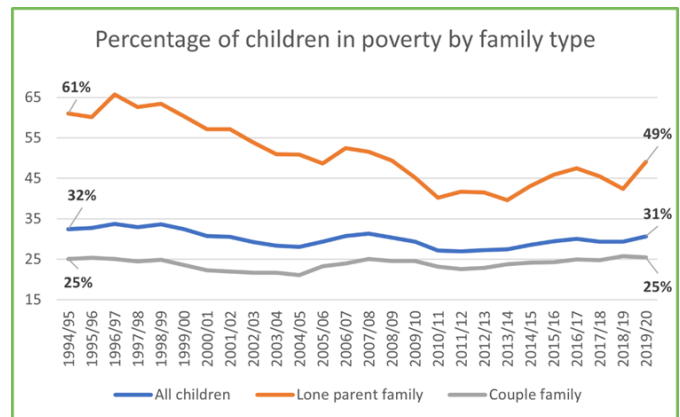
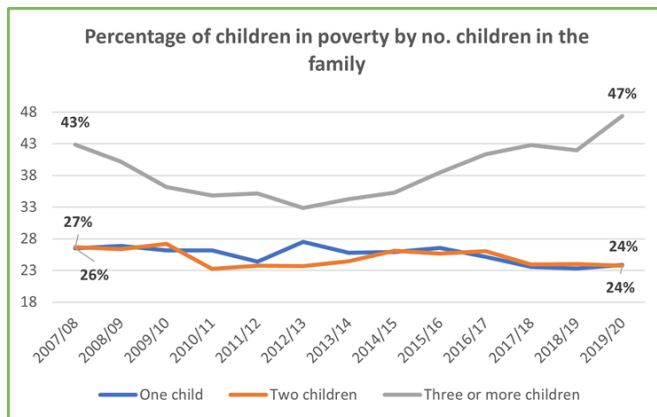


## Worrying national trends detailed on GMPA's Poverty Monitor

By Graham Whitham

We have added two new pages to the [Greater Manchester Poverty Monitor](#). The first details some worrying national poverty trends, showing that poverty was growing among 'at risk' groups in the years leading up to the pandemic.

The [National Poverty Data page](#) uses data from the government's [Households Below Average Income data series](#). This provides data on UK poverty levels, broken down by a range of different family types and characteristics. The most recent data takes us up to the eve of the pandemic. Children in lone parent households, households containing a disabled person and families with three or more children have always been at greater risk of poverty. That risk has been growing in recent years as illustrated in the charts below. This is why it is so important that the Government retains to £20 [Universal Credit uplift](#).



The National Poverty Data page also includes a range of other selected data, including poverty rates by ethnicity and English region. For those of us working locally, it can be useful to look at national poverty data, particularly trend data, to understand what is happening to poverty over time. Many of the national trends are likely to be replicated in Greater Manchester. It can help us think about how policy and practice can respond to the changing nature of poverty among residents in our city region.

A second new page provides [Index of Multiple Deprivation \(IMD\) data](#) at ward level. The IMD combines information from seven domains to produce an overall relative measure of deprivation for small areas in England. The domains are: Income; Employment; Education; Skills and Training; Health and Disability; Crime; Barriers to Housing Services; Living Environment. The more deprived is an area, the higher the IMD score but the lower the rank. The IMD is published every four years and was most recently published in 2019.

There are two subsets to the IMD. The Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI) subset measures the proportion of all children aged 0 to 15 living in income deprived families. The Income Deprivation Affecting Older People Index (IDAOP) subset measures the proportion of all those aged 60 or over who experience income deprivation.

IMD produces data for small geographic areas known as Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs). LSOAs aren't coterminous with electoral wards, but 'best fit analysis' can provide a deprivation score and ranking for electoral wards in England using IMD.

You can download the IMD score, the average score by domain and the IDACI and IDAOP scores for best-fit LSOAs in each electoral ward in Greater Manchester by [visiting this page](#).

We are working to a full update of the Poverty Monitor in spring 2022. If you make use of the Monitor we'd be really grateful if you could complete [this survey](#). The information we gather will help us evidence the impact and usefulness of the Monitor to stakeholders and potential funders.

