



Health Inequalities Pool

FOOD RESOURCE PACK



FOOD FUTURES – THE STRATEGIC CONTEXT

Summary

This briefing paper provides an introduction to the Food Futures Strategy.

In addition it attempts to explain to the uninitiated how Food Futures fits in with the various other strategies and structures that are in operation in Manchester. In particular the document focuses on the following relationships with Food Futures, and the city in general:

Food Futures



MANCHESTER

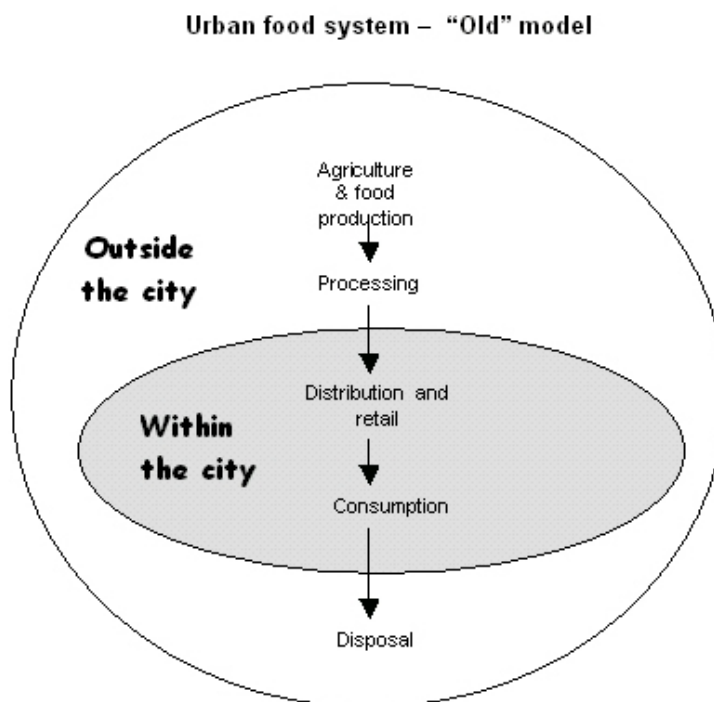
- **Manchester Partnership** – a high level, city wide ‘forum’, where important planning and strategy decisions are made about how services are delivered in Manchester neighbourhoods.
- **Community Network For Manchester (CN4M)** – a city wide network of individuals, groups and organisations, working collectively to engage local communities in Manchester Partnership, and other decision making forums.
- **Community Engagement Strategy** – the cities strategy for engaging local people in strategic decision making process, and empowering local communities.
- **Environmental Campaigns** – the City Council launched a campaign, in March 2006, to become Britain’s ‘greenest city’. The initiative is being lead by the Environmental Strategies team, and links a number of ‘green’ strategies, including the biodiversity strategy, the tree strategy, and the energy strategy for the city.

Introduction to the Food Futures Strategy

At the time of writing this document, the Food Futures Strategy is available in draft format only. It is anticipated that the final version of the Strategy will be launched during the Food Futures conference due to take place on May 8th 2006.

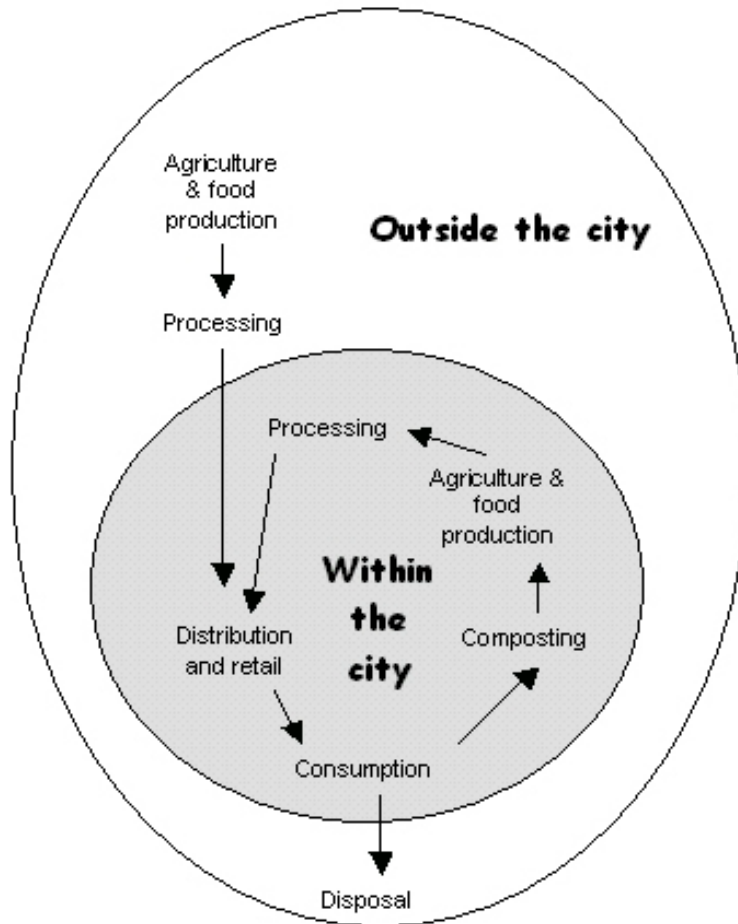
Food Futures is very much a **sustainable food strategy** – because it is based around **closed cycles** within the city:

