



Poverty is often thought of in simple financial terms but without worrying first about an individual's access to money, groups of people can find themselves marginalised, without opportunity and facing big disadvantages to being involved in society at all. GMPA is in Tameside to visit People First Tameside, an organisation working with local people with learning disabilities.

Three people in every hundred will have a learning disability, and they are likely to have difficulty with everyday activities and struggle with the same things the rest of us take for granted: understanding information, managing money, living independently, making and sustaining friendships and relationships, and finding and maintaining work. This makes it hard for them to join in with the community, and a vulnerable target for abuse and manipulation. One tragic story is that of the death of David Askew, a cherished and much loved individual member of the People First Tameside community who suffered bullying and abuse for most of his adult life from generations of families around where he lived. David eventually died of a heart attack in 2010 after youths had made another attack on his family home, and the following police investigations into David's case made national headlines: over 26 young people were involved and one person was given a prison sentence.

"It's really about tackling disadvantage and inequality", says Liz Wright, People's First Tameside manager, *"because people with learning disabilities want the same as everyone else. A loving relationship, friendships, good food, travel, to have fun and laugh, to have opportunities in life"*. People First Tameside puts people with learning disabilities as central decision makers in the organisation. Where other organisations might describe 'service users' for those engaging with their services, here any person with a learning disability that comes through the doors is a 'member'. All members vote for which of them should be on the Committee, which then makes the fundamental decisions about where to spend the money, which staff to employ, and what activities to pursue. Craig, for example is Secretary and 'does all the paperwork, typing up the minutes' while Jenny the financial officer jokes, *"I pay the staff"*.

The model of total inclusivity moves away from the old almost Victorian model of isolated, top-down and directed care, where people with learning disabilities were looked after in separate institutions, shut up, locked away from ordinary society.



"People don't want others feeling sorry for them", says Liz, *"people want to be part of their community, to be respected and have the same opportunities in life"*. And here, they are very much part of the community and they design the resources and help to be able to best integrate with wider society. Several members laugh with pride announcing that *"I am part of the furniture"*, a wonderful way of expressing a sense of belonging to a community that isn't simply short term and will be gone tomorrow.

Core to the services then offered by People First Tameside focus is the "Our Way, Our Day" service, where special one day events and workshops are organised for members to enjoy. GMPA joins People First Tameside for a BBQ, where groups are chopping onions, preparing kebabs, wrapping bananas and chocolate in foil to go on the grill.



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Terry plays music as the DJ, and there is a lot of laughter and friendship between everyone. It's a happy space, and members are easily enjoying themselves. Planned activities include trips to the local nature reserve, arts and crafts days, visits to the National Football Museum, bowling, and trips further afield, to Blackpool for example. Added to the "Our Way, Our Day" is a simple social club and drop in, where members come to relax and spend time with their friends, or ask the staff for help with a letter, for relationship advice, for support to feel safe.

People with learning disabilities often face disadvantages and stigma, whether in accessing services or directly experiencing hate crime, and this has led to Disability Awareness Training being a central pillar in People First Tameside provision. GMPA attended a practice session for the Disability Awareness Training, later to be given in a school. A Powerpoint presentation is projected onto a big wall and members take it in turns to present each slide to the group, reading the content. There is a passion in the room as members talk about their own personal experience of hate crime and vulnerability. The aim of the training is to raise awareness in schools, targeting our next generation of young people giving them positive messages around disability and difference, with the hope that they will become a much more aware and less likely to discriminate against others for being seen to be different.



There is another crucial pillar to the work of People First Tameside too, "My Life, My Way", which is bespoke one-to-one support for members around their personal needs and desires and designed specially to help them flourish. This helps individuals into employment, such as Denzel who now has a job two days a week as a cleaner. Through all of this work, it is clear that the people with learning disabilities are put centre stage, empowered, and given opportunities to become full members in society. *"It is the most simple things, sharing a meal, passing the salt, going to the pub or sharing a bottle of wine that people with learning difficulties often have no access to"* explains Liz, adding *"just because you have a disability, it doesn't mean you have to miss out on life"*.

The inspiring work of People First Tameside helps us reflect that the challenge of tackling poverty is about giving everyone in the community opportunity to be fulfilled, to thrive and to feel welcomed. The great potential of community organisations to make a difference to the lives of those in their neighbourhoods can only be encouraged.

