

Report on GM Living Wage Week November 11th - 17th



This year's Living Wage Week was a busy one for the GM Living Wage Campaign as we were involved in activities and events across Greater Manchester with partners and supporters.



Chris Smallwood, Martha Crawford
and John Hacking

On Wednesday November 13th we ran a joint briefing event with The Good Employment Charter Implementation Unit at Salford Museum. The event was attended by over 25 employers who are supporters of the Greater Manchester Employment Charter and featured presentations on the benefits of the Living Wage from the GM Living Wage Campaign, Martha Crawford from the Living Wage Foundation and Chris Smallwood, MD of the Salford-based Living Wage Employer Anchor Removals. A blog on the [Good Employment Charter](#) website gives more information about the event.

At the Living Wage Foundation's launch event in Salford on November 11th, Salford was recognised for its ambition to be England's first accredited Living Wage Place. GM Living Wage Campaign is a member of Salford's Living Wage Place Action group and a sponsor of the Living Wage bid. At the event there was the welcome announcement of Manchester City Council and Oldham Council becoming the latest GM local authorities to become Living Wage Employers. There was a commitment from Manchester City Council to take the next step to becoming a Living Wage Place and the GM Living Wage Campaign has been asked by Manchester City Council to work with them to achieve this objective.

On November 13th we partnered with Boo Consulting, a Living Wage Employer in Bolton to hold a Living Wage networking session. We attended the event along with 10 Bolton employers, some of whom are already Living Wage Employers and others who wanted to know more. The event was a great success and we will be working with colleagues in Bolton to work towards Bolton becoming a Living Wage Place.



Boo Consulting and Bolton Employers



Manchester writer and poet
Tony 'Longfella' Walsh

We also ran an extensive social media campaign to raise awareness of the importance and benefits of paying the real Living Wage. The campaign celebrated accredited employers and featured key GM figures photographed showing their commitment to the campaign for the Living Wage. We had a range of supporters from local authorities, trade unions, voluntary and community sector organisations and private business. We also had a pledge of support from Manchester poet Tony Walsh aka Longfella. The hashtag #GMLivingWage was widely used through the week on Twitter. We also shared information through our social media networks, to support the action taken by GM Citizens at Stockport Town Hall to lobby Stockport Council to become a Living Wage Employer.

If you want any more information about Living Wage Week in particular or the GM Living Wage Campaign in general then email the GM Living Wage Campaign Coordinator [John Hacking](#)

Follow the Greater Manchester Living Wage Campaign on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#)

Poverty, Destitution and Exploitation – Understanding the vulnerabilities of people homeless and rough sleeping to modern slavery by Tom Madden, STOP THE TRAFFIK

Exploitation is an under-reported but inextricable aspect of poverty. Traffickers are professionals at turning vulnerable peoples' desires for a better life into profit through the most vicious kinds of exploitation. While other elements of extreme poverty have been studied in great detail in the UK and around the world, the links between chronic poverty and exploitation are less well understood.



In the media and in public conversation, trafficking and exploitation are often portrayed as crimes that mostly effect people from outside the UK. Whether [recent arrests of the Czech sex trafficking ring in Levenshume and Gorton](#) or the tragedy of the [39 Vietnamese nationals found dead in the back of a Lorry](#) in Essex. What is often missing from the reporting is that in the UK, there are [three times more minors exploited from the UK than any other nationality](#) and UK adults are the 4th most frequently exploited demographic. Vulnerability to exploitation does not depend on the country you live in, but on the leverage traffickers can use to control and manipulate people for a profit. With the [UK's social safety net stripped in the wake of austerity](#) since 2010, [14 million people living below the poverty line](#) and [1.5 million destitute across the country](#), the number of people vulnerable to exploitation is huge.

One of the most vulnerable groups in the UK are people who are homeless or rough sleeping. Despite [decreases in the numbers of people with no place of safety](#) in Greater Manchester following the concentrated efforts of housing schemes like [A Bed Every Night](#), [the problem remains significant](#) and the number of people who are vulnerable to exploitation remains high. Previous research has demonstrated links between homelessness, rough sleeping and a vulnerability to trafficking and exploitation. The [Passage in London 2017 report](#) found that 64% of homelessness organisations have encountered modern slavery. The Modern Slavery Helpline [reports](#) that 276 cases connect modern slavery to homelessness. In addition, the links between rough sleeping and a vulnerability to trafficking have been [illustrated](#) in numerous [case studies](#).

Specifically, [Human Trafficking Foundation](#) and [Greater Manchester Combined Authority](#) identified attributes which increase rough sleepers' vulnerability including:

- A history of mental health issues
- Alcohol and drug dependency needs
- Former asylum seeker status
- Having no recourse to public funds

Between January and March 2019, STOP THE TRAFFIK circulated a survey aiming to understand the experiences of being targeted for exploitation from people who were rough sleeping, homeless, or accessing homeless services across Greater Manchester. Extensive findings from the survey are presented in a [full report](#).

