together
we are
GREATER
MANCHESTER



Communications and Engagement Impact Report

Transforming waste across Greater Manchester

Annual Report 2025/26







R4GM Recycle for Greater Manchester
suez
GMCA GREATER MANCHESTER COMBINED AUTHORITY

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Background

This report highlights the impact and achievements of the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) and SUEZ recycling and recovery UK partnership over the past year, demonstrating how effective waste management can deliver environmental, social and economic benefits for residents across Greater Manchester.

Serving nine Greater Manchester local authorities, the partnership continues to achieve strong operational performance, with an overall recycling rate of 50.9% (2024/25 figures) and a landfill diversion rate of 99.5%, ensuring that almost no household waste is sent to landfill.

Alongside delivering essential waste and recycling services, the partnership is maximising the value of public investment through an ambitious social value programme that supports local communities, businesses and residents.

The report highlights achievements across a range of areas, including recycling centre performance, award-winning social value initiatives, community engagement, behaviour change campaigns, education and outreach programmes, and the continued success of Renew, Greater Manchester's flagship reuse and repair initiative.



Recycling rates at our recycling centres

The recycling rate at Greater Manchester's 20 Household Waste Recycling Centres improved year-on-year, supported by better recycling facilities and new containers for materials including mattresses, carpets, vapes and hard plastics. Reuse donation points also continued to help divert household items from waste.

62%

Recycling rate



4,857,362

Total visits



Delivering social value

SUEZ delivers a comprehensive programme of social value commitments that support SUEZ employees, local businesses and communities, with Renew, Greater Manchester's reuse scheme as the largest initiative. Together, the commitments have generated £23.3 million worth of social value in one year.



£23.3m

of social value generated

54

social value commitments

Success at the Public Finance Awards

This approach to generating social value through public procurement won two awards at the Public Finance Awards for Delivering Sustainability and Social Value.

Renew Hub was recognised as the UK's largest reuse and repair operation.

- The programme has generated £23.3 million in social value.
- The partnership also won the overall Grand Prix award





Apprenticeships



Apprenticeships remain an important part of SUEZ's social value commitment, supporting local employment, skills development and future workforce planning across Greater Manchester.

Six new apprentices joined **SUEZ** in 2025/26 in various roles such as transport, maintenance and contract data roles.

- Two Level 3 Metal Fabricator apprentices joined the workshop team in Bolton.
- One Level 2 Transport Planner apprentice and one Level 3 Data Technician apprentice joined transport and maintenance teams.
- Two Level 3 Business Administration apprentices joined the contract data team.

6
new apprentices



Apprentice case study – Shaun, Welder Fabricator

Shaun joined **SUEZ** as a Metal Fabricator apprentice after 16 years working for himself as a joiner. He wanted a new challenge, greater job security and the chance to learn a new trade.

He is now part of the **SUEZ** workshop team in Bolton, spending four days a week on site and one day at Tameside College. His role includes making and repairing containers, refurbishing skips and supporting work at **SUEZ** sites across Greater Manchester.

The apprenticeship is helping Shaun build practical skills, gain qualifications and develop a long-term career with **SUEZ**.