[More information](#) is available on their website or follow them on Twitter @Pftameside

Community Voices

When the first Poverty Monitor was published back in 2014 one of the key elements of the work was the accompanying document "What citizens say about poverty in Greater Manchester". The impact of poverty on individuals and communities was much more evocative in their own words than in any commentary or report.

Over the coming weeks we will be hearing from communities across Greater Manchester again but this time we are recording their words in their own voices and sharing them with you via a GMPA YouTube Channel.

These are the people who need to play an increasingly role in the activities designed to combat poverty: the people living with poverty every day.

[This week we are delighted to introduce you to Rachel who lives in Rochdale.](#)



The YouTube logo, consisting of the word "You" in black and "Tube" in white on a red rounded rectangle background.

Neighbourhood Food Collections 30 June, 1 & 2 July 2016

Join Team FareShare at the nation's biggest food collection and help us fight hunger this summer. By giving just a few hours of your time you could collect enough tins, packets and essentials for hundreds of meals.



You don't need to go far, the collection is taking place in Tesco stores across the UK so you can volunteer to collect donations from shoppers at your local store. [Find out how to volunteer.](#)



Just before Christmas 2015 Stockport Foodbank collected a record-breaking 3,700 kgs at the Handforth Dean store and they are hoping to match that in July.

One of the new volunteers told GMPA *"Its good fun and very satisfying. Tesco were very helpful and allowed us to swap some items that we got in abundance for things we were short of and they announced the collection every half hour or so to remind shoppers. I did some leafleting at first where we hand out information about the foodbank with a list of what we need on it. One woman wasn't going to give us anything as she thought that people who couldn't feed their children shouldn't have had them! I struggled not to laugh out loud but suggested to her that times had changed and perhaps they hadn't had the foresight to know that! She was the only one I spoke to over two whole days who was grumpy about what we were doing.*

"One lady carefully looked at the list and said 'OK' but I wasn't confident that she would buy anything for us. How wrong could I be! When she came out of the store she gave us two large carrier bags and said rather self-consciously 'I just got you one of everything I hope that's OK?' How wonderful! One chap in a sharp suit clutching a flash smart phone asked the boss lots of questions and then went back outside. We didn't see him again until he pushed up one of the deep trollies full to the brim and said 'There you go'. When we asked why all the questions and then such generosity he said 'I just wanted to make sure you were the real thing.'

"Children with their parents were given a few items to bring to our table, every age group, every nationality stopped to give us something. Some stopped to have a grumble about the Government and some to find out more about the foodbanks and how they work but overall it was a positive and rewarding experience. It must have been because I'm doing it again in July!"

One of the best outcomes of a Neighbourhood Food Collection is very over-worked van drivers as they move all the produce to the warehouse, so why not spare a couple of hours and come along to help us keep them busy? [More information](#)

Women in the northern powerhouse workshop

Saturday June 11th, 2016 10am - 5pm at the University of Manchester, Roscoe Building, Room 1.009, Oxford Road, Manchester M13 9PL

New powers to local authorities, millions of pounds of investment and new elected mayors but will any of these things work for women in the north? Tell the Women's Budget Group about what you want the northern powerhouse to do. More affordable childcare? Better apprenticeships for women? Better flexible working and part-time job opportunities?

This event is an opportunity for you to speak directly to those holding the purse strings. Kate Green MP, Shadow Minister for Women and Equalities will be attending as well as representatives from local and regional authorities who will provide an overview of their plans for the region.

No prior knowledge is required, come along, listen, learn and contribute. Make sure the northern powerhouse is not just a boys club. All genders welcome at this event and it is child friendly. Thanks to Amiel and Melburn Trust for making it possible.

[More information and to book](#)



Vacancy: Greater Manchester Living Wage Campaign Coordinator (Part Time)

£25,727 – £29,528 p.a. pro rata 14 hours per week, Salford 1 August – 30 November 2016, with possible extension subject to funding

The Greater Manchester Living Wage Campaign is a coalition of people and organisations who want to make Greater Manchester a Living Wage Zone. You will work with the campaign group to devise strategies and actions to promote the Living Wage across the city region and ensure that they are carried out. The Coordinator is the main representative of the campaign and will attend meetings with key stakeholders and decision-makers in the city, as well as representing the campaign to the wider world. The key focus for this short-term contract is to coordinate the Greater Manchester Living Wage Campaign's activities for Living Wage Week at the start of November 2016.