The survey revealed that out of the 180 respondents:

- 29% had experienced being offered food, accommodation, drugs or alcohol in return for work
- 32% had witnessed or heard of it happening to someone else
- 21% had concerns over how safe or genuine these offers were
- 22% had warned someone, or been warned, not to take job offers from particular people or groups
- 17% had known someone go missing after taking up an offer of work
- 24% had not been paid wages that were promised to them after doing work

The report also includes quotes which viscerally characterise the exploitation taking place in the region every day:

"[People offer food, accommodation, drugs or alcohol to me] all the time - everyone who is rough sleeping gets asked to sex work or prostitute themselves"

"[I was] bullied... for not shoplifting. My feet was burnt down and I was thrown in the canal"



Tom Madden
Community Data Analyst
at STOP THE TRAFFIK

Having demonstrated the existence of the problem, STOP THE TRAFFIK and GMCA are collaborating on a second stage of the research and a multi-agency response to the issue. We will build a network of organisations working to support homeless and rough sleeping people across Greater Manchester and collate their understandings of the exploitation occurring in the communities that they support. We will then disseminate this shared learning, through training, awareness campaigns and literature to transform Greater Manchester's understanding and preventative strategy towards the exploitation to some of the most vulnerable people in our communities.

If you would like any more information about the report or would like to get involved in the upcoming preventative projects combatting exploitation in Greater Manchester, please get in touch by [email](#).

More information about [STOP THE TRAFFIK](#)

Growing food for community use

By Kalwant Gill-Faci



GMFA's [Greater Manchester Food Poverty Action Plan](#) calls for more food to be grown in GM communities, for sharing with people in need across the city region. In this article Kal Gill-Faci shows what can be done with even a relatively small plot of land.

At the launch of the Greater Manchester Food Poverty Action plan in March this year, I was volunteering at the charity Pledge and I pledged to continue my work helping homeless people and those suffering food poverty through my allotment in Trafford. This year we took on another half plot which we dedicated 100% for growing exclusively to donate to charities that support those in need.

The Plot for Poverty (Plot 7F) located at Humphrey Park Allotments in Stretford grows fruit and vegetables exclusively for donations and this year we partnered with the charity Reach out to the Community.



Weekly donations were delivered between mid-June to mid-November to the shop where food parcels are made up and handed out. A women-only hostel also received donations this year. Work on the plot is carried out all year round with the busiest months being February to August. I am ably assisted by my 2 children and my nephew's son and their contribution has been a massive help!



This is the third year that this work has continued and each year the donations have increased. In addition, we received a grant of approximately £500 from Trafford Housing Trusts' Social Investment Fund which was used to purchase much needed tools, materials and gardening supplies.

I also collect donations from the wider allotment community at Humphrey Park Allotments for distribution and the result is a car boot load almost every week!

This year we helped to provide an estimated 500+ food parcels during the 5-month period of donations.

I continue to share my work as much as possible through social media and speaking at conferences and events.

For any questions or enquiries about my work please send me an [email](#)



Kalwant Gill-Faci



Bite Back 2030

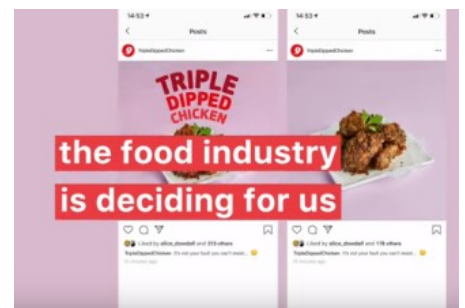
Bite Back 2030 is building a powerful movement of young people who want everyone to be given the opportunity to be healthy, no matter where we live.

Why? We are all up against a flood of unhealthy food, pouring out from fast food outlets, supermarket shelves and school canteens. As a result 3.3 million children are overweight and the UK has the worst childhood obesity rates in Western Europe

Bite Back 2030 want to close the floodgates but they believe we need to act now. They want to stem the tide of unhealthy foods and improve the flow of affordable, healthy options for young people. Bite Back 2030 exists to make sure this happens.

Bite Back 2030 [filmed a social experiment](#) that highlights the deliberate tactics used by the food industry to target young people with unhealthy options.

They also held a [launch event](#) with many celebrities and potential influencers attending. Follow their campaign on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#)



The pre-Christmas Food Collection

Christmas is only three weeks away. No doubt many people are looking forward to the festive season, perhaps some days off work, time with close family including excited small children and some treats for everyone. That is how its supposed to be but for too many people it's becoming increasingly difficult, with more than ever expected to need to use a food bank. [Data released earlier this year](#) shows April to September 2019 to be the busiest half-year period since the charity opened. During the six months, 823,145 three-day emergency food parcels were given to people in crisis in the UK; more than a third of these (301,653) went to children. This is a 23% increase on the same period in 2018 – the sharpest rate of increase the charity has seen for the past five years.



Record food collection for Stockport food banks

For 3 days at the end of November a team of volunteers from Stockport Foodbank ably supported by corporate volunteers from Astra Zenica and the Co-op Bank Manchester, received food donations from Tesco customers.