- The existing (current mainstream) food model is a non-sustainable ‘linear’ model – food is produced and processed outside of the city, consumed within the city, and is disposed of outside the city, i.e. at landfill sites. This amounts to inefficient and non-renewable use of energy and natural resources, and is therefore unsustainable:



- The Food Futures model on the other hand, strives to be sustainable, in that it localises the food economy, and encourages internal cycles within the city. The emphasis is on food being produced and processed within the city, i.e. through community food projects etc. After being consumed, food is then disposed of within the city, through local composting, and is returned to the land to produce more local food:

Urban food system – “New” model



Key Impacts of Food

The strategy is rationalised by recognising that food is important to everyone, and is an issue that covers many different areas of life. The key impacts of food on physical, mental and social wellbeing are identified in the Strategy as:

- Food and health (i.e. diet and nutrition)
- The local and regional economy
- The social impact of food (i.e. meals and celebrations)
- Food and the environment
- Childhood diet
- Vulnerable groups (i.e. older people)
- Transport links

The Manchester Vision

The local vision for the future of food in Manchester is grounded in the concept of food security and inspired by the national vision for sustainable farming and food, while also stressing the importance of food for the local economy, and of enjoying food:

“Our vision is a city with a culture of good food, in which access to affordable fresh food is at the heart of local communities; where local food production and distribution are commonplace, supporting the local environment, health and improving social capital; where the public sector, private sector, and communities work in partnership to improve diet and nutrition in the city, and to reduce the environmental impact of the food consumed here. A place where people choose a healthy and well balanced diet; where people can enjoy a wide variety of food at its best, whether at home or eating out; and where food preparation is safe and hygienic wherever and whenever people eat.”
(Manchester Food Futures Draft Strategy)

Strategic aims and objectives

A set of strategic aims have been developed from this vision. These are:

- To improve the health of the people of Manchester
- To protect the local and global environment
- To strengthen the local economy
- To build stronger and more sustainable communities
- To promote culinary diversity and the enjoyment of good food across the city.

Under each of these aims, a group of action points have been identified. The action points are linked to the main elements / processes that comprise the new, sustainable Food Futures urban food model (refer to diagram above). The main elements / processes in the Food Futures model are:

Production – Processing – Distribution – Consumption - Disposal

The Food Futures strategy can be obtained from the MACC website at: <http://www.macc.org.uk/wellbeing/food/intro.htm> (follow the link to ‘Food Futures Programme’)

Manchester Partnership

Manchester Partnership is a citywide structure wherein different interest groups, or partners engage, discuss, and make decisions about how services are delivered within the City. The Partnership strives to make Manchester green and sustainable, and to improve the quality of life for local people. The various members of the Partnership include the City Council, the Community Network For Manchester (which represents the community and voluntary sector), and various agencies including GM Chamber of Commerce, GM Police, GMPTA, Jobcentre Plus, Learning and Skills Council, Manchester Enterprises, and the NHS for example.

The Manchester Partnership is guided by a document called the Sustainable Community Strategy. In addition, the various partners are bound by a Local Area Agreement (or LAA), which is an agreement with central government to provide 'Best Value' in service delivery for local people.

