

INTRODUCTION

Tackling poverty needs to be a strategic priority for the new Mayor of Greater Manchester. Part of our role at Greater Manchester Poverty Action is to highlight the scale of the problem and, as we've reported through our [Poverty Monitor](#) and [newsletter](#), there are scores of people in Greater Manchester experiencing hardship and deprivation, sleeping rough or relying on food handouts. Many more are just about keeping their heads above water, finding that work doesn't always offer the effective route of poverty that it should do.

The Mayor should set ambitious targets to drive down poverty, reducing homelessness and food poverty and use their powers to reduce the cost of living for those on low incomes (for example dealing with transport and housing costs) and work to ensure the benefits of economic growth in Greater Manchester are shared more evenly so that in-work poverty is reduced.

Many will argue that the Mayor's powers are limited and that their ability to directly address poverty will be constrained. Here we present a series of articles from stakeholders across the city region setting out what they think the mayor needs to prioritise if we're to drive down poverty in Greater Manchester. Despite limited powers, there's a huge amount the Mayor will be able to do and we should be optimistic about the future.



What is clear is that the Mayor will have to exercise soft power, bringing together actors from across the public, private and third sectors to maximise his or her ability to address an issue that continues to blight our city region. Collaboration as much as direct action will be key.

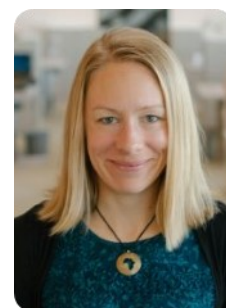
Graham Whitham, Director Greater Manchester Poverty Action

Street Support and Manchester Homelessness Partnership: Viv Slack



[Street Support](#) is a central place online that makes it easier for people experiencing homelessness to find the help they need. We also make it easier for businesses and citizens to give help effectively.

In connecting this network, we support [Manchester Homelessness Charter](#), bringing together people who are homeless, the voluntary sector, community and faith groups, council, police, health services, businesses and citizens in a common mission...to End Homelessness.



If we could ask for one pledge from the new Greater Manchester mayor it would be to commit to involve people with lived experience of homelessness in key decisions and design of services.



We have seen the difference that the core principles of partnership and co-production can make, both in changing the system, and us as individuals.

We believe the new mayor can play a key role in embedding partnership and co-production fully into the culture of our region, and lead the way for other sectors to follow.

As our friends at Leeds Poverty Truth Commission say - "Nothing about us without us is for us."

Change comes from us. If you would like to know more about the charter, or can pledge to take action towards this mission as an organisation, business or individual, visit charter.streetsupport.net.

Greater Manchester Social Value Network: Matthew Jackson

The [Greater Manchester Social Value Network \(GMSVN\)](#) seeks to ensure that social value is at the forefront of everything that public, commercial and social sector organisations do in Greater Manchester. This includes in their strategies, their spending, their recruitment practices, their delivery of projects, and in their relationship with Greater Manchester as a place and its residents. GMSVN's members, including local authorities, housing organisations, and voluntary and community sector organisations, would expect the GM Mayor to also adopt such principles to ensure that social value is at the heart of their approach.



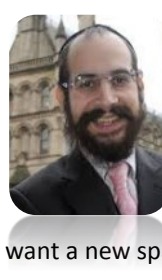
We would expect social value to be a common thread in all Greater Manchester Strategy and inform all Mayoral objectives moving forward. We would expect social value in Greater Manchester to be measured in a proportionate and relevant way. We would expect social value to be embedded in the Mayor's own office through a specific policy role and we would expect social value to be a key component of and consequence of development schemes. Greater Manchester attracts and already has a significant amount of wealth which does not always reach the right places – social value is a means through which the benefits of wealth can be realised for all. GMSVN can assist in realising this and support the GM Mayor through continuing to: collect information and evidence of social value; support organisations to deliver social value; and influencing behaviour of key organisations around their approach to social value.

Matthew Jackson is Chair of GMSVN and Deputy Chief Executive of the Centre for Local Economic Strategies (CLES)



Candidate: **Jane Brophy**
(Liberal Democrat)

Jane is committed to protecting green spaces from development, tackling rising crime and protecting local jobs from the threat of hard Brexit. She has spent her working life in the NHS and promises to protect local health services from cuts.