Closing date for applications: 5pm, Wednesday 15 June 2016. Interviews in Salford, Thursday 30 June 2016.

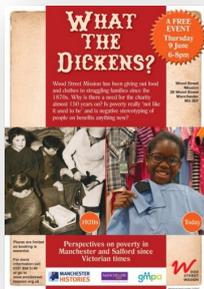
For further details or to download an application pack please go to the [website](#) or call Janet on 0161 236 9321. No CVs please.

Forthcoming Events:

What the Dickens?

Thursday June 9th 2016, from 6 - 8pm at Wood Street Mission, 26 Wood Street, Manchester M3 3EF

This event, in association with the University of Manchester and GMPA, explores how poverty and the perceptions of poverty and inequality have changed over the years. Is it really 'not like it used to be'? And is negative stereotyping of people on benefits anything new? A lively, interactive discussion chaired by Julie-Marie Strange from the University of Manchester with drinks and nibbles.



Click here to [book your place](#)

Crash course on devolution

Tuesday June 14th, 2016 in central Manchester

This CLES event will comprise of a facilitated discussion on all things devolution. Cost £40 for CVS organisations.

[More information and to book](#)

Where does volunteering go from here?

Thursday June 23rd 2016, at St Thomas Centre, Ardwick Green North, Manchester M12 6FZ

You are invited to this event to give your views on the future of volunteering in our region and to have your say on the development of the Volunteering Greater Manchester network. With attendance from Tony Lloyd (Interim Mayor), Carolyn Wilkins (Chief Executive, Oldham Council) and Dr Julian Skyrme (Director of Social Responsibility, University of Manchester) already confirmed, this should be an exciting and interactive event. Event Fee £10 [More information and booking](#)

How has Manchester welcomed refugees?

Thursday June 30th, 2016 from 6 - 8pm at the Portico Library & Gallery, 57 Mosley Street, Manchester M2 3HY

Do you have a burning question about the role we've played in supporting refugees? Are you interested in learning how to make Greater Manchester a more welcoming place? Expert speakers from refugee support organisations, the refugee community and academia will be joined by public figures to discuss how our city has provided a place of safety for people fleeing persecution over the decades.

[More information and to book](#)

Introduction to asset based community development

Thursday July 28th, 2016 10am—4pm at the Manchester Conference Centre, 78 Sackville Street, Manchester M1 3NJ

Orange Club UK offer a practical one day workshop about challenging assumptions and working from the ground up to focus on the capacities of individuals and neighbourhoods and building communities from the inside out. To consider resources, strengths, skills, abilities and assets people and communities can draw upon. Facilitated by Gary Loftus.

Cost £102 [More information and to book](#)

Why GM Poverty Action?

In the Recommendations Report of the GM Poverty Commission, 2.4 *Maintaining Momentum on Poverty* called for the formation of a Poverty Action Group to help take forward the work of the Commission.

A small number of public, private and civic sector individuals came together to form GMPA - a 'coalition of the willing'. This group has since grown to nearly 90 organisations and individuals.

GMPA is based upon principles of cooperation between organisations.

For more information about Greater Manchester Poverty Action

please visit our [website](#), follow us on [Twitter](#) or visit our [Facebook](#) page.

All these platforms are there to share news and opinion from our readers, from GM Poverty Action and from our community.

We want to celebrate our successes, find new ways of working together and provide a voice for the people living in poverty in our region. But we can only do this with your help and support.

For more information or to share your news please contact [Chris](#) or [Peter](#).

Copies of previous newsletters are available on our [website](#)

If you would like to contact us or submit an article for inclusion in a newsletter please get in touch in one of the following ways:

Post: c/o 5th Floor Church House,
90 Deansgate, Manchester M3 2GH

Or contact our Communications Manager:
Chris Bagley T: 07419 774537 [Email](#)
and we will reply as soon as possible.

NB GMPA does not have full-time dedicated administrative support so please do not expect an immediate response.