Over the 3 collecting days, a massive 6800kgs of food was donated, enough food for about 7500 meals which has now replenished the food bank warehouse in time for the 'Christmas rush'.

Stockport Foodbank Manager, Nigel Tedford, said, "We have been so humbled by the generosity of people particularly at this time of economic uncertainty. The donations that we have received will help us to meet the increase in food bank demand which we expect at this time of the year and our thanks must be expressed to all the Tesco customers for every tin and every packet. We hope that this level of generosity was matched all across the country."

Details about Stockport Foodbank can be obtained from their [website](#) or [Facebook page](#).

Welfare Reform Survey

Manchester City Council would like to understand how Manchester residents have been affected by Welfare Reform and Universal Credit. This is your chance to answer a few questions to tell Manchester City Council how Universal Credit is affecting your life. Your response will also be used to help the City Council and partners develop services to help you. Deadline for responses is December 18th, 2019 [Further information and to take part](#)



Forthcoming events



The Booth Centre offers regular drama and music workshops in partnership with [The Edge Theatre & Arts Centre](#).

Join them this season for their own modern version of Dickens' classic tale, A Christmas Carol.

Bournemouth Councillor John Peasley hates Christmas. He also hates anything that doesn't make a profit, so the opportunity to close the local library on Christmas Eve is one that he can't turn down. All seems lost until he is visited by the ghost of his old colleague Jack Marlow and by the ghosts of Christmas past, present and yet to come. Will they save the library? Will they save his soul?..... and will they save Christmas?

With songs, humour and our own inimitable style of entertainment, The Booth Centre promises to get you in the Christmas spirit (see what they did there?) and have you leaving the theatre with hope and love and not even a trace of humbug!



An Edge Production In Association With The Booth Centre

Date: Thursday December 12th, 2019 at 7.30pm – Friday 13th and Saturday 14th December 2019 at 3pm

Tickets: £12 full price £6 concessions [More information and book](#)

More forthcoming events

TOMORROW: Company Investigations workshop - The Meteor

Thursday December 5th, 2019 from 6.45 - 8.45pm at Methodist Central Hall, Oldham Street, Manchester M1 1JQ

This workshop will show you the techniques and tools needed to uncover information on any company you wish to investigate. The speaker is Peter Murray, former president of the National Union of Journalists and current lecturer in Journalism at the Manchester Metropolitan University. The cost of attending is £5 [More information and book](#)

The World's Big Sleep Out

Saturday December 7th 2019 at Lime Square, Openshaw



The World's Big Sleep Out Campaign was founded by Josh Littlejohn, the co-founder [Social Bite](#) based in Scotland which started as an Edinburgh sandwich shop offering employment and free food to homeless people. The event is run in partnership with the Institute for Global Homelessness, UNICEF USA, Malala Fund and Social Bite. Josh Littlejohn commented "As well as raising money and investing in charities that make a difference, we want to send a message to the World's political leaders to enact compassionate policy and find solutions for homelessness locally and the global refugee crisis that affects us all. By collectively sacrificing our beds for one cold night we can reach out a hand of compassion and solidarity with those who need it most – homeless people on our doorsteps and refugees internationally. Over 50,000 people sleeping out on a December night is a mandate for action." 50% of the funds raised go to Homeless Friendly, 50% will go to supporting people displaced internationally. [More information and to register](#)

Christmas Carol Service at Manchester Cathedral M1 1SX

Thursday December 19th, 2019 from 2.30 - 3.30pm followed by refreshments



A festive celebration and sing along to your favourite traditional Christmas Carols. Hear a special performance from the Booth Centre Streetwise Opera group. This service will celebrate the work of homeless services in our city, all are welcome. There will be a retiring collection in support of the Booth Centre. The event is free but please email [Nick](#) to register

Do you have any events that you'd like GMPA to publicise? Please [email us](#) with the details.



Understanding poverty measurement, definitions and data

Thursday February 6th, 2020 from 9.30am - 3.45pm at the Honeywell Centre, Oldham, OL8 3BP

Debates about whether poverty exists in the UK and how to define and measure it have raged for decades. A multitude of data is available that helps quantify poverty, but that wealth of data can make finding the most useful and best supporting evidence difficult. By the end of this one-day course participants will have developed an understanding of what key poverty datasets tell us, how best to access data sources and how to use this knowledge to support the work that they do. [More information and book.](#)

Maximising support for people on low incomes in the austerity era

Friday February 28th, 2020 from 9.30am - 3.45pm at Church House, 90 Deansgate, Manchester, M3 2GH.

This course will explore how to access and identify support for people on low incomes in the context of social security reforms and cuts. This course is for VCSE organisations who work with people experiencing poverty and who wish to understand how to maximise support for their service users and public sector professionals involved in service design and delivery. It will also be of interest to researchers seeking to understand the current social security landscape. [More information and book.](#)

For more information about Greater Manchester Poverty Action

please visit our [website](#), follow us on [Twitter](#) or visit our [Facebook](#) page.

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

Copies of previous newsletters are available on our [website](#) If you would like to submit an article please [get in touch](#) For more information please contact us by [email](#)

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



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