

TRAFFORD POVERTY STRATEGY

2022-25

Preventing and reducing poverty in Trafford

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Introduction

Setting out our **vision to reduce poverty in Trafford**, this strategy has been developed in partnership, with involvement from Trafford's voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise (VCFSE) sector, public services, health services, and housing associations. This strategy succeeds the 2021-22 Trafford Poverty Strategy, and sets out the commitments we have made in partnership to tackle poverty in our communities.

Living in poverty can prevent people from reaching their potential and can **impact on health and wellbeing**. The rising costs of living could result in more households experiencing poverty and this will disproportionately impact certain groups such as those on a low income, older people, people with disabilities and single parents.

Whilst the rising costs of living cannot be directly influenced by Trafford's organisations, we can work together locally to support residents who are experiencing poverty. With inflation in the UK rising to a 30-year high, now, more than any point, a joined-up partnership strategy on poverty is needed.

Poverty is a problem of insufficient resources to meet every day needs and to participate fully in society. This is primarily about a lack of income; therefore, in this strategy we have highlighted the need for people have the money they require to support themselves and their families.

This strategy also recognises that 'food poverty' or 'fuel poverty' **cannot exist independently; an individual or family struggling will be experiencing all the challenges** that come with having insufficient resources to afford every day needs.

“Over 20 organisations from the public and VCFSE sectors have been involved in the creation of this strategy, all of which feel passionately about working in partnership to support residents living in poverty. Each organisation has their own vision, responsibilities and programmes for reducing poverty, but collectively we can have a greater impact in supporting our residents” Councillor Joanne Harding, Executive Member for Culture, Leisure and Strategic Partnerships and Chair of the Trafford Poverty Action Group

Each organisation will play a role in taking ownership of actions to support the delivery of this strategy over the next three years.

This **partnership approach** to tackling poverty in Trafford is reflected in our Trafford Poverty Truth Commission, launched in May 2022. As well as involvement from public services and VCFSE organisations in the project, schools and private sector businesses from across Trafford have taken on a pivotal role in listening to lived experiences of poverty and supporting policy change.



Working in partnership

This strategy has been developed in collaboration with many organisations from Trafford and the strategy recognises and complements the existing strategies and programmes of work across our partnership and across Greater Manchester.



Stretford Public Hall



St John's Centre

Trafford Corporate Plan: Our Trafford, Our Future

Levelling Up



Trafford Social Value Charter

GM Good Employment Charter



Trafford Locality Plan



THT Community Grants



Places for Everyone

Trafford VCFSE Strategy



The Greater Manchester Strategy 2021-2031

Trafford Housing Strategy 2019-2023



Trafford Homelessness Strategy 2019-2024

Community Based Working



What does poverty look like in Trafford?

Our definition of poverty

Poverty is when someone doesn't have access to the material resources they require to both meet basic needs and to participate fully in society.

Our vision for reducing poverty in Trafford

“Trafford should be a borough where no one is marginalised or discriminated against due to financial or material circumstances, where everyone has the opportunity to improve their life chances, and where everyone can access the benefits and opportunities that come with living in a vibrant and successful borough.”

Because Trafford's poverty statistics look better than other areas of Greater Manchester, there is often a misconception that poverty is not experienced by residents in our borough.

On average, 1 in 10 children (11.4%) in Trafford are living in poverty compared to an average of 1 in 3 children in other boroughs in Greater Manchester. The reality is that this average figure for Trafford masks the poverty experienced by residents in some of our communities; in Old Trafford, almost 1 in 3 children are living in poverty (30.4%).*

