

Today's GMPA newsletter is our 150th edition. The newsletter has become a home for sharing important policy developments, good practice and events. Over 1500 people subscribe to the newsletter, representing nearly 500 organisations committed to tackling poverty in Greater Manchester. Please encourage colleagues and others to [sign up to the newsletter](#). Thank you to everyone who has contributed to the newsletter since it began in July 2014.

Here are some of the comments about the newsletter content made by respondents to our 2021 Impact Survey:

*"I read about socio-economic duty in the newsletter and am re-visiting how we implement this in the Council."*

*"I have used the statistics you have provided to give credibility to the arguments I make."*

*"I have found out things in the GMPA newsletter or through other GMPA activities that have helped to shape the way in which my work is delivered."*

*"...you have facilitated a much broader conversation than might have otherwise been possible. I think your combination of local and city regional is very powerful."*

*"The information provided on Child Poverty has enabled me to raise awareness with local decision makers to shift focus and resources."*

A huge thank you to Chris Bagley who compiles and publishes every edition of the newsletter. Chris has volunteered with GMPA since we first started, and is the reason that we've been able to maintain the newsletter and grow our network during this time.

Please note that we will be issuing the newsletter every three weeks until May 2022 when we will return to the fortnightly edition.

## We are recruiting! Job opportunities at GMPA

We are currently recruiting to two roles. Full details, including deadlines and details of how to apply, can be found on our [website](#).

The first role is for a [Head of Advocacy, Policy and Research](#) (deadline for applications in January 26th, 2022). This is a new role and will make a vital contribution towards achieving the change we wish to see. They will drive forward our influencing work, managing our Policy Officer and GM Living Wage Campaign Coordinator.

The successful applicant will have a minimum 2 years' experience in a relevant advocacy, policy or research role. They will have leadership experience, or the ability to grow into a leadership role, and be able to motivate a team and support GMPA to deliver against our strategic priorities. They will need a good grasp of policy relating to poverty and an understanding of the opportunities to address it locally. They will be able to plan and deliver on a range of policy and research outputs, in line with our three-year strategy, and be confident in undertaking direct advocacy with decision makers and stakeholders.

We are also recruiting for a new [Policy Officer](#) (deadline for applications February 10th, 2022). The successful candidate will have a minimum one year's experience of working in a policy or research role, or in a strongly related field and the ability to develop and deliver high quality policy and research projects in support of advocacy objectives, using a range of tactics.

As with all our roles, we particularly welcome applications from people from diverse backgrounds and from people with lived experience of poverty.

If you would like to discuss either role, please contact our CEO [Graham Whitham](#).

## Meet Ed, one of the Tameside Poverty Truth Commissioners

Ed shared his story at last November's launch of the [Tameside Poverty Truth Commission](#). His story, and those shared by the other Commissioners, affected everyone there and strengthened everyone's resolve to tackle poverty, and to embed the voices of people with lived experience of poverty in Tameside's decision-making structures. Ed wanted to share his story with our wider network.

**POVERTY  
TRUTH TAMESIDE**

Ed was abused as a child and grew up in poverty. Despite his troubled start to life he worked hard to become a social worker. After many years of service, Ed had to take medical retirement aged 41 due to severe epilepsy. Poverty and ill health have been a dark cloud that has followed Ed throughout his life and at this point in his life, his confidence hit rock bottom.



Ed, Tameside Poverty  
Truth Commissioner

After receiving extensive counselling, Ed wanted to find a way to contribute to other people in need and find a way to rebuild his confidence. He discovered the Tameside Poverty Truth Commission and jumped at the chance to join. He wants to overcome insecurities that have held him back for so many years, and rediscover his voice.

Being a part of the Tameside Poverty Truth Commission has helped Ed to build his confidence. Mixing with other like-minded people who share some of his experiences, has helped him to rediscover his voice. Ed feels he has found a way to make a real difference for the people of Tameside by joining other people who are vulnerable but are supported and encouraged to channel their difficulties for positivity.

Ed says, "I would encourage anyone with a lived experience of poverty, who wants to make a difference to themselves and for other people to join a Poverty Truth Commission. It's an absolutely brilliant set up. It's got to start from the bottom and that's what Poverty Truth Commissions do."

