

Event: Levelling up isn't working

Book [here](#) to join us on Tuesday July 19th, 2022 for our event 'Levelling up isn't working – how do we locally prevent and reduce poverty across Greater Manchester?'.

With GMPA's [Greater Manchester Poverty Monitor 2022](#) demonstrating that the Government's levelling up agenda is failing to address poverty and socio-economic inequalities, we'll be coming together in July to explore what more we can do across the city region.



To be held at the Friends Meeting House in Manchester from 9.30am (for a 10am start) the event will examine the findings from the Monitor followed by a panel discussion focusing on boosting household income and financial resilience as the best means of preventing and reducing poverty locally.

Our Monitor has three aims. To:

1. Provide a useful resource for those seeking to gain a multi-dimensional picture of poverty in Greater Manchester
2. Raise the profile of poverty and inequality in Greater Manchester among stakeholders, including the VCSE sector, public bodies, academics, businesses and media
3. Equip stakeholders with the knowledge they need to tackle socio-economic disadvantage in their own activities, from policy development to service design, advocacy and campaigning.

Collectively, the statistics in the Monitor provide a detailed insight into poverty across the city region. They highlight the scale of poverty and inequality of outcomes, both within the city region and between the city region and the rest of England.

The Monitor details poverty data across a range of ten key themes: child poverty, debt, education, fuel, utilities and food, health, homelessness, housing, deprivation, the labour market and social security.

Key findings from the Monitor include:

- 25% of children across Greater Manchester live in poverty
- 181,588 households are experiencing fuel poverty
- 195,000 workers in our city region earn less than the Real Living Wage of £9.90 an hour
- The number of foodbanks and other providers supporting people on low incomes to meet basic food needs has doubled in 5 years

Further detail will be presented at the event by our CEO Graham Whitham. The panel discussion will follow and include:

- Professor Sarah Marie Hall, The University of Manchester.
- Maria Marshall, Project Manager at The Independent Food Aid Network.
- Steve Hughes, Chief Operating Officer at Citizens Advice Stockport, Oldham, Rochdale and Trafford.

We hope you can join us for what will be an interesting and important event on how we can locally prevent and reduce poverty during the cost-of-living crisis and beyond. Please register via [Eventbrite](#).

The new Manchester Living Rent – affordable housing that is easy to understand

Article provided by Manchester City Council



Manchester City Council has announced a new rent level called the Manchester Living Rent as a way to make sure more homes are affordable to Manchester people. The Manchester Living Rent (MLR) is a rent level that people on housing benefit can access, meaning new housing – regardless of where it is built – will be affordable to anyone in the city. This level of rent will be capped at the Local Housing Allowance level (or LHA). The LHA is the rent level set by the Government that will cover a person's rent if they are on housing benefit or Universal Credit.

The Manchester Living Rent is also cheaper to residents than the standard Government definition of Affordable Housing – or 80% of market value for a particular area.

By pricing new homes at this rent level, the Council can ensure that new housing can be accessed by as many people as possible – particularly those households on lower incomes. The Council's home building company, This City has already made a commitment that at least 20% of all the homes built by the company will be set at the Manchester Living Rent. And most Registered Providers and Housing Associations already cap their affordable homes at the Manchester Living Rent to ensure people on housing benefit can access their properties.

However, the ambition is that all Registered Providers and Housing Associations sign up to the Manchester Living Rent movement, as well as developers making a commitment to the Manchester Living Rent to improve access to affordable housing for Manchester residents.

Council Leader Cllr Bev Craig said of the new Manchester Living Rent: "I grew up in Council housing, my family still rely on it. I know first-hand the security that affordable housing can bring. This is something we care deeply about and something we are committed to improving in the city.

"We should and will do anything in our gift to bring homes to Manchester people that they need - and in places they want to live. Making sure we have the right kinds and supply of housing is vital to a successful city, including low-cost options.

"The Manchester Living Rent is important in that it creates a level playing field in housing affordability. It means that regardless of where the home is in the city, it can be affordable to anybody. It's a clear and straightforward way of describing what we mean - low-cost homes that people on a minimum wage can afford."

[Find out more about the Manchester Living Rent](#)

End Child Poverty Coalition: Talking about Poverty - Action Toolkit

by Rachel Walters, End Child Poverty Coalition Coordinator

The End Child Poverty coalition have launched their Action Toolkit, written for young people, by young people. This aims to encourage young people to understand the root causes of child poverty and develop campaigning solutions to address them.



You can download the whole toolkit, or individual sessions [here](#).



Government data shows that across the UK there were 3.9 million children living in poverty (after housing costs) between April 2020 and April 2021, which is a staggering 27% of all children.

Yet the needs of children and young people are often ignored by decision makers. For example there was no mention of child poverty in the 'Levelling Up' white paper, and recent costs of living interventions are being made without taking into account the number of children living in each family. The Action Toolkit was developed by several End Child Poverty Youth Ambassadors, with support from Dr Gill Main from Leeds University. Youth Ambassadors are young people who work alongside the coalition to ensure that the voices of 16 - 24-year-olds are heard by those in positions of power.

