

Mayoral election represents an opportunity to push tackling poverty up the agenda

By Graham Whitham

Poverty is a growing problem in our city region with over 600,000 residents living in poverty. Greater Manchester is home to some of the UK's most deprived neighbourhoods. Poverty and economic inequality in Greater Manchester results in widely varying health, education and economic outcomes for the city region's residents. Poverty damages the lives of the people it affects, both in the here and now and in the long-term. High levels of poverty act as a drag on Greater Manchester, hindering the economic potential of the area and putting pressure on public services. Poverty, therefore, is everybody's business.



Ahead of the Greater Manchester Mayoral election on Thursday May 7th, 2020, GMPA is calling on candidates to commit to tackling poverty in Greater Manchester. The Mayor can play an important role in this agenda, both through direct powers and by working with local authorities and key partners to implement innovative and consistent approaches to tackling poverty across the city region. Central to this agenda will be creating a strategic framework that ensures tackling poverty is a priority for the Mayor. Our asks set out what this framework should include. In some instances, it may be appropriate for the mayor to seek the devolution of further powers from central government in order to maximise the impact of local efforts to tackle poverty.

GMPA is calling for a number of measures, including:

- The creation of a strategic framework for tackling poverty by
 - Appointing a portfolio lead for poverty
 - Introducing a socio-economic duty
 - Embedding a focus on poverty in the refreshed GM Strategy.
- A reduction in food poverty, with a strong focus on ensuring no child goes hungry.
- The embedding of working with people with lived experience of poverty across all relevant areas of decision making.
- A focus on the poverty premium that builds on GMPA's research to better understand the nature of the poverty premium in Greater Manchester and the establishment of an incubator scheme for start-ups seeking to tackle the poverty premium
- Work to maximise the positive impact social security provision can have on tackling poverty in Greater Manchester. This could include a GM wide benefit take-up campaign and the devolution of elements of the welfare system so that we can do more to tackle poverty locally.

As we approach the election in May, we will be setting out further detail of the things we need to see happen across a range of policy areas including:

- Housing and homelessness
- Creating an inclusive economy
- In-work poverty
- The poverty premium, and Social security.



We will be inviting external experts to write about these issues in greater detail in future editions of the newsletter.

With a huge amount happening across Greater Manchester to redouble efforts to tackle poverty, including the introduction of local poverty strategies, the mayoral election represents an opportunity to consolidate and strengthen anti-poverty efforts across the city region.

Graham Whitham
Director, GM Poverty Action

Training opportunities on poverty



GMPA is working in partnership with Policy North Training to provide training to organisations working to address poverty across the city region and the rest of the UK. We aim to support organisations to better understand some of the complexities around poverty and enable them to improve policy and practice as a result. Courses currently open to bookings are:

Our **Maximising support for people on low incomes** course will run on February 28th, April 28th and October 8th, 2020. This course is for VCSE and public sector organisations who work with people experiencing poverty and who wish to understand how to maximise support for their service users and those involved in service design and delivery. To book your place on this course click [here](#).

The extremely popular **Understanding poverty measurement, definitions and data** course will run on March 12th and November 18th, 2020. This course is for organisations who wish to strengthen the case for their work by presenting accurate and relevant data about poverty to funders, supporters and policy and decision makers. To book your place on this course click [here](#).

Our **Exploring the Poverty Premium** course is running on March 18th, 2020. Attendees on this half day course will be able to better understand the poverty premium, the way it affects customers, clients and consumers and how they can amend and 'poverty proof' their practices. To book your place on this course click [here](#).

We aim to keep the cost of attending courses low, whilst looking to grow and develop our training offer and raise revenue for GMPA's activities. All courses take place in central Manchester unless otherwise stated.

Greater Manchester Living Wage Campaign



On February 14th, I took part in a workshop and panel at the Social Value – People, Place and Planet event organised by [CLEs](#) in Manchester. I shared the platform with a range of speakers including Sam Hepher from the [Living Wage Foundation](#). The event was well attended, and a good discussion took place about the role the Real Living Wage can play in delivering social value and social justice.

The next meeting of the GM Living Wage Campaign will take place on Wednesday March 25th, 2020 from 2pm - 4pm at Church House, 90 Deansgate, Manchester M3 2GH. It is open to anyone interested in promoting the Real Living Wage in Greater Manchester. A booking link will be sent out to the members of the GMWLC's mailing list in the next few days. If you're not on this list, please [contact me](#) and I will add your details.

Finally, a reminder about the Living Hours Workshop that will be held on Tuesday May 12th, 2020 from 2pm - 4pm at The Mechanics Institute in Manchester. It is organised by the Living Wage Foundation and GM Citizens UK, and all GM Living Wage Campaign supporters are encouraged to attend to find out more about the emerging Living Hours Campaign. This is a chance to find out more about the campaign for job security as well as a fair pay. There will be details about registering for the event soon but if you want to know more now please [contact me](#).



