

IT STARTS HERE: THE ROAD TO NET ZERO FOR GM BUSINESSES



A Report on Business Awareness, Attitudes and Actions to
get to Net-Zero from

q.energy

Powered by GM Chamber Q3 2021
Quarterly Economic Survey



IT STARTS HERE: THE ROAD TO NET ZERO FOR GM BUSINESSES

OVERVIEW

In 2019, the UK became the first major economy to pass a [Net-Zero emissions law](#), requiring the UK to bring all greenhouse gas emissions to Net-Zero by 2050. But the race to a more sustainable future isn't just a race, it's a team sport. This means we all have to play our part in order to reach the end goal. This especially includes the UK's Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs), a sector that accounts for over 99.9% of UK businesses and contributes to 50% of all commercial emissions across the country.

Q Energy proudly collaborated with the Greater Manchester Chamber of Commerce with their [Q3 Quarterly Economic Survey](#) launched on 28th September 2021.

Four additional questions were included that focussed on net-zero and what businesses are doing to achieve it.

At the time of writing COP 26 is currently in full swing in Glasgow with the eyes and the ears of the world waiting to see what actions come out of this hugely important conference.

Our survey highlighted areas that need further clarification, simple messages that need getting across. It also highlighted areas that businesses are pressing ahead with and may surprise some by their responses and attitude.

There's no doubt that many GM businesses already taking action are doing so for the right reason – but more needs doing.

At Q Energy we are firm believers in the power of data to drive net-zero activity how can you tackle something if you don't measure it? How can you make a start if you don't know where you currently are?

We can help with these and more to make sure if your business is looking to start its journey to net-zero or you may already be on it, the vital support, guidance and help is there for you. Just get in touch.

Vijay Natarajan
Founder & COO



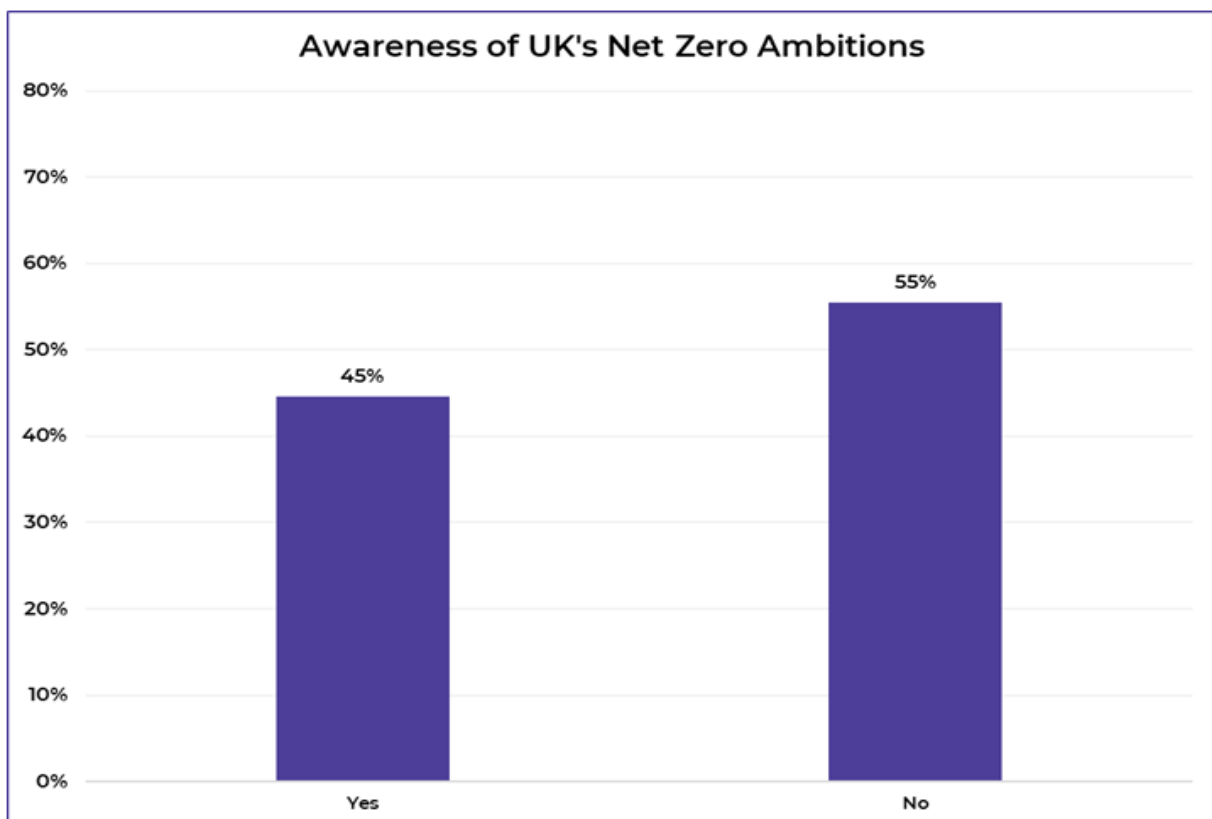
1. BUSINESS AWARENESS OF UK'S NET- ZERO AMBITIONS

