

New statistics show the scale of child poverty across the UK



By Rachel Walters, Coordinator at the End Child Poverty Coalition

On 5 June, Loughborough University and the End Child Poverty Coalition - of which GMPA is a member - published the latest local child poverty statistics.

This research takes a closer look at child poverty levels in each local authority and Westminster constituency across the UK. Whilst the government produce national figures for child poverty, this research allows us to look at changes at a local and regional level.

Researchers at Loughborough University use government data to calculate these figures, alongside information on local rent levels - meaning these figures are 'after housing costs' and take into account the income available to a family once rent, water rates, mortgage interest payments, insurance payments, ground rent and service charges are paid.

Sadly, the results from this year's research are shocking; for example, Birmingham constituencies have the highest levels of child poverty for any Westminster constituency - with child poverty in Birmingham Ladywood at 54.6%. Detail on the figures for Greater Manchester can be found on the following page.

The government data which is used for this research is always a year old, meaning this year's figures cover 2021/22, which is just six months into the cost-of-living crisis. It won't be until next year that we see the true impact soaring living costs has had.

This year's research not only looks at where levels of child poverty are the highest, but also which family types are most likely to experience poverty. We found that:

- 71% of children who were in poverty, after the cost of housing is taken into account, were living in a family where at least one adult was working.
- The poverty rate for children in families with three or more children was 42%, compared with 23% and 22% among children in families with one or two children.
- Children living in a family where someone is disabled had a poverty rate of 36% after housing costs were factored in, compared with 25% for children living in families where no-one is disabled.
- 47% of children in Asian or Asian British households and 53% of those in Black households were in poverty after housing costs, compared with just 25% of those where the head of household was White.

High levels of child poverty shouldn't be tolerated by decision makers, and we know that decisions made by MPs have the ability to change children's lives. The Coalition is calling on the UK government to scrap the two-child limit to benefit payments as this is the most cost-effective way of reducing child poverty. Getting rid of this policy would immediately lift 250,000 children out of poverty.

[Please take action, emailing your MP today](#) – letting them know that you want change for the 4.2 million children who live in a low-income family in the UK.

The End Child Poverty Coalition is made up of over 101 organisations including child welfare groups, social justice groups, faith groups, trade unions and others. Together with a group of 18 Youth Ambassadors we all believe that no child in the UK should live in poverty. We ask that this and future governments, commit to end child poverty.



"I endured the physical impacts of poverty such as owning little furniture, sleeping on the floor and going without the luxury of heating and hot water during the winter.

"Living in a low income family even prevented me travelling to school – and my mum would tell the school we were ill because we had no money for petrol to take us."

- Iv, 17-year-old Youth Ambassador for the End Child Poverty Coalition

More than a third of children in Greater Manchester living in poverty



By Hollie Griss, Communications and Media Officer at Greater Manchester Poverty Action

At Greater Manchester Poverty Action, we have been leading on North West publicity for the [End Child Poverty Coalition's new figures](#). Here's a closer look at the local and regional picture.

The new local child poverty statistics for Greater Manchester are stark. They show that 37% of children and young people in the city region are living in poverty - or the equivalent of a staggering 11 children in a classroom of 30.

The highest levels are in Manchester where this figure reaches 44.7% of all children and young people, closely followed by Oldham (43.6%) and Bolton (41.6%).

Alarming, four of the city region's local authorities also now feature in the list of the twenty council areas with the highest child poverty rates in the whole of the UK – **with Manchester having the third highest child poverty rate in the country**.

Across the North West as a whole the number of children living in poverty has seen a worrying increase in the last 7 years, rising 5.4 percentage points since 2014/15. During this time, child poverty only rose by one percentage point across the UK.

What do the figures mean?

While these new figures are shocking, they are sadly not surprising. Child poverty rates have been rising in Greater Manchester for a number of years, and inadequate government support means there is no safety net when something like the pandemic or cost-of-living crisis hits.

It's deeply concerning that the UK government has no plan or strategy to address poverty. Crisis responses and temporary sticking plasters are very clearly not working, and we really need to see real policy change that protects and supports our poorest households.