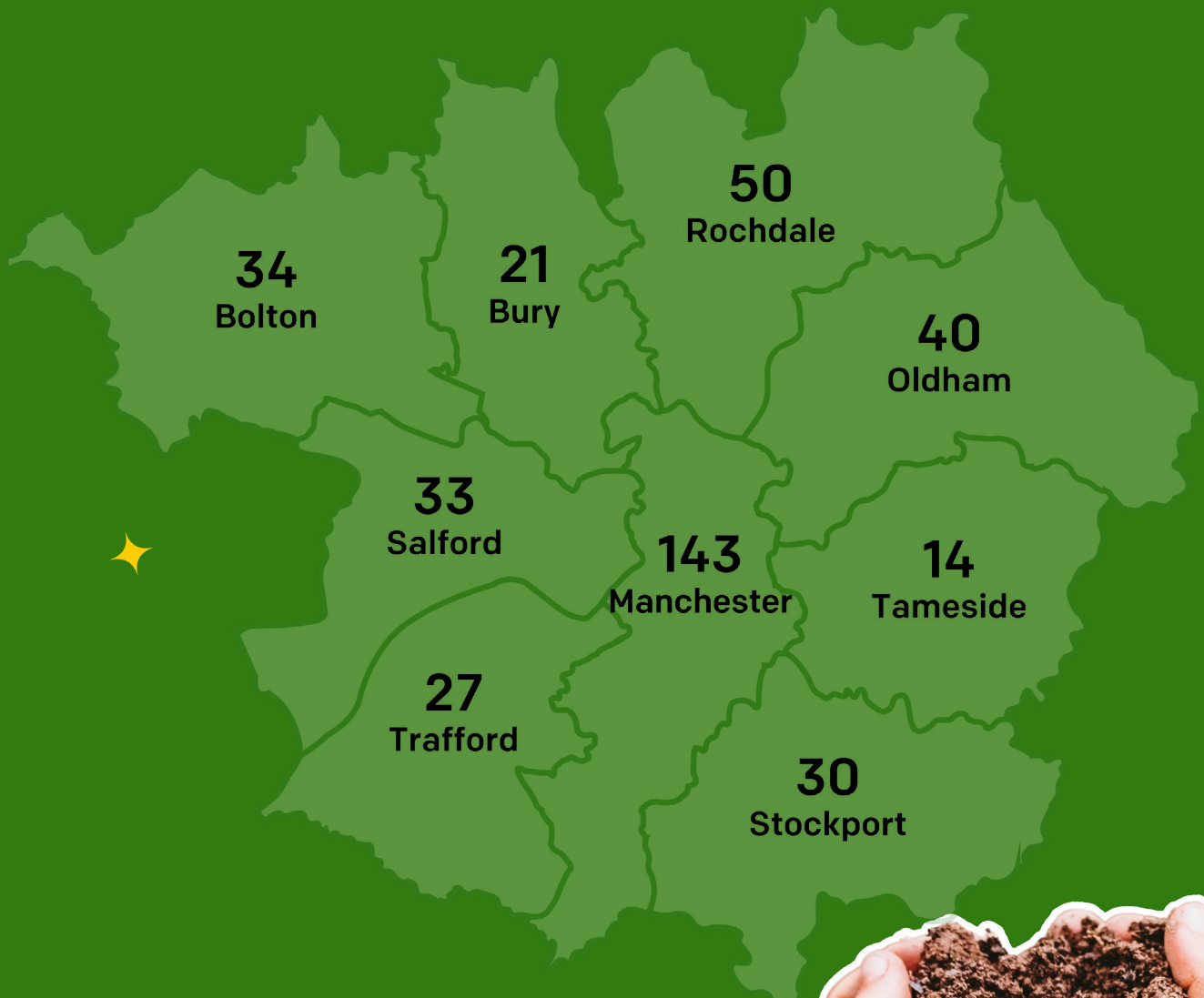
Compost donations

The food and garden waste collected from households across Greater Manchester goes through an industrial composting process to create organic, peat-free compost certified to PAS 100 standard.

Local community groups, education establishments and voluntary organisations can apply for a donation of a tonne of compost for their work.

Last year a total of 392 groups received a donation of compost through this scheme.

Council area breakdown:





Tree planting

200

SUEZ has committed to planting 200 trees each year in Greater Manchester

SUEZ continued its social value commitment to tree planting by working with the Community Forest for Greater Manchester and City of Trees to plant native trees. The activity supports local biodiversity, improves air quality and helps to manage surface water run-off.

More than

1,700

trees have been planted across the region since 2019

210

native trees planted by 10 **SUEZ** volunteers



Renew



Renew continues to support reuse across Greater Manchester by collecting donated household items from recycling centres, repairing or upcycling them at the Renew Hub, and selling them through shops, online channels and market events.

- 148,502 items sold in 2025/26, a 12% increase on the previous year.
- Items are sold through three recycling centre shops, online sales platforms and Renew Hub market events.
- **SUEZ** donates £100,000 each year from sales to the Greater Manchester Mayor's Charity to support homelessness.
- A further £200,000 each year supports the **Renew Community Fund**, which has funded 20 groups this year and a total of 110 local community groups in the last five years.