The first question focussed clearly on awareness of the UK government's ambitions to become net-zero by 2050.

Slightly worryingly despite the constant stream of information, awareness raising in the media, work done by the Chamber and the build up to COP26 itself 55% of Greater Manchester businesses were unaware of the UK's net-zero goals.

This tells us that a huge hurdle the Government must overcome in order to hit the 2050 target is educating business owners about net-zero, a buzzword commonly used but not properly understood.

COP26 will undoubtedly help with this but the high level of businesses unaware of the overall target and strategy means there is still considerable work to be done.



Source : GMCC QES Q3 2021 took place 16th August to 13th September and was completed by 351 businesses.

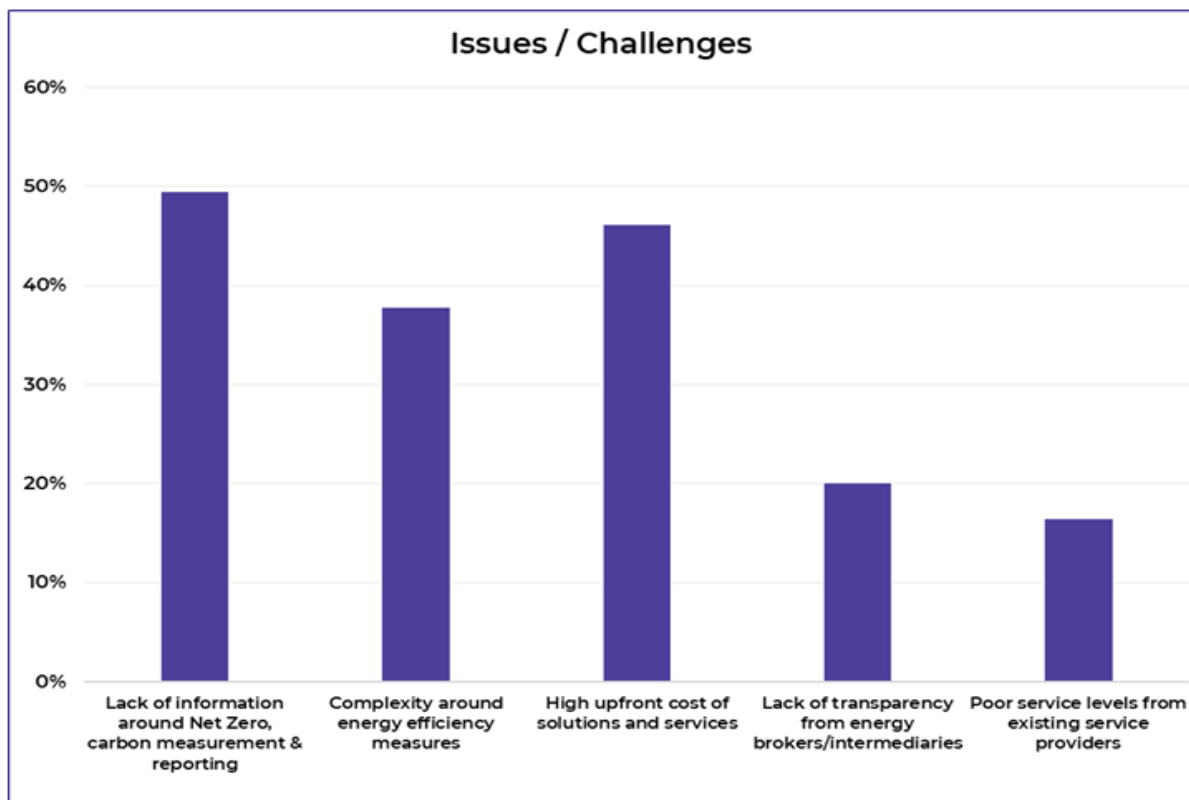
2.ISSUES AND CHALLENGES FACED

The second question referred to issues and challenges that businesses face with either making or taking decisions to enact net-zero activity from getting basic information to practical actions.

