

Events in March will explore strengthening local welfare provision

Local welfare assistance schemes can play a central role in the local safety net, meeting people's immediate needs and averting deepening hardship and deprivation.

Lack of government guidance and support on how schemes should operate means that they have evolved differently in each locality and not everywhere in England has a scheme in place. All ten of our Greater Manchester boroughs have worked hard to retain local provision and there are some examples of good practice locally. However, we also know that more needs to be done to scale up that good practice across the city region, raise awareness of schemes and ensure local support best meets the needs of low-income residents.

Average per capita funding for local welfare provision in **England** is **£0.73** compared to **£6.49** in **Scotland**.

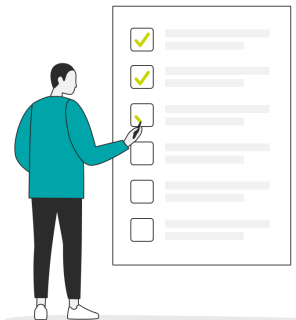


Research by GMPA has found that the type of support, how support is accessed, knowledge of schemes and the level of funding that goes into them varies considerably from one borough to the next.

As we enter a period that will lay bare the economic damage of COVID-19, Greater Manchester Poverty Action's latest report (published in December) – [Strengthening the role of local welfare assistance](#) - provides a series of recommendations to improve schemes.

The recommendations include taking a 'cash first' approach to supporting people, simplifying the application process, taking a case worker approach to supporting residents that helps prevent future financial hardship and ensuring schemes can be accessed by different population subgroups.

GMPA's local welfare assistance scheme checklist enables local areas to understand how they can **maximise positive outcomes** for residents through their scheme.



Most of the recommendations in the report come at no-cost. Where there are cost implications, upfront investments are suggested that will deliver savings in the long run by improving outcomes for residents and reducing pressure on other services.

Local authority delivered local welfare schemes need to be joined up with other help in each locality, enabling councils, housing providers and VCSE sector organisations to coordinate support.

Alongside the report, GMPA has produced tools for local authorities and their partners to use to enhance schemes and measure their effectiveness.

GMPA will be holding two events using Zoom in March to explore the findings and recommendations from the report. The first event, aimed at local councillors, will take place on Thursday March 4th at 7pm. To book your place click [here](#).

The second event, aimed at people working for local authorities, housing providers, VCSE sector organisations and other stakeholders, will take place on Tuesday March 23rd at 10am. To book your place click [here](#).

At both events you'll hear from report author Simon Watts and Graham Whitham, GMPA Chief Executive. There will be opportunity for questions and presentations will take attendees through the support tools developed alongside the report.

We are recruiting

GMPA is now recruiting to [two new roles](#), both of which will play a central role in the organisation's development and delivery. Both roles are for an initial 18 months, working 3.5 days per week.

We are seeking a **Fundraising Officer**. This role will predominantly focus on supporting funding applications to trusts and foundations, as well as supporting income generation through other sources and developing and overseeing the organisation's fundraising strategy alongside the CEO and COO. It will suit someone with fundraising experience, with strong written and people management skills.

The deadline for this role is 5pm on Thursday February 25th, 2021. For full details of how to apply please go to the [jobs page](#) of our website

We are also seeking a **Policy Officer**. The postholder will inform local responses to poverty, including influencing local poverty strategies, the work of the Greater Manchester Combined Authority and local welfare provision. At a time when poverty is growing nationally, it has never been more important to identify what we can do locally to address the issue. We are looking for someone with experience in either policy, advocacy or research roles.

The deadline for this role is 5pm on Thursday March 5th, 2021. Full details of how to apply can be found [here](#).

If you would like an informal chat about either of these roles, please call Graham Whitham on 07917 644435.

Making Greater Manchester a Real Living Wage City Region

Online meeting February 23rd, 2021 at 2pm



At the launch event for Living Wage Week 2020, the Mayor of Greater Manchester, Andy Burnham, called on every sector partner and stakeholders to work towards making Greater Manchester the first Real Living Wage City Region in the UK.

The GM Living Wage Campaign (GMLWC) welcomed this announcement and we have committed ourselves to work with the Mayor and others to achieve this ambition. To achieve this accredited status, a GM Real Living Wage Action Plan will be formulated and should include how partners and stakeholder can get involved, what the timescales are, what the challenges are likely to be and how they might be overcome.

GMLWC Co-ordinator John Hacking is keen to ensure that the regions' campaign supporters and activists can be involved in the drive to achieve Living Wage city region status as they have a wealth of knowledge, experience, and information to contribute to this process. So this is a good time for the GMLWC to discuss how we can make the best and most effective contribution. To this end there will be a meeting on Tuesday February 23rd, 2021 at 2pm.

The meeting is open to all who are interested in campaigning for the Real Living Wage in GM and will focus on the work to be done to achieve Living Wage City Region Accreditation. There will be an opportunity to hear the latest update on the Living Wage City Region Action Plan and how to get involved. We want to hear your ideas and suggestions that can help us to make this ambition a reality and improve the lives of tens of thousands of low paid workers and their families. There is much for us to build on but a real prize for us to gain. It would be great to see as many people as possible getting involved.

If you want to attend the meeting please book at [Eventbrite](#).

If you have ideas, questions or comments ahead of the meeting we would be delighted to hear from you.

Best Wishes and Stay Safe.

