

Update from GMPA's Greater Manchester Food Poverty Alliance

Following a successful [launch](#) and [empowerment evening](#), the real work of the Greater Manchester Food Poverty Alliance has begun. The work of the Alliance is now being coordinated across several sub-groups who will co-produce a Food Poverty Action Plan for Greater Manchester.



The Action Plan, to be launched early next year, will be co-produced by people from each borough of Greater Manchester, including experts by experience – people who have lived experience of food poverty. It will set ambitious but achievable aims for Greater Manchester to tackle food poverty, and a clear set of actions needed to achieve these aims. As we identify people and organisations whose support will be needed, we will ask them to work with us now in developing solutions, rather than simply presenting a set of actions to them at the end of the year.

Six themed sub-groups have been tasked with developing their own sections of the Plan – this table shows some of the themes that they will cover, and information on how to get involved. Everyone who receives this newsletter will be welcome to any or all of these meetings, even if you are not on the Alliance or sub-group's mailing list, but please do email the chairperson(s), copying in GMPA at food@gmpovertyaction.org so they know to expect you, and so they can include you in future communications.

Themed sub-group	Topics include:	Chair(s)	Meetings
1. Place-based access to food	Research into areas of GM that lack healthy and affordable food options	Graham Whitham	Has met twice, next meeting to be confirmed (TBC)
2. Children experiencing food poverty	Access to fresh, sustainable healthy food during both term times and holidays. Food education both inside and outside schools	Dominic Coleman Letitia Rose	Has met twice, next meeting 21st July
3. Causes of food poverty	Benefits, support, advice and in-work poverty. The food system and food supply chain mechanisms	Dr Mags Adams Secretary: Nayan Joshi	Has met twice, next meeting October 7th 11am - 1pm Church House
4. Food banks and beyond	Coordination between social food and food aid providers. Sharing good practise and exploring new models	Lily Axworthy	Has met twice, next meeting July 17th
5. Measuring and monitoring food poverty	Measuring food poverty. Monitoring actions taken to reduce food poverty	Charlie Spring	Has met once. Next meeting 6 - 8pm, Monday July 9th, MMU
6. Skills and training for people in poverty	Cooking skills Access to food/skills Employment Food production	Adele Jordan Maggie Lister Helen Walker	Has met twice, next meeting TBC



Tom Skinner, GMPA
Director

There is also the Driver Group which coordinates the process, the Reference Group for people in positions of power and influence who can help to address any issues that the sub-groups identify, and the Diversity Group, which will advise the other sub-groups about how to address food poverty for everyone (please email [Atiha Chaudry](mailto:Atiha.Chaudry), to join this group).

It is clear that there is a great appetite for action on hunger, so please join us in this coordinated and strategic work to tackle food poverty together.

Our *Beyond Poverty* series continues with Darryl's story. His experiences illustrate the links between childhood poverty and crime, and the importance of positive rehabilitation and is the fifth case study from our *Beyond Poverty* series.

Darryl's story

Darryl's story shows us the links between childhood poverty and crime, and the importance of positive rehabilitation.

Darryl grew up in Oldham. His mum left home when he was just 4 weeks old, "She just lost interest and stopped coming to see us not long after that. Grandma told me it was because Mum wanted a girl, and I was a boy", he remembers. "I hardly ever saw her after that. Never at all in my teenage years". His father had to bring up Darryl and his two older sisters on his own, and although there was always food on the table, it was a struggle to buy anything extra with his dad's wages from packing in a warehouse.

Darryl had a rough and hard youth. "I was excluded loads of times from school, getting into trouble for stuff like fighting and verbally abusing staff. I did it all to get attention. To prove I could do things". Darryl was eventually expelled. "Behind all of this was money.



Some studies find a strong and direct relationship between socioeconomic status and offending, particularly in respect of the impact of childhood poverty and the effects of growing up poor on persistent youth offending (Braithwaite, 1981; Jarjoura et al 2002; Hay and Forrest, 2009; Bjerck, 2007).

"I always wanted money. To buy things I didn't have. It started off petty, thieving a CD from the shop. Trespass and probably some criminal damage too". But then he fell into company with people who just drank and did drugs all day. "We ended up doing a lot of drugs, drinking, and getting caught in drug dealing. It made me even more desperate for money. And the crimes started getting more serious." Darryl got involved in a spat with other lads in town, and was sent to prison for three and a half years.

Darryl was in prison for a year and a half, before being released.

However, he broke his curfew by returning to drinking, and was sent back to prison for a further year and a half. But he says, "It's not that everyone in prison was poor, or grew up without much, there was a wide range of us. But in prison there was poverty of spirit. I got worse in there. It didn't help me. My mental health got worse. I was angry. Looking back, I wasn't ready to come out." Darryl then spent several years in a secure psychiatric hospital, where he "picked up a lot of skills from psychology and psychotherapy which have helped me enormously to return to a normal life."

"I've always known poverty from looking at all those things I never had. Having money, and everything you want. We didn't live like that. We were in a situation where we had nothing."

Darryl thinks about what poverty means for him. "Nowadays people who have no money are homeless. I guess it's a change in society. In my time, it was crime. You would just turn to crime to get money."