Respondents could choose more than one answer to allow a clearer picture of where issues lie.

Supporting the findings from Q1 around lack of awareness of the governments ambitions *“lack of information around Net-Zero, carbon measurements and reporting”* was the number one challenge with 49% of respondents choosing this. The cost of implementing action came second with 46% of businesses citing *“high upfront costs of solutions and services”*.

This question highlighted that information, measurement and reporting are the three fundamentals required to get businesses to consider their action and make a start on their net-zero journey. Without taking these initial steps none of the other measures can successfully follow. This does not mean the other challenges noted are any less important but the initial call to action around information, with a focus on actual costs of taking action, act as the primary blockages for many businesses in Greater Manchester.



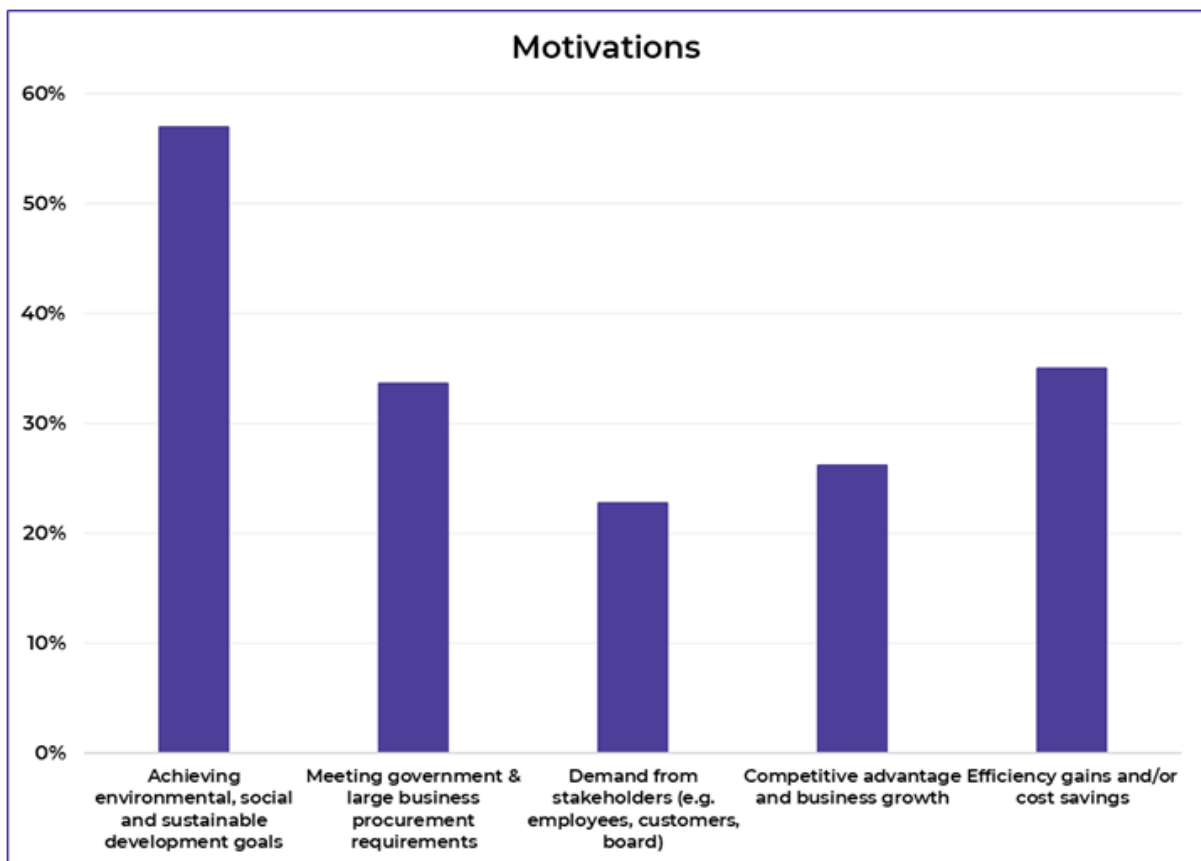
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3.MOTIVATION FOR GOING NET-ZERO