Money Matters – new programme from GMPA

By Graham Whitham, Chief Executive Officer

The cost-of-living crisis continues. At a time like this, when so many families are struggling, it is vital that they claim all the support they are entitled to. We know that hundreds of millions of pounds in benefits go unclaimed each year in Greater Manchester and that problem debt is compounding financial hardship for many households.

More needs to be done to maximise household incomes and to boost financial resilience. From this week, GMPA's new [Money Matters](#) project has begun delivering benefits and debt advice to parents/care givers of students at Trafford College, Lostock High School and Seymour Park Primary School.

Support is being provided by our trained Financial Inclusion Officer, on secondment from Citizens Advice. We want to deliver financial gains to parents and demonstrate the need for more projects that work with schools and other institutions to proactively identify people in need of financial support.



BENEFIT CHECKS



DEBT ADVICE



GRANT
SEARCH/APPLICATIONS



BUDGETING ADVICE



Evidence from this work will be used to support GMPA's policy and advocacy work, and the scaling up of the initiative across Greater Manchester should it prove successful. The programme is being funded by Kellogg's and making use Citizens Advice resources and systems. The programme will initially run until May 2023.

Graham Whitham

The importance of local anti-poverty strategies

By Alexis Darby, Head of Advocacy, Policy and Research

At GMPA we work with local authorities across Greater Manchester on the design and implementation of their anti-poverty strategies. As the cost-of-living crisis continues to hit more and more people, local councils have a key role to play in offering guidance and support to residents.

Occasionally places outside of the city region reach out to GMPA for support. Recently our CEO, Graham Whitham, met with Oxford City Council's child poverty review group to discuss steps the council could take to become an 'anti-poverty' council. It's great to see the publication of their report '[Child Poverty In Oxford](#)' which sets out recommendations for an anti-poverty strategy and includes taking a cash first approach to local welfare which gives residents maximum dignity, choice and control when accessing local welfare support. Crucially, this approach gets more money into people's pockets, boosts household income and is the preferred choice for individuals facing financial crisis rather than the use of food banks, vouchers or other in-kind support.

Across Greater Manchester, Salford has a robust anti-poverty strategy in place that focuses on creating a more inclusive borough by preventing people falling into poverty, providing targeted support for people struggling in poverty and campaigning for long term change in Government policies and practices.

We know that other boroughs are in the stages of updating their strategies and we are currently supporting Trafford Council and Manchester City Council on updating their anti-poverty strategies.

At GMPA we work to **prevent**
and **reduce** poverty across
Greater Manchester.



Communities in Control: A Week of Action

Communities in Control is a week of action, led by GMCVO in partnership with GM VCSE Leadership Group that marks the start of a sustained campaign to build awareness of the part VCSE organisations play in creating an economy that is more inclusive of those that have been increasingly left behind.

A programme of events is taking place during the first week of July across Greater Manchester which will showcase some of the ways in which VCSE organisations are enabling people and communities to take control of power and assets.

The week will kick off with a panel discussion on Monday July 4th, 2022 asking 'Community Ownership - a key ingredient in a thriving economy?' GMPA's CEO, Graham Whitham, will be a panel member.

[Click here to view the programme and book your place at one or more of the events](#)

**GREATER MANCHESTER
VCSE LEADERSHIP GROUP**
the sector's voice in Devolution

GMCVO

GM VCSE Work and Wellbeing Survey



As we know from our State of the VCSE sector research, there are around 75,000 paid staff and 500,000 volunteers working in charities, community groups, faith-based organisations and social enterprises across Greater Manchester. This is a massive workforce of people who are dedicated to doing good in their communities.

We also know from many conversations that the pandemic has had a major impact on workforce wellbeing, retention and recruitment in VCSE sector organisations and that there are inequalities within our sector, just as there are in communities.

Over the next 18 months, the sector's local infrastructure organisations across the city region will be working together to improve our support on workforce issues, including matters such as HR support, leadership development, workplace wellbeing and recruitment.

But before we do that, we want to find out what is important to you right now. With the support of GM Health and Social Care Partnership, we are working with RobertsonCooper to gather feedback.

[Complete the GM VCSE Work and Wellbeing survey](#) The survey closes on Monday July 4th at 5pm.

GMCA and Stay Nimble

Do you or anyone you know need help figuring out your next work move, or finding a path to better-paid employment? You may be eligible for 6 hours of free one-to-one online support from a qualified career coach, if you're living in Greater Manchester, are aged 50+ and are in receipt of one or more benefit (Universal Credit, Job Seeker's Allowance, Employment Support Allowance, Housing Benefit, Child Tax Credit, Working Tax Credit or Personal Independence Payment). Details of the programme including full eligibility criteria are available on the [Stay Nimble website](#).

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](#).

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

Views expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily the views of GMPA. We try to fact-check all articles and events, but if you notice an error please [let us know](#) so we can correct it in a future newsletter.