

Anti-poverty strategies report launch

Thank you to everyone who attended the webinar launch of our latest report, [Local anti-poverty strategies: Good practice and effective approaches](#) a fortnight ago. We are encouraged by the interest the report has received. You can view the slides and watch the webinar recording [here](#).

Manchester City Council launches its new Anti-Poverty Strategy

On Monday February 27th, 2023 Manchester City Council launched their renewed Anti-Poverty Strategy as part of their commitment to 'Making Manchester Fairer'. The launch event held at the People's History Museum brought together elected members, council officers and partner organisations from across the city to discuss the new strategy. The strategy which builds on its predecessor 'The Family Poverty Strategy', has a strong commitment to partnership working and a recognition that collaboration with residents and organisations is key to the successful delivery of the strategy.



**MANCHESTER
CITY COUNCIL**

The Anti-Poverty Strategy draws upon evidence from residents, organisations and national research to provide recommendations to tackle poverty, its causes and its consequences.

Introducing the strategy, Councillor Bev Craig, leader of Manchester City Council, acknowledged that whilst Manchester is a thriving city, recent economic challenges have exacerbated longstanding inequalities that disproportionately impact certain communities. Cllr Craig said "We recognise that no one person or organisation holds all the levers to address poverty. It is now more important than ever that we work together across our city to take tangible actions to tackle poverty. We all have a shared responsibility to ensure no one gets left behind".

Dr Cordelle Ofori, Deputy Director of Public Health for Manchester outlined that the strategy has four key themes: preventing poverty, mitigating poverty, pathways out of poverty and inclusive and effective delivery, and beneath these themes there are 50 specific action points the council will be taking as part of this strategy. Dr Ofori encouraged the individuals and organisations in the room to consider their own role in contributing to Making Manchester Fairer.

A panel Q&A session was held and the panel members included GMPA's CEO Graham Whitham who contributed to a discussion on the role of the private sector in tackling poverty across the city and highlighted good examples such as Kellogg's funding the GMPA Money Matters programme. The panel discussion focussed heavily on the importance of involving those with lived experience of poverty in the development, delivery and governance of the strategy and councillors urged attendees at the launch to apply to become part of the Making Manchester Fairer Programme Board and the Communities and Power Forum. Closing the Q&A panel, Graham Whitham raised the importance of public bodies such as Manchester City Council voluntarily adopting the socio-economic duty which would require these bodies to actively consider the way in which their decisions increase or decrease inequalities that result from socio-economic disadvantage.

In summing up the event, Deputy Leader Cllr Joanna Midgley, who is the Executive Member with responsibility for Reducing Poverty and Tackling Inequalities, looked forward to delivering this strategy across the city over the next five years. Cllr Midgley recognised the ambition of the strategy but highlighted that by taking collective action, there is much that can be done to make life easier for people experiencing poverty and emphasised the importance of a dual responsive and reactive approach.

A key theme of the launch event was collaboration and it was encouraging to see so many ambitious and optimistic organisations represented in the room. GMPA looks forward to working with Manchester City Council and its partners on delivering the Anti-Poverty Strategy over the next five years.

The report 'Making Manchester Fairer: Anti-Poverty Strategy 2023 - 2027 can be accessed [here](#).

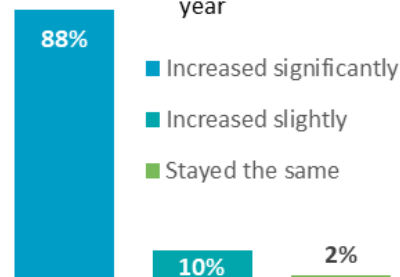
Save the date: Fuel poverty in Greater Manchester March 30th 2023

Coinciding with the launch of our new report, *Warm this Winter*, on Thursday March 30th, 2023, GMPA will be holding an online event exploring fuel poverty in Greater Manchester. This event will discuss the findings of qualitative and quantitative research conducted by GMPA into experiences of fuel poverty across Greater Manchester, both among those living on low incomes and in GM's VCSE sector. It will also consider ways forward, outlining the suggestions put forward by our network and those of people with lived experience of poverty.

The findings detailed in our report reflect wider trends towards increasing economic precarity and hardship among people on low incomes. Our research shows that the impacts of fuel poverty are wide ranging and significant, with detrimental effects on physical and mental health, as well as on quality of life. Local organisations are also struggling to cope with rising need, with 98% of our survey respondents who work within organisations that support people in poverty having experienced increased demand since the same time last year.

With the rising cost-of-living making it harder for people to afford their fuel bills, we'll be inviting you to attend our virtual event on March 30th where we'll be presenting the research findings and discussing where we can go from here. Please keep a look out for details of how to book onto the event next week.

Changes in demand for advice or support with fuel poverty/heating costs compared to this time last year



Call for Free School Meals expansion

from a press release by The Food Foundation

New data released last week from The Food Foundation shows the number of households where children are not getting enough nutritious food has nearly doubled in the past year.

In January 2023, 21.6% of households with children reported that their children had directly experienced food insecurity in the past month, affecting an estimated 3.7 million children. This is compared with 11.6% in January 2022.

These findings come alongside the first national modelling of support for Free School Meals expansion across England's parliamentary constituencies, which shows overwhelming support (72%) for Government action.

Expanding Free School Meals nationwide, which has been the basis of the [Feed the Future campaign](#), has been made even more urgent following the [Mayor of London's announcement](#) last week that he will be funding Free School Meals for all primary schoolchildren in the capital as a one-year emergency measure from September 2023.

The London initiative puts further pressure on national Government to honour its levelling up commitment, given the postcode lottery of access to Free School Meals between London and the rest of England where the eligibility annual household income threshold remains at £7,400 (after tax, excluding benefits).

England also lags far behind the devolved nations. Scotland and Wales are rolling out Universal Free School Meals in primary schools, and in Northern Ireland the income threshold is double that of England (£14,000).



The Food Foundation launched a new [#FeedtheFuture](#) campaign to call on Government to extend Free School Meals to more children. You can support the campaign [here](#).

Further information is available [here](#).

Greater Manchester Real Living Wage Campaign Update



It's good to be able to start this update with the positive news that Trafford Council agreed recently to apply for accreditation as a Real Living Wage Employer. Great news for hundreds of workers struggling with the cost-of-living crisis.

Trafford Council Leader Councillor Tom Ross said: "One of our corporate priorities is to support people out of poverty and paying the Real Living Wage is a key action in responding to the cost-of-living crisis at a time when costs are increasing. We have also agreed to apply for Living Wage Accreditation which formally recognises and celebrates employers who choose to go further than the government's minimum hourly rate." You can hear Tom talking about this exciting development on the latest GMPA podcast by going to [Councillor Tom Ross Podcast](#)

On February 8th GMPA's John Hacking and Laura Burgess attended an event organised by the Work and Equalities Institute at the University of Manchester. At the event we, along with representatives of trade unions, activists and academics discussed whether and how local good employment charters could influence employers to improve their employment practices including paying the Real Living Wage. The workshop formed part of a research project exploring how local employment charters attempt to influence and regulate employers at local level, taking in experiences across the GM City Region. A report on the points arising from the event will be shared in a future update.

This year, on July 6th, the Living Wage Champion Awards will be held in Manchester. If you know an individual or organisation that has made an outstanding contribution to the drive to tackle low pay and poverty through the Real Living Wage Campaign this is a great opportunity to get them some recognition. Put your nominations in at [Living Wage Champion Awards](#)

At the time of writing, there are 613 accredited Real Living Wage Employers in Greater Manchester, up 22 since the last update. We are on track with the action plan target of 650 accredited employers by the end of 2023.

John was pleased to attend the recent GM Real Living Wage Action Plan Steering Group meeting and planning is underway for the next Campaign Strand meeting on March 17th.



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

Best Wishes,

[John Hacking](#)

Greater Manchester

Living Wage Campaign Coordinator

You can follow the GM Living Wage Campaign on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#).

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

Tameside in Work

The Tameside in Work programme has been given funding for another year, enabling them to continue providing support to residents who are looking to increase earnings and/or working hours. The scheme is open to people who are already in employment, on low pay or self-employed, who want to participate on a voluntary basis and receive support tailored to their needs.

Are you a Tameside Resident?
Are you in employment on low pay or are self-employed?
Would you like free professional support to upskill or increase your earnings?

TAMESIDE IN WORK
#inworkprogression

If you are interested in this opportunity sign up now!
Email tamesideinwork@tameside.gov.uk
Call 07849310786 Sign up at www.tameside.gov.uk/tamesideinwork

Tameside Metropolitan Borough
NHS Tameside and Glossop Clinical Commissioning Group

Policy and Research updates



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.

The number of UK children in food poverty has nearly doubled in the last year to almost 4 million. After energy costs, the rocketing price of putting a meal on the table is now the biggest single pressure on low-income household budgets. [Read more.](#)

The number of households in [England](#) who spend more than 10% of their income, excluding housing costs, on energy has increased from 4.93m households in 2021 to 7.39m in 2022. Consumer champion Martin Lewis and over 100 organisations - including GMPA - have called on the Government to extend the energy price guarantee. [Read more.](#)

It will take 300 years for the government to meet its end-of-decade energy efficiency targets for British homes at its current rate of progress, warned fuel poverty charity National Energy Action (NEA). [Read more.](#)

One in five parents and carers are spending less on books for their children because of the cost-of-living crisis, and a quarter have asked children to borrow more books from the school library, new research has found. [Read more.](#)



Almost a third (29%) of British adults say that the current cost of living crisis is impacting their ability to do their job properly. Younger generations are the group most struggling with worries about making ends meet at work, with 35% of 25–34-year-olds agreeing with this statement. [Read more.](#)

According to the ONS survey, which was released today, 92% of students revealed that their cost of living had increased over the past year with bills making up the lion share of their expenses. The survey also found that 46% of respondents reported their mental health and well-being had worsened. [Read more.](#)

More tenants (61%) are finding it difficult to pay their energy bills than people who have their own property, according to the [Office for National Statistics \(ONS\)](#). [Read more.](#)

More than four in 10 of the population expect to save no money whatsoever over the next year, according to the Office for National Statistics (ONS). Pay growth is failing to keep pace with prices, forcing people to use cash they may have usually saved to fund spending. [Read more.](#)

More than 600,000 working-age households on means-tested benefits will still have less income in 2023–24 than if benefits had simply kept pace with inflation during the crisis, despite the flat-rate ‘cost of living’ payments. [Read more.](#)

Quarter of UK households regularly run out of money for essentials, survey says. [Read more.](#)



New research from Citizens Advice shows 1.6 million children currently live in privately rented homes with damp, mould or excessive cold. The charity’s analysis suggests more than half of private renters in England - 2.7 million households - are struggling with one or more of these issues right now. [Read more.](#)

Reminder: Household Support Fund (HSF) 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024: The expectation is that the HSF will be used to support households in the most need; particularly those who may not be eligible for the other support the government has recently made available but who are nevertheless in need and who require crisis support. The HSF is intended to cover a wide range of low-income households in need including families with children of all ages, pensioners, unpaid carers, care leavers and disabled people. [Read more.](#)

The cost-of-living crisis will continue to intensify as inflation soars and government support lags. Organisations and campaigners must continue to call on the government to do more to tackle the harsh economic realities for the most vulnerable. More articles are available on our [website](#).

Boosting household incomes with Money Matters

GMPA's Money Matters programme has so far helped Trafford and Manchester families to gain more than £100,000 in household income.

Money Matters has been running since last June in partnership with Citizens Advice SORT (Stockport, Oldham Rochdale and Trafford), with a Financial Inclusion Officer providing debt and benefit advice via local schools. The programme has now grown to supporting families in eight schools, reaching them via newsletters, classroom update apps and events such as parents' evenings.

Money Matters at GMPA supports people to maximise their household income and manage debts, with a trained advisor available to reach families via schools in Trafford and Manchester.

We have helped families gain more than **£80,000** in income since June 2022.



Support for families has included help with budgeting, applying for grants to buy essential items such as cookers and beds, and clearing utility debts. Most of the £100,000 income gain has come from ongoing benefits support, which means that the cumulative impact of this work will be even higher.

Money Matters is already confirming that having access to effective support is crucial for families living in poverty or at risk of being affected by poverty. In one example, a family was identified as missing out on nearly £1000 per month of eligible benefits, a "life-changing" amount according to the parent who contacted us.

Not every family who engages with Money Matters is eligible for further support, however this approach of reaching people via school settings has proven the difference that it can make. This is particularly the case when we engage with families who are being forced to make difficult budgeting decisions, and advice services across the UK, including Citizens Advice, are reporting unprecedented demand.



Elaine Riozzi

We would like to thank our Financial Inclusion Officer, Elaine Riozzi for her commitment to Money Matters. Elaine was on secondment with GMPA and has now returned to a role within Citizens Advice SORT.

We would therefore like to welcome our new Financial Inclusion Officer, Manjeet McCartney to her role. Manjeet is also joining us from Citizens Advice SORT, with significant experience in providing debt and benefit advice.

There will be further updates on the Money Matters programme in future newsletters. We will also be conducting a formal evaluation of the programme over the summer, before sharing the findings from this via our network and partners.

We would like to thank Kellogg's for their continued support of Money Matters, and all partners who are helping to make this work possible, including Citizens Advice SORT and local schools.



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.

