment with RESP.
- Two Heat Network Delivery Unit (HNDU) grants secured; heat network feasibility and non-strategic zone studies progressing.
- Hydrogen: Tameside Hospital fuel-cell feasibility funded.

Challenges:

- Local Energy Market PPA pilot being considered.
- Smart energy: focus on performance evidence; flexible services/tariff awareness pending portal hard launch.
- Heat zoning co-design agreed in principle; delivery design pending.

Aim 2 – Buildings

Progress:

- Social Housing Decarb Fund 2.1 (SHDF) mostly complete; SHF Year 1 allocated, Local Grant roles filled.
- Net Zero Housing Retrofit Framework call-offs ongoing; Able-to-Pay domestic retrofit support services awarded.

- Retrofit Portal soft-launched for ECO4, GBIS, LA-Flex; Snugg advice integrated.
- Public Building Retrofit Fund (PBRf) drawing high school participation; baseline work underway.
- Ongoing data collection for Places for Everyone; Embodied Carbon Calculator showcased.

Challenges:

- Cooling pilot paused due to costs; focus on self-funded cooling guidance.
- Credit union finance products being refreshed; DESNZ/NWF engagement for pilot loans.
- Estate data consolidation for owned/leased buildings targeted for Q4.

Aim 3 – Transport

Progress:

- Public consultation open for GM Transport Strategy 2050 and Delivery Plan (2027–37).
- 142 km Bee Active delivered; signalised junctions ahead of target; bike hire users +3%, rides +20%.
- Metrolink: OBCs for Sandhills & Cop Road; Stockport SOC in development; Bee Network App live chat & safety features launched.

Challenges:

- Passenger Information Displays (PIDs) rollout scheduled for 2026.
- Metrolink renewals (TMS server, lifts) run into 2026.
- Rail PAYG integration with DfT/GBR for 17 stations by Dec 2026.

Aim 4 – Natural Environment

Progress:

- New Sites of Biological Interest surveyed; 9 LAs funded for management plans.
- GMCA Responsible Body service for Biodiversity Net Gain approved; launch April 2026.
- Sustainable Water Fund launched; 600+ property interventions; GM flood-risk map v1 complete.

- £0.5m awarded to 19 Green Spaces Fund projects.

Challenges:

- Biodiversity Net Gain land restoration projects awaiting launch.

Aim 5 – Circular Economy & Waste

Progress:

- Eco Grants Wave 2: 56 applications; Eco-Refill in 42 schools; 3.8 tonnes litter collected; 1,025 refill stations.
- Borro/Bee Cup in 23 locations; BeeGreenGM asset-reuse platform in testing.
- Interim Waste Plan presented for approval.

Challenges:

- Industrial circularity: BNZ T&F group shortlisting 6–12 firms for action.
- Resource management pilot in planning/procurement.

Aim 6 – Adaptation

Progress:

- Exploring funding to align retrofit with property flood resilience.
- Severe cold-weather toolkit disseminated; GEC blog on extreme heat at work published.
- Climate Adaptation Strategic Vision & Objectives co-developed; Action Plan due next quarter.

Challenges:

- Business flood-resilience awareness remains Amber; push needed for delivery.

Aim 7 – Air Quality

Progress:

- Domestic burning campaign live; Burn Better pages updated; monitoring extended to Spring 2026.
- Hackney Support Fund operating; DAQI subscribers now 754 (+10).
- Ongoing promotion of Bee Network's role in air quality improvement.

Challenges:

- None were highlighted.

Aim 8 – Economy

Progress:

- BNZ campaigns and website refresh scheduled Jan–Feb; T&F groups for industrial, supply chain, and skills mobilised.
- Employee engagement campaign in planning; supply chain and green skills workshops scheduled.

Challenges:

- Some industrial decarbonisation and green skills actions remain Amber; next steps to be confirmed.

3. Identified Risks and Emerging Issues

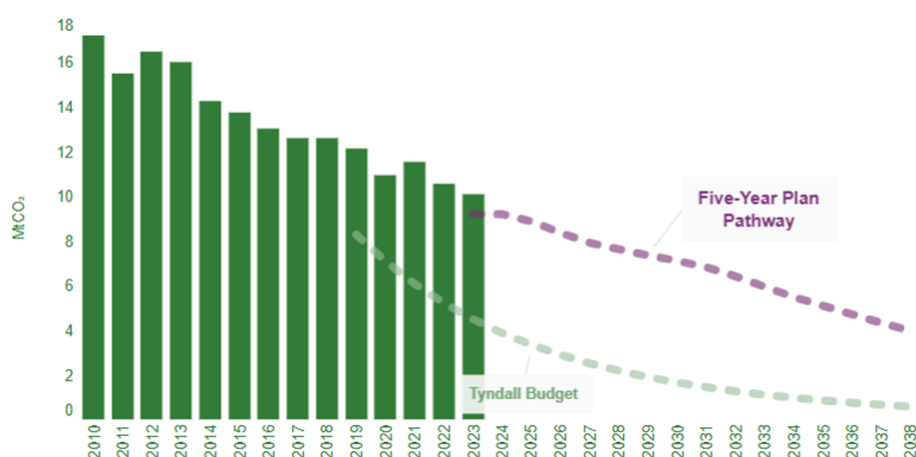
- 3.1 Officers and sub-groups have identified a number of risks to existing, and particularly future, programme delivery. Mitigation of these risks, as far as possible, will be managed by the responsible Accountable Body.

In terms of the priorities set out in the 5 Year Plan, the following areas remain flagged as “red”.

Key risks:

- **Failure of the 5 Year Environment Plan to achieve a step change in reducing carbon emissions.** To achieve the 2038 mission, the GM 5-Year Environment Plan outlines our ‘fair’ carbon budget contribution of 67 mega tonnes of CO₂ for 20 years (2018-2038). This budget was exceeded in 2023 when cumulative emissions reached 67.8 mega tonnes. With the exception of the post-pandemic rebound in emissions between 2020 and 2021, emissions have steadily decreased year-on-year from 2018 to 2023. However, this rate of decrease has not been as rapid as the required rate of decrease to remain within the Tyndall budget. Despite this early exceedance of the budget, it remains important to not only focus on the end goal of 2038 but also consider the amount of emissions over this period and aim for as rapid a decarbonisation as possible. The Tyndall pathway remains in our benchmark emissions graphs for full transparency of our original targets.

- Failure to accelerate decarbonisation of buildings to meet low carbon heating targets.** Measures continue to be implemented with a focus on accelerating decarbonisation and increasing energy generation including the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund, Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme, Go Neutral project including schools solar PV offer, and Advanced Zoning Pilot project delivery to identify Heat and Energy Network Opportunity Areas across Greater Manchester.



- Level and depth of retrofit required to meet our overall ambitions is highly challenging.** The decarbonisation of Greater Manchester homes through deeper whole house retrofit is being mitigated by the publication of a Retrofit Report that sets the priorities and framework for action and, along with the Retrofit Taskforce is focused on delivering home and building retrofit at scale.
- Failure to enhance our water bodies against level of ambition.** The GMCA, Environment Agency and United Utilities (through their Tripartite Agreement) have published an Integrated Water Management Plan to draw together a collective vision, objectives, and actions, and identify accountability and resources for delivery. The plan will deliver progressive improvements in sustainable water management, enhancement of the natural environment, accelerate natural flood management interventions and reduce the operation of storm overflows.

4.0 Recommendation

The Partnership is recommended to:

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