

Food Poverty Action Plan for Greater Manchester Launch Event on Monday 4th March 2019



Many of you have been involved in and supported the Greater Manchester Food Poverty Alliance over the last year, which is coordinated by GMPA.

The Alliance comprises over 100 participants:

- from every borough in Greater Manchester
- representing each sector of work
- working across nine sub-groups to draft the Food Poverty Action Plan for Greater Manchester

The Action Plan will be a comprehensive set of aims and actions, for our city region to begin the long-term task of eradicating food poverty.

I am delighted to announce that the six themed sub-groups have each submitted drafts of their sections of the Action Plan so we will have a full draft early next year, and that we have a date for the launch event – the afternoon of Monday 4th March 2019. All details for the event will follow in the new year, but we do have our first speaker confirmed – Greater Manchester Mayor Andy Burnham.

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



Tom Skinner, GMPA Director

While we're still working on the Action Plan, I can tell you that it will recommend as many employers as possible should become accredited as Real Living Wage employers – read more on the following page about what this looks like – and that it will be focused on tackling the root causes of food poverty – read more on Page 3 about the End Hunger UK conference that discussed how we can do this.

GMPA Training Courses

Following the success of the two training courses we ran in the autumn, we are scheduling course dates for 2019. The 'Understanding poverty measurement, definitions and data' course in September was fully booked so we're running it again in [March and June 2019](#). Feedback from the September date included:



"Great work – learnt loads"

"A complex and in-depth subject was covered in an interesting and informative manner"

"Good balance of presentation and group discussion"

This course is for organisations and individuals who wish to strengthen the case for their work by presenting accurate and relevant data about poverty to funders, supporters and policy makers. It is suitable for third, public and private sector organisations. It is also suitable for researchers who wish to develop a baseline understanding of debates about how poverty is measured and commonly used datasets. By the end of this one-day course participants will have developed an understanding of what key poverty datasets tell us, how best to access data sources and how to use this knowledge to support the work that they do.

We will also be running our poverty premium and risk of poverty courses in 2019. Please keep an eye on the [training page of our website](#) and newsletter for details.

IKEA – Introducing the Living Wage is an investment we are incredibly proud of

By Katarina Verdon Olsson, Store Manager at IKEA Manchester (Ashton-Under-Lyne)

Since [IKEA became the largest accredited Real Living Wage employer in retail](#) in 2016, the Greater Manchester Living Wage Campaign has worked with the local store in Ashton-Under-Lyne to promote their good work, and to encourage other employers to follow in their footsteps. Here the local store manager Katarina Verdon Olsson writes about the benefits to co-workers and the business as a whole.

As a values-driven organisation, we believe in providing a meaningful wage to our co-workers that supports the cost of living and this is why we were the first large retail employer to commit to paying the Living Wage and becoming an accredited member of the Living Wage Foundation.

On 1 April 2016, IKEA UK introduced the Living Wage – as defined by the Living Wage Foundation – for all of our co-workers. Today 9,000+ co-workers of all ages across the UK benefit from earning above the statutory National Living Wage. On a local level this has impacted the lives of 300+ co-workers living and working in the Greater Manchester area at the IKEA Manchester store in Ashton-Under-Lyne.

This move was part of a wider transformation of basic co-worker conditions introduced globally by IKEA to ensure that co-workers have the right level of pay, the right contract and an appropriate schedule.

Introducing the Living Wage is an investment we are incredibly proud of, particularly as our co-workers have told us about the positive benefits this has had on their lives. Below are some stories from our co-workers working at the IKEA Manchester store who have shared how the Living Wage increase has impacted them:

“My daughter loves to dance and is passionate about many different types of dance such as ballet, tap and modern. The increase in the living wage meant that we could afford more lessons and the cost involved with performances. The extra money also meant that I could take my family on weekends away more often within the UK.”

Tim (Recovery Co-worker)

“The increase in the living wage meant I could save more money for my dream wedding in Disneyland in Florida. I had also been secretly saving for a honeymoon in the Caribbean which I surprised my girlfriend with the news before we jetted off to the US for our wedding in November last year.”

Danielle (Kitchens co-worker)



IKEA workers front and centre at our 2016 Living Wage Week event

Implementing the Living Wage Foundation’s recommended rates of pay is not only the right thing to do by our co-workers and our values but it also makes good business sense. As we continue to grow in the UK, motivating and retaining our co-workers, as well as attracting new co-workers, becomes increasingly important. We also believe that a team with good compensation and working conditions is in a better position to provide a great experience to our customers.