"I'm happy I did those 5 years in hospital. If I was just in there for a couple of years, I wouldn't have learnt all that I have. I picked up skills from the psychology and psychotherapy classes. People might think I'm daft, but I picked up a lot."

Darryl has made a success of his life since leaving hospital. He moved from 24/7 supervision, to being supported from a distance, for just 6 hours a week. He spent a long time volunteering in the kitchen at [Back on Track](#), a Manchester charity that enables disadvantaged adults to make lasting, positive changes in their lives.

Darryl has a passion for cooking and performing arts, and has been singing with [Streetwise Opera](#), a choir that works with individuals with experience of homelessness. He is now studying performing arts at college, and will soon start as a volunteer with [Neshomo](#), befriending long term mentally ill people in the Greater Manchester Jewish community.

"Everyone in hospital said to me 'you're never getting out', meaning that I would never turn my life around. But I did and if I can do it, anyone can. Now I want to help others."

Interview carried out by Peter Cruickshank for Greater Manchester Poverty Action's [Beyond Poverty](#) report



Chris Dabbs, and his team at Unlimited Potential, are congratulated on their recent Living Wage Foundation Award for Industry Leadership.

Unlimited Potential, whose work supports people to lead happier and healthier lives, won the **Living Wage Foundation's** Industry Leadership Award thanks to its dedication to promoting the real Living Wage through Salford's Health and Wellbeing Board.

Through Unlimited Potential's leadership, the Board agreed to establish a multi-sectoral Living Wage task group, chaired by Unlimited Potential's chief executive, Chris Dabbs. It has so far successfully supported the accreditation of 11 major Salford health and care organisations as Living Wage employers.

Chris said: *"We're delighted that once again the city of Salford is being recognised for its commitment to the real Living Wage. The accreditation of the 11 organisations is just another step to our city becoming the country's first fully Living Wage health and social care system by 2021.*

"The award is a testament to all of the organisations that have contributed to the progress made on the real Living Wage in Salford. Unlimited Potential will continue to champion the need for all health and social care workplaces to implement the real Living Wage."



Marcia, Debs, Chris and Sue
at Unlimited Potential

GM Living Wage Campaign Group News

At our recent Campaign Group meeting, Chris Dabbs also gave a presentation on how we might nudge employers towards the Living Wage.

Chris introduced us to the EAST principles of 1) make it easy; 2) make it attractive; 3) make it social and 4) make it timely. He explained that if all four are applied, then it is possible to shift employer thinking about becoming an accredited Living Wage employer. He also explained that it is important to 1) define the problem from their perspective not ours, before applying the EAST principles and then 2) test, learn and adapt our use of the principles in the given context.

Living Wage Week: Lola McEvoy, from the Living Wage Foundation, shared some of their plans for this year's Living Wage Week. This year, the Foundation will be celebrating the work of the Living Wage movements. They are planning to have celebrations in Manchester, with as much involvement as possible, from local people. This will include inviting those who have benefited from being paid the Living Wage to share the impact this has had on their lives. Working with the Foundation and our colleagues in GM Citizens, we hope to include a celebration of five years of the GM Living Wage Campaign, as well as running some targeted campaign actions.

Campaign Action: A planning meeting took place on May 22nd 2018 for an action to build pressure on a large locally based employer. We will build support and develop partnerships with MPs and trades unions, and are planning a big action to take place during Living Wage Week.

Greater Manchester Councils: We are keen to pick up our conversations with council leaders across the city region, to ensure that those that need to, apply to the Living Wage Foundation for accreditation – currently Salford is the only accredited council in Greater Manchester, although Greater Manchester Combined Authority also became accredited last year, and most councils have made some moves towards paying the Living Wage. Also, as our Campaign Group grows, we are identifying activists who have local links to councilors and others with leadership positions in their local council, to pick up the local Living Wage accreditation conversations.

GM Good Employment Charter: we continue to support meaningful engagement with the Charter as it moves into the second consultation round later this year.

Last but by no means least, it was reported that Debbie Leigh, John Leigh and Vicky Egerton have all stepped down from the Core Team. They were all thanked for all the help and support they have given to the Campaign, and we wished them all well in their future work.

If you have any questions, queries, comments or suggestions about the GM Living Wage Campaign, please do get in touch via email to Lynn or call 07948 549485

Helping hand with your water bill

Don't suffer in silence - that's the message from United Utilities if you're struggling to pay your water bill.



"If you're going through a tough financial patch and are finding it hard to pay your water bill, please get in touch with us on **0800 072 6765**. We're easy to talk to and the sooner you call, the quicker we can get you the right support to prevent you falling further into debt," says Jane Haymes from United Utilities.

"We're already helping more than 100,000 customers in this way so it's well worth picking up the phone."

One scheme, called Payment Matching Plus, promises to make you debt free within two years.

Jane adds "If you've built up a lot of debt, our Payment Matching Plus scheme will get you back on track. For every £1 you pay we'll put in £1 too and after six months we'll increase our contribution to £2. We'll then clear any remaining debt if you continue to make regular payments for two years."