Candidate: **Schneur Odze** (UKIP)

A manifesto promising transparency includes an online portal with statistics from each borough to see where councils are excelling and falling short. "It is imperative we have a strategic vision. That applies to housing, transport, and other things. I want a new spatial framework."

DivaManc: Amanda Wait

Over the past 9 months [DivaManc](#) have been holding conversations with women who are living, working, studying and caring in Greater Manchester about their engagement with and representation in the Devolution debate.

Austerity measures mean that 86% of savings over the 2010-20 period will have come from women's pockets¹. This has been a political choice. We've heard how this is being experienced by women of all ages across Greater Manchester. Without a strong voice, they stand to miss out on the opportunities Devolution can afford.

Working in partnership with the Fawcett Society, DivaManc have developed five pledges that we want the Mayor to embrace. This includes calling for more gender-balanced leadership and representation; increasing women's voice and participation in policy-making; challenging bias; closing the gender pay gap and making Greater Manchester a place of choice for women and girls to live, work, study and care.

To help make progress towards these goals, and to tackle women's poverty specifically, we'd like to see the Mayor prioritise the following action:

Within the first 100 days of office: Work with businesses, public sector, voluntary and community sector, trade unions and citizens to co-produce a comprehensive strategy to tackle women's poverty in Greater Manchester.

Within the first year of office:

- Adoption of a GM Living Wage.
- Publish a plan for ensuring carer's get a fair deal in GM.
- Increase the number of young women accessing high quality paid apprenticeships.



¹ [Women's Budgeting Group response to 2016 Budget.](#)

Inclusive Growth Analysis Unit: Professor Ruth Lupton



Like many other cities, Greater Manchester faces ongoing challenges of widespread poverty, low pay, labour market inequalities and an uneven pattern of economic growth which has left many people and places behind. We need a new 'inclusive growth' approach in which more people can contribute to and benefit from prosperity. Our approach to economic growth has to change. The election of the mayor is a great opportunity to set this vision, and he or she will need to use their 'soft powers', working across private, public and civil society sectors, to turn this into a reality.



We would like to see the mayor:

- Adopt a [more distributed leadership approach](#), identifying and involving leaders across the private, public and VCSE sectors who can make inclusive growth happen. Inclusive growth doesn't fall into a neat policy silo, but is in one of those 'in-between spaces' of urban policy in which no one institutional actor has a concrete or exclusive mandate
- Find ways to involve people with experience of 'uninclusive growth' in designing new policies
- Encourage large institutions to support smaller local firms, disadvantaged individuals and communities through local procurement and employment practices.
- Lead on meaningful engagement with business, testing what can be achieved through voluntary action, such as via [employment charters](#) and wider levers to promote responsible business
- Support the [development of different economic models](#) such as social enterprises, co-ops and mutuals which spread benefits more equally and new forms of 'patient capital' to support investment in the local economy, perhaps through a local bank

"Nothing about us without us is for us."

Greater Manchester Law Centre: Roz Burgin



The right to justice is as important as the right to health or education. For many, law centres provide the only means for free, walk-in, face-to-face, professional legal advice and representation. It is therefore a travesty that, following brutal cuts and contract reorganisations, the people of Greater Manchester have gone from having nine law centres across our ten boroughs to only having two, in Bury and Rochdale.

Our community fought to restore and improve access to justice for people in poverty and vulnerability. It is thanks to this collective effort that the [Greater Manchester Law Centre](#) defiantly opened its doors in Moss Side last year.

We have had to be innovative to survive in the face of economic hardship and budget cuts. We are not short of political and community support, as our campaign has gained national recognition as well as an overwhelming local response. But we need more than words and encouragement to carry out our own vital work, and we demand that similar legal services are made available across Greater Manchester.

Levies, compulsory and voluntary, have been proposed to boost funding for a variety of services, including homelessness support and community care. We therefore challenge Manchester's Mayor to implement a levy on private legal firms in our city, to fund legal aid services.



We are fighting together for free access to justice, and we demand sustainable financial support, in the form of a levy, to meet the advice and representation needs of our community.

Greater Manchester Law Centre 159 Princess Rd, Manchester M14 4RE

End Hunger UK: Niall Cooper

Food is the most basic of human requirements. Yet increasing numbers of people across Greater Manchester are struggling to afford sufficient healthy food for themselves and their families.