As well as being good for society, we have also seen business benefits to paying the real Living Wage. At IKEA Manchester, since adopting the Living Wage in 2016 we have not only seen a decrease in staff turnover by -12%, we have also seen the improvement in the co-worker engagement survey (+3.7%) and customer experience key performance indicators.

We encourage other businesses to explore what the benefits of paying the real Living Wage would mean for their staff, business and the Greater Manchester area.



Katarina Verdon Olsson



Can you become an accredited Real Living Wage Employer? It's easier than you may think – [please fill out this form](#) to start the process and join over 150 Greater Manchester-based employers in committing to paying your workers enough to live on.

A growing movement? End Hunger UK conference 2018

By Dr Charlie Spring, University of Sheffield



On World Food Day 2018, the End Hunger UK campaign convened its second annual conference in Westminster to discuss the growing movement around household food insecurity in the UK. A broad coalition of food aid providers, think tanks, faith leaders, researchers, local authorities, artists and diverse experts by experience, End Hunger represents a national effort to galvanise public and policy attention to evidently large numbers of people struggling to afford adequate food. We don't know how large; one panel discussed the ongoing Bill to measure food insecurity nationally via the ONS Living Costs and Food Survey. It is hoped such monitoring would give a more robust sense of the scale and severity of UK food poverty, to be tracked against changes including Universal Credit rollout and Brexit.

Power of stories and frames

A key theme of the day, however, was the power of stories and images over stats in capturing public and policy attention to food poverty, its causes and solutions. A collaborative photo exhibition, 'Behind Closed Doors', has toured the UK with portraits and research into experiences of food insecurity, some displayed at the conference and ending in the House of Commons. We heard young poets recite moving submissions to a recent poetry competition. The Food Foundation are collecting submissions of lived experiences towards their [Children's Future Food Inquiry](#), while the Independent Food Aid Network (IFAN) aim to build an online [Story Bank](#) of lived experiences of food insecurity.

A panel led by Church Action on Poverty reported research by [JRF and the FrameWorks Institute](#) into effective ways to shift public discourse about poverty. Countering individualising, blame-and-shame accounts requires keying into commonly-held beliefs about the injustice of poverty and government's responsibility to protect against it, using well-chosen examples and stories rather than relying on numbers alone.

Whose problem?

Coordinated by Sustain's Food Power programme, partnership structures such as the Greater Manchester Food Poverty Alliance have been forming around the UK to ask how food poverty might be addressed at local and regional levels. The End Hunger UK gathering therefore required us to think about scales of responsibility for preventing poverty. I heard discussions about how local networks of food banks might better share their food supplies as demand increases. It was encouraging to hear food bank leaders discuss exit strategies over the next few years, and we must help them to realise these goals as [my research shows how difficult this has been in the US and Canada](#)

Some alliances expressed frustration at local authorities producing poverty strategies yet lacking any funds to turn aims into actions. Public health workers have conducted needs assessments and written proposals that end up ignored by senior colleagues. Yet, affecting national government and company policies that affect benefit and wage levels felt too tough a goal for many of the local alliances I spoke to. End Hunger UK, then, provides one lens through which to target a palpable collective anger. Another potential shared voice was offered by the school students of Blackburn and Darwen who have been organising as part of Food Power's efforts to involve experts by experience in campaigning. The girls, who [shared their stories for a short film](#), are launching a campaign Darwen Gets Hangry, which they hope will encourage others to turn their own experiences of shame and guilt about being food-poor- or 'hangry'- into something collective and targeted that can spread to other parts of the UK.



Dr Charlie Spring

The girls shared a panel with a group of asylum seekers from Luton who are also part of End Hunger UK, who formed a growing group after seeking Red Cross food parcels and now cook their produce as community meals. One lady, still seeking asylum after 16 years, told us she understands why some of the families she meets spend their money on drugs, even before food; they don't have enough love, she said, or motivation and opportunities. Her expression of shared purpose with the Darwen girls to counter government indifference, gave a hopeful sense that the divisive forces of Brexit and far-right populism might be countered by intersectional struggles of solidarity against the erosion of public entitlements and the human right to decent food.

This is an abridged version of an article that Charlie wrote for the Realising Just Cities blog – you can [see the full version here](#).

