

Mini budget - GMPA's response

The government has no strategy to tackle poverty

In the mini-budget statement on September 23rd, Chancellor Kwasi Kwarteng unveiled his “growth plan”, announcing the country’s largest package of tax cuts in 50 years. He axed the 45% income tax band for people who earn over £150,000, a policy that has since been reversed, and removed the cap on bankers’ bonuses.

It isn’t just these policies that favour the rich. Measures such as cutting stamp duty and capping energy prices will disproportionately benefit the rich.

The government’s measures are a win-win for the richest in the country, whilst the poorest households who have been struggling for years but even more so now, have been abandoned. The Resolution Foundation said that despite Monday’s U-turn, the richest households would still gain almost 40 times as much as poorer families from policies announced in the mini-budget. Their initial analysis suggested only 12% of the gains will go to the poorest half of households, who will be just £230 better off on average next year.



Instead of targeted measures to mitigate the impact of rising costs, the government has chosen to punish low-income households by introducing [a tougher benefits policy for around 120,000 part-time workers](#).

It is impossible to justify the decisions made to drive growth when we are facing the biggest drop in living standards for generations. The [IMF](#) has criticised the government’s proposals, warning that tax cuts could speed up price rises and increase inequality.

Furthermore, according to a 2020 study by [LSE’s International Inequalities Institute](#), keeping tax low for the rich does not boost the economy or jobs. They used data from 18 OCED countries, including the UK and US, over the last five decades and found major tax cuts lead to higher income inequality.

The government does not have a strategy to tackle poverty, and the lack of action will increase inequality throughout the country. This will take an enduring toll on the poorest communities and younger generations to come.

At GMPA, we believe we need a new up-to-date cost-of-living support package that is targeted at low-income households, i.e. those who need the most support. This should be the first step to better long-term planning to address poverty that includes scrapping damaging policies such as the bedroom tax and two child limit on certain benefits.

Job Opportunity at GMPA

Senior Policy and Research Advisor



We are seeking a Senior Policy and Research Advisor to help drive forward our policy and research work, supporting us to achieve even greater impact. We want Greater Manchester to be at the forefront of efforts to prevent and reduce poverty. In this new position, the successful applicant will play a central role in enabling that to happen. Further information, full particulars and a job description are available on our [website](#).

Permanent contract: 5 days a week (35 hours). Salary range: £37,000 to £41,500, depending on experience.

How to apply: To apply, please send a two page CV and covering letter (of no more than three pages) to [Chris](#) by 5pm on Tuesday October 25th, 2022. **Please note: Your covering letter must address how you meet the items set out in the person specification section of the job description. Applications that fail to do this will not be considered.**

Interviews will take place mid to late November.

For an informal conversation about the role please contact [Graham Whitham](#).

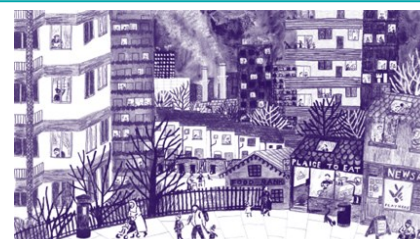
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We strongly encourage candidates of all different backgrounds and identities to apply. We welcome applications from people with lived experience of poverty.

What can we do about the cost-of-living crisis?

By Uisce Jordan, [Changing Realities Project](#)

The release of the Chancellor's 'mini-budget' on the September 23rd has left me, and many others, feeling quite helpless as we worry about rising levels of poverty and inequality. As media increasingly reports on the cost of living emergency it's hard not to feel overwhelmed and isolated. That is why now, more than ever, genuinely participatory projects such as 'Changing Realities' are important.



Changing Realities is an opportunity for families struggling and those living on low-incomes to join as a collective voice and advocate for real change. The project brings together experts by experience with researchers, artists, and Child Poverty Action Group to make change happen. By nature of being an online project, it also allows us to connect with people from all across the UK. I am based in Belfast and can understand how, despite certain differences in the social security system in Northern Ireland, we face many of the same difficulties as people from other parts of the UK. By connecting online, we become a larger community that can laugh together, learn from each other, and share experiences, good and bad.

What's involved?

We share the everyday realities of life on a low income, but we also want to try to change things – improving the lives of those struggling to get by. Together we discuss solutions to the issues affecting people such as housing, work, low-wages, childcare, food, health, fuel, debt and access to public services. We accomplish this through online diaries, virtual workshops, skill-building activities and much more. We support people to speak directly to the media about the reality of living on a low income. You can do as much or as little as feels right for you.