148,502
items sold in
2025/26

£300,000
to good causes
each year



Renew COMMUNITY FUND

The R4GM Community Fund was relaunched as the Renew Community Fund in 2025, with a stronger focus on reuse, repair and circular economy projects. Communications activity helped raise awareness and support applications from community groups across Greater Manchester.

Key facts:

- 113 applications were received from across all nine Greater Manchester districts.
- 20 projects were supported, including repair cafés, reuse and repair workshops, environmental education and community composting projects.
- Four online workshops were delivered, attracting 112 attendees.
- Promotion included digital channels, social media, partner networks, guidance materials and case studies.

Case Study: Breightmet Community Sewing Classes and Uniform Locker

Breightmet Community Group used **Renew Community Fund** support to deliver sewing classes and a Community Uniform Locker, helping residents reuse textiles, learn practical skills and access affordable school essentials. This includes:

- Free sewing classes to help residents repair and reuse textiles, reducing waste and building confidence.
- The Uniform Locker, which redistributes donated school uniforms, shoes, bags and stationery to support families.

The service is designed to be welcoming and accessible, giving residents choice and dignity.

113
applications were received



Royal visit to the Renew Hub

His Majesty King Charles III visited the Renew Hub on 16th March to launch the Circularity in Practice initiative, recognising Greater Manchester's work to reduce waste and make better use of resources.

- The visit showcased how items are repaired, refurbished and given a new life.
- His Majesty met staff, apprentices and partners involved in reuse and repair.
- The visit highlighted **Renew's** environmental, skills and community value.



His Majesty met staff, apprentices and partners involved in reuse and repair.



Events and visits

An event was held to mark four years of the Renew Hub.

The Greater Manchester Mayor, Andy Burnham attended the event and learnt how the UK's largest repair site is helping local charities and community groups.

- **Renew** has raised £1.6 million for good causes over four years.
- The Mayor met repair experts, community groups and charities supported by **Renew**.



£1.6m

was raised for good causes over four years

Defra Minister Mary Creagh visit

Circular Economy Minister Mary Creagh MP visited the Renew Hub in February to see how reuse and repair supports the circular economy.

- The visit showcased how pre-loved products can be repaired, reused and sold at affordable prices.
- The Minister described the **Renew** model as "the circular economy in action."



The Big Recycling Survey

In August 2025, we launched The Big Recycling Survey, a six-week research period designed to help us better understand residents' attitudes, behaviours and confidence around waste and recycling. Through the survey, we explored motivations and barriers to recycling, levels of knowledge, preferred information sources, and wider behaviours such as reuse, repair and the use of recycling centres.

Key facts and outcomes:

- **8,892** online responses were received, making it the highest-response survey delivered to date.
- The campaign used social media, newsletters, outdoor advertising, print advertising and **200+** posters in libraries and community hubs.
- Responses were monitored in real time to improve representation and reach under represented audiences.
- More than **1,500** written comments helped identify practical barriers and opportunities for service improvement.
- Findings are shaping future **R4GM** communications, improving targeting and supporting clearer recycling guidance.



8,892

online responses were received

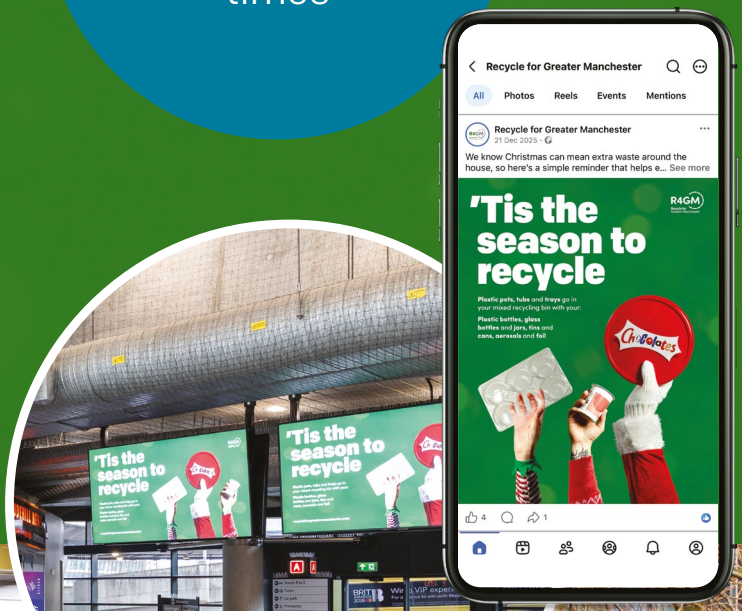
Christmas and festive recycling activity

A festive recycling campaign ran throughout December to help residents manage extra waste, recycle correctly and reduce food waste over Christmas and New Year.