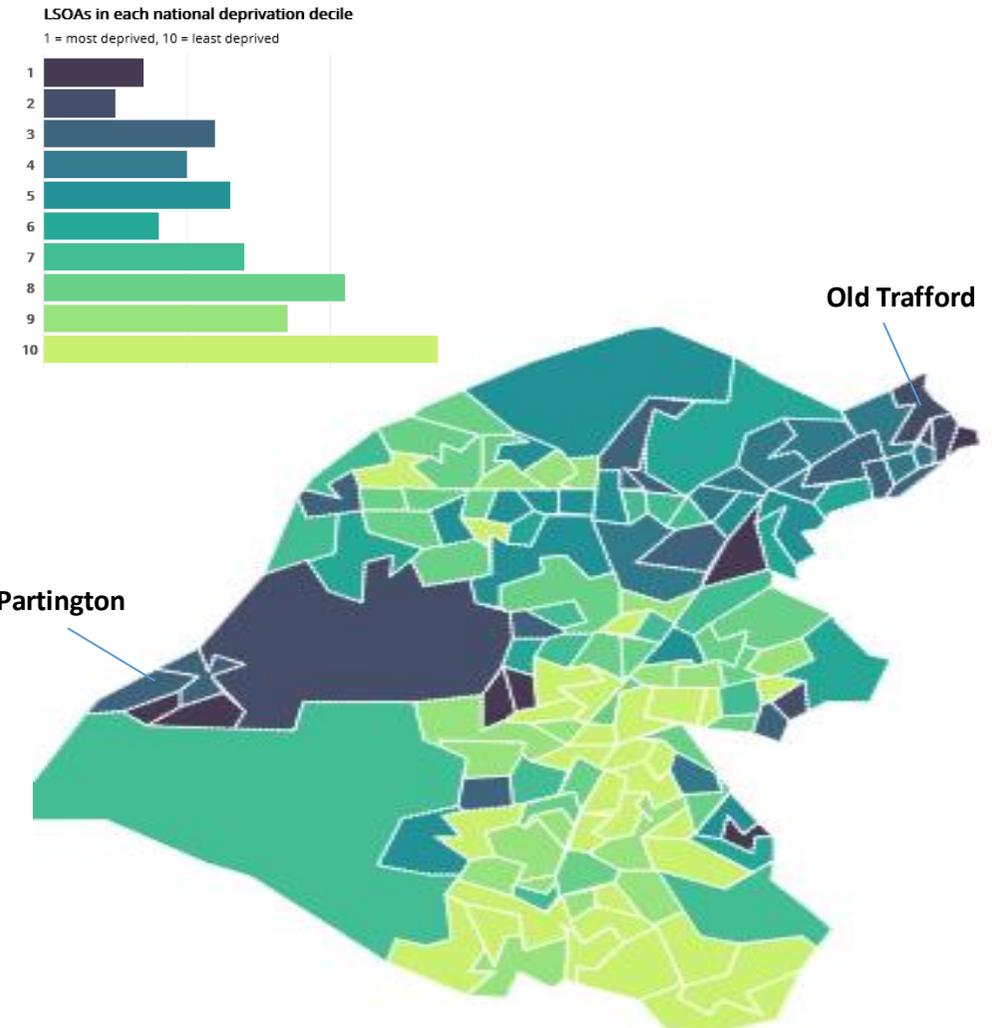
It should also be noted that these figures are based on poverty experienced by households before housing costs; therefore the level of poverty could increase with the current rise in living costs.

This strategy recognises that the causes of poverty are wide-ranging and many existing strategies and programmes of work are underway in Trafford to help reduce inequality and improve lives. This strategy does not intend to duplicate any of the work that is already underway but, seeks to complement and support delivery.

*2020/21 figures from <https://www.gmpovertyaction.org/pm2022-child-poverty/>

Poverty in Trafford

Within Trafford, five small areas (called Lower Super Output Areas) rank in the 10% most deprived areas in the whole of England. This is shown on the map below which highlights the scale of deprivation across the borough.