Uisce Jordan

If you're a parent or carer with children under 19, and you're on a low income, we'd really like to work with you, please [get in touch](#) for more details. Together, we can document the realities of this cost-of-living crisis.

Email: changing-realities-project@york.ac.uk Twitter: @changing_r

Changing Realities is funded by abrdn Financial Fairness Trust.



Challenge Poverty Week in England and Wales

By Niall Cooper, Church Action on Poverty

Are you ready? It's time to come together with people and groups around Greater Manchester and across the country, for the third Challenge Poverty Week in England and Wales.

This year, the week is focusing on dignity, looking at how that can be maintained for everyone amid the cost-of-living emergency.

The week runs from October 17th to 23rd 2022, and one of the launch events is happening here in Manchester, on Monday 17th. Local people with first-hand experience of poverty and low-income will meet with local politicians, organisations and business people at Central Hall, from 10am to 3pm.

You don't need to be a big organisation to take part though... everyone can and should get involved in Challenge Poverty Week. After all, we all want to live with dignity – to be treated as fully human, to have choices and be able to participate in our community. But this winter, the soaring cost of living will deny that dignity to millions of people. People will be forced to go hungry, or cold, and to make agonising choices about which fundamental essentials they will have to go without.

We want to speak up together, challenging the unjust systems and policies that are causing and exacerbating poverty, but also celebrating the work of people, organisations and communities across England and Wales who are coming together to uphold people's dignity at this time.

Challenge Poverty Week will be a chance for people and communities facing poverty to stand up with dignity, share stories, and speak out for a just solution to the cost-of-living crisis. This is the third time Challenge Poverty Week has been held in England and Wales, following on from its success over the past decade in Scotland.

Your group could organise a discussion or storytelling session, join in the discussion online, invite politicians or journalists to one of your organisation's regular events or sessions, or write to your MPs and councillors to say what needs to change.

Challenge Poverty Week is an opportunity to highlight the incredible work being done by community groups around the country, and to show what can and must be done differently.

Last year, we saw the publication of new report into how people on low incomes were affected during the pandemic, lots of fascinating discussions, meetings with politicians and journalists, and the Greater Manchester Big Poverty Conversation. This year, we are looking forward to a further mixture of online and in-person events, including film screenings, meetings with politicians, church discussions, and a wide range of campaigns around the cost-of-living.

Online activities can be just as effective as offline ones - sometimes even more so. You can reach more people without geographic or travel barriers, and some people are more comfortable sharing with an online meeting than addressing a busy room of people. Do bear in mind, however, that not everyone has good internet access – so judge for yourself whether to make your event physical or digital.

The week's aims are to:

- Build awareness and support for long-term sustainable responses to the pandemic and cost-of-living emergency, that focus on enhancing the dignity and agency of people in poverty.
- Raise voices in unison against poverty and shine a light on visions for a more just, compassionate and opportunity-filled country.
- Show what is already being done at community level to challenge and alleviate poverty.
- Change the conversation around poverty and help end the stigma.

You can download the Challenge Poverty Week toolkit, packed with ideas and tips, [HERE](#).

Let's speak up as one, stand up for dignity, and challenge poverty together!



Niall Cooper

Policy and research - latest news

We are providing a summary of the latest news and policy developments to keep you up to date with what is happening across the UK. To find out more, click [here](#).



A rising number of poor families in Glasgow are being forced to live on £115 per week below the [poverty](#) line on average, a report shows. [Read more.](#)

Concerns Coventry children are not claiming free school meals due to 'stigma'. [Read more.](#)

The cost-of-living crisis could add £3.7bn to the costs of delivering adult social care, the County Councils Network has warned. [Read more.](#)



The Progressive Economy Forum (PEF) said the poorest tenth of families could face bills amounting to 47% of their disposable income this winter, even after the support from the Prime Minister's energy price guarantee is taken into account. [Read more.](#)

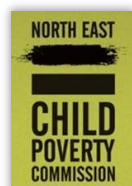
More than 3 million people in the north of England are at risk of social exclusion as a result of poor transport services, research has found. [Read more.](#)

Analysis by The Children's society indicates that around one in eight children aged between 10 and 15-years-old were unhappy in school in 2019/2020. The charity also found that around 6% were unhappy with their lives overall, having carried out a survey of more than 2,000 children aged between 10 and 17 in the UK, as well as their parent or carer. Data published by the UK Understanding Society, covering 40,000 UK households annually, indicates that on average, happiness with life as a whole, friends, appearance and school were all significantly lower in the latest figures than a decade previously in 2009/2010. [Read more.](#)