Key facts and outcomes:

- Campaign activity included outdoor advertising, radio, digital advertising, press and media engagement.
- The campaign generated over **2.7 million** impressions.
- BBC Breakfast and radio coverage shared practical advice on festive waste, recycling and food waste reduction.
- **Spotify** food waste adverts reached almost 240,000 unique listeners.
- The **R4GM** website received 279,288 views across the quarter, including around **4,000** visits on Boxing Day.
- Three **Renew** pop-up markets raised over **£15,000** and promoted pre-loved Christmas shopping.

Seen
2.7m
times





Renew
Pre-loved items
for you, your home & garden

£15,000

raised via three **Renew** pop-up markets

Repair Week

2nd-8th March 2026

See the Repair Directory interactive map

Repair Week was a week-long celebration across Greater Manchester, encouraging residents to fix items instead of throwing them away and helping them find local repairers.



54% of items were partially or fully repaired

Key facts:

- **34 in-person events** took place across seven districts – a 17% increase on 2025.
- RepairFest brought together **5 repair groups** and was featured on Granada News.
- **57 items** were brought to RepairFest, with **54%** partially or fully repaired.
- Social videos and adverts reached **969,267** people.
- Print adverts reached **191,500** people.
- **5,500 people** viewed the campaign webpages, events listings and Repair Directory.
- Libraries were given **World Book Day** resources to promote repair-themed books and information.
- **45+ repair groups**, businesses and individuals attended the Fixer Mixer networking event.

The Repair Directory now lists **40+ places** where residents can get items fixed and includes an interactive map.

34 in-person events across **7 districts**

The highlight of the week was RepairFest, Greater Manchester's biggest ever repair café.

Overall, Repair Week successfully raised awareness of repair, increased community involvement, and helped more residents find practical ways to reuse items and reduce waste.



Redevelopment of Reliance Street recycling centre, Manchester

The recycling centre on Reliance Street in Manchester was temporarily closed in June 2025 ahead of redevelopment to create a modern, higher-capacity site with improved recycling infrastructure, traffic flow and a new Renew shop.

- Coordinated communications were delivered with **SUEZ** and local authorities to minimise disruption.
- Residents in Manchester and Oldham were provided with clear information about the closure and alternative recycling centres.
- Activity included stakeholder engagement, printed materials, on-site signage, social media, community outreach, partner toolkits and councillor briefings.
- **73,000** direct communications were delivered to households in the surrounding area.
- A dedicated webpage provided clear guidance throughout the closure period.



73,000

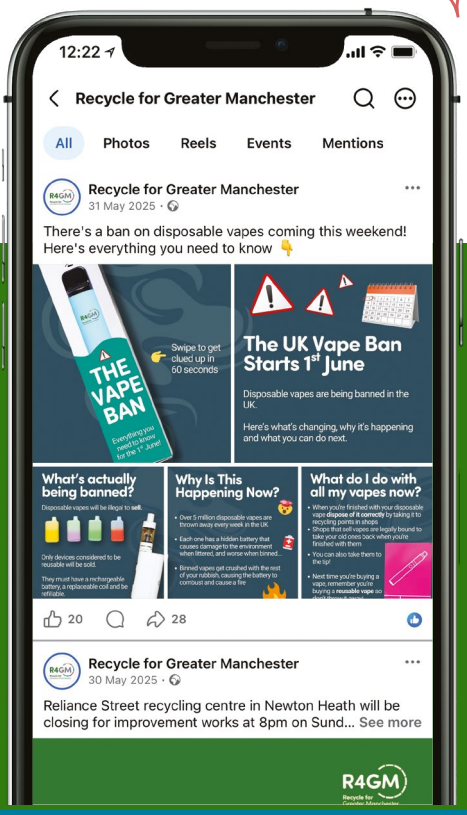
direct communications were delivered

Social media highlights

Social media channels grew in 2025/26, with content performing best when it was timely, locally relevant and connected to Greater Manchester communities.