Creating an inclusive economy

In 2021, 80.7% of Trafford residents were paid at or above the real living wage by their employer. The real living wage is £9.90 per hour in Greater Manchester

10.7% of Trafford residents claim Universal Credit; this includes people who are working on a low income and require additional financial support. In Partington and Old Trafford, 26.3% and 23.2% respectively claim Universal Credit

Improving access to information and advice

In early 2022, it was estimated that 393 residents living in two wards within Stretford and Old Trafford were entitled to claim Pension Credit but were not doing so; this would account to almost £1million*

Ending smoking for all would lift around 450,000 households out of poverty. Ending smoking in our communities would not just benefit the health and wellbeing of individuals but also their financial circumstances**

Maximising household income

A household is considered fuel poor if their income is below the poverty line (taking into account housing costs) and their fuel costs are higher than is typical for their household type

In 2019, 12.8% of households in Trafford were fuel poor. This masks considerable variation between small areas within Trafford. In Clifford ward, some 20.3% of households were living in fuel poverty

Supporting children and young people

In March 2022, 1.78% of young people aged 16 and 17 years in Trafford were NEET (not in employment, education or training)

11.4% of children in Trafford live in low income families. This percentage rises in Old Trafford where 30.4% of children are living in low income families

61% of eligible families in Trafford are claiming Healthy Start

Data sourced from <https://trafforddatalab.shinyapps.io/corporate-plan/m>

* Sourced from GMCA analysis on Pension Credit in Greater Manchester

** Delivering a Smokefree 2030: The All Party Parliamentary Group on Smoking and Health recommendations for the Tobacco Control Plan 2021

Lived experience of poverty

We are passionate about understanding the lived experience of poverty and this is why we are delivering a **Poverty Truth Commission** in Trafford.

Launched in May 2022, the Trafford Poverty Truth Commission brings together **residents with lived experience of poverty**, and leaders in the public, private and third sectors. Those involved share their own experiences, work to better understand the causes and impacts of poverty in Trafford, and develop ideas and proposals to tackle it.

The residents involved in the project are called 'Community Commissioners' and the launch event highlighted some of their personal stories. The Civic Commissioners, those involved from the public, private and third sectors, are tasked with making the changes the Poverty Truth Commission recommends.

The Poverty Truth Commission will take place until February 2023, after which a **recommendation report** will be published. This report will set out practical and achievable actions to alleviate poverty in Trafford. All organisations and businesses in Trafford are expected to consider how they can play their part in alleviating poverty.

The Poverty Truth Commission has been sponsored by Trafford Council and Trafford Housing Trust, and is being delivered by the Poverty Truth Commission team at Stretford Public Hall

**POVERTY
TRUTH** **TRAFFORD**

“I’m on Universal Credit; the higher rate due to my disabilities, and even though I qualify for PIP, it is not enough to live on by the time I’ve paid all my bills. I can’t afford to go out or socialise, which when living on your own is crucial for your mental health and wellbeing”

“Everything you have to apply for is online, which is all the more difficult on a phone, assuming you have one”

Community Commissioners, Trafford Poverty Truth Commission

This Trafford Poverty Strategy is a three-year strategy; however, because the findings from the Trafford Poverty Truth Commission will be of such significant importance, we will **review this strategy in summer 2023** to ensure it reflects and supports the recommendations from the Commission.



What have we done and what are we going to do?

The Trafford Poverty Strategy 2021-22 focused on short term actions we could achieve to alleviate poverty in Trafford.

The **Trafford Poverty Action Group** was established in 2021 to oversee the delivery of the one year Poverty Strategy and development of the three year partnership strategy; the group includes representatives from across the public and VCFSE sectors in Trafford.

The Trafford Poverty Strategy 2021-22 detailed specific actions we would deliver, some of which have become long term objectives still in progress. **Our key 2021-22 highlights include:**

40 Trafford schools now host Go with the Flow red boxes containing free sanitary products for young people

Trafford's Welfare Rights Team supported residents to secure a total of over £1million in benefits they were entitled to

310 people were prevented from becoming homeless; a significant increase in the number of homeless applications were received

Commissioned by Trafford Council, Trafford Carers Centre supported carers living in Trafford to maximise their income to the value of £725,000

In December 2021, Trafford Assist provided financial support to over 4,000 families

Leading on the development of this Trafford Poverty Strategy, the Trafford Poverty Action Group delivered a number of workshops to engage a greater range of partners.