According to the Resolution Foundation, households in London and the south-east could gain an average of £1,600 next year from Friday's fiscal statement. This is three times as much as those in Wales, the north-east and [Yorkshire](#), which it predicts will gain an average of £500. [Read more.](#)

Research developments

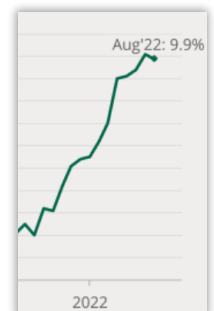


Almost two in five children in the North East (38%) are living in poverty. This rises to almost half (47%) of NE children living in a household with an under 5. Both are now the highest rates of any UK nation or region, with the North East experiencing by far the steepest increases in child poverty in the country in recent years. [Read more.](#)

The Kerslake Commission on Homelessness and Rough Sleeping has published a new report which assesses the steps made towards ending rough sleeping in England and considers the impact of the current economic crisis. [Read more.](#)

This briefing gives an overview of rising prices, particularly food, energy and fuel prices, including the effect of the conflict in Ukraine. It outlines Government support as well as how inflation, interest rates and other policies which will affect household budgets. [Read more.](#)

The cost-of-living crisis is hitting people living in rural areas harder than those living in towns and cities, according to a new report. In rural areas, these median earnings amount to £23,117 per annum across all workers, and £28,065 for full time workers, compared to £24,540 and £29,612 respectively in predominantly urban areas. [Read more.](#)



Cost-of-living is directly harming child health, paediatricians warn. A survey of nearly 500 paediatricians by the college found that almost two thirds (60%) believed that the crisis was already affecting the health and wellbeing of children. [Read more.](#)

Greater Manchester Real Living Wage Campaign Update



New Real Living Wage Rate Announced

The new Real Living Wage rate has been announced and it is **£10.90 per hour**.

To help millions deal with the cost-of-living crisis the [Living Wage Foundation](#) brought the announcement of the new rate forward to September 22nd. Usually announced in November as part of Living Wage Week, the new rate was announced early this year to encourage employers to pay staff the increased rate as soon as possible. Unlike the Government's National Living Wage for over 23-year-olds, the Real Living Wage is the only wage rate independently calculated based on the actual cost of living, and it also applies to workers over the age of 18. A full-time worker earning the new, Real Living Wage will earn £1,950 a year more as a result of the uplift. The Living Wage Foundation estimates that the increase in the Real Living Wage rate will result in a pay increase for at least 18,000 low paid workers in Greater Manchester.

500th Greater Manchester Real Living Wage Accredited Employer Announced

Alongside the announcement of the new Real Living Wage rate is the great news that the [Octagon Theatre in Bolton](#) has become the 500th employer based in Greater Manchester to be accredited as a Living Wage Employer by the Living Wage Foundation. The 500 accredited companies and organisations employ over 120,000 people. Please go to the GMPA website for a full list of the current [Real Living Wage Employers in Greater Manchester](#).

The GM Real Living Wage Action Group, led by the Mayor of Greater Manchester, Andy Burnham is driving forward Greater Manchester's Living Wage City Region campaign, and GMPA is playing a key role in the Action Group as both a member and as Chair of the Campaign Group which is supporting organisations and individuals to promote the Real Living Wage in Greater Manchester.



More information about the local campaign can be found on GMPA's website [here](#).

Best Wishes,
Greater Manchester Living Wage Campaign Co-ordinator [John Hacking](#)

Twitter: [@GMLivingWage](#) Facebook: [facebook.com/gmlivingwage](#)

The Greater Manchester Living Wage Campaign is run by Greater Manchester Poverty Action.

Manchester Homelessness Partnership Relaunch

On October 10th, 2022 from 12 - 4pm at Central Methodist Hall, Oldham Street, Manchester, M1 1JQ

The Relaunch of the Manchester Homelessness Partnership will bring together cross-sector organisations to pledge their commitment to ending homelessness in Manchester. Six years after the original launch of the Partnership in 2016, the Relaunch will be an opportunity to reflect on and celebrate the achievements of the Partnership so far, as well as look to the future and plan the next steps of the Partnership. The day will include keynote speakers from the partnership. [Reserve your place here](#).



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.