"We went without eating properly to make sure the kids were fed. I wasn't able to do anything with the kids, like treat them or take them out.

"Christmas was very hard and we relied on present donations, which made me feel useless."

- a mum-of-four from Stretford supported by GMPA

What can we do locally?

While many of the main drivers to tackle poverty lie with central government, there are ways we can reduce poverty locally.

1) Adoption of the Real Living Wage: the Real Living Wage (RLW) reflects the real cost of living in a way that the statutory minimum set by government doesn't. Employers paying the RLW plays a vital role in addressing low pay and boosting household income. For organisations looking to become accredited RLW employers, visit our [GM Living Wage Campaign](#) page.

2) Local anti-poverty strategies: anti-poverty strategies implement robust responses to poverty. For local authorities looking to take a strategic approach to poverty, take a look at our [best practice](#).

3) Cash-first use of Household Support Fund: the Household Support Fund can be used to give families money rather than in-kind support such as food parcels and energy vouchers, maximising choice, flexibility and dignity for individuals in receipt of support. For local authorities looking to take a cash-first approach to the delivery of the HSF, see our [best practice briefing](#).

For more information on the Greater Manchester statistics, see our [GM press release](#). For more on the figures across the wider North West region, see our [North West press release](#).

You can also hear CEO Graham Whitham talking more about the statistics for the North West in [an interview with BBC Radio Lancashire](#).



Making Rother fairer for all: adopting the socio-economic duty



By Helen Flynn, Head of Policy, Research and Campaigns at Just Fair

On Wednesday 24 May 2023, Rother District Council became the latest local authority in England to voluntarily adopt the Socio-economic Duty, contained in Section 1 of the Equality Act.

[The Duty is an important tool for tackling inequalities](#) resulting from socio-economic disadvantage. With our partners in the 1ForEquality campaign, Just Fair has been campaigning for the government to commence the Duty and encourage and support its voluntary adoption by local authorities across England.

The voluntary adoption of the Duty marks the latest milestone in a very conscious journey by Rother District Council to tackle socio-economic inequality.

Rother's Anti-Poverty Strategy

In 2019 the newly elected Rother Labour Group began calls for an Anti-Poverty Strategy, as part of the 'Rother Alliance' coalition, and later that year the Anti-Poverty Task and Finish Group was established. Consultations were held with local organisations and stakeholders, before a strategy was drafted and put out to consultation. A final version of the [Anti-Poverty Strategy for 2022-2027](#) was adopted by Rother District Council in September 2022.

Taking the next step – the Socio-economic Duty

But the journey towards a fairer Rother was only beginning. In September 2022 the Chair of the Anti-Poverty Task and Finish Group, Cllr Sam Coleman, also proposed that Rother District Council voluntarily adopt the Duty, noting:

“Further work is needed to address more immediate problems that have developed in part because of the financial fall out of the Covid-19 pandemic and the current cost of living crisis, both of which have occurred since the initial remit of the Anti-Poverty Strategy was developed.”

During his time working on Rother's Anti-Poverty Strategy, Cllr Coleman had taken part in [Greater Manchester Poverty Action's work on anti-poverty strategies](#), where he was introduced to the Socio-economic Duty.

In seeking levers to compliment the Anti-Poverty Strategy to better tackle socio-economic inequality, Cllr Coleman became an advocate for the voluntary adoption of the Duty by Rother District Council.

Making Rother fairer for all – adopting the Socio-economic Duty

During the Council session on 24 May 2023, Cllr Coleman noted that in adopting the Duty,

“We are sending a message to our residents that we care.”

In seconding the motion, his colleague, Cllr Bayliss added,

“The Duty is far more than a symbolic gesture. It strengthens our commitment to make Rother fairer for all.”

On Rother's voluntary adoption of the Duty, Graham Whitham, Chief Executive Officer of GMPA commented:

“GMPA has been working hard with local authorities and other public bodies across the city region on voluntary adoption of the Socio-economic Duty. In the aftermath of the pandemic and in the context of the cost-of-living crisis, more and more public service delivery organisations are recognising the intersection between socio-economic disadvantage and equalities issues. They want support and tools to ensure policy and practice takes into account the needs of low-income residents. The Socio-economic Duty has an important role to play in this.