Within the Partnership there are seven focal areas of work, which have been identified by the government, and form part of a national strategy for the renewal of deprived neighbourhoods in the UK. Seven '*Thematic Partnerships*' have been formed, in order to deliver on each of these focus areas. The seven partnerships are called:

1. Health Inequalities
2. Economic and Local Employment
3. Crime and Disorder
4. Culture
5. Sustainable Neighbourhoods
6. Children and Young People
7. Transport

For more information on Manchester Partnership, visit the web site at: <http://www.manchesterpartnership.org.uk>

Manchester Partnership and Food Futures

As discussed above, there are seven thematic partnerships within Manchester Partnership, of which the Health Inequalities is one. The Health Inequalities Partnership aims to see "*Manchester men and Manchester women have the same expectations of a lengthy and healthy life as their counterparts in the rest of the country*". (The average life expectancy in Manchester is some ten years less than that of people who live in the south west of England!)

Under the Health Inequalities Partnership, there are several strands of work. The Partnership focuses on programmes that address:

- Tobacco control
- Food and health
- Physical activity
- Accident reduction
- Alcohol and drug misuse

The **‘Food and Health’** strand of the Health Inequalities Partnership, relates to Food Futures, and the Partnership’s action plan on Food and Health, generates much of the Food Futures work programme. Because of this, the Health Inequalities Partnership provides the core funding for the Food Futures Strategy (in the form of NRF funding). However, as you will have seen from the strategic aims of Food Futures (refer to previous section), the Strategy covers much more than just food and health, aiming in addition to impact on issues such as local and regional economics, the environment, and sustainable communities.

At the centre of the Food Future’s Strategy, is the Food Future’s Strategy Group, which is comprised of key people from different parts of the City Council, and also includes a representative from the community sector. Because the Food Future’s strategy covers broader issues than just food and health, the Strategy Group work together to pool resources from different areas of the city council. This means that in actual fact the Food Futures Strategy is much bigger than just the Health Inequalities Partnership funding that it receives.

(Issues concerning community engagement, and how Food Futures relates to other city strategies are discussed later in this document.)

Manchester Partnership and the Key Impacts of Food

As is discussed above, there are seven Thematic Partnerships which work under the banner of the Manchester Partnership. It is interesting to ‘map’ these seven themes onto the key impacts of food, which are discussed in the previous section summarising the Food Futures Strategy. They can be roughly mapped as follows:

Key Impacts of Food (from Food Futures draft strategy)		Seven Thematic partnerships of Manchester Partnership
Strong correlation	Food and health	Health Inequalities
	The local and regional economy	Economic and Local Employment
	Food and the environment	Sustainable Neighbourhoods
	Childhood diet	Children and Young People
	Transport links	Transport
Less of a correlation	Social impact of Food	Culture
	Vulnerable groups	Crime and Disorder

The interesting thing about the strong correlation between the impacts of food and the different themes of Manchester Partnership, is that food can be seen to be a **cross cutting theme** within the Manchester Partnership, and within strategic planning in general.

This gives the Food Futures Strategy great strength, and puts the programme in a good position to obtain funding and resources from different areas of Manchester City Council, Manchester Partnership, and other organisations and funding bodies, operating in the city, region, or nationally.

The Joint Health Unit

The Food Futures Strategy is being led by an organisation called the Joint Health Unit (JHU), which is based in the Town Hall, and is a collaboration between the Primary Care Trust in Manchester, and the City Council (hence the 'Joint' health unit).

The JHU was set up "in recognition of the fact that Manchester has some of the most challenging health problems in the country". The main aim of the JHU is

to, “co-ordinate efforts to reduce inequalities within the city, and between the city and the rest of the country”.

For more information on the JHU visit the Manchester City Council web site at: <http://www.manchester.gov.uk/health/jhu>

Since Food Futures is a Manchester Partnership strategy, it receives Neighbourhood Renewal Funding (NRF), in order to help deliver its work programme. NRF is central government funding, which is ‘channelled’ through Manchester Partnership.

(It is worth noting at this stage, that although Food Futures is being delivered by the JHU as the ‘Food and Health’ strand of the Health Inequalities Partnership, the Strategy actually reinforces the objectives of several of the Thematic Partnerships. For example, as discussed above, the strategic aims of Food Futures include ‘protecting the local and global environment’, and ‘strengthening the local economy’. These aims reinforce the aims of the Sustainable Neighbourhoods, and Economy and Local Employment Partnerships respectively.)