Food banks are the most visible manifestation of the growing crisis of food poverty in Greater Manchester. Their volunteers do remarkable work providing emergency aid to increasing numbers of people, but food banks must be viewed as an emergency response. Much more must be done to address the underlying reasons why people turn to food banks in the first place.



The scale of hunger among school children is of serious concern. Schools play a vital role in tackling hunger among children. It is essential to ensure that children are able to access a decent meal not just during term time, but 365 days a year. Take up of free school meals should be promoted, but the scale of the problem requires new thinking about extending support particularly during the school holidays.

In some areas of Greater Manchester, people on a low income find it particularly hard to buy affordable healthy food. The Mayor should make a commitment to supporting the roll out of Local Pantries – local food clubs – run by and for local people, in neighbourhoods across Greater Manchester.

Above all, the new Greater Manchester Mayor needs to provide strategic oversight for monitoring the prevalence of and response to food poverty in Greater Manchester. This will require mobilising the efforts of people and organisations behind an End Hunger Greater Manchester campaign.

Niall Cooper is Director, Church Action on Poverty and Coordinator of the [End Hunger UK campaign](#)



Candidate: **Andy Burnham** (Labour)

“We will end rough-sleeping here by 2020 through a new Mayor’s Homelessness fund. I will kick start the fund by donating 15% of my salary on an on-going basis and seek donations from others. We will build truly affordable homes and introduce a new scheme to regulate unscrupulous private landlords.”



Candidate: **Sean Anstee** (Conservative)

“Our Mayor will have a multi-million pound budget and control over jobs, transport, housing, healthcare and skills. So its going to need someone with experience and the track record to take GM forward. I believe I’m that candidate. I believe that together we can create a new period of greatness.”

Oxfam: Emily Ball

Poverty experienced by young people under the age of 18 can have a longstanding impact on their health, education and life chances. Worryingly, in Greater Manchester it is estimated that 1 in 4 young people live in poverty.

There have been many policies put in place to alleviate the number of young people in poverty, all with various degrees of success. Even though young people (and their parents) are often the object of such policies, decisions surrounding what might empower them is often made for them, which excludes their views. This exclusion omits a body of evidence from young people’s lived experience. Young people should have their voices heard and should have direct access to the new Mayor in order to share their stories.



An establishment of a Youth Assembly is a crucial step in ensuring that issues of child poverty are tackled, which captures the experiences and suggested solutions of the young people who experience poverty daily. A poverty sub-group with youth peer researchers (where research is undertaken by those who have experience of living in poverty themselves) would be one way to capture the experiences and keep the new Mayor informed of and accountable to tackling the severity of the situation. This is in addition to the listening and valuing the changes young people want to see and be involved with creating in Greater Manchester.

Greater Manchester Housing Action



On April 3rd, [Greater Manchester Housing Action](#) held the first and best attended [grassroots hustings](#) of the Mayoral election period with over 180 attendees. All of the main mayoral candidates were on the platform.

The event was a major success, pinning decision makers to concrete actions. All candidates pledged to start a youth homelessness forum in an effort to end street homelessness and all agreed to look into cooperative and community owned models of housing provision.

GMHA see Devolution as an opportunity for the new mayor to emancipate Greater Manchester from the escalating housing crisis by generating equitable housing-policy; putting people not profit first.

We call upon the new metro Mayor to honour their pledges and be fully accountable to the rising population of homeless, those in rent-poverty and in need of social housing, which has increasingly diminished.

GMHA seeks enforcement of transparent planning processes foregrounding:

- Liveable density
- Truly affordable, good quality homes on council tenure
- Sustainable communities via mixed tenure developments
- Increased capacity and support for mutualist housing solutions
- Rent controls and landlord licensing schemes
- Enforcing rented healthy homes standards
- A halt to Buy to Let abuses, and land speculation
- Compulsory suspension of Section 106 for all new GM developments, ensuring developers do not default on Community Fund contributions
- Empty Homes taxation and Hotel Tax to raise revenue to fund empty housing retrofit scheme for homeless accommodation
- Compulsory purchase orders on empty properties after two years of dormancy
- Support public asset transfers of empty buildings for emergency shelter use



"We are fighting together for free access to justice"

Good Food Greater Manchester Partnership: Lucy Danger

"Food Glorious Food..." Or perhaps not if you're a child from a family struggling to put a proper meal on the table as well as pay for heating and other basics. In 2011 [Save the Children reported](#) that 91,000 children across Greater Manchester were in "severe poverty". By 2014 the Tackling Food Poverty Together coalition hadn't got much better news when they told us 1 in 10 people in Greater Manchester skipped meals so a family member could eat, the joint highest number for city-regions in the UK. It is [well documented](#) that child-development is fundamentally affected by what foodstuffs they eat and this in turn naturally affects their life chances.



