

GREATER MANCHESTER VISITOR ECONOMY

The pre-pandemic visitor economy across Greater Manchester was worth £9billion to the economy and supported 100,000 jobs. Business visits and events alone were worth £862million a year, supporting 35,100 jobs. The economic value of the visitor economy had grown by 30% over the previous six years to 2019.

Manchester is the third most visited city for international visitors after London and Edinburgh.

The top ten most visited attractions in Greater Manchester in 2019 were: The Lowry (863,428 visitors), HOME (848,033), Manchester Art Gallery (750,216), Science and Industry Museum (556,267), Manchester Museum (368,748), Bolton Museum (362,577), Dunham Massey (340,235), The Whitworth (327,871), Manchester United Museum & Tour Centre (310,807), and the Runway Visitor Park at Manchester Airport (290,013).

Manchester city centre is also home to: The National Football Museum (179,342 visitors in 2019) and People's History Museum (107,343); and several leading British libraries, including Manchester Central Library, The John Rylands Library and Research Institute, Chethams Library, and The Portico Library. These libraries, plus the Manchester Poetry Library at MMU, Elizabeth Gaskell's House, the International Anthony Burgess Foundation and a rich history of poetry, spoken and written word all contributed to Manchester being named a UNESCO City of Literature in 2017.

Other major new Manchester visitor economy attractions include the National Trust Castlefield Viaduct which opened in summer 2022; Mayfield Park which opened in autumn 2022; Aviva Studios, the home of Factory International, opening in October 2023; Co-op Live opening in spring 2024, and the reopening of the magnificent Manchester Town Hall to visitors as soon as the ongoing restoration of the Grade 1 Listed building is complete.

Greater Manchester's hotel market is buoyant. Since 2019 over 4,100 new rooms have come to market across the region at new properties including Dakota Manchester, Native, the Stock Exchange Hotel, LEVEN, and Hotel Brooklyn. Looking ahead, around 6,000 additional rooms are already in progress to come on board within the next five years.

Manchester is also a growing food and drink destination, with gamechangers like Mana (Michelin star), acclaimed small menu restaurants such as Erst, Another Hand, 10 Tib Lane, Climat, and Higher Ground, repurposed beautiful historic buildings like Mackie Mayor (a former Victorian meat market), and new food-focused neighbourhoods like Kampus in the heart of Manchester's Gay Village.