



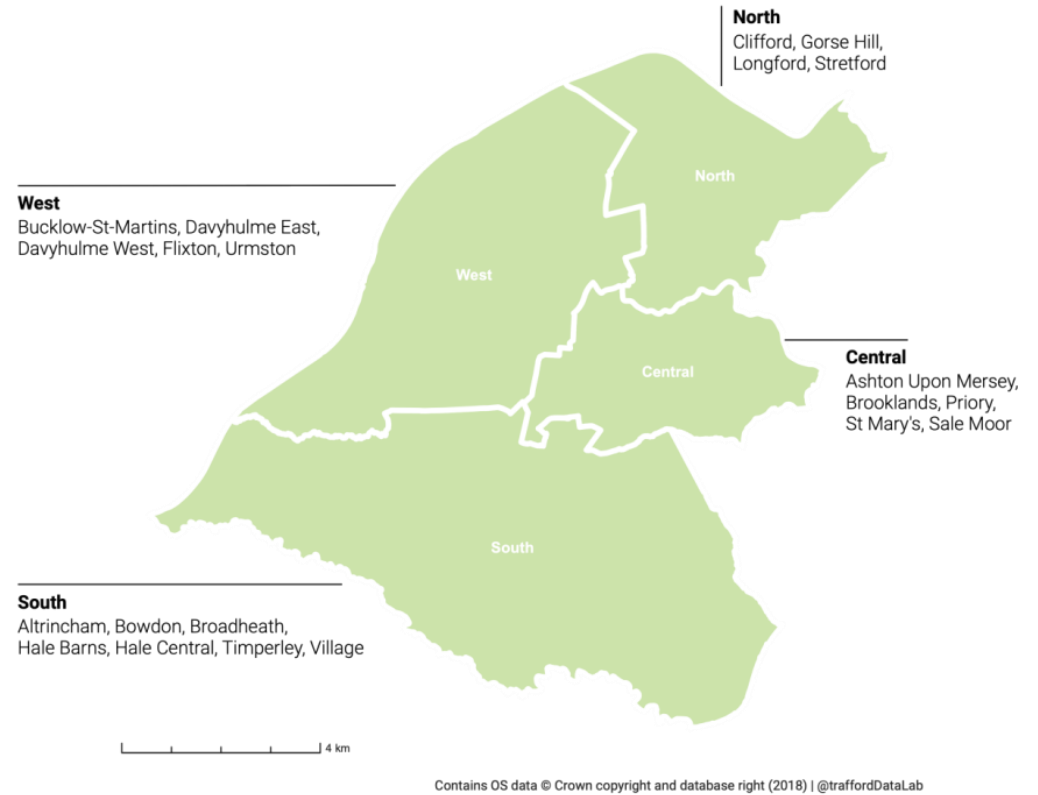
TRAFFORD POVERTY STRATEGY

2021/22

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Trafford's localities



Foreword

The Trafford Poverty Strategy sets out our bold vision for Trafford and our guiding principles for tackling poverty and its effects on individuals and families.

Poverty can impact upon many different people in many different circumstances, prevent people from reaching their potential and can have a negative effect on people's health and wellbeing. People in Trafford living in poverty wake up every day facing financial insecurity and feeling marginalised.

Poverty is not just a problem for the people who experience it; it puts extra pressure on services and communities. While many of the main drivers of poverty lie with central government, there is much we can do locally to help prevent and reduce and alleviate poverty.

This strategy was in development prior to the Covid-19 pandemic. The pandemic has highlighted many of the inequalities that exist in society, including here in Trafford. It has resulted in increased need, and the Council and partners have been working hard to find ways to maintain and increase support for those facing financial hardship.

We know that a larger group of people will be experiencing poverty as we emerge from the pandemic. For some people, this may be transitory as the economy recovers and job opportunities are created. For others, the poverty they were already experiencing will have deepened and been compounded by the economic consequences of the pandemic.

