

Greater Manchester Real Living Wage Campaign Update

By John Hacking, Greater Manchester Living Wage Campaign Co-ordinator.



May 12th was a very significant date for the campaign to make Greater Manchester a Real Living Wage City Region as it saw the first meeting of the City Region Living Wage Action Group chaired by the newly elected Mayor of GM, Andy Burnham.

Greater Manchester Living Wage Campaign (GMLWC) has been working towards the goal of making GM a Real Living Wage City Region for a number of years and the announcement in November 2020 by the Mayor that it was his intention to make this vision a reality, was a massive step forward for our campaign to see a real improvement in the lives of thousands of low paid workers in our area.

Since the announcement I have (as reported in previous newsletters) been working with partners and stakeholders across GM to create the Living Wage Action Plan which was unveiled on May 12th. The Living Wage Action Plan Group will now work to outline a clear path towards the goal of all employers in the city-region paying the living wage and offering living hours by 2030, as recommended by the [Independent Inequalities Commission](#) in its report published earlier this year.

I have been, and will continue, to work on the Plan to ensure that there are ambitious targets and that there is the widest and most diverse possible involvement from all sectors and communities across GM.

The Action Plan Group will be chaired by Lou Cordwell, Chair of the Greater Manchester Local Enterprise Partnership and is made up of businesses, unions, local authorities, civil society, faith groups, social enterprises and voluntary organisations. The Plan will focus on key sectors of the GM economy: 'anchor institutions', including large public sector organisations; local authorities; health and social care; hospitality and leisure; large employers; small and medium enterprises; and the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector.

GMLWC along with GM Citizens will lead on the campaigns sub-group focussing on using our local networks of Real Living Wage activists and advocates to target employers across GM working with local and national campaigns.

As part of the work to involve a wide and diverse group of people and organisations in the Campaign Subgroup, we will be holding a meeting of the GMLWC group in June. If you are on the database you will receive more information in the next couple of weeks. If you aren't but want to be then please send your name, organisation (if applicable) and email address to [me](#).



In addition to this, we continue to work with partners across GM on a range of local campaigns. One of the activities we promote, and support, is to encourage more local authorities to become Real Living Wage Employers. As reported previously Bury Council recently made a commitment to become a Real Living Wage Employer. In the latest in our series of podcasts we spoke to Councillor Eamonn O'Brien, Leader of Bury Council about a range of issues related to the fight against poverty and in particular the plans to make Bury Council the 4th local authority in GM to become a Living Wage Employer. You can listen the podcast on our website [here](#)

[John Hacking](#), Greater Manchester Living Wage Campaign Co-ordinator

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New local child poverty figures show worrying trends

By Graham Whitham, CEO GMPA



Last week the End Child Poverty Coalition released new analysis showing child poverty rates across the UK by local authority area over the six years leading up to the pandemic. Even before the economy was hit by the pandemic, child poverty was becoming more entrenched in areas with already high levels of poverty and deprivation.

Of particular concern is the increase in child poverty in the North East, with the largest increases in child poverty between 2015/16 and 2019/20 happening in Newcastle upon Tyne (up 12.8%), Gateshead (up 11.2%), Redcar and Cleveland (up 10.6%) and County Durham (up 10.5%).

Whilst the increases in Greater Manchester haven't been as sharp as in parts of the North East, there have been significant increases in Manchester (up 6.4%), Oldham (up 5.1%) and Bolton (4.1%). Across Greater Manchester as a whole, only one of our ten boroughs (Trafford) saw child poverty fall over this period - as shown in the table below:

Child poverty rate by Greater Manchester borough (child poverty measured after housing costs).							
Local authority	Percentage						Percentage point change (2015-20)
	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	
Bolton	32.9%	35.7%	36.3%	37.0%	37.8%	37.0%	4.1%
Bury	30.5%	31.9%	33.4%	34.3%	32.8%	32.1%	1.6%
Oldham	32.4%	36.4%	35.2%	35.5%	38.7%	37.5%	5.1%
Tameside	31.0%	31.9%	34.0%	34.9%	33.9%	33.4%	2.4%
Trafford	23.6%	23.8%	25.6%	25.6%	22.8%	22.6%	-1.0%
Manchester	35.4%	37.6%	38.9%	40.1%	40.7%	41.8%	6.4%
Rochdale	32.9%	35.5%	35.7%	36.5%	36.9%	36.0%	3.1%
Salford	32.3%	33.0%	35.5%	36.5%	34.7%	34.1%	1.8%
Stockport	25.1%	24.6%	26.8%	27.7%	25.5%	25.4%	0.3%
Wigan	28.3%	29.3%	30.6%	31.4%	29.9%	29.3%	1.0%

*Adapted from analysis released by the End Child Poverty Coalition:
<http://www.endchildpoverty.org.uk/local-child-poverty-data-2014-15-2019-20/>*

Nationally, the highest rates of child poverty remain concentrated in large conurbations like London and Birmingham.



"No child should have to suffer because of the situation they are born into. No one should have to feel ashamed of those experiences either."