[John Hacking](#),

Greater Manchester Living Wage Campaign Co-ordinator

Follow the campaign on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#)

The Greater Manchester Living Wage Campaign is a Greater Manchester Poverty Action project

Job opportunity: Tameside Poverty Truth Commission Facilitator

[Poverty Truth Commissions](#) create a space to meaningfully bring together people with different experiences, knowledge, and power. We are recruiting a facilitator to help establish the Tameside Poverty Truth Commission. The deadline for applications is 10am this Friday February 28th, 2020 – please find more information, including how to apply, [here](#).

Using our voices to build a movement for change

JRF have provided the following write up on the event held in Manchester on February 11th, 2020

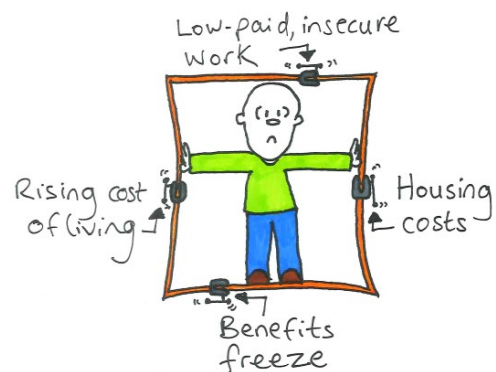


The economy we have today was designed – and it can be redesigned to work for everyone.

Across the North, communities and organisations are working tirelessly to make life better for people in poverty, whether that's by providing services directly or campaigning for policy change. Many of them came together at the Joseph Rowntree Foundation's (JRF's) conference in Manchester, *Talking about poverty: using our voices to build a movement for change* – in partnership with GMPA, Church Action on Poverty and the FrameWorks Institute – to find out how they could influence local and national conversations about poverty using framing.

Public attitudes really matter when it comes to real action and change for people in poverty. That's why the stories we tell about poverty are so important – the words and images we use can improve people's understanding of how poverty works and what can be done about it. This is called framing. It's about consciously choosing a set of tested techniques that can change people's hearts and minds, based on research with 20,000 members of the public.

At the event, part of which was attended by Andy Burnham, Mayor of Greater Manchester, delegates had the chance to learn new skills, deepen their knowledge of framing, find out how it's being used by JRF's experts, and hear from people with direct experience of poverty on how they're using framing to tell their stories in the media. The conference brought together 130 delegates, ranging from grassroots activists, campaigners and communicators to local councils and public affairs specialists, each working on an issue, root cause or consequence of poverty in the North of England.



It's vital to build a movement calling for action on UK poverty if we want to see real change, and this conference was one step towards bringing us all together as a collective voice.

JRF JOSEPH
ROWNTREE
FOUNDATION

You can see reactions and highlights from the event at [#TalkingAboutPoverty](#) on Twitter. If you want to know more about how to use framing in your work, you can download [JRF's free toolkit](#) or [email JRF directly](#)

The impact of suicide is devastating: for family – for friends – for the community

By Kelly Warner, Greater Manchester Suicide Bereavement Information Service



The Greater Manchester Suicide Bereavement Information Service is a confidential information service here for anyone who has been bereaved or affected by suicide at any time in their life. The service is here to help answer your questions and find the right support you may need. This could be anything from seeking advice on an inquest, connecting you with others that have had similar experiences or finding you further practical or emotional support.

Call: 0161 983 0700 Monday – Friday 10am – 4pm (Excluding bank holidays) [Email](#) [Website](#)

This confidential service is here for people living in all ten boroughs of Greater Manchester:
Bolton – Bury – Manchester – Oldham – Rochdale – Salford – Stockport – Tameside – Trafford – Wigan

We love MCR Grants

The We Love MCR Charity offers three grants to community organisations and individuals.

The Stronger Communities Fund: offers small (up to £2,000) and large grants (up to £70,000 per year) to community groups and organisations that aim to strengthen and bring their communities together. To apply, projects or activities must address one or more of these themes and benefit the residents of Manchester:

- Helping in the early years;
- Combating loneliness and social exclusion;
- Protecting and improving our open spaces;
- Offering positive youth activities.

The **Manchester's Rising Stars Fund** (supported by the Sir Howard Bernstein Endowment Fund) aims to give young Mancunians a helping hand to allow them to take opportunities that may otherwise be out of their reach. Many agencies and organisations in the city offer practical support and assistance, but sometimes a financial grant to pay for something that will help a young person to take a step forward towards their goal is what it takes to enable progress. We love MCR welcomes requests for grants from 16 - 24 years olds (or up to 30 years old if they have personal experience of homelessness) to purchase equipment, to fund courses and accreditations, and to support other costs relating to moving into employment, education or training. They will only consider requests that come from young people whose financial or family circumstances put them at a disadvantage as they start their adult life and they will only support proposals that can make a sustainable difference.

Please see the [website](#) for further information, full criteria and application forms.

We love MCR has been a supporter of GMPA's Greater Manchester Food Poverty Alliance project.



MANCHESTER HISTORIES

The Manchester Histories Festival 2020: Call for Contributions

The Manchester Histories Festival 2020 will be held from June 4th - 8th, 2020.