It is important that we do what we can to respond to poverty among all sections of our community and prevent people falling into persistent poverty.

That is why we have taken the decision to launch a one-year Poverty Strategy now. This will enable us to maximise the impact of responses to poverty over the next 12 months and provide time for the Council and partners to develop a longer-term strategy once the post-pandemic picture becomes clearer over 2021. Over the next 12 months we will work with partners to develop a three year Poverty Strategy for 2022-2025.

The way in which local agencies respond to poverty is important. 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, the best way of addressing poverty is to ensure people have the money they need to afford the things they need. This principle underpins the response to poverty set out in this strategy.

Another important principle is the need to prioritise poverty reduction and prevention over alleviation. There is already significant work in Trafford that helps prevent people falling deeper into hardship – whether that be financial advice, benefits advice, employers adopting the Real Living Wage or supporting people to move into good quality work.

However, sometimes people do not access support until they have already reached a crisis point. This can often lead to responses to need that, while important, focus on mitigating and alleviating, rather than setting people on a pathway out of poverty.

It is also important to recognise that the different kinds of poverty are often linked. While people experiencing poverty might be facing challenges in affording certain items or paying bills, someone struggling to put food on the table is also likely to be struggling to afford to pay their rent, to save and to pay their energy bills. 'Food poverty' or 'fuel poverty' cannot exist independently for a person or family; they are experiencing poverty.

We also need to consider the impact of our response to climate change on poverty. Mitigation responses to climate change such as improved public transport, enhanced green spaces, sustainable fuel sources and cleaner air will have a significant impact on those living in poverty.

We aspire to prioritise developing a response to poverty that maximises people’s incomes and gives them maximum choice, dignity and control. This is because people experiencing poverty are best placed to understand what their needs are and how to respond to them.

The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic has influenced the content of this Poverty Strategy as the pandemic has had a significant impact on the levels of poverty and inequality experienced by residents in Trafford. From March to May 2020, the number of people claiming benefits principally for the reason of being unemployed doubled in some areas of Trafford.

Poverty prevention and lifting people out of poverty is at the heart of Trafford’s Covid-19 Recovery Plan which compliments this strategy. The emergency response to the pandemic in Trafford has been unprecedented and there has been a fantastic commitment from public services, voluntary organisations, community groups and residents who have supported isolated and vulnerable individuals. The engagement and dedication from everyone involved has been truly inspiring.

In addition to helping those who are already struggling, we must look to prevent people from falling into poverty in the first place by creating an inclusive economy in Trafford. This would provide sustainable employment opportunities and create mechanisms for growth which would be felt more uniformly across all segments of society. We can also do this through income maximization work, making sure people can access all of the financial support available to them.

This Poverty Strategy is aligned with Trafford Council’s Corporate Plan which describes the vision and priorities for the borough with one common vision – we want to make Trafford a better borough where everyone has a chance to succeed and everyone has a voice.

Our priorities are:



Introduction

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.”

