

Cash First in Practice 1



Jo Mitchell – [Presentation slides](#)

Wigan Council

Jo is Assistant Director, Customer Experience and Support, at Wigan Council.

She has worked in Local Government for over 30 years, with a background in Welfare Rights and Advice. Jo is the strategic lead for Wigan's Customer Experience Strategy and Welfare, Information and Advice Strategy, ensuring continued alignment to the Deal 2030 priorities.



Jo is passionate about public services, Wigan borough and the communities in it and is determined to make a difference for its residents. She is focussed on putting our customers at the heart of service delivery and is committed to improving outcomes through collaboration, innovation, and technology.



Joanna Hill – [Presentation slides](#)

Trussell Trust

Joanna is Greater Manchester Area Manager for the Trussell Trust supporting 19 food banks and 65 distribution centres across 10 local authorities. She supports food banks on both an operational and strategic level and works alongside them in the development of strategic plans which work towards ending the need for food banks. As part of her work

Joanna also works alongside the 10 local authorities, the GMCA and several local and national partners.

Joanna has 13 years' experience in regional and service management in the charity sector, with an anti-poverty focus at 5 different organisations. She has supported on strategic planning, external networking, training and development of staff and volunteer teams.

Andy – [Presentation slides](#)

GM Migrant Destitution Fund

Andy has been co-chair of the Migration and Destitution Action Group since 2017. He has brought his positivity, courage and enthusiasm, as well as insights from his personal experience of destitution, to play an instrumental role in setting up and managing the Migrant Destitution Fund.

Dr William Wheeler

GM Migrant Destitution Fund

Will has co-chaired the group with Andy since 2021. He has been involved in working with refugees

and migrants in Manchester since 2015, most recently as a research fellow at the University of Manchester, carrying out research about lived experiences of the UK's asylum system.

Greater Manchester Migrant Destitution Fund



The Migrant Destitution Fund provides cash grants of £80pm to people made destitute by their immigration status. Recipients include refused asylum seekers; people on spouse visas who have lost their right to remain after a relationship breakdown; EU nationals unable to regularise their status after Brexit. Banned from working and accessing benefits, these are among the most marginalised in our society, leading lives of often hidden homelessness in our midst, with a debilitating effect on mental and physical health.

There are no stipulations about what MDF grants are spent on. Uses might include fresh, culturally appropriate food; credit/data to contact loved ones in the UK or back home; travel to crucial medical or legal appointments; or contributions to stretched household finances where people are staying with friends/family.

Impacts include improvement in physical and mental wellbeing; reduced social isolation; reduced risk of exploitation and abuse; reduced dependence on others.

Crucially, amidst cruel and dehumanising hostile environment policies, providing cash restores a measure of freedom and dignity to those forced into destitution because of where they come from.

www.migrantdestitution.co.uk @MigrantFundGM

To donate, visit <https://localgiving.org/charity/macc/project/migrantfundGM/> For information about how to get help, or to get involved, contact info@migrantdestitution.co.uk