Community Network For Manchester (CN4M)

CN4M is a citywide network of individuals, and community and voluntary sector groups and organisations. CN4M has partnership status within Manchester Partnership, and serves the purpose of **community engagement** – which is about supporting and encouraging local people to engage in decision-making processes in the City. Put another way, it is about devolution and local governance. Since Manchester Partnership is the main arena for strategic decision making in the City, engaging local people and groups in the Thematic Partnership structures is a key objective for CN4M.

In order to facilitate the engagement of local people, CN4M has seven thematic ‘**Pools**’ which relate to, and act as bridges, between the community and the seven thematic Partnerships that comprise Manchester Partnership. The Thematic Pools are typically comprised of local people and groups, and act to convey information downwards from the Partnership to the community, and also to help formulate collective thinking within the community, which can be fed upwards to the relevant thematic partnerships.

Health Inequalities Thematic Pool

One of the seven Thematic Pools of CN4M, is the **Health Inequalities Pool**, which inevitably links into the Health Inequalities Partnership. Since the Pool

links into the Health Inequalities Partnership, it is therefore the bridge for local people wishing to engage in the Food Futures Strategy, which as you will recall is a work strand of the Health Inequalities Partnership.

CN4M's Health Inequalities Pool is led by an organisation called Manchester Alliance For Community Care (MACC). MACC is known as the '**link**' organisation for the Health Inequalities Pool, and is responsible for managing and administrating the activities carried out by the Pool.

During a Health Inequalities Pool meeting held in October 2005, and through a consultation which was called the 'Great Health Debate', food was identified as the most important issue, and the one that Pool participants felt they could do something about - at both personal and community levels. The Health Inequalities Pool is therefore committed to engaging in, and supporting the Food Futures Strategy, acting primarily as a bridge between it, and the local community.

For more information on MACC, and its involvement in Health Inequalities, visit the website at: <http://www.macc.org.uk> (and follow the link to 'Wellbeing').

The Safer Stronger Communities Fund

CN4M is financed by a fund called the Safer Stronger Communities Fund (SSCF). This is a central government fund, which is channelled through Manchester Partnership. CN4M in turn distributes SSCF to the various organisations in the Network, which are leading up on work. CN4M therefore distributes funding to MACC, as the link organisation for the Health Inequalities Pool.

For more information on CN4M go to the web site at: <http://www.cn4m.net>

CN4M have a set of downloadable Fact Sheets on their web site, which explain the different facets of the Network, and its relationship to Manchester Partnership, and central government, in great detail.

To access these follow the links to 'Publications' and 'Fact Pack' on the CN4M web site.

Alternatively contact the CN4M team at:
Green Fish Resource Centre,
2nd Floor, 46-50 Oldham St
Manchester
M4 1LE
Phone 0161 234 2929

Manchester Community Engagement Strategy

The Manchester Community Engagement Strategy was written in June 2003 and adopted by Manchester Partnership. It sets out what Community Engagement is, why we do it and what aims and objectives we have. The Strategy is for 2003-2008. Since the Community Network For Manchester (CN4M) is the organisation within Manchester Partnership, which is primarily responsible for engaging community and voluntary sector groups in the Partnership, and other decision-making processes in the City, it has an intrinsic role to play in the delivery of the Community Engagement Strategy.

For more information on the Strategy, visit the City Council web site at:

<http://www.manchester.gov.uk/bestvalue/ward/communityengage.htm>

- From here you can download a copy of the Strategy.
- In addition you can download a copy of the **Community Engagement Toolkit**, which is a manual that has been developed to assist local groups and organisations engage in decision-making processes in the City.

For more information on community engagement, contact Patrick Hanfling, Community Engagement Development Officer on: 0161 234 4093 or p.hanfling@manchester.gov.uk

Community Engagement and Food Futures

Within the Community Network For Manchester structure, the Health Inequalities Pool exists as a bridge, to help engage local communities in the Health Inequalities Partnership, and more specifically, the Food Futures Strategy.

Food Futures currently has a Strategy Group, lead by the Food Futures team based at the Joint Health Unit. The Strategy Group also involves key people from different parts of the City Council, such as the Environmental Campaigns Team, and Procurement, for example. In addition, the Strategy Group also has a community representative from the Health Inequalities Pool, which is part of the Community Network For Manchester.

With the official launch of the Strategy, at the Food Futures conference, scheduled for May 8th (2006), it is anticipated that the Strategy Group, which is currently almost entirely city council workers, will be formalised, and re-launched as the Food Futures Partnership Board.