Our guiding principles

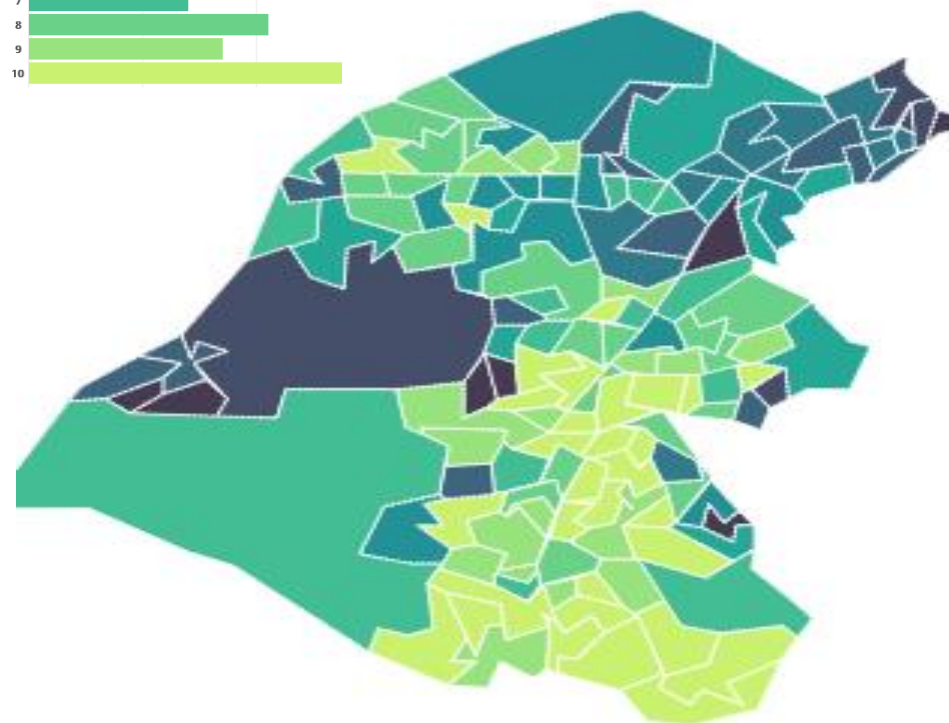
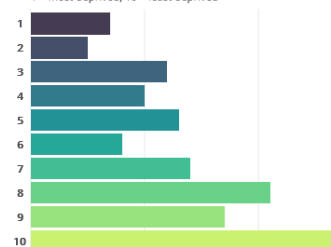
- People should be empowered to maximise their household income
- People should be helped to improve the situation they are in while in poverty
- Services and approaches should be easily accessible and not perpetuate the stigma of living in poverty
- Skills and opportunities should be maximised to support and empower people to get out of poverty
- We need to work together with our partners and stakeholders to prevent people from falling into poverty in the first place

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.

The tables on pages 6 and 7 provide a more detailed picture of what poverty and inequality looks like in the borough.

LSOAs in each national deprivation decile
1 = most deprived, 10 = least deprived



What does poverty and inequality look like in Trafford?

Deprivation	Children
<p>In 2019, Trafford ranked 191 out of 317 local authority areas in the Index of Multiple Deprivation (1 being the most deprived area)</p> <p>11,980 people in Trafford live in a lower super output areas within the 10% most deprived areas in the country</p> <p>Life expectancy amongst residents can vary by eight years depending on where they live</p>	<p>25.3% of children have not achieved a good level of development at the end of Reception</p> <p>11,611 children in Trafford live in families with an income below 60 per cent of contemporary median income and are classified as living in poverty</p> <p>48.2% of children in Clifford live in these households, 40.3% in Bucklow St Martin's and only 21.9% in Hale Central</p>
Employment	Health and Wellbeing
<p>In 2019/20, 4.5% of males living in Trafford aged 16 to 64 years were unemployed</p> <p>In August 2020, 7,960 people were claiming Jobseeker's Allowance or Universal Credit due to being out of work</p>	<p>In 2018, it was established that 10,327 households in Trafford experience fuel poverty</p> <p>38,603 people living in Trafford have a limiting long-term illness or disability</p>
Education	Mental Health
<p>Between December 2019 and February 2020, there were 270 16 and 17-year-olds not in education, employment or training (NEET)</p>	<p>It is estimated that 15.4% of the population experience a common mental disorder; this is 28,638 people in Trafford</p>