Findings from the survey also showed that “*achieving environmental, social and sustainable development goals*” (57%) was by far the number one motivation for a business when it came to achieving Net Zero, even more so than “*efficiency gains and/or cost savings*” (35%).

This is especially surprising considering we’ve just come out of a pandemic and finances are likely to be a worry for many businesses.

Interestingly, “meeting government & large business procurement requirements” finished just in third place with 33% of the votes. This demand is only expected to increase, as from September 2021 the UK government requires prospective suppliers bidding for contracts over £5 million a year to have committed to Net Zero by 2050 and have a carbon reduction plan published. You can read more about that [here](#).

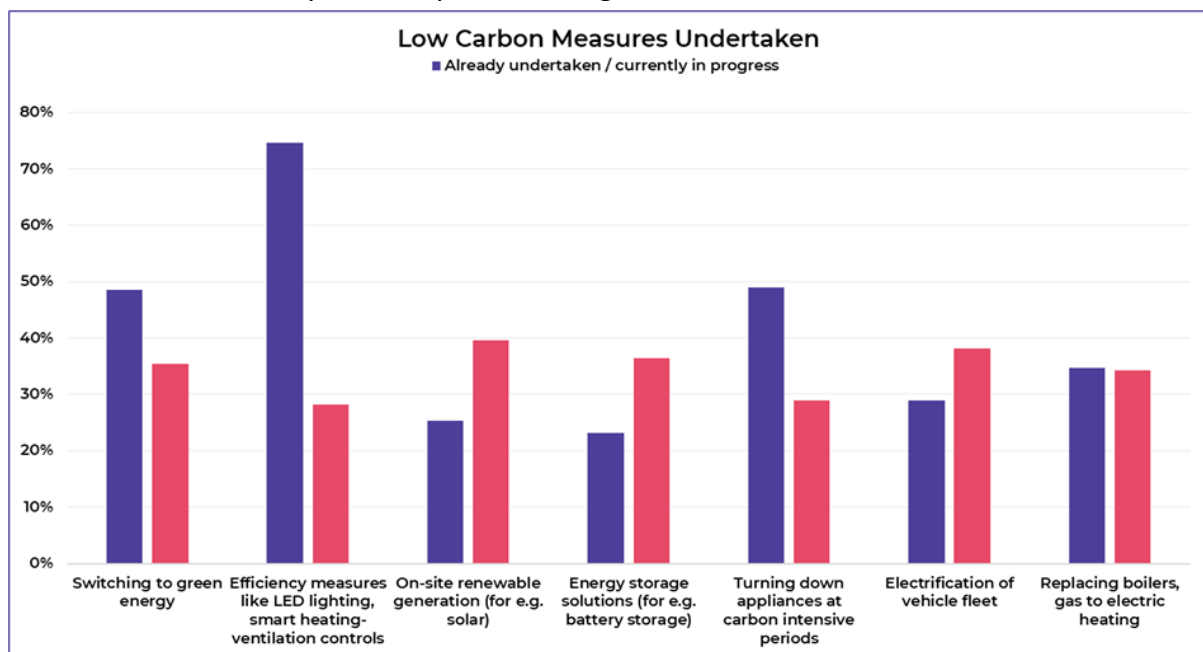


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4. LOW CARBON MEASURES ALREADY UNDERTAKEN

The last survey question was aimed at finding out what actions businesses have taken to implement low carbon measures.

The results showed that the most common low carbon efficiency measures currently undertaken are the installation of L.E.D lights and smart heating & ventilation controls, with most people planning to install on-site renewable generation such as solar panels and battery storage in the next 12 months. Switching to 'green' energy appears to be something a lot of businesses have already done or plan on doing in the next 12 months.



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So, how does the Government reach Net-Zero 2050?