The Food Futures Partnership Board will reflect the structured pattern of Manchester Partnership, and as such, will be a cross-sector partnership, engaging a balance of representatives from different interest groups, including the public, private and community and voluntary sectors. This will help ensure that as the Food Futures programme develops, it caters for the needs of everyone in the Manchester.

Increasing Community Engagement in Food Futures

As this document is being written, there is only one community representative in the Food Futures Strategy. However, community engagement is central to the values of the City Council, and the Manchester Partnership, hence the Community Engagement strategy. When the Food Futures Partnership Board is formalized at the Food Futures Conference in May 2006, therefore, there will be increased opportunities for different community representatives to sit on the Board. The Health Inequalities Pool is already working with Food Futures, to identify suitable community and voluntary sector representatives, who will represent a broad cross-section of different interest groups from the sector, including for example, community gardens and allotments, diet and nutrition and community co-ops.

Food Futures is an evolving programme, and although the final version of the Strategy is still to be launched, the Strategy Group has identified a number of areas of work to take place within the strategy. These will probably include the following:

- Food supply chain / food security
- Skills, education, employment and economy
- Children and Schools
- Community engagement / local action
- Information and campaigns
- Sustainable public procurement and Environmental Links

The plan is to set up working groups, to assist with the delivery of each of these different areas of work. As with the Food Futures Partnership Board, it is anticipated that there will be opportunities for community engagement, in each of these working groups, as the Strategy unfolds, and the different areas of work begin to role out.

Food Futures and Green City Manchester

In 2005 Manchester City Council resolved to become 'Britain's greenest city', and in March 2006 the **Green City Campaign** was launched, at a conference held at the City of Manchester Stadium. This was a cross-sector event, including a good balance of delegates from the public, private, and community and voluntary sectors. Following on from the launch the **Green City Alliance** has been established. This is a cross-sector network, designed to engage people from all walks of life, including local communities, in having a say about how Green City is delivered, and how Manchester can become more sustainable.

The Green City initiative links together different parts of the Council, including the Environmental Strategies team, and the Environmental Campaigns team. The new **Green City Team** is overseen by the Environmental Services department of the Council.

The Green City campaign was kick started in 2005 with £200k of funding which was made available from the Council's **Service Improvement fund**. In addition Green City has been included as one of three priority areas of work within **Sustainable Neighbourhoods**, which is one of the seven thematic partnerships that comprise Manchester Partnership. As such Green City receives a share of the **Neighbourhood Renewal Fund** that is channelled through the Partnership structure. The bulk of funding and resource for Green City however, is will be derived from the **mainstream funding** of the various partner organisations that comprise the Sustainable Neighbourhoods Partnership.

The Green City team are delivering a number of initiatives which are related to the environment, and which have links with the Food Futures Strategy:

- Wild About Manchester – the biodiversity strategy
- Manchester Tree Strategy
- Manchester is My Planet - climate change campaign
- Energy Strategy
- Composting campaign
- Waste and recycling
- Fairtrade campaign
- Environmental Education and Schools
- Manchester in Bloom – brightening up urban environments

Linking Food Futures with Green City

There is massive scope for linking Food Futures into the different strategies and campaigns that are being delivered by the Green City team.

It is interesting that the Food Futures Strategy is being developed by the Joint Health Unit, and is seen as a health and wellbeing issue, with the bulk of its core funding being provided via the Health Inequalities Partnership.

The Green City team on the other hand correlate more closely with the Sustainable Neighbourhoods Partnership, receive their funding from different sources than Food Futures, and decision makers generally sit on different boards. There is a lot of potential for building strategic links between Food Futures and the various Green City strategies and campaigns, and there are opportunities for community representatives engaging in the Greening Manchester Alliance, and the Food Futures Partnership Board, to act as catalysts in this process:

Wild About Manchester

“There is no possibility of a sustainable culture, without sustainable agriculture”
– Bill Mollison, co-founder of the International Permaculture Community.

This is Manchester’s biodiversity strategy, which was launched in 2005. Biodiversity is about the different species that exist in an area, and the mutually beneficial relations between them. Although Manchester (and developed countries in general) has a lot of biodiversity, much of it is exotic and/or cosmetic, and many of the different species that exist in the area do little to contribute towards the stability of the region’s native biodiversity. Before agriculture became industrialised in Britain, biodiversity formed the basis of the Islands’ sustainable agricultural systems. Through industrialisation however, these stable biodiverse systems were replaced by monocultural agriculture, which require external inputs of energy and resources in order to be maintained, and is therefore non-sustainable. Curiously there is no mention of agriculture in Manchester’s biodiversity strategy, which deals specifically with issues including conservation and recreation. It is very important therefore to link sustainable local food production into the Manchester Biodiversity Strategy, if Food Futures is to achieve it’s vision of a city where, “local food production and distribution are commonplace, supporting the local environment, health and improving social capital”.