Tesco shoppers show their commitment to their 'neighbours'

Tesco at Handforth Dean has long been one of the leading supporters of Stockport Foodbank and that was again reflected in the support that came from hundreds of customers as they donated food and Christmas items to the Foodbank's Christmas collection.

For 3 days, willing volunteers from the Prince's Trust, GM Fire and Rescue Service, foodbank centres and local Churches manned the collection point in store and were inundated with donations of all sizes, from single tins to full trolleys. Nigel Tedford, Manager of Stockport Foodbank said, "We are constantly amazed as to how generous people are and continually thinking of the needs of others, particularly at this time of the year. Our thanks must also go to Tesco's staff who make the collections possible – it's a great partnership all round."

"With the recent introduction of Universal Credit in Stockport and the seasonal increase in the number of people needing help from the Foodbank, these donations will go a long way to keeping the shelves full, well into the New Year."

This nationwide event is a partnership between The Trussell Trust, FareShare and Tesco. Collections took place across the country for three days, with volunteers putting in thousands of hours talking to shoppers, collecting and sorting donations, and battling through the traffic to get the food back to their storage facilities. The final total will be topped up by Tesco making a financial contribution equivalent to 20% of the value of the food collected.

Foodbanks and pantries will be providing support across Greater Manchester over the coming difficult weeks - to find out where they are situated please visit our [food providers map](#).



Volunteers from the Prince's Trust and Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service helping out on Thursday

Forthcoming events



Its Behind You! Christmas Pantomime

Thursday December 13th - Saturday December 15th 2018 at The Edge Theatre, Manchester Road, Chorlton, M21 9JG

The Booth Centre offers regular drama and music workshops in partnership with [The Edge Theatre & Arts Centre](#). Join the cast of characters as they journey to rescue Sleeping Beauty from Baron Von Greed's castle. Will they reach her in time? Will the funniest joke in the world, save the day? [Buy Tickets](#)



Join Shelter Manchester for an afternoon of celebration and festive fun

Saturday December 15th, 2018 from 2 - 5pm at St Michael's, George Leigh Street Manchester M4 5DG



Escape the hustle and bustle of the city centre and come along to beautiful Hallé at St Michael's to enjoy an afternoon of music, poetry, entertainment, and information about our work. Everyone is welcome, and they would love to see you! Drop in for a drink and mince pie or stay all afternoon. Take in the lovely surroundings, try your luck on a stall, get your kids' faces painted, and find out more about Shelter in Manchester. Register [here](#)



Christmas Carol Service at Manchester Cathedral

Friday December 21st, 2018 from 2.30 - 3.30pm followed by refreshments

Come along to a festive celebration and sing along to your favourite traditional Christmas Carols. Hear a special performance from the Booth Centre Streetwise Opera group. This service will celebrate the work of homeless services in our city, all welcome. Email [Charlotte](#) to register.

Greater Manchester Food Poverty Alliance: Action Plan Launch Event

Date for your 2019 diary: Monday March 4th, 2019 in the afternoon - venue to be confirmed

Details for the event will follow in the new year, but we do have a confirmed speaker – GM Mayor Andy Burnham. 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: Understanding Poverty Data Training Courses

March 7th and June 5th, 2019 - full day courses, venue to be announced

Do you want to understand more about how poverty is measured and where you can access data? 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 makers. A more detailed course overview and booking is available via our website [here](#)

Review of 2018

Over the past 12 months we have shared 20 newsletters as well as our research into [Local Welfare Assistance Schemes](#), [child and family poverty strategies](#) and most recently, [the poverty premium](#).

We have launched the [Greater Manchester Food Poverty Alliance](#), continued to host the [Greater Manchester Living Wage Campaign](#), shared our series of [Beyond Poverty](#) stories, added a new [map](#) and included articles in the newsletter on a range of topics including homelessness, food poverty and employment. We have also provided training courses and have [more on the calendar for 2019](#).

Many, many people have worked with us to achieve all of the above. Thank you.

This is our last 2018 Newsletter. We will be back in January, so if you would like to send an article, do get in touch. Our contact details are shown in the box on the right.

In the meantime we would like to wish you

**A PEACEFUL AND HAPPY
CHRISTMAS SEASON**

and we look forward to a

NEW YEAR

*full of opportunities that can be
shared by everyone.*

Best wishes from

Graham, Tom and Chris



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 for inclusion 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.