So what are we doing to change this? There are hundreds of positive and progressive initiatives and organisations working together across Greater Manchester to combat hunger whilst trying to help address the root causes; many are supported by FareShare which redistributes surplus food from industry; most have private sector partners who support this work with resources or volunteering. Alongside this, are nationally acclaimed school-dinner schemes like Oldham's, run by award winning 'employee of the year', Anne Burns, ready to be replicated across the city-region. So, plenty to build upon...



The Good Food Greater Manchester Partnership calls upon the elected GM Mayor to engage with our work by endorsing us and supporting a task group to take forward action to eliminate hunger in children and young people in order to give them the best chances and help them to achieve better outcomes. This 'legacy' work will not only help the individuals and families concerned but will be an investment in the future of our economy, our society and the Greater Manchester environment, in the widest sense.

Lucy Danger: CEO of EMERGE (which runs FareShare Greater Manchester); Chair Good Food Greater Manchester Partnership which seeks to drive food up the strategic agenda and 'join the dots' in terms of practice and policies on the economic, social and environmental impacts and opportunities for food across the city-region.



Greater Manchester Housing Providers

[Greater Manchester Housing Providers](#) (GMHP) want everyone in Greater Manchester to live in a home they can afford and we want the GM Mayor's support to make that happen



GMHP have been out campaigning with the National Housing Federation, calling on politicians and local people to back this pledge. All the main mayoral candidates have already pledged their support.

Research commissioned by the National Housing Federation revealed that 8 in 10 GM residents felt that there is a shortage of affordable housing, with those renting privately struggling the most with housing costs.

Many people are still living in sub-standard private accommodation across GM so the new Mayor should also look at regeneration. Since the severe cuts to housing renewal funding over the last few years, the worsening condition of swathes of older terraced housing, often occupied by private renters or low-income owner occupiers, constitutes a ticking time bomb both in terms of housing and health. There is a need to maintain and regenerate some of the existing housing within GM to keep it fit for purpose.

GMHP built more than 8,000 new homes in the last five years, a third of all the new homes built. With the right support, we want to build over 12,000 new homes by 2021. GMHP are helping to push up standards in the private sector by developing and delivering a GM Private Sector offer including empty homes, social lettings and home improvement options.

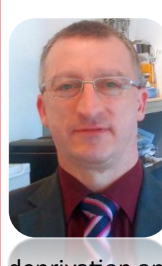
For further information on the work of GMHP please visit our [website](#).

You can also read the [blog](#) by Jon Lord, Chair of GMHP Group, on what a GM Mayor should do about housing.



Candidate: **Will Patterson** (Green Party)

"There needs to be a roof over every head; with more homeless shelters to assist those people forced to sleep on the street plus support for young people to get into independent living. I will push for public bodies to pay a Living Wage and push the Government to pilot a Basic Income Scheme in GM."



Candidate: **Stephen Morris**
(English Democrats)

"My manifesto, my contract with you, guarantees local jobs for local people, a living wage, social housing and a public transport system fit for purpose. I know how to tackle the appalling child poverty, deprivation and homelessness spreading across our area."

GMCVO: Alex Whinnom

Food is a basic human need. Back in 2012, GMCVO published [a report on Food Poverty and Food Deserts in Greater Manchester](#). Since then, matters have become even worse. Lack of access to decent food was identified as a major barrier to "keeping yourself and your family fit and healthy" by a large proportion of people consulted over the [GM Health and Social Care Strategy in 2016](#) but increasing numbers of residents cannot access or afford it. Indeed in many cases, they cannot afford adequate food at all. An immediate charitable response has been made through food banks but this is hardly a solution.

There is already a robust movement in Greater Manchester of urban farming, community orchards, allotments, school plots and guerrilla gardening. We have an emerging social enterprise/co-operative sector focusing on urban food production and distribution; another offering catering, cooking skills and community meals, often making good use of 'waste' food. The city region is almost a quarter 'rural' with productive farms and smallholdings on our doorstep. Local government has legislative powers that could shape local retail by reducing access to unhealthy food in favour of equally cheap quality products.