“We've been pleased to work closely with Just Fair, The Equality Trust and others to increase awareness of the Duty. We were delighted to hear that our conversations with Rother District Council led to them adopting the Duty. It illustrates the value of sharing local approaches that respond to socio-economic disadvantage.”

In the journey Rother District Council is taking they have shown there are many actions local authorities can take to ensure greater fairness, and tools such as anti-poverty strategies and voluntary adoption of the Socio-economic Duty can complement each other in this regard.

We look forward to seeing the difference the Duty makes for Rother.

For more, read about the [1ForEquality Campaign](#) and/or the [Practical Guide for Local Authority Implementation](#).

Volunteering in sport, physical activity, and movement: what is the impact of the cost-of-living crisis on this?



By Holly Grimes, People and Leadership Lead at GreaterSport

Volunteering in all forms can have huge benefits for individuals, organisations, and society, but there are persistent inequalities in who is most likely and able to volunteer their time, including those who are most impacted by poverty and the cost-of-living.

At GreaterSport, we have been conducting research with a focus on working collaboratively with VCSE organisations to develop a collective understanding of how we can develop a systemic approach to volunteering in sport, physical activity, and movement in Greater Manchester.

Conducted alongside 10GM, Manchester Metropolitan University, and Bolton Council, the research had three key objectives. One of these was around understanding the trends, inequalities, and barriers within physical activity, sport, and movement volunteering to make it more accessible, inclusive, and reflective of Greater Manchester's communities - and this is where the intersection between poverty and volunteering became most apparent.

To ensure the research was grounded in local, on-the-ground knowledge and lived experience, we also established a VCSE Volunteering Advisory Group, made up of a diverse network of organisations – including GMPA - each bringing unique and meaningful insights into volunteering in this space and how we can make it more inclusive and accessible.

Penny Rimmer, GMPA's Policy Officer said: "I have thoroughly enjoyed my time being a part of the advisory group. It has been a fantastic opportunity to represent GMPA and bring our insight and experience to shape and support the research and recommendations with an incredible network of passionate individuals and organisations.



Members of the VCSE Volunteering Advisory Group

"The cost-of-living crisis is worsening already difficult financial circumstances, further exacerbating the difficulties organisations and volunteers face, from the financial and operational sustainability of organisations to the impact of reduced disposable income on individuals' ability to volunteer.

"I look forward to the next phase of this work, implementing the recommendations through the GM Moving Volunteering Community of Practice into tangible action, and particularly joining the cost-of-living working group to delve deeper into the implications of the Cost-of-living Crisis - examining both its immediate and long-term impacts on volunteering in sport, physical activity, and movement in Greater Manchester."

Through the research, eight recommendations have been developed for how we can enhance the volunteering system in GM, with one of the key themes emanating from the research around how the cost-of-living is impacting people's ability to volunteer in different ways.

Whether that be through increased childcare responsibilities which means some older people are less able to give up their time, the impact volunteering may have on welfare payments, unaffordable upfront expenses for travel to volunteering opportunities, digital exclusion, or the need to take on additional paid work which removes time for volunteering – there is a clear link between the cost-of-living and people's ability and agency to volunteer.

Our research alongside the VCSE Advisory Group has helped us begin to understand this, however, we are keen to explore this further to better understand the impact the cost-of-living is having on people and organisations across GM. If you would be interested in being involved in a working group around the relationship between the cost-of-living and volunteering, with a particular focus on volunteering in ways that support others to move more, please get in touch with holly@greatersport.co.uk.

To find out more about the research, [read the full report](#) and see how you can get involved in our new GM Moving Volunteering Community of Practice to help us implement the research recommendations.



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.