This strategy is focused around **five themes** with the aim of tackling the causes of poverty and raising people out of poverty.

Creating an inclusive economy

- Access to skills and jobs, giving people financial security and enough income to live well
- Local employers engaged to create inclusive, equitable economies that maximise the Trafford pound

Improving access to information and advice

- Access to information and advice for everyone, and support for those that need it
- Community-based services and activities designed with local people to meet their needs

Maximising household income

- Support residents to increase their household income and to be able to stretch this income

Supporting children and young people

- Schools, colleges, early years settings and community groups that support children and young people to flourish

Facilitating community resilience

- A sustainable and well supported VCFSE sector including volunteering coordination and support
- Healthy homes, quality outdoor spaces and connected communities

The Trafford Poverty Action Group have identified actions under each of these themes, which are aligned to Trafford's 'building blocks' for thriving communities, and can be delivered in partnership over the next three years to tackle poverty.

1 - Creating an inclusive economy

We aspire to create an inclusive economy in Trafford where economic growth in our borough creates opportunities for all residents and businesses are guided and supported to create conditions where their workforces can develop and thrive. These opportunities could be in the form of good employment and training opportunities, better employment conditions and more businesses investing in social value to benefit our communities.

What are we doing already?

The **Trafford Employment, Enterprise and Skills Group** is made up of partners working together to improve opportunities in Trafford for residents to improve their skills and access employment.

One of the programmes delivered by this group is the **Trafford Pledge** which matches residents looking for work with employment and training opportunities. Support is targeted to our communities within Trafford who are experiencing the greatest inequalities.

The **Inclusive Economy Board** exists to address business issues arising and make strategic links between education and training providers to overcome obstacles being faced to ensure the local economy continues to thrive and individuals are supported.

The Council has a dedicated **Inclusive Economy Recovery Plan** which has been developed to help both residents and businesses to recover from the Covid Pandemic with many actions related to addressing poverty in the borough.

What more do we plan to do?

To build on the work we are doing already, we aspire to:

- Actively encourage businesses to **improve employment conditions**
 - Increase the number of Trafford businesses paying the Real Living Wage
 - Support businesses to offer flexible working to allow increased job opportunities for residents with caring responsibilities
 - Support businesses to offer greater health and wellbeing support and information to employees
- Develop a **Social Value Charter** for Trafford, outlining commitments to increasing social value for the benefit of our communities
 - Invest in co-ordination of social value; matching social value opportunities with voluntary and community organisations to encourage local spend and ensure benefits remain as local as possible to our Trafford Communities
 - Review the Inclusive Economy Recovery Plan to ensure a more specific focus on addressing poverty as well as health inequalities and the climate crisis
- Continue to support Trafford **residents in to employment and training**
 - Create clear pathways from education and training through to employment so people can recognise the journey they are taking and how to progress. We will focus on specific sectors such as social work, construction and the green economy
 - Provide greater employment advice and support for residents who are furthest from the job market, such as those over the age of 50 years,
 - We will work with education providers to provide accessible courses to residents in their communities so they are able to enhance their skills

2 - Improving access to information and advice

We aim to ensure that residents who are seeking information and advice can access this easily and that people are directed to the most appropriate support. This is especially important for residents facing difficult circumstances whereby this information and advice is needed as quickly as possible.

What are we doing already?

Trafford's **Information and Advice Working Group** is made up of partners from the public sector and VCFSE sector who provide information and advice to residents. These partners work together to improve accessibility to information and advice. The group have mapped the information and advice **offer across Trafford** to better understand where residents can go for support and how well known, used and accessible this support is.

Trafford's six **Community Hubs**, established during Covid-19 have been funded to continue to provide face to face information, advice and support for residents within their communities.

To increase **digital access**, residents can seek support from a Digital Champion, access Trafford's laptop lending scheme or attend free courses.

Health services proactively **social prescribe** residents to advice and support needed to address the wider determinants of health

What more do we plan to do?