## Greater Manchester Real Living Wage Campaign Update



The Greater Manchester Living Wage Campaign's mission has always been to make Greater Manchester a Living Wage City Region. In 2021, [that became Greater Manchester's mission](#). GMLWC is working with many other partners to make this a reality.

There were just 26 Real Living Wage accredited employers in Greater Manchester when the GM Living Wage Campaign started. By the end of June 2021 there were over 360.

We have been working closely with the Living Wage Foundation (who accredit Real Living Wage employers) and you can now [access an up-to-date list of all of the Real Living Wage accredited employers based in GM](#).

We are delighted to report that at its recent Cabinet meeting at the end of August, Bury Council agreed to become an accredited Real Living Wage Employer. When the council adopts the Real Living Wage, then around 4000 staff who are either directly or indirectly employed by the council will benefit. Councillor Eamon O'Brien, Leader of the Council explained that adopting the Real Living Wage was part of the authority's commitment within the Let's Do It Strategy to reduce poverty in the borough. To hear more about Bury Council's plan to become a Real Living Wage employer and the part that plays in the wider fight against poverty you can listen to a [podcast interview we did with Eamon](#) in April this year.

In other good news Manchester United have committed to paying all employees at the club above the Real Living Wage. The club sent a message out to all employees to say that they would be upping their wage to £10 per hour.

[John Hacking](#),

Greater Manchester Living Wage Campaign Co-ordinator

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



The Greater Manchester Living Wage Campaign is a Greater Manchester Poverty Action programme.

## Fixing Lunch

A new report by CPAG and Covid Realities



The Child Poverty Action Group (CPAG) and [Covid Realities](#) have released a new report, [Fixing Lunch: The case for expanding free school meals](#). The report brings together findings from CPAG analysis and the Covid Realities research programme to highlight problems with existing FSM provision. It also draws on research carried out as part of CPAG and Children North East's [UK Cost of the School Day](#) project.

Despite a rise in the number of children claiming FSMs between March 2020 and March 2021, there are still one million school-aged children in poverty who miss out on any form of FSM provision because of restrictive eligibility criteria. The proportion of children in poverty not getting free school meals varies a lot across the 4 nations, and is highest in Wales and England (where 42% and 37% of children in poverty miss out on free meals respectively). Rates are much lower in Scotland (17%) and Northern Ireland (22%).

Key recommendations, developed with Covid Realities participants, are:

- Work towards the long-term goal of universal provision of FSM for all children across the UK.
- In the short term, increase eligibility to every family on Universal Credit (or equivalent benefits).
- Eligibility should also be extended to all families with no recourse to public funds.
- Follow the Scottish Government's lead, extend free school meals to all primary school children across the UK.
- Support family finances throughout the year by addressing the inadequacy of the social security system.
- As a first step, the planned £20 cut to universal credit must be abandoned.



## Number of young people receiving benefits increases

A new report by the Resolution Foundation



The proportion of young adults claiming income-related benefits increased from 9% to 15% during the Covid crisis – a larger increase than any other age group. This was part of the overall increase in claimants, highlighting the vital role that Universal Credit - including the £20 'uplift' - has played during the pandemic, according to new research published by the Resolution Foundation in late August.



The report - Age-old or new-age - funded by the Nuffield Foundation, examines the shifts in the number of people receiving benefits during the crisis, and how this varied for different age-groups. There was a staggering surge in UC claims, with 1.3 million more families receiving the benefit in the first three months of the pandemic and a further 600,000 since then.

As a result, the total number of families receiving a working-age income-related benefit rose by 1.4 million in the space of 12 months to 7.5 million in February 2021 and reversed a long decline in benefit receipt.

In 2005, 72% of people lived in households that received at least one benefit, a figure that had fallen to 62% by the eve of the crisis. This fall was driven by the removal of Child Benefit from higher earners, the increase in the State Pension Age, and rising employment and earnings causing some families to no longer be entitled to welfare support. The Resolution Foundation estimates this figure has been partly reversed, with 64% of people now receiving benefit income in their household.

