

Organisations coming together to tackle poverty in Greater Manchester

We are delighted to confirm that 17 organisations have already signed up as [Principal Partners of GMPA](#) for 2019. This includes our 2018 Principal Partners, plus new organisations including Great Places Housing Group, Kellogg's, Equity Housing Group and Wythenshawe Community Housing Group.

Principal Partners support GMPA with pledges of funding and support. Without this support we wouldn't be able to do the work that we do such as delivering the Food Poverty Alliance, influencing local decision makers or conducting research into the poverty premium. If your organisation would be interested in becoming a Principal Partner, joining with the group represented below, please contact our director [Graham Whitham](#)



As well as these key pledges of funding and support, our Principal Partners join GMPA's advisory group and we provide a GMPA 'Principal Partner' logo for use on their website as well as displaying their company logo and an appropriate quote on our website. We would like to confirm our Principal Partners for 2019 by the end of the financial year, so do please [get in touch](#).

Alternatively, organisations can sign up to our [Supporters Scheme](#) through smaller pledges of funding. Again, a logo for use on their website will be provided and we display their logo on GMPA's website.

These partnerships not only enable us to continue our work but demonstrate to the Greater Manchester community, the commitment of so many across the city region to continue the fight against poverty.

Thanks again to everyone who supports our work.

Graham Whitham

New campaign to tackle homelessness launches in Rochdale Borough

by the Sanctuary Trust

Earlier this month, Sanctuary Trust launched a new campaign in Rochdale giving people the chance to donate towards a fund which buys practical items for people who are homeless – things like a deposit for a home, enrolment on a training course or new clothes for a job interview.



The campaign involves many local partners who will access the fund, and the Sanctuary Trust's Pass It On scheme are proud to be leading it. Pass It On provides training and development opportunities for people who've experienced homelessness or related issues, so they know first-hand what it takes to make that 'real change' to our lives. With Real Change Rochdale, they are now providing the things to help others do the same.

Real Change is an 'alternative giving' model, offering members of the public who are worried about homelessness a way to give other than in the streets. By doing so their money can go further by joining with other people's donations to buy bigger items, as well as the long-term support provided by charities and voluntary groups. That's what has been seen from the campaign in Wigan & Leigh which started last year, as well as the long-running Big Change MCR initiative.

The aim of the fund is to help overcome the poverty gap which GMPA has persuasively demonstrated. Too often, the hard work that people who are homeless (and those supporting them) put in to change their lives falls flat for want of a small amount of money. This flexible funding pot gets this to them as quickly as possible so that no one needs be homeless or beg in the streets.

To provide these grants they need to fundraise, though! They had raised nearly £1500 before they even launched – with the help of partners such as Rochdale Sixth Form College who won our 'Real Change Champions' trophy for their efforts – but they will need more than that to keep going. Over the coming weeks they will be out talking to local people, businesses, faith groups, community groups and more, and if you would like to help you can:



- Donate through the BigGive
- Share the Campaign on your social media pages
- Invite Real Change to your workplace, event or community group
- Do your [own fundraising](#) for Real Change

More info is on their [website](#). Individually, everyone can all do a bit, and together we can make a Real Change!

John Wigley, Brian Duffy, Mike O'Day & Tony McManus (Real Change Co-Chairs, Sanctuary Trust Pass It On scheme)

Greater Manchester Living Wage Campaign meeting – February 26th



We need your help convincing Greater Manchester Councils and the Co-operative Group to become Living Wage accredited employers!

The GM Living Wage Campaign are planning our next steps to ramp up our campaign to secure a commitment to paying a real Living Wage through accreditation.

We have had some encouragement in this, with [Oldham Council committing](#) to join Salford as only the second Living Wage accredited council in Greater Manchester, but there are eight more still to go! Meanwhile the Co-op Group lags behind most of [its competitors](#) in terms of pay rates, but have recognised the need to change and are slowly catching up, under our influence.

Join us to share and plan influencing techniques and tactics, discuss campaign actions and develop a collective strategy to influence the Co-op Group and GM Councils and provide you with the support you need to campaign locally.

February 26th, 2019 from 3 - 4pm at Church House, 90 Deansgate, Manchester, M32GH Please RSVP to [Victoria](#)

Manchester Poverty Truth Commission Co-ordination Support Role – 10 days per month

This role is to help co-ordinate, support and enable commissioners in their engagement with the poverty truth commission, offered either for someone who is looking for a self-employed opportunity to run alongside other pieces of work, or on a part time basis employed by Church Action on Poverty. The post will run from March 2019 – December 2020 in the first instance. Please contact [Church Action on Poverty](#) for more information, a job description and an application form. No CVs please. Deadline: 10am, Friday February 15th, 2019. Interviews week beginning February 24th, 2019.

Campaign for Better Transport

By Darren Shirley, Chief Executive of Campaign for Better Transport

Imagine not having any transport. No car, no affordable train service and no buses. How do you get to work, or to college or to medical appointments? For many people on low incomes this is all too common a reality.



Darren Shirley

According to the Office of National Statistics, [households spend an average of £79.70 a week on transport](#), making transport the biggest household expense. For people on low incomes, the cost of transport is just one more expense that must be at best juggled, or at worst sacrificed. Whilst there is no official definition of transport poverty, or any agreed figures on the number of people affected, it is a problem more and more people and organisations are being to recognise.

Transport poverty is not simply a question of being able to own a car, combinations of poor transport provision, high fares and car-based housing and other developments, all contribute to creating social isolation and poverty. Nor is this just an issue for those without cars; those with access to cars find that they are forced to use their cars more than they want to, or more than they can afford to.