The focus for this festival will be the 50th anniversary of the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act (1970), a landmark piece of legislation that was pioneered by Lord Alf Morris, MP for Wythenshaw for 33 years and the first ever Minister for the Disabled. The Festival will be based at Manchester Central Library and be inspired by the following themes: Celebrate – Learn – Challenge. Individuals and groups are invited to take part by putting on a performance, debate, film screening, discussion, exhibition or creative intervention.

All of the Manchester Histories events will, ideally, be co-created by and supportive of individuals and communities. It is therefore holding an open call inviting anyone to contribute to the festival programme and its aims and aspirations, whether individuals, organisations, service professionals, researchers, academics, historian, artists or musicians. The organisers would especially like to see most of the events led by disabled people.

The deadline for the open call is Friday March 27th, 2020, with all the details available [here](#). On Saturday February 29th, 2020 from 11.00am – 2.00pm, a drop in session will be held at Manchester Central Library for people to find out more or discuss their ideas before they make their submissions. For further information about the Festival please visit the [website](#).

Forthcoming events

Tameside Food Network

Tuesday March 10th, 2020 from 10am - 12pm at the District Assembly Room, Stalybridge Civic Hall, Trinity St, Stalybridge, SK15 2BN

One important outcome of the GM Food Poverty Alliance has been to embed food poverty, and the Action Plan specifically, in the wider efforts to develop a comprehensive food strategy for the city region. There is an opportunity for people who live or work in Tameside, to attend the first Tameside Food Network meeting of 2020, which will be on the theme of food poverty. Please contact [Victoria Hamlett](#) for more details.

Homelessness Faith Sector Summit

Thursday March 12th, 2020 from 11am - 3pm at the Methodist Central Hall, Oldham Street, Manchester, M1 1JQ

Manchester has the highest number of children living in emergency and temporary accommodation. At the last meeting of the GM Homelessness Action Network (GMHAN), Shared Health presented their preliminary findings. The Faith Sector are invited, in conjunction with colleagues from GMHAN, for another Homelessness Faith Sector Summit to hear more information about family homelessness in GM and to consider how we all might contribute to the response. [More information](#)

More forthcoming events

Respected and Connected: Older people and equalities in Greater Manchester

Wednesday March 18th, 2020 from 10.30am - 4pm at Federation house, 2 Federation Street, Manchester M4 4BF

The event will celebrate the learning of Ambition for Ageing's Equalities Board over the last four years, and the diversity of Greater Manchester's Over-50s. They will also be displaying a new artwork, created by Equalities Board members with artist Eva Schlunke. Free global buffet lunch. You can find out more and book for free [here](#)



Windrush Scheme Engagement Event

Thursday March 19th, 2020 from 5 – 8pm, at Trinity House Community Resource Centre, Grove Close, Rusholme, M14 5AA.

The purpose of this event is to reach out to and beyond the Caribbean community, to engage all Commonwealth citizens and other nationalities who have been lawfully resident in the UK for a long time, but who do not have documents to demonstrate their status. Advisers from the Windrush Scheme will be on hand to answer questions, help people fill out application forms, and provide information and application forms for the Windrush Compensation Scheme, all free of charge. *Please be reassured that no information provided in relation to an application or query under the Windrush scheme will be passed onto Immigration Enforcement.*

Talking about poverty through lived experience workshops

Thursday March 19th and Tuesday June 30th, 2020 from 9.30am - 5.30pm at the Priory Centre, 15 Priory Street, York YO1 6ET

We are the APLE Collective!

ADDRESSING POVERTY WITH LIVED EXPERIENCE

APLE invite activist groups with lived experience to two follow up framing workshops bespoke to people with direct experience of poverty. The workshops will provide an in-depth look at the framing tools and how we can use them to build public and political will to take action. The workshops will be co-hosted with The Frameworks Institute. [More information and book](#)

Manchester Voluntary Sector Assembly – Social Prescribing

Monday March 30th, 2020 from 1.30 - 4.30pm at Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service Training Centre, Cassidy Close Manchester M4 5HU



Social prescribing (Be Well) is now operating across Manchester. A core element of the social prescribing model is linking people with long-term needs to neighbourhood organisations and assets, many of which are VCSE organisations. The aim of this Voluntary Sector Assembly is for the VCSE sector to discuss and agree what it wants and needs in order to increase the impact and effectiveness of social prescribing. Together we will write a manifesto which will be presented by representatives of the assembly to senior representatives of Manchester Health and Care Commissioning and Manchester Local Care Organisation. [More information and book](#)

GMCVO



Prior to the Assembly there is also a **Social Prescribing** workshop on March 10th, 2020 from 10am - 1pm organised by GMCVO and National Voices at St Thomas Centre, Ardwick Green North, Manchester M12 6FZ aimed at representatives from GM based charities, social enterprises or other community-based organisations involved or looking to be involved in social prescribing. This could be in a role that connects people with health problems to activities and sources of support, a provider of activities or support for people, or as an infrastructure organisation building and supporting community activity and connection. [More information and book](#)

Early notice: The **Sustainable Food Cities** and the **Food Power Conferences** will be held in Leeds from June 9th - 11th, 2020

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 GMIPA 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 GMIPA. 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.