If you're receiving Pension Credit and struggling to make payments, you can apply to United Utilities for their Help to Pay scheme. This caps your bill at a reduced amount based on your income and outgoings.

If you're struggling to make water bill payments due to losing your job or having to pay out for an unexpected emergency, the company's Payment Break scheme can help by delaying your payments for an agreed period. Any delayed payments are then spread over a longer period of time.

United Utilities can also help if you're applying for Universal Credit by delaying your water bill payments for up to eight weeks while you wait for your first UC payment to arrive.

Jane also commented "If your home has more bedrooms than people, it's also worth considering a water meter as it's one of the easiest ways to make a big saving on your bill. We fit them for free and you can even switch back to your old bill within two years if for whatever reason you're not making a saving."

The United Utilities affordability team can be contacted on 0800 072 6765.

You can find more information about all of the company's schemes on their [website](#). A form is also available on this webpage for customers who would prefer to submit their details online rather than calling and United Utilities' affordability team will give you a call back.

GMPA has been working to shine a light on different types of non-statutory support available to people on low incomes. We regularly feature different organisations working to support people experiencing poverty across Greater Manchester in our newsletter and [our maps](#) detail different types of support across the city region. If you'd like to feature in our newsletter please get in touch.

The Greater Manchester Bike Share Survey - win £200!

The University of Salford and British Cycling are inviting readers to take part in an online survey on cycling and bike share in Greater Manchester. They are interested in your views even if you don't cycle (or use bike share).

The survey takes approximately 10 minutes to complete and you have the chance to enter a prize draw to win £200 in shopping vouchers.

The survey is aimed at people over 16 who live, work or study in Greater Manchester, or have visited the area over the last 12 months.

The results will be publicly available and help researchers and policy makers understand how to make our cities more cycle friendly.

[Complete the survey here](#)

The Greater Manchester Bike Share Survey

Win £200

University of Salford MANCHESTER

BRITISH CYCLING

HSBC UK

*Prize draw for £200 shopping vouchers. 16 and over only.

Forthcoming Events:



Festival of Ageing
from July 2nd - 15th, 2018
across Greater Manchester

The Festival of Ageing is aimed at all those who are aged over 50 and living in Greater Manchester. There will be a range of activities on offer: fun, music, dancing, hobbies, physical activities, information and lots of opportunities join in with events both local to you and further afield.

If you work with anybody aged over 50 or are aged over 50 yourself, then get involved!

There will be a main event in most GM Boroughs and lots more small neighbourhood events and activities. GMCVO currently have over 200 events registered, you can find more details on the [webpage](#) and you can register for a priority wristband and a printed events brochure here: [Individual registration form](#) or phone Jane Bramley on 0161 230 1438.

Salford VCSE Conference

Thursday July 5th, 2018 from 9am - 4.30 pm at the AJ Bell Stadium, Stadium Way, Eccles M30 7EY

The launch of the VCSE Strategy for Salford; Inspirational speakers; Have your say - 'The Great Big VCSE Poll'; Tackling poverty pledges - one year on and more to be announced. Workshops morning and afternoon. Foodbank collection.
[More information and registration](#)



Welfare Conditionality: Sanctions, Support and Behaviour Change

[SHUSU, University of Salford](#)
Wednesday July 18th, 2018 from 1 - 4 pm at the Old Fire Station, The University of Salford M5 4WT



University of
Salford
MANCHESTER

This project has created an international and

interdisciplinary focal point for research on welfare conditionality, providing a new and wide-ranging evidence base on the impact and ethicality of welfare conditionality across a range of policy areas. This event provides an opportunity to discuss the research findings and how they can feed into the work and welfare agenda across GM. [More info and book](#)

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



Europaia is a charity that works with people from Eastern and Central Europe who have settled in Greater Manchester.

They offer free Advice Sessions on the first Saturday of each month from 10.30am and Free Legal Surgeries on the third Wednesday of each month from 2pm. They work with interpreters and translators (Polish, Russian, Czech, Slovak and Romanian) in order to engage with their communities. Their Advice sessions cover issues such as employment issues, housing, benefits, local councils, utilities, landlords, and more. Their Legal Surgery assists people with family law advice and sign posting you to other organisations that will assist you.

Free 30 minute Legal appointments. Please [email](#), in your own language, to book an appointment.

Europaia's offices are at St Wilfrid's Enterprise Centre, Royce Road, Manchester M15 5BJ For more information visit their [website](#)

[The Charity Tax Commission](#) is investigating whether charitable tax reliefs could be used more strategically to produce better outcomes for beneficiaries. This is a chance to influence the commission's recommendations before it is too late. Please come to this event and have your say.

Tuesday July 3rd, 2018 from 2 - 4 pm at St Thomas Centre, Ardwick Green North, Manchester M12 6FZ

Tax reliefs for charities are estimated to be worth £3.77bn a year, eg business rates relief, Gift Aid and VAT relief. But are the right charities benefiting? The Commission is investigating whether charitable tax reliefs could be used more strategically to produce better outcomes and wants to explore bold ideas for reform. Commissioners will be attending. The event is held in partnership with NCVO. [More Info & Book](#)

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 in a newsletter 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.