Audiences grew by **2,564** followers across Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn and TikTok.

- This is **16%** more followers than the previous year.
- Most followers are based in, or list their location as, Manchester.
- The gender gap between followers reduced.
- Best-performing content linked to current events, cultural moments and local community stories.

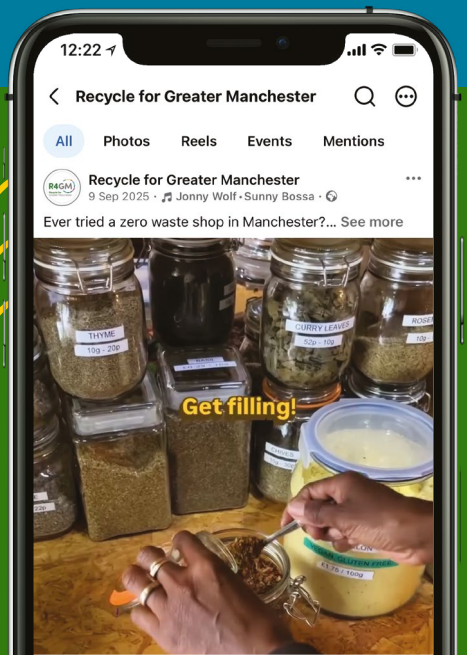


18,264

Followers across Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn and TikTok

20,207,400

impressions



Website insights

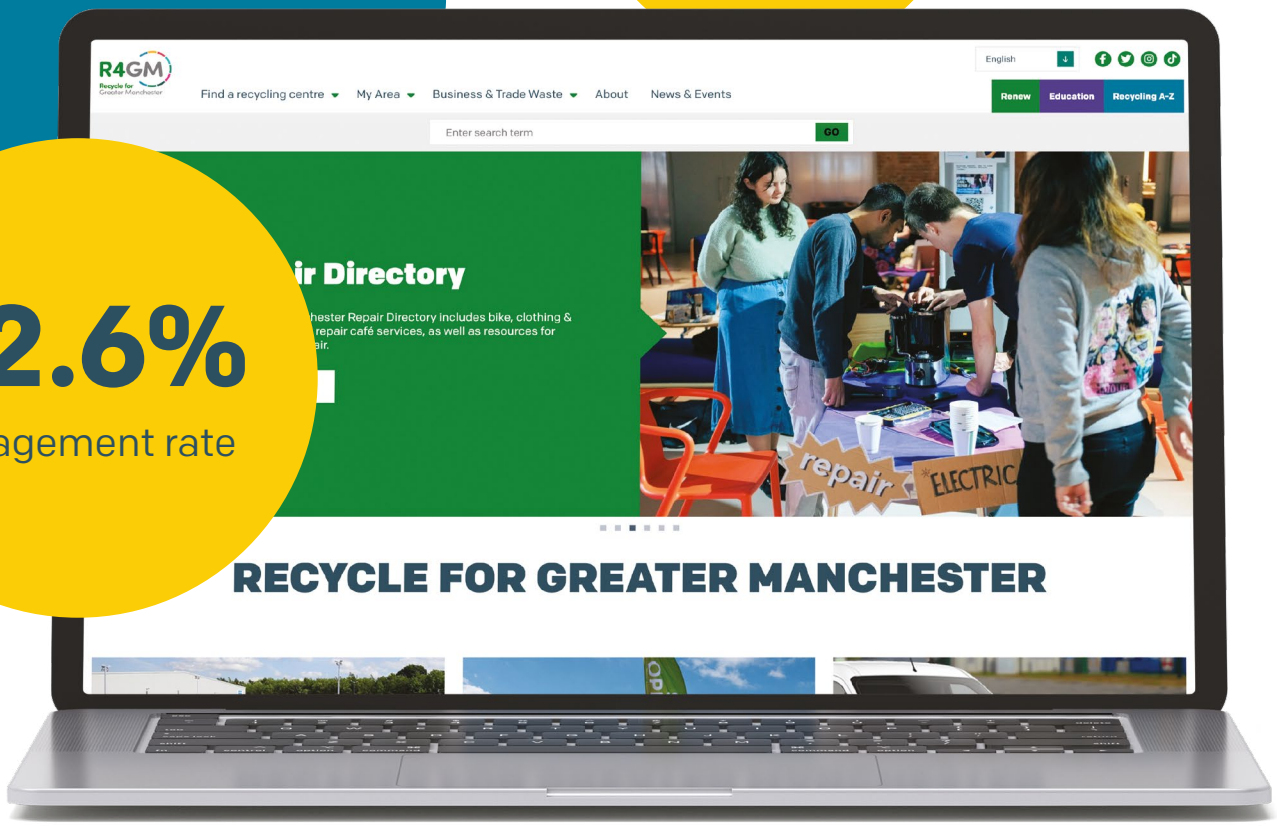
The R4GM website remains a key public information channel, helping residents to find clear guidance on what, how and where to recycle, including the A-Z recycling guide, recycling centre information, van permits, Renew, education content and campaign pages.