Manchester Tree City

The City’s Tree Strategy was also launched in 2005, and like the Biodiversity Strategy, does not yet make the linkage between sustainable local food production, and trees. Just as biodiversity is essential to sustainable food producing environments, trees are an essential part of any stable, biodiverse

ecosystem, and therefore need to be thought of in context with food production in Manchester, and the City's hinterlands. Trees provide multiple functions including water retention, climate regulation (they moderate extremes in temperature, and act as windbreaks), soil conservation and improvement, habitat, domestic and wild animal forage, food and fuel for people, building resources and much more. In order to be sustainable therefore, Manchester needs to develop spatial strategies which lead to the development of sustainable neighbourhoods which exhibit beneficial relationships between trees and woodland, food and local people. There are many tried and tested models for tree-based sustainable food production in the UK, including permaculture, forest gardening and agroforestry practices. There are also opportunities to replant our open spaces, urban countryside, parks and community gardens with edible species of fruit trees.

Manchester is My Planet

Climate Change is a global issue which threatens to effect global and local food security in the future. Climate Change is destabilising local weather patterns, leading to agricultural uncertainty. In addition, many of marginalised, semi-arid, food producing regions in the world are becoming increasingly arid and incapable of producing food as a result of rising temperatures. These factors, combined with an expanding global population, mean that there will be increased competition for food in the future.

In order to reduce emissions of climate change gasses, and to preserve global food security, it is vitally important to reduce food miles, by producing as much food as close to home as possible.

Also, by planting the right trees in the right spatial context, we can sequester CO₂ from the atmosphere, and reduce the impacts of climate change, whilst creating the basis for sustainable urban food production.

Energy Strategy

“When will people in the West learn that you cannot eat money!?” – Chief Seattle.

Although there is enough oil left to last for a predicted thirty years or more, we are moving beyond the period of cheap energy. Oil supplies are peaking, meaning that for the first time in history, demand for oil is outstripping our ability to be able to supply it. This is resulting in increased competition, war, and global insecurity. In all probability, oil prices will sky-rocket beyond proportion in the near future. Since much of the food that we eat is imported from distant shores, rising oil prices will result in escalating rises in the price of food in the UK in the future. Unless that is a massive drive to produce food locally, and conserve energy by reducing transport and dependence on oil based fertilisers and pesticides, deprived inner-city communities in the UK will be amongst

those most hard-hit by these price rises, resulting in unprecedented levels of food insecurity.

Composting

Composting is an important part of the 'New' Model Urban Food System, included in the Food Futures Strategy (refer to previous section). It is an obvious step to begin to treat food waste locally, and to use it to improve the soil, in order to increase food productivity.

Waste and Recycling

There are many opportunities for linking waste treatment and recycling with food production systems. For example there are community garden and allotment plots in the city that recycle cardboard and woodchip, in order to lay paths between vegetable beds.

Fairtrade Campaign

To "strengthen the local economy" is listed as a strategic objective of the Food Futures Strategy, and healthy and wealthy people form the basis of healthy local economies. We have no chance of having peaceful, secure, and sustainable neighbourhoods, as long as corporate interests are ripping of communities.

Environmental Education and Schools

It is clearly important to educate children about environmental issues. There has been a lot of development in this area through Healthy Eating campaigns and Eco-school initiatives. It is also important however, to educate the parents of school children. There is no use teaching children if they are sent to the chippy to get their tea, as soon as they get home.

Manchester in Bloom

There has been a proliferation in community gardening initiatives in the City in recent years. However, despite the ecological imperative, food production does not win points in Britain in Bloom competitions, and community gardens which focus on ecological solutions have rarely, if ever been awarded priorities. There is a need for a cultural shift away from the exotic / cosmetic / linear/ Victorian model of urban green space, towards a more solutions based model.



**Produced by
Manchester Alliance for Community Care
Swan Buildings, 20 Swan Street, Manchester, M4 5JW.
Tel: 0161 834 9823
Fax: 0161 832 2352
www.macc.org.uk**