

Greater Manchester Poverty Action (GMPA) Impact Statement

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November 2020

This Impact Statement has been compiled to support prospective Non-Executive Directors understand more about GMPA's work and the impact the organisation has.

"So many organisations are involved in combating poverty and in dealing with the effects of it, but to have an independent organisation whose role is to focus wholly on the causes, effects and mitigation of poverty is so vitally important. An organisation that is not in 'competition' with others, but instead serving them to do what they do better is similarly important."

Respondent to GMPA's 2020 Annual Impact Survey

"The combination of networking, research, policy influencing, information activities and tools developed by GMPA have provided a reliable point of reference for those working on different dimensions and aspects of poverty across Greater Manchester. I think this broad range of services and activities in and of itself is the main contribution of GMPA, as it creates channels to connect a complex network of stakeholders and helps them find new ways to work together effectively, while also supporting their work more directly by providing evidence, training, networking opportunities."

Respondent to GMPA's 2020 Annual Impact Survey

Who we are and how we work

Greater Manchester Poverty Action (GMPA) is a not-for-profit organisation that works to address poverty across Greater Manchester.

We **convene and network** organisations from public, private and VCSE sectors, and people with lived experience of poverty, to foster collaboration and innovation and to maximise the impact of efforts to address the **underlying causes of poverty** across Greater Manchester. We **equip stakeholders** with the knowledge they need to tackle poverty. We carry out **research and advocate for changes in policy** at a local and city regional level and sometimes at a national level to address the structural and systematic causes of poverty.

There are three strands to our work: *Policy and research, programmes and network support.*

Vision

Our vision is of a Greater Manchester free from poverty where all residents can realise their potential and access the benefits of living in a diverse and vibrant city region.

Aims

GMPA works to the following aims:

1. **Equip stakeholders** from across public, private and VCSE sectors across Greater Manchester with the skills, knowledge and expertise they need to tackle poverty.
2. Participate in **policy and research** projects to advance knowledge of poverty, its causes, effects and solutions so that decision makers are better equipped to tackle the problem.

3. **Convene, connect and network** organisations (from public, private and VCSE sectors) and individuals (from all backgrounds, including people with lived experience of poverty) from across Greater Manchester (and beyond where applicable) in order to identify and strengthen existing anti-poverty work and to enable greater collaboration in the development of new projects.
4. **Promote innovative policy and practice-based responses** to poverty that draw on good practice, that are evidence based, collaborative and scalable.

A list of GMPA's impact and achievements

Equip stakeholders with the skills, knowledge and expertise they need to tackle poverty.

- The GMPA fortnightly newsletter, promoting good practice and keeping our network informed of relevant developments in policy and practice, has now reached 121 editions.
- GMPA has maintained maps of support services for people experiencing poverty in Greater Manchester for the last three years. The maps enable people experiencing poverty, and those supporting them, to access support quickly and efficiently. The maps have received 73,000 hits to date.

“The food map is an excellent resource for the foodbank and it's users, and really appreciate the time that must have gone into making it so up-to-date before Covid.”

Respondent to GMPA's 2020 Annual Impact Survey

- GMPA maintains a growing network of **1400 stakeholders** across Greater Manchester, made up of people working in the VCSE, public and private sector, as well as people with lived experience of poverty, who support our vision of a city region free from poverty. This gives us considerable convening power, and the ability to connect stakeholders across systems so that they can achieve greater impact through their work.

Promoting innovative policy and practice-based responses to poverty

- GMPA has successfully influenced the development and implementation of poverty strategies in Manchester, Salford, Tameside and Trafford.
- GMPA's policy and research work has resulted in Oldham and Stockport councils redesigning their local welfare assistance provision so that they better support people living in poverty.
- GMPA successfully lobbied for the introduction of the Greater Manchester Good Employment Charter and has been the Greater Manchester Combined Authority and Growth Company in shaping the Charter.

“I pay tribute to Greater Manchester Poverty Action for championing this [the Good Employment Charter]”

Andy Burnham, Mayor of Greater Manchester. GMPA Podcast. Published 26th August 2020.

- Through the Greater Manchester Living Wage Campaign (hosted by GMPA) we have seen considerable growth in the number of accredited Living Wage employers in the city region. There are now over 150 accredited Real Living Wage employers in Greater Manchester. Up from 20 employers four years ago.
 - The Campaign has successfully influenced adoption of the Real Living Wage by Salford, Manchester and Oldham councils (all of which are now working to become

‘Living Wage Places’). For Manchester City Council alone, adoption of the Real Living Wage benefits 1000 workers to a value of £1.5m per annum.

Convening, connecting and networking organisations and individuals in order to identify and strengthen existing anti-poverty work and to enable greater collaboration in the development of new projects.

- In 2019 GMPA launched a Food Poverty Action Plan for Greater Manchester - A plan to address the underlying causes of poverty co-produced by over 100 stakeholders. As a result of this work, over 100 pledges to tackled food poverty were made by 50 different organisations.

Delivery during COVID-19

As a result of the pandemic GMPA has focussed on the immediate crisis caused by COVID-19. Whilst we are still working towards our vision of a city region free from poverty, we have had to adapt our workplan for 2020. During this period we have been focusing our delivery on the following areas:

- Gathering intelligence from food banks, food pantries/clubs and meal providers. This information has been used by the GMCA, GM Health and Social Care Partnership and each of the ten GM boroughs to coordinate food provision and support. Specifically:
 - GMPA has been advising how to support residents on low incomes who would usually access support through services that have had to close or adapt their operations. We are using the intelligence described above to inform this work.
 - Maintaining online maps of food aid providers and other support services available to people on low incomes (see: <https://www.gmpovertyaction.org/maps/>). **The food providers map has received 13,600 hits since the beginning of March.**
- Maintaining an understanding of how local authorities, the GMCA and other stakeholders are supporting people experiencing poverty. Specifically we have:
 - Shaped the Equality Impact Assessment tools developed by local authorities to assess the impact of community responses (the provision of food, access to prescriptions and other welfare support) to the pandemic on different groups of the population. We developed a policy briefing and presented this to the Greater Manchester Humanitarian Assistance Group in April (see: <https://www.gmpovertyaction.org/socio-economic-duty/>). The briefing focussed on ensuring socio-economic status/poverty was included within the Equality Impact Assessment tools and explained how this could be done and the issues that should be taken into account. This was taken up by local authorities as a result of our work.
 - Supported local authorities in allocating additional hardship funding from central government to people struggling financially during the pandemic. This has included developing a policy briefing and presenting it to the Greater Manchester Humanitarian Assistance Group. This focussed on maximising choice, dignity and control for recipients of local welfare support and considering how local welfare support could best meet immediate needs whilst also addressing the underlying causes of poverty.

“I have been really pleased to see GMPA putting the Socio-Economic Duty at the heart of their strategy work on poverty. It is great to see this tool being promoted and we are very grateful for

the attention GMPA have brought to it.”
Respondent to GMPA’s 2020 Annual Impact Survey