<p style="text-align: center;">Child Poverty</p> <p>5,085 (11.6%) under 16s are living in poverty in Trafford; 69% of these children are from families in with at least one parent in employment</p> <p>Variation across Trafford: 30.8% of children in Bucklow St Martins Ward, 24.7% in Clifford Ward and 1.8% in Timperley Ward live in poverty</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Council Tax Support</p> <p>In a recent 2018 survey, council tax debt was the most widespread debt among respondents across the UK, with nearly 1.6 million people unable to pay their council tax</p> <p>Trafford is one of a few authorities that offers 100% relief from Council Tax under our Council Tax Support scheme.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Debt and Credit</p> <p>National figures suggest that there are around 8.3 million people in the UK who are unable to pay their bills and around 22% of UK adults have less than £100 in savings</p> <p>In 2017-18 some of the most common issues raised with Citizens Advice Trafford were surrounding debt</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Poverty Premium</p> <p>Estimates suggest that the poverty premium (extra costs when purchasing essential items) can amount to £490 a year, but sometimes can be as high as £2,250.</p> <p>The type of fuel tariff low income households are on contributes the most to the poverty premium. Our response to climate change could help to alleviate fuel poverty</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Food Insecurity</p> <p>In Partington and Old Trafford, it is estimated that around 28% of households experience food insecurity</p> <p>Trafford South Foodbank and Stretford Foodbank estimate that in 2018/2019, food was provided to 2,932 people (1,740 adults and 1,192 children)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Housing and Homelessness</p> <p>Within Trafford, in 2018/2019, 416 people were homeless or threatened with homelessness. 160 households were also accepted as unintentionally homeless and in priority need.</p> <p>Housing has become less affordable in Trafford. In 2018 the ratio of median earnings to median house prices was 9.43 compared to 7.58 in 2014</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Carers</p> <p>25,000 people living in Trafford were providing unpaid care in 2017</p> <p>In a survey completed by Trafford Carers Centre, 33.5% of carers reported that they struggled to make ends meet and 40% reported needing to borrow money</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Go with the Flow</p> <p>In Trafford it is estimated that up to 950 young people are unable to afford sanitary products. This could be affecting their education and future aspirations.</p> <p>Our Trafford campaign to support young people to access sanitary products is called 'Go With The Flow'</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Disability and Vulnerable Adults</p> <p>There are 38,603 residents in Trafford (17%) with a long term health problem or disability</p> <p>43.6% of households where the head of the household is classified as 'permanently sick/disabled' are in fuel poverty</p>

Links to other strategies

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.



What are we going to do?

1. Child Poverty

Our aspirations for tackling child poverty in Trafford will be overseen by the creation of a Poverty Action Group, which will coordinate and develop the ongoing response to poverty in Trafford, and some of these aspirations will be delivered via Trafford's School Readiness Plan

Health and Wellbeing

- Increase the uptake of healthy start vouchers by families, by streamlining the application process for eligible families. This will help to maximize household income for food
- Assist in coordinating food provision over the school holidays to families eligible for Free School Meals. We aspire to work with partners to ensure the basic needs of low income families are met during the holidays in a way that maximizes choice, dignity and control for families

Relationships and Parenting

- Improve the access to counselling
- Encourage employers to support better parental leave for fathers
- Provision of improved parenting courses

Childcare

- Improve access to childcare through the promotion of free early education or childcare for 2, 3 and 4-year-olds
- Understand reasons for lack of uptake of the free early education or childcare for 2, 3 and 4-year-olds so uptake can be encouraged and increased

Youth Employment

- Work with providers and employers to improve the quality and provision of further education and apprenticeships

2. Council Tax Support

To ensure that Trafford Council does not exacerbate or contribute to people's experience of poverty, we will ensure individuals are receiving the maximum council tax benefit they are entitled to and that we are not causing distress when collecting council tax.

How we will do this by:

- Carrying out engagement work with people experiencing difficulties paying council tax
- Council staff and enforcement agents undertaking vulnerability training and adhering to code of practice
- Continuing to ensure all care leavers are 100% exempt from paying council tax
- Continuing and safeguarding 100% council tax support for low income individuals
- Promoting uptake and referral to the Council's Welfare Rights Service
- Promoting the Council's Local Welfare Assistance Scheme and ensuring it is accessible

We aspire to:

