

Can you PLEDGE to take action to help tackle food poverty?

After a year of convening and coordinating the Greater Manchester Food Poverty Alliance, we are looking forward to the launch of the first ever Food Poverty Action Plan for Greater Manchester on Monday. We are delighted with the number of people who have booked to attend the launch event, but if you haven't already done so please make sure you [book your place ASAP](#).



Thank you to everyone who has co-produced the Action Plan through the Food Poverty Alliance. At the event a number of organisations have committed to coming on stage to make pledges stating what they will do to help us tackle the scourge of food poverty in Greater Manchester.

We want even more organisations to take part in this. We'd love to hear about new actions you may take in response to the recommendations of the Action Plan, but you could also make a pledge if you are taking action in line with the recommendations, and are willing to help us spread that way of working across Greater Manchester. Whether you're a voluntary or community organisation providing food handouts, a private company that pays the living wage or a local authority officer involved in developing a local poverty strategy, we want to hear from you.

By giving your pledge you'll be helping make the Action Plan a reality. On the next page you will see a list of some of the actions that'll be featured in the Action Plan.

If you are willing to make a pledge we will ask you to join us on stage at the event where you'll be able to read your statement out in front of Andy Burnham and other attendees. If you are unable to make the event we are happy to read out the pledge for you.

There will be chances to pledge action on the day, but it would be great to know as much as possible in advance, to help us with planning and publicity. If you are able to commit any support, please [email](#), ideally by midday on Friday 1st March, with PLEDGE in the subject line and say:

- What exactly you are committing to do, and where possible, which one of the Action Plan's actions it relates to
- Whether you or a colleague will be able to attend the event to announce your pledge in person, or if I can share it on the day
- Your contact details, or the details of the person in your organisation who will carry out the pledged action
- Please also include a small JPG version of your logo to help us publicise your support

I look forward to working with you on one of the biggest challenges facing Greater Manchester, one that we can tackle through concerted strategic action.



Tom Skinner
Director, Greater Manchester Poverty Action

A selection of the recommendations from the Food Poverty Action Plan



Here are a few of the actions that will feature in the Action Plan. Please note that this is not the action plan itself – to be among the first to see that, you'll need to [join us on 4th March](#) – but it should give you an idea of the kinds of actions that we're looking for.

Everyone:

- Establish more food clubs/food pantries, especially in areas that lack affordable healthy food;
- Action to reduce the 'poverty premium' – the extra costs facing people on low incomes for everyday goods and services;
- Work with the Food Poverty Alliance on localised in-depth pilot projects, to create a more joined-up approach to addressing food poverty in specific neighbourhoods;
- Connect the welfare system with other local support offers, so it can better engage with claimants to understand their needs and build support around them;
- Develop a free online platform for food support providers, like the streetsupport.net site created for the homelessness sector;
- Open up unused land for community food growing, and commercial/professional kitchens when they are not used, for community use;
- Work with the Food Poverty Alliance to measure food poverty in specific neighbourhoods, and across Greater Manchester;
- Contribute financially to the Alliance, so that GMPA can employ a full-time coordinator to support the implementation of the Action Plan – more information about the Alliance and how this money would be spent is available on request.

Education:

- Schools should develop, share and follow good practise to increase uptake of free school meals without exposing pupils to stigma;
- Schools should work with local businesses and charities, with the help of neighbourhood teams, to provide breakfast clubs. Where possible they should be open to all pupils;
- All 10 GM boroughs should support and coordinate provision of activities with food during school holidays. Share learning to develop a toolkit, and build towards a GM-wide approach;

- Schools, colleges and universities should support local charities to provide food and cooking classes, as well as large-scale cooking of surplus ingredients for community use, making their kitchens and food storage available where possible.

Health and care:

- Expand social prescribing for healthy food-related activities such as cooking classes and food growing;
- Work with charities and businesses to promote healthy food, with positive messaging and campaigns. Campaigns should be linked to organisations that can help people to access and use healthy food, including support such as cooking classes and fuel vouchers;
- Ensure that disabled people and older people are given enough support to access healthy affordable food;
- Ensure hospital discharge includes a nutrition/hydration check and provision of 'food to go' bags for those who won't have support at home.

Businesses, charities and 'anchor institutions':

- Show leadership in tackling low pay, insecure work, and unemployment – become [accredited Real Living Wage employers](#);
- Those that handle food should prevent unnecessary food wastage and ensure that high quality, healthy surplus food is sorted and put to good use;
- Support should be given to building capacity for food acquisition, supply and redistribution;
- Develop and implement procurement policies to source supplies locally, including but not limited to food.

Housing:

- Prioritisation of social and affordable housing in all neighbourhoods in planning decisions;
- Use landlord licensing and other tools to improve standards, and push for longer tenancies;
- Ensure that temporary accommodation is equipped with cooking equipment and other white goods necessary for a basic standard of living.