Focusing on which groups have been the main recipients of the pandemic benefit surge, the report notes that young adults (16 - 24 year olds) – the age group least likely to receive benefits – have seen the sharpest increases in support. The proportion of 25-29 has also increased sharply – from 17% to 24% per cent – while the share of 30 - 59 year olds claiming benefits has increased more slowly, from 22% to 27% per cent.

The Foundation believes that young adults have been hit hardest by the Covid-19 crisis and that it would have been far worse if not for the furlough scheme and while the number of families receiving benefits had dropped by some 130,000 by May of this year, the Office for Budget Responsibility expects the number of families receiving benefits to remain higher for the next two years than it was before the pandemic.

There has also been a potentially worrying rise in the number of older UC claimants, with 34,000 more people aged over 50 on the benefit since February 2021.

With record numbers of people now receiving UC, future decisions such as the future of the £20 a week uplift\*, will have a bigger impact on family living standards across the country than ever before.

Alex Beer, Welfare Programme Head at the Nuffield Foundation said: "This research highlights the relevance of the benefits system to people of all ages, as well as the vital role it has played in supporting people and families through the economic crisis caused by the pandemic. However, it also shows that the level of support varies significantly across different age groups, and those differences should be taken into account by government when considering any changes to benefit rates."

### \*100 organisations urge the Prime Minister not to cut Universal Credit

The largest coalition of organisations to date on this issue has signed a [joint open letter to the Prime Minister](#), sent on September 2nd 2021, calling on him not to go ahead with the planned £20-a-week cut to Universal Credit and Working Tax Credit, due to come into effect on October 6th, 2021.

The joint letter, coordinated by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, was signed by 100 organisations, including GMPA, that operate at a national level as well as in communities across the UK. Among the signatories are leading voices on health, education, children, housing, poverty, the economy and other aspects of public policy.

## Afghan Refugee response

In light of the humanitarian and political crisis unfolding in Afghanistan, voluntary organisations, community groups, and faith organisations in Greater Manchester are delivering vital help. 10GM is working with the VCSE sector to provide direct support to refugees and those with no recourse to public funds. Over the coming weeks, they will be working with colleagues across the sector to build a collaborative, supportive response for people arriving in the region.

In the meantime, there are a number of practical ways you can help and support those being evacuated. Please see the details posted on the Macc website [here](#).



### What do you need from a venue?

Macc are hosting the next discussion space for VCSE organisations and groups to meet and discuss what organisations currently need from a venue as this may have changed during the course of the pandemic on: **Tuesday September 14th, 2021, 11am - 12.30pm**

They would welcome examples from those who have had some recent venue challenges and any approaches you could share which could also benefit others. The meeting is open to any VCSE organisation working in Manchester. If you or someone from your organisation would like to attend or have any questions, please [email Anna](#) for details and access information.

## GM Moving in Action: Launch and Conference

An online Conference on Monday September 13th, 2021



Join people and partners from across Greater Manchester at the GM Moving in Action launch, the shared vision and plan for a healthier, happier city region.

Over the last six months, GM Moving partners have engaged with over 2,000 people on the strategy; and are delighted to be able to launch it at the 2021 GM Moving in Action Conference. It will be a day full of inspiration and action, with opportunities to learn, connect and commit to our future role in this movement, for movement.

Sign up [here](#) and spread the word. Think diverse. Think local, GM and national. Think about people across sectors and across places, all part of a whole system approach to active lives and tackling inequalities. Everyone is invited.

## Fully funded home based training offer



System Group are offering 2 fully funded home based courses for people in Manchester with multiple start dates.

**Level 3 Diploma in Logistics** – Covering business process management, procurement, warehouse operations and more. This would ideally suit someone who was looking at either a supervisory role in logistics or procurement or someone who was interested in the industry but did not want to be on the driving side. The course lasts 8 weeks.

**IT User skills Level 3** – Covering spreadsheets, word processing, presentation and databases, as well as improving productivity using IT. With the digital skills gap becoming bigger, companies are in real need of employees with IT qualifications. You must be 19+ years old and have access to a laptop or tablet. The course lasts 6 weeks.

Both courses are Monday-Friday 9:30am – 3.00pm. System Group are working alongside some large employers to offer interviews upon completion of the courses. For more information please go to the [website](#) or send an [email](#)

### 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.