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

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John Hacking
GM Living Wage
Campaign
Coordinator

Cutting £20 a week will cause an income crisis

Reporting on the #KeeptheLifeline campaign led by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation

This pandemic has shown us that life is full of things we can't plan for, and we all need a social security system we can rely on.

The [Social Security Benefits Up-rating Order 2021](#), passed on Tuesday February 9th, increases social security payments by the rate of CPI inflation (0.5%) from April 1st, 2021. However, if the £20 a week uplift to UC is not made permanent in the Budget, this uprating is negated.

If the uplift is not made permanent, standard UC allowance rates will drop:

By a quarter for single claimants under 25, from £342.72 to £257.33

By a fifth for single claimants over 25, from £409.89 to £324.84

By 17% for joint claimants under 25, from £488.59 to £403.93

By 14% for joint claimants over 25, from £594.04 to £509.91



Without £20 a week, UC will be worth less than in 2013.

As a result of lower-than-inflation uprating between 2013 and 2015 and the benefits freeze from 2016 to 2019, the value of UC's Standard Allowance has fallen far below inflation. The £20 a week uplift made 2020 the only year in UC's existence where the Standard Allowance surpassed cost of living related inflation rates since its introduction.

If the £20 a week uplift is cut, the Basic Allowance for UC will be worth around 11.5% less in real terms than it was 8 years ago, in 2013.

As set out in [JRF's briefing](#), and further confirmed by the latest Bank of England forecast, a six month extension will see the cut come at a peak of unemployment. If it would be wrong to cut it now, it would be wrong to cut it in six months' time when unemployment will likely be even higher.

You can read more about this campaign on JRF's website [here](#)

Not enough is being done to tackle child poverty

Reporting on a poll published by the End Child Poverty Coalition



Despite the Government's frequent statements on levelling up the country, only 19% of the British public think it is doing all it reasonably can to tackle child poverty, according to new research by the End Child Poverty coalition of charities and campaigners including GMPA.

The End Child Poverty coalition is calling on government to make the £20 a week increase to Universal Credit permanent, expand it to other legacy benefits, and commit to a joined up strategy across government for reducing and ending child poverty.

The latest figures (2018-19) show 4.2 million children were in relative poverty, which is 600,000 more than in 2011/12. The figures for 2019-20 are due to be published soon. Projections from the Resolution Foundation show that from this year – 2020/21 – to the end of the Parliament, around 730,000 more children will be living in poverty.

Anna Feuchtwang, Chair of the End Child Poverty coalition and Chief Executive of the National Children's Bureau, said: "This is a bit of a vote of no confidence in levelling up so far. Ministers should be worried why so few people believe the government is doing what it should be doing on child poverty. We know what a good childhood looks like. It's one in which children have enough to eat, somewhere safe and comfortable to sleep, with the chance to fully participate in society and pursue the things they love. And yet we know that for many children poverty holds them back, creating shame, stigma and ruining their life chances."

For more information visit the End Child Poverty website [here](#).

Worth a mention

The **Regional Spokesperson Network** is a programme run by NEON to substantially boost the number of regional progressive, diverse voices speaking in the media across the UK. The Regional Network is part of the New Economy Spokesperson Network, and provides training, coaching and PR booking support for people across the UK working on a range of issues, from migration rights to climate change, inequality to public health.

Applications for the next round of Regional Spokesperson Network are now open. Find out more and apply [here](#). The deadline for applications is 8.00am Monday March 8th, 2021.



Wythenshawe Foodbank is part of the Trussell Trust network providing emergency food to support those in crisis. They operate a 'hub and spokes' model comprising of a warehouse and distribution centres across Wythenshawe. They are looking for enthusiastic, motivated and experienced individuals who will be able to co-ordinate and develop Wythenshawe Foodbank as they begin a new phase in their service to the Wythenshawe community.

They are recruiting a Foodbank Manager for 21 hours per week and a Warehouse/Volunteer Co-ordinator for 18 hours per week. Working patterns to be agreed but some occasional evening and weekend working may be required

Location: Unit E Access Via Ainley Road Service Yard, 10-11 The Birtles, Wythenshawe, Manchester, M22 5UN

These are initially 18 month contracts. For further information, salaries and how to apply please visit their website [here](#)

Training courses available to GMPA's network over the next 6 months

Over the last 2 years GMPA has delivered a small number of paid for training courses in partnership with Policy North Training. The courses equip stakeholders with the knowledge they need to fight poverty both in Greater Manchester and across the UK as a whole.



Maximising support for people on low incomes – Monday June 28th. [BOOK HERE](#).

Understanding poverty measurement, definitions and data - Thursday March 25th and Tuesday May 11th [BOOK HERE](#).

Identifying poverty data in Greater Manchester – Thursday April 15th – [BOOK HERE](#).

Exploring the poverty premium – Friday June 25th – [BOOK HERE](#).

[Full course overviews and costs can be downloaded from the training page of our website.](#)

GMPA Food Providers Map - can you help?



If you are familiar with our support service providers maps of Greater Manchester on our website, we would be grateful if you could take the time to look at the [Food Providers map](#) which, during the pandemic, has been visited an average of 80 times every day.

Are the food banks, pantries, food clubs and meal providers that you are familiar with on the map? To the best of your knowledge are their details accurate? If not please [contact Chris](#) with the correct information. Many thanks.

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 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.