- The website received **1,219,000** views between 1 April 2025 and 31 March 2026.
- The most visited pages were the Recycling Guide A-Z, Find a Recycling Centre, Van Permit, **Renew** and the homepage.
- The Recycling Guide A-Z was the top-performing page, with around **178,403** views.
- Most traffic came from organic search, supported by referrals from council websites, media pages and social media.

1,219,000
website views

Visit the R4GM website

62.6%
engagement rate



Home compost bin offer



The home composting campaign encouraged residents to reduce waste at home by offering discounted composting products through Great Green Systems.

Key facts and outcomes:

- Greater Manchester residents could access discounted Hotbins, Bokashi bins and wormeries.
- Residents took advantage of a £10 discount and free postage.
- 786 compost bins were sold between April 2025 and March 2026.

Find out more about home composting

In The Loop

The In The Loop campaign used two short films to show everyday recycling behaviours at home and encourage residents to recycle correctly.

Key facts and outcomes:

- Films ran on YouTube, Connected TV and social media.
- Local newspaper adverts helped reach residents less likely to be online.
- Videos were viewed 1.2 million times.
- Print adverts reached 150,000 people.





Plastics recycling campaign

We launched a new campaign in October 2025 which reinforced to residents that plastic pots, tubs and trays now go in their mixed recycling bin. The service change had been introduced in autumn 2024 and we shaped the campaign using resident queries about exactly which items could be recycled and how they should be presented at the kerbside.





Launched during National Recycle Week, the campaign used **outdoor advertising, social media, website content and targeted Manchester Evening News activity** to improve understanding and reduce confusion about which plastics can be recycled.



Education and outreach

The education team operates tours around the materials recovery facility, the Renew Hub and the solar farm as well as running an extensive outreach programme for schools and community groups designed to inspire residents to recycle correctly, consider repairing items, buy second-hand and manage their waste more responsibly.

Key facts and outcomes:

- 286 sessions delivered to 7,254 visitors in 2025/26.
- Activity included education centre visits, school and community outreach, online sessions and open days.
- Participants included schools, further education, community groups, businesses and residents.
- An English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) session was trialled to help residents understand waste and recycling vocabulary and use local services with confidence.

286
sessions delivered to **7,254 visitors**



Find out more about booking a place

Green Careers Week

Green Careers Week highlighted career opportunities in the waste and resources sector, helping young people see the range of roles linked to recycling, reuse and sustainability.

Key facts and outcomes:

- Activity ran during **Green Careers Week**, 3rd–8th November.
- A Green Careers session was delivered for primary schools with **GMCA's** Education, Work and Skills team.
- The session showed pupils the variety of operational, technical, environmental and community-facing roles in the sector.

Feedback from some of our participants:

"Lovely presentation style — involving children in demonstration. Excellent group activity for children to complete. The children really enjoyed the session and loved getting involved and asking/ answering questions."

"So inspiring to see a public/ private partnership that actually delivers for the local community. And the staff have been so friendly."



"Education officer was very interactive and helpful with facilitating this session. The activities were helpful and informative."



R4GM Recycle for Greater Manchester

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