We acknowledge that it can be challenging for Trafford residents to identify the right information and advice due to there being so many different 'routes of entry' for support. To address this, we aspire to enable residents to easily understand where they can access the most appropriate support.

- **By 2023**, we will have worked with Greater Manchester Poverty Action to create a **Money Advice Referral Tool** for Trafford. This online tool will support residents who are experiencing financial difficulties to access the best support for their circumstances. We will also ensure paper versions of the tool are available for residents who are unable to, or would prefer not to, use an online tool.
- We commit to **reviewing and improving digital access** to all information and advice **by 2025**. Trafford Council will review digital accessibility for residents requiring information and advice on what services to access for support. We will ensure this information and advice supports those experiencing poverty and difficulties such as housing, money management, welfare rights, children and adult services, health and wellbeing.

We acknowledge the importance of **maintaining face to face support** and we aspire to continue and improve the information and advice available via the telephone and face to face, with a particular focus on providing this support in community venues.

We will also coordinate more **training opportunities** for frontline staff and volunteers to ensure they have the knowledge and skills to support people to access the information and advice needed.

3 - Maximising household income

We will support residents experiencing poverty to increase their household income and to be able to stretch this income with the use of available schemes. Rising costs of food and fuel are impacting households' ability to pay for basic needs. To address this, we will work in partnership to support residents to access the income and support they are entitled to.

What are we doing already?

Our commitments to ensure residents experiencing poverty can access the advice and information they need easily and quickly will support individuals and families to maximise their household income.

The **Money Advice Referral Tool** will support people to access the right services to ensure they are in receipt of the income they are entitled to, financial support in crisis situations and opportunities to stretch income.

Organisations working across Trafford offer support and administer a range of **schemes to support individuals and families** needing financial support; this includes emergency financial support for fuel and food costs, school uniform and supplies, advice on energy efficiency to reduce the cost of heating homes and tailored support to resolve or reduce debt.

We will continue to provide advice and specialist support for residents to access the benefits they are entitled to claim.

What more do we plan to do?

As the cost of living rises, we aspire to equip frontline staff, communities and residents with the information and advice they need to be able to pay for basic needs.

- We will **create a partnership** to ensure support for people experiencing difficulties paying for gas and electricity is coordinated
 - A number of organisations in Trafford offer advice to people on reducing the cost of fuel and insulating homes; we will bring these organisations together so collectively they can ensure residents are receiving the best advice and support
 - The partnership will share knowledge on the best ways to liaise with energy companies on behalf of customers in order to reduce the impact of rising fuel costs on residents
- We will continue to **promote schemes** which enable households to stretch their income and pay for basic needs in times of crisis
 - We will increase the uptake of the Healthy Start Scheme in Trafford to improve access to food and reduce health inequalities
 - We will promote temporary financial 'cash-first' support schemes such as the Household Crisis Fund available through Trafford's Community Hubs to ensure those entitled can access this support
 - We will work with foodbanks and organisations providing discounted food schemes to ensure advice and information to the residents using these services is accessible
 - We will continue to promote the benefits of using Credit Unions
 - We will extend smoking cessation support across Trafford

4 – Supporting children and young people

Children living in poverty are likely to experience multiple health and social inequalities. We will work in partnership to enable children and young people to benefit from education in the best possible way, as well as support families who face many challenges as a result of living in poverty.

In order to provide children with the best start in life and to close the educational attainment gap between children from disadvantaged backgrounds and their peers, Trafford aims to support more families through early interventions and support from services such as the Healthy Child Programme, parenting support and mental and emotional health services.

What are we doing already?

Trafford Best Beginnings Board is a strategic board with a focus on improving outcomes for families with children aged 0-5 years. The aim is to ensure that all children in Trafford have the best possible start in life.

Mental Health Support Teams now work with 36% of our education settings to deliver low level evidence-based interventions to children and young people, whilst supporting schools to develop their whole school approach to mental health and wellbeing.

Support schemes available to families in Trafford ensure that children and young people have access to **school uniforms and equipment** for their education.