Ed is looking forward to the next year as a Poverty Truth Commissioner. He hopes to help others in the way he has been helped, and to make a difference to the community of Tameside. He wants to continue finding his voice.

*The Tameside Poverty Truth Commission is a Greater Manchester Poverty Action programme.*

## The British Red Cross Covid-19 Hardship Fund Report

**BritishRedCross**

The British Red Cross have published a new policy briefing on Financial Hardship and the need for cash-based assistance during emergencies. The report is available [online](#).

The briefing draws upon insight from their internal evaluation of the British Red Covid-19 Hardship Fund, delivered in partnership with Aviva and the Aviva Foundation. The Hardship Fund was set up in response to the outbreak of the pandemic, and designed to support the most vulnerable. The fund provided cash grants of £120 a month for up to three months to help people immediately meet their essential living costs. The Hardship Fund has now closed, but between March 2020 and July 2021 the fund distributed nearly £4.5 million in cash assistance to over 18,000 people across the UK.

Reflecting on the experience of recipients of Hardship Fund support and quantitative data from the evaluation, the briefing makes recommendations to inform the future delivery on emergency cash-based assistance. Central to this is a preference for cash-based assistance during emergencies to promote dignity and choice, the need for the timely release of funds and diverse and inclusive assessment criteria, in which people with No Recourse to Public Funds are eligible.

The briefing also strongly champions the need for Local Welfare Assistance schemes, equipped with a sustainable and longer-term funding settlement.

The findings from the report echo GMPA's call for [a 'cash first' approach](#) to supporting people experiencing poverty. We have been pleased to work with and support a number of councils across Greater Manchester with this approach during the pandemic.

## Greater Manchester Real Living Wage Campaign Update



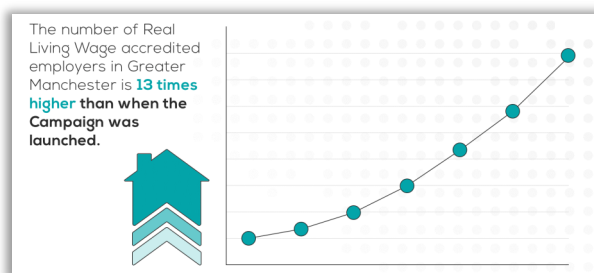
This year promises to be a big one for the campaign for the real Living Wage in Greater Manchester. Following the launch of the GM City Region Real Living Wage Action Plan in Living Wage Week last November by Mayor Andy Burnham, it is now time to start to implement the plan and generate real change on the ground for low paid workers. The first Action Plan meeting was held on January 10th and good progress was reported including an increase in accredited Real Living Wage Employers to 422 (from 403) in GM since the plan was launched. GMLWC will shortly be hosting the first meeting of the Campaign Strand of the Action Plan which will work to promote the real Living Wage throughout all aspects of the Action Plan delivery over the next 3 years.

The beginning of a new year is perhaps a good time to remind ourselves why employers should not only pay the real Living Wage but should become accredited Real Living Wage Employers.

Gaining accreditation by the Living Wage Foundation as a Real Living Wage Employer is a public commitment from employers to ensure that all employees who work for them, directly and indirectly, can earn a wage that is enough to live on. There are over 6,000 accredited Living Wage employers across the country.

Real Living Wage accreditation not only guarantees fair pay to directly employed staff, but crucially, it includes indirectly employed staff like cleaners, warehouse workers, catering staff and security guards.

These workers have been described as “invisible” because they are often not included in workforce statistics or in gender pay gap reporting, but they regularly make up a huge percentage of the low paid workforce.



The accreditation badge is an benchmark for responsible pay and gives staff and consumers the confidence that real Living Wage employers have committed to increase employees’ wages every year in line with the cost of living.

In order to continue the campaign for the real Living Wage here in GM, GMLWC will be holding a Campaign Meeting for supporters of the GMLWC and Real Living Wage activists on February 17th, 2022 at 2pm. The meeting will be online and if you are on our GMLWC database you will receive joining details in the next few days. If you aren’t on our database and would like to be please email your details to [john@gmpovertyaction.org](mailto:john@gmpovertyaction.org)



Best Wishes and Stay Safe.  
Greater Manchester Living Wage Campaign Co-ordinator  
[John Hacking](#)

Twitter: [@GMLivingWage](#) Facebook: [facebook.com/gmlivingwage](https://www.facebook.com/gmlivingwage)

The Greater Manchester Living Wage Campaign is a Greater Manchester Poverty Action programme.