Currently the problem is structural and endemic, and the solutions are fragmented and unsupported by policy or finance. But the building blocks are there. Our new Mayor, with the enormous soft power they will have, could lead on an inclusive, progressive food strategy for Greater Manchester and make food poverty history.

Alex Whinnom, Chief Executive, GMCVO

The GMCVO logo consists of the letters 'GMCVO' in a white, sans-serif font, centered within a dark grey rectangular box. Below this box is a solid blue horizontal bar.

Candidate: **Marcus Jonathan Farmer**
(Independent)

Mr Farmer stated that he would build strong partnerships with other cities and deal with congestion on the roads by making the bus and tram systems free at point of use, with the costs covered by increased council tax. He would create a "business-minded organisation" that links schools with local companies and is a supporter of grammar schools.

No photo available. For more info check the BBC [website](#)

Candidate: **Mohammad Aslam**
(Independent)

"If elected I will improve many things in Greater Manchester. I'll give free transport to school, college and University students during term time, I will house all homeless people and give grants to small businesses. I will improve the roads, transport and the police force. I want to bring in outside investment into GM to make it a great and modern region."

No photo available. For more info check the BBC [website](#)

Why GM Poverty Action?

In the Recommendations Report of the Greater Manchester Poverty Commission, 2.4 *Maintaining Momentum on Poverty* called for the formation of a Poverty Action Group to help take forward the work of the Commission.

A small number of public, private and civic sector individuals came together to form GMPA. This group has since grown to over 700 individuals from more than 200 organisations plus Local Authorities and MPs and an increasing number of members of the public.

GMPA is based upon principles of cooperation between organisations.

Forthcoming Events:

Greater Manchester Living Wage Campaign Update Meeting



On Monday May 15th, 2017 from 2 - 4 pm at Salut Wines, 11 Cooper St, Manchester M2 2FW

Members are invited to give a 3 minute update about recent activities. [Please book to attend.](#)

What the social care crisis means for disabled people - discussion with Dr Frances Ryan

On Wednesday May 17th, 2017 from 6 - 7.30pm at Geoffrey Manton Building, Manchester Metropolitan University, M15 6LL



In an era of deepening austerity, this timely event will discuss what the current social care crisis and cuts to social security mean for disabled people. Speakers will address Manchester's current NHS and social care agenda, as well as the wider national picture. The event aims to bring together key parts of the community: campaigners, activists, politicians, media, students, and others. Attendees will be given a prior opportunity to submit questions that will be used on the night to trigger discussion. [Book here.](#)

COOKBank: Setting up a Community Cooking Club 2 Day Course

On May 17th & 18th At Bridge 5 Mill, 22a Beswick Street, Ancoats, Manchester M4 7HR



The course includes: defining good food; how to overcome the many barriers to cooking healthy food from scratch; resourceful financial solutions to food poverty and food waste; logistics of setting up and running a Cracking Good Food Community Cooking Club; a hearty meal - you will deliver a cooking workshop to each other; a full 40 page colour toolkit as a guide for future support; a Certificate of Achievement.

Cost: £250 per person inclusive of lunch on both days, refreshments, all written materials, equipment (aprons provided) and ingredients to cook.

[More information and to book](#)

Any events you'd like GMPA to publicise? [Email us with the details](#)

For more information about Greater Manchester Poverty Action

please visit our [website](#), follow us on [Twitter](#) or visit our [Facebook](#) page. You can also visit our YouTube channel [Community Voices](#)

All these platforms are there to share news and opinion from our readers, from GM Poverty Action and from the community.

We want to celebrate our successes, find new ways of working together and provide a voice for the people living in poverty in our region. But we can only do this with your help and support.

For more information or to share your news please contact [Chris](#)

Copies of previous newsletters are available on our [website](#)

If you would like to contact us or submit an article for inclusion in a newsletter please get in touch in one of the following ways:

Post: c/o 5th Floor Church House, 90 Deansgate, Manchester M3 2GH

Or contact our Communications Manager: Chris Bagley
T: 07419 774537 [Email](#)
and we will reply as soon as possible.

NB GMPA does not have full-time dedicated administrative support so please do not expect an immediate response.