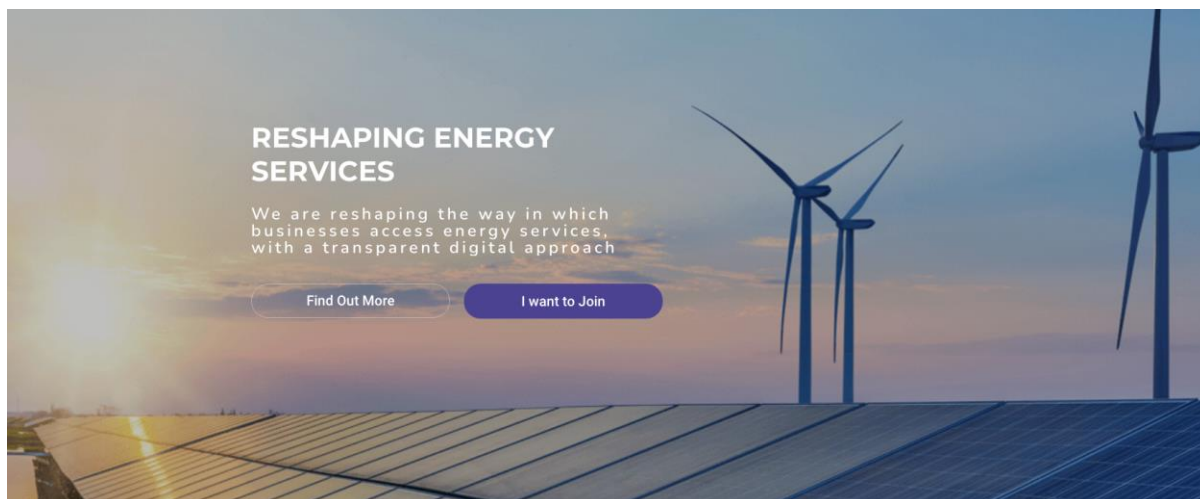
Overall, the results from the survey tell us that Greater Manchester businesses do care about creating a sustainable future when it comes down to energy, and are already taking or planning on taking some actions in the next 12 months.

However, the findings also suggest that many businesses don't fully understand the meaning of Net-Zero or the Government's ambitions, whilst being under the impression that carbon reduction solutions are expensive when this doesn't have to be the case. For the Government to reach Net-Zero by 2050, they first need to put more resources into educating business owners about the nation's targets and how it can benefit the environment and their business financially.

Easily accessible services need to be available to help businesses decarbonise, such as funding and financing options plus affordable solutions for the installation of energy efficiency equipment.

The Government's push for the free smart meter rollout needs to continue to allow for more accurate monitoring, reporting and tracking of energy data. With remote monitoring, reporting and making use of insights being the key element, we at Q Energy are looking to be the leaders in championing a data-driven approach to Net Zero with our smart carbon reduction platform with web and mobile app interfaces.

After working on some groundbreaking energy solutions projects over the last couple of years, Q Energy has come to understand and begin to address a variety of the above issues. This year we have launched the [Energy Savers Club](#), a free to join carbon reduction club for SMEs that helps businesses directly source energy from renewable generators, rewards SMEs for their energy-saving actions whilst also providing funding and financing options for solar panels, battery storage, LED lighting, smart heating controls and [more](#).



“The Energy Savers Club is a great example of the impressive services being created through Government supported Projects. With the Government's 2050 net-zero targets slowly approaching, one of our main interests is to find out methods to decarbonise the UK's SME sector, a notoriously hard sector to decarbonise. By working with innovative tech businesses such as Q Energy and allowing them to demonstrate their solutions, we're hoping that we can replicate any success on a nationwide scale, which will benefit the nation environmentally and the businesses involved financially.” - **Antoni Micheal, Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy**

To help businesses get a better understanding of how they can achieve Net-Zero, Q Energy has created a free Net-Zero reporting tool that allows you to calculate your carbon footprint

and receive carbon reduction targets. You can also schedule a free on-site energy audit that will be carried out by an industry expert.

Get your FREE Net-Zero report here: <https://netzero.qenergy.ai/>

If you have any questions about your businesses energy use or how you can help the nation become Net-Zero, feel free to get in touch at info@qenergy.ai / 0161 706 0980