- a young person with lived experience of poverty



In response to these concerning figures, the End Child Poverty Coalition is calling on the UK Government to recognise the scale of the problem and its impact on children's lives and to create a credible plan to end child poverty which must include a commitment to increase child benefits. Given the extent to which families are already struggling, the planned £20 per week cut to Universal Credit in October 2021 should be revoked. The support should also be extended to those still receiving financial assistance from the old benefit system, referred to as 'legacy benefits', before they are switched to Universal Credit.

To read the full report please visit the End Child Poverty Coalition [website](#).

GMPA is a member of the End Child Poverty Coalition steering group.

Severe inequalities in access to parks and greenspaces

GROUNDWORK

GREATER MANCHESTER

Groundwork Greater Manchester have published the '[Out of Bounds: Equity in Access to Urban Nature](#)' report, drawing on evidence and insight from contributors across the green space, health and equalities sectors.



Key statistics brought together in the report show that:

- Only 5% of adults say that access to nature has never been important to them or their mental health
- 40% of people from ethnic minority backgrounds live in the most green-space deprived areas
- 29% of people living with a long-term illness or disability had not visited a natural space in the previous month.

But what does the report mean for Greater Manchester?

Michaela Howell, Head of Communities at Groundwork Greater Manchester, explores this question, drawing on three of the reports' recommendations:

- We must reimagine urban nature to ensure that it meets the needs and desires of communities today.
- We must rebalance power in the management of green and blue spaces and build better partnerships.
- We need to integrate urban nature solutions fully into efforts to tackle health inequalities, climate change and biodiversity loss.

Read more [here](#)

Extended school provision

By David Bradley, Child Poverty Action Group

Schools have a unique place within their communities. With an extended school day, schools can and do support children's development and learning, support mental health and wellbeing, mitigate the effects of child poverty, and help prevent poverty by supporting parents to work. These activities have always been a valuable part of school life, but there is an even greater need now to support schools to deliver these services as the pandemic continues to affect the learning of children and the financial circumstances of families. Crucially, the government must provide schools with dedicated funding and a clear long-term vision for delivering these services. [Read our briefing on extended schools provision.](#)



CPAG is calling on the government to:

- Provide a statutory framework and strategy with adequate additional, ring-fenced funding so schools in England can provide programmes, activities and services that go beyond the core function of classroom education.
- Ensure every school has the funding and resources to provide comprehensive before- and after-school care, and holiday provision which is suitable for its pupils and families.
- Ensure every school can provide additional services that support families in their community with their wider needs eg, dedicated mental health and wellbeing practitioners, and welfare rights advisers.



CPAG estimates that it would cost the government £2.6 billion a year to fund every primary school, and £525 million a year to fund every secondary school in England to deliver core extended schools activities, and an additional £500 million to provide mental health practitioners and family support workers. We estimate that it would cost £10 million a year to fund an extended schools coordinator in each local authority across England.

Find out more about the Child Poverty Action Group and this campaign [here](#)

Communities Addressing Gambling Harms

As part of GMCA's ambition to support better lives for all in Greater Manchester, they are inviting you to join them on Thursday June 24th, 2021 from 10am-12.30pm for the launch of a new initiative to support community-led and place-based projects to prevent or reduce harms associated with gambling. This is facilitated by funding from the Gambling Commission and part of a new pan-GM programme (see [here](#) for more details).

Priorities will include initiatives that focus on:

- Tackling inequalities
- Community-led activities and sports
- Reforming public services
- Children and young people

At this interactive online event you will have the opportunity to hear about the impact of gambling in our communities, connect and collaborate with partners and find out how to access funding to support the development of successful interventions to improve wellbeing.

To secure your place at this event, please register [online](#)

Community Food Co-ordinator Role



FareShare Greater Manchester is looking for someone who is passionate about reducing food waste and food poverty by working in close partnership with their Community Food Members.

If you want to make a real difference as their Community Food Co-ordinator please click [here](#) for more information about applying for the role. Closing date: 10.00 am Tuesday June 1st, 2021.

Greater Manchester Housing providers newsletter



In [this issue](#) they are focussing on the work they do on employment and skills and they have contributions from Bolton at Home, ForHousing, Irwell Valley Homes, Jigsaw Homes, Mosscafe St Vincent's, One Manchester, Onward Homes, Salix Homes, SixTown Housing, Southway Housing Trust and Stockport Homes. They have also included an update from the GMHP Employment and Skills Lead plus contributions from two successful GMHP collaborations - Motiv8 and The Good Food Bag.

The GMHP Employment and Skills Theme has an active membership that meets regularly to discuss best practice, performance, new initiatives, opportunities, and Athena, the delivery arm of GMHP.



Fully-funded on-line courses

UK Skills Academy are offering fully funded courses to business and individuals across a range of digital and cyber security courses. Their courses are funded through Skills Support for the workforce and Adult Education funding and delivered through a fully digitalised enrolment and learning process.



They are currently offering a range of courses:

- Cyber Security,
- IT user skills,
- Digital Marketing,
- Digital Skills in Employment.

Successful completion will provide a certificate or diploma and all the learning is currently done online. You must be legally resident in the UK, able to take paid employment in the UK, and aged 16 or above. [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](#).

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.