## Job Opportunity with FareShare Greater Manchester

### Volunteer Coordinator

This is an exciting opportunity to join their Volunteering team, supporting the FareShare Greater Manchester and Touch Wood operations.

It's a busy and varied role but primarily focuses on recruiting, engaging and retaining volunteers to support the important work they do. The role requires someone with ideas and a good knowledge of the voluntary sector to recruit, train, and develop volunteers across our service. The Volunteer Coordinator will work closely with the Volunteering and Employability Programmes Manager to identify ongoing volunteering needs for the organisation.

The closing date for applications is January 28th, 2022 and it is expected that interviews will take place w/c January 31st, 2022

For more information and to apply, please go to the [website](#).



## Battling The Blame Game: Exploring New Narratives On Child Poverty

Wednesday February 16th, 2022 online event from 12.30 - 2pm



**Save the Children**

Even before the pandemic, 4.3 million children were growing up experiencing poverty in the UK. Whilst attitudes to poverty have slightly increased in sympathy over the last 10 years, support for significant policy interventions such as a more generous welfare system has been limited. The prevailing view amongst the public is the assumption that families make 'bad choices', rather than that a lack of money inhibits opportunities for children and families.

To create more support for children and their families we need a powerful new narrative that can help stop the blame game. One that can reduce beliefs that child poverty is simply the fault of the parents and increase the belief that families living in poverty deserve help from the state. But how do we do that?

Save the Children will be sharing findings from their new report which explores new narratives on child poverty at [a webinar on Wednesday February 16th, 2022](#). This research developed and tested different messages with key swing voter audiences to see which have the strongest potential to create a change in thinking.

In this webinar they will be sharing the ideas that key swing audience's currently hold on children and families in poverty and what new narrative and messaging resonates with them and could help create a change in public attitudes and they want to hear what tools and resources could help you adopt a new narrative

What's new about this research? This report builds on the research of Joseph Rowntree Foundation on how to talk about poverty, with a specific child poverty focused lens. It explores how new narratives might work with all the changes the British public have experienced as a result of the COVID pandemic.

## [Pathways from Homelessness Conference 2022](#) will take place in Manchester on Wednesday March 16th, 2022

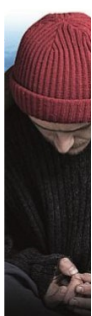
To highlight the amazing work Greater Manchester does within the homelessness sector Shared Health are hosting an event before the main conference begins on the evening of Tuesday March 15th to spotlight best practice and innovative ideas.



**Shared Health Foundation.**  
Reducing the Impact of Poverty on Health.

The evening will provide a networking and learning space for anyone working or experiencing the homeless and inclusion health sector in Greater Manchester and will feature a small selection of organisations who are trying things differently, taking risks and improving the health of the most excluded, to share ideas that 'just might work'. These talks will be in the PechaKucha (Japanese for ChiChat) style of speaking - 20 slides, 20 seconds per slide. The quick fire talks will focus purely on solutions and innovative working - even if they are in the pilot stage, to hear new innovative ideas and ways of working and from all areas of the homeless and inclusion health sector. Open to small organisations and individuals.

If you've got something to share and want to present at the event, email a short summary of your work to [Sam Pratt](#) by Monday January 31st, 2022. The venue will be City Centre, details to follow with current covid guidelines adhered to.



### Help for people sleeping rough

Information about the plans for helping rough sleepers in Greater Manchester over the winter (until March 2022) is available [here](#). If you are concerned about someone you have seen sleeping rough, you can use [this website](#) to send an alert to StreetLink. The details you provide are sent to the local authority or outreach service for the area in which you have seen the person, to help them find the individual and connect them to support. Please note: if you think the person is under 18 don't contact StreetLink but instead call the police.

[Street Support website](#) - on this website you will find information about organisations that provide food, facilities, clothes and other personal items as well as help finding accommodation, or simply someone to talk to. Please check with any organisations directly before visiting.

### 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.