Lack of transport options impacts on people's health and wellbeing, as well as their education and employment opportunities. A recent [Joseph Rowntree Foundation report](#) looked at the transport issues facing out-of-work residents in six low-income neighbourhoods, including Harpurhey in Manchester. It found that 'transport is a significant barrier to employment for many residents living in low-income neighbourhoods' and 'public transport is often seen as something which constrains, rather than enables a return to work'.

Last year we published our seventh annual Buses in Crisis report. It showed local authority supported services are at crisis point, with £172 million cut from bus budgets in England since 2010/11. Local authority bus spend in the North West region dropped more than a fifth (21.54 %) in eight years, with 77 bus services altered, reduced or withdrawn in the last year alone. The loss of a bus service can have a devastating impact on both individuals and whole communities, especially those on low incomes who are already disadvantaged.

Buses connect people to jobs, health services, education establishments and shopping and leisure facilities, not to mention enabling people to visit friends and family. When a bus service disappears, so does a person's and a community's only link to the outside world.

That's why [Campaign for Better Transport](#) wants to see a national investment strategy for buses, like already exists for rail and roads, to ensure buses remain part of the public transport mix.

We also need to make sure public transport remains affordable. Bus fares are rising far higher than that of any other public transport mode, and far higher than the cost of car ownership. Even rail fares, which are rising less than bus fares but still higher than the Consumer Price Index (CPI) which is the official inflation figure used to calculate things like benefit increases, are an increasing unmanageable burden on people's pockets.

One way the Government could help is to introduce a season ticket for part-time workers. Currently a season ticket offers a discount if used to travel for five days a week. If you work part time, or on a zero hours contract, or work part of the week from home because you have caring responsibilities, you must either choose to buy a season ticket and lose money on the days you don't travel, or buy more expensive individual single or return tickets. We want to see more flexible ticket options which reflect modern working practices and don't disadvantage people commuting less than five days a week.

Even people who do need to commute five days a week can find the cost of an annual season ticket too much to pay out in one go, meaning they are unable to take advantage of the discount offered by buying your year's travel up front. Some employers offer season ticket loans which allow people to borrow the money for their annual ticket and pay it back in smaller amounts from their wages over the course of the year.

So far these type of schemes generally only apply to rail season tickets, but we'd like to see this extended to cover bus tickets as well. Low income families are more dependent than others on bus travel and the cheaper fare deals which involve paying larger lump sums are often unavailable to them.

Transport poverty, like other forms of poverty, does not just impact on the individual or their immediate family; it has far reaching consequences that affect whole communities, even whole regions of the country. Ultimately there is also a national economic impact which should, if nothing else, spur the Government on to tackle the issue.



Forthcoming events

Greater Manchester Food Poverty Alliance: Action Plan Launch Event

Monday March 4th, 2019 from 12.30pm - 3pm at Methodist Central Hall, Central Hall, Oldham Street, Manchester, M1 1JQ

Please [book now to reserve your place](#), to find out what you can do to help us end hunger in Greater Manchester

Greater Manchester Poverty Action: Training Courses

[More detailed information and booking for all four courses is available here](#)

Understanding Poverty Data on March 7th and June 5th: Do you want to understand more about how poverty is measured and where you can access data? Strengthen the case for your work by presenting accurate and relevant data about poverty to funders, supporters and policy makers?

Exploring the poverty premium on September 11th: Understanding this issue can support service providers, businesses and policymakers to identify changes in policy and practice that can help mitigate the impact of the poverty premium.

Risk of poverty among different groups on November 6th: Looking at trends in poverty in the UK and supporting participants to think about their own client base and how they can effectively target and design projects and services.

Social Work and Austerity

Thursday January 31st, 2019 from 10am - 3pm
at The University of Manchester, Ellen Wilkinson
Building, Room A2.16, Manchester M15 6JA



The recent UN Rapporteur's report outlined the extent of poverty in the UK and its impact on individuals, families and communities. This event will consider how social work as a profession and individual social workers can respond. [More information and book](#)

GM Spatial Framework workshop for the VCSE sector

Thursday February 7th, 2019 from 9.30am - 12.30pm at Mustard Tree, 110 Oldham Road, Manchester, M4 6AG.

To will consider in more detail the lines of enquiry of the consultation and draw up a formal response on behalf of the VCSE sector in GM. To book your place please email [Karen Conway](#) by Friday February 1st.

Tackling Modern Slavery

Stronger Together workshops are interactive and focus on practical skills to equip businesses to tackle modern day slavery . There are a number of courses being offered in Manchester over the next six months. [More info and book](#)

Holiday Hunger

To help combat the issue of Holiday Hunger, FareShare's #ActiveAte programme is supplying food to over 350 holiday projects this summer, providing nutritious meals and snacks for approximately 50,000 children per week and with the additional support provided by the [FareShare Go scheme](#), the number rises to 1,000 projects, and 160,000 children.

#ActiveAte school holidays this summer. Find out more [here](#)

Do you have any events that you'd like GMPA to publicise? Please [Email us](#) with the details.

Support us

Greater Manchester Poverty Action (GMPA) exists because of the support of likeminded organisations and individuals across Greater Manchester, and beyond, who share GMPA's desire to see an end to poverty in our city region. There are three ways you can support GMPA's work, either through individual donations, signing up as a supporter or becoming a GMPA Principal Partner.

[More information](#)

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](#) or call 07419 774537 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.



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.