What more do we plan to do?

- We aspire to develop **Family Hubs across Trafford** as part of our Early Help Strategy to provide support to the whole family; children, young people, parents and carers.
Family Hubs are centres which, as part of integrated family services, ensure families with children and young people aged 0-19 receive early help to overcome a range of difficulties and build stronger relationships. Effective early intervention can improve children's wellbeing, educational attainment and life chances, reduce family poverty and improve mental and physical health and wellbeing. These centres will enable easier access to support, better outcomes for families and more effective service delivery.
- For those young people who face challenges once they leave education, we need to provide the right support to enable them to access opportunities; we aspire to work in partnership to support more **young people aged 16-18** to secure employment, education and training which will have a positive impact on their future prospects, health and wellbeing.
- We will work to increase the take up of funded childcare and early education places for 2 year olds, especially in the North of the borough, to **increase school readiness**.
- We will continue to ensure that children who receive free school meals can access free or low-cost **summer holiday activities** for families.

5 – Facilitating community resilience

Community resilience is the ability for residents and communities to use the resources available to support each other. To enable communities to be able to support each other, the right services and resources need to be available. The role of the public and VCFSE sector is to facilitate this by providing the resources for residents and communities to improve their health and wellbeing.

What are we doing already?

Over £2million per year is distributed in Trafford as grants to voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise organisations to deliver advice, support and activities in communities.

Trafford's **six Community Hubs**, established during Covid-19 have been funded to continue to provide face to face information, advice and support for residents within their communities.

Trafford VCFSE sector has always played a vital role in our communities and the value of the sector was further demonstrated during Covid-19, when our VCFSE organisations were key to supporting residents in financial and personal crisis.

The **Trafford VCFSE Strategy** has been developed to outline how we will work in partnership to further strengthen the VCFSE sector.

What more do we plan to do?

- We aspire to support the continuation and enhancement of the work delivered by Trafford's six **Community Hubs** in supporting residents and communities.
- We aspire to enable frontline staff and volunteers to access greater **training opportunities** so they are equipped with knowledge and information, and feel empowered to support and advise residents and communities.
- We commit to delivering the actions outlined in the **Trafford VCFSE Strategy** in partnership to strengthen our VCFSE sector in Trafford, enabling the sector to better support our communities and people experiencing poverty.
- We aspire to work closely with organisations supporting **people with disabilities and their carers** who are more likely to be living in poverty.
- We commit to increase the supply of and access to **affordable housing**, and to **reduce homelessness** in Trafford.
- We commit to listening to **lived experience of poverty** through projects such as the Poverty Truth Commission and incorporating this in to policy change so that the support available to residents experiencing poverty is more person centred.
- We commit to adopting a **socio-economic approach** to programmes of work across our partnership to assess the impact this work has on poverty.

We can only tackle poverty by working together

“The fight against poverty cannot be won if we all ignore it or just watch” Community Commissioner, Trafford Poverty Truth Commission

Tackling poverty in Trafford is everyone’s business: public services, the voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise sector, businesses and communities. This is why the Trafford Poverty Strategy 2022-25 is not owned by one organisation but by all stakeholders who have a key role to play in reducing poverty.

Over the next three years, the Trafford Poverty Action Group will monitor and measure the impact of the strategy. All organisations represented on the group will commit to actions which support the outcomes in this strategy and an action plan will be developed to hold ourselves accountable.

The strategy will be reviewed in summer 2023 to ensure it reflects and supports the recommendations from the Trafford Poverty Truth Commission.

Measuring Success

Over the next three years, we will measure our success and expect to see:

An increase in the number of Trafford residents paid at least the real living wage

An increase in the number of Trafford residents claiming the benefits and accessing the schemes they are entitled to

Fewer children living in low income families especially in areas of Trafford where the numbers are highest

A reduction in the number of Trafford residents claiming benefits due to seeking employment

An increase in children who are school ready and increased attainment amongst young people

Fewer young people who are NEET (not in education, employment or training)