From poverty to prosperity for all - a one day conference (2nd April 2019)

On 2nd April the Inclusive Growth Analysis Unit (IGAU) from the University of Manchester and GMPA are hosting a joint conference exploring what more we can do to tackle poverty at local- and city-region level, with a particular focus on Greater Manchester.

Greater Manchester can tell an impressive 'growth story', but poverty continues to exist across the city-region and on a large-scale. More than 600,000 people are living on low incomes, with child poverty rates of over 40% in parts of the city-region. Meanwhile a growing share of people are in in-work poverty and welfare reforms and a freeze on working-age benefits have taken £100s if not £1,000s out of the pockets of the poorest families. We need to understand how we can respond to these challenges across the city region.

The conference is being held at the Mechanics Institute in the centre of Manchester. Please book your place [here](#).

This conference builds on the [local poverty strategies](#) event GMPA held at Kellogg's in October 2018.



Keynote Speaker:
Katie Schmuecker,
Joseph Rowntree Foundation



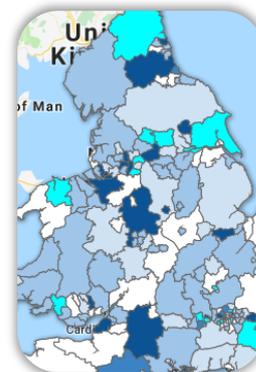
Poverty Strategies Map – Updated

In the autumn GMPA launched a new resource detailing those local authorities with child and family poverty strategies in place. Initially we mapped a small number of areas. We have now widened this out so that the map includes information about 209 local authority areas across England and Wales. Of the 209 areas we have mapped, 31 have a child or family poverty strategy in place (for example Manchester) and a further 80 incorporate a focus on child and family poverty within a broader strategy (for example Salford) or set of strategies (for example Wigan).

GMPA believes having a local child and family poverty strategy in place is highly important. Many of the most important decisions made affecting child poverty and children's lives are made at a local level. Local action can be taken in a number of areas including:

- Parental employment
- Educational outcomes and experiences
- Housing support
- Local elements of the welfare system.

Please visit the [poverty strategies](#) page of our website to see the updated map, to find out about your local area and to download our briefing.



A brand new Community Grocer project opened up at the Aquarius Centre in Hulme on Tuesday 26 February, and they will then be opening their doors every Tuesday.

Members who join the shop can pay just £2.50 for around £12 worth of groceries which include things like tins, chilled, frozen, fruit and vegetables. Other Community Grocer projects have been a hugely popular in Fallowfield, Gorton, Rusholme and Longsight and Ardwick, read more about these other shops [here](#).

Membership for the new Community Grocer is available to people living within walking distance (15 minutes) of the project. For more information please call 07305 325 369 or [email](#)

GMPA is delighted to add this new community grocer to our [Food Provider's map](#)

Forthcoming events

Greater Manchester Poverty Action: Training Courses

GMPA provides training to organisations working to address poverty across the city region and the rest of the UK. We aim to support organisations to better understand some of the complexities around poverty. We offer three different courses. The next available training is our Understanding Poverty Data course:



Understanding Poverty Data: Would understanding how poverty in the UK is defined and measured help you and your organisation in the work that you do? Do you need to identify robust sources of data to support your fundraising bids? Are you regularly challenged about the nature and scale of poverty in the UK and find the myriad of information about poverty hard to navigate? This course is designed to support organisations facing these challenges.

Next available dates are March 7th and June 5th, 2019. It is a full day course.

Exploring the Poverty Premium: Next available date is September 11th, 2019. It is a half day course.

Risk of poverty among different groups: Next available date is November 6th, 2019. It is a half day course.

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



Family Fund Information and Support Day

On Tuesday March 26th, 2019 from 10.30am - 2.30pm at St Thomas Centre, Ardwick Green North, Manchester M12 6 FZ

Learn more about support services, grants and information available to you and your disabled child or young person. They are also running two focus groups on the day to ask families about how they find the information, advice and support they may need. The discussion will last about 90 minutes each and we will be asking families to pre-register.

For further info or to register either [email](#) or visit the [website](#)



Greater Manchester Law Centre manifesto launch

On April 11th, 2019 from 6 - 8pm at Thompsons Solicitors, 55 King Street, Manchester, M2 4LQ

Access to legal advice, representation and justice can empower people, reduce homelessness and poverty, challenge the hostile environment against claimants and migrants, enforce people's rights and prevent inequality and exclusion.

The manifesto will set out their demands for change, declare what they stand for, celebrate their work so far and call on others to fight with them for free access to justice. Get your £5 ticket [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](#) 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.