Christians Against Poverty (CAP) report reveals a **sharp rise in unsustainable budgets** with the average person £242 short each month. CAP is launching a campaign to 'take on poverty' as its landmark client report shows low incomes and rising costs are devastating lives. [Read more.](#)

Findings by a study from Cosmos revealed, **pupils in families who reported using food banks during the pandemic received lower GCSE grades** (almost half a grade per subject), even taking into account previous grades and other aspects of their household finances. [Read more.](#)

Universal credit childcare funding to rise 47% from June. Parents on universal credit will be able claim hundreds of pounds more to cover childcare costs from the end of June, the government has announced. [Read more.](#)

However, this funding does not stretch far enough. A new briefing by JRF and the Coram Institute presents **key recommendations for a new childcare system** that better meets parents' needs - particularly for families facing disadvantage. [Read more.](#)

Report and findings of a research project exploring the **energy and affordability challenges faced by fuel poor households** during the winter of 2022 to 2023. [Read more.](#)

Councils urged to **improve knowledge and information management**. Problems with knowledge and information have led to delays, missed appointments, vulnerabilities being missed and financial detriment for residents seeking help with housing problems, warns Ombudsman. [Read more.](#)

Food inflation in the UK has slowed from April's record-breaking rise - but is still up more than 15% on the year, new retail figures show. Research by the British Retail Consortium (BRC) and Nielsen shows a **15.4% rise in food inflation** in the year to May. [Read more.](#)

Bird's eye view of poverty in schools survey



Child Poverty Action Group (CPAG)

In a first-of-its-kind survey, the Education Anti-Poverty Coalition, coordinated by CPAG is asking everyone working in and with schools across England to share their experiences of the scale and impact of child poverty in their school or setting.

We are working with others across the education sector to highlight the effects of child poverty on pupils, schools and the wider education system and to advocate for change.

Please take 5 minutes to [fill out the survey](#) and help us put an end to child poverty.

Job opportunity



Caritas Salford

Caritas Diocese of Salford is the principal social action agency of the Catholic Diocese.

We are advertising for a full- or part-time Project Worker at our Young Parents' Accommodation to work in Bolton.

The role involves supporting the young parents to look after the health and development of themselves and their babies, working positively with other professionals, as well as preparing and supporting the young parents to move into their own independent tenancies.

The role involves residential shift working which includes a mix of daytime hours, evenings, weekends. The hours consist of 3 or 5 x 7.5-hour fixed shifts per week. The salary is £26,549 - £27,535 (pro rata for part time).

The application closing date is Friday 23 June and interviews will be held on Wednesday 28 June.

Learn more and apply: <https://www.caritassalford.org.uk/careers/>.



Upcoming events



Shared Health is hosting a Doctors in Deprivation training day

Tuesday 27 June 2023, 10am-4pm

This event will explore the challenges faced by those working in areas of deprivation and disadvantaged communities and share the hopeful work organisations in Greater Manchester and beyond are doing to reduce health inequalities and the impact of poverty on health.

Get to grips with the health inequalities that many people face, and how you can help put things right. Learn about the causes and effects of health inequalities, and find out about the ways in which GPs and healthcare staff can do their bit to make a difference.

Come and receive clinical training, find your tribe and work together to tackle health inequalities in our city region. Tickets are free - [book your place](#).

Learn! Lobby! Delivery!

Join the GMHAN Task groups to change the system

Wednesday 5 July 2023, 9:30am-12:30pm

Last year the Greater Manchester Homelessness Action Network (GMHAN) set up three task groups, which focused on Learning, Lobbying and Delivering change.

A year on we are inviting you to join the groups at our full network event, where they will share what they are working on and ask for your input into how they can push for change to tackle homelessness in Greater Manchester. [Sign up on Eventbrite](#).



Basic Income North 2023

Thursday 20 July 2023, 10am-4pm

With prominent business and government leaders backing calls to implement universal basic income (UBI), the idea is receiving high levels of coverage and interest across the north of England.

But what is UBI? How might it work, what might be the benefits, and is this something that could work in the North? These questions will be examined and pondered upon in this joint RSA and Basic Income North event.

The aim of this event is to continue discussions around Basic Income in a Northern context, and to show what incremental changes can be made to current systems to achieve a Basic Income in due course.

This informal event is free to attend and open to Fellows, friends, and colleagues interested in this subject.

[Book your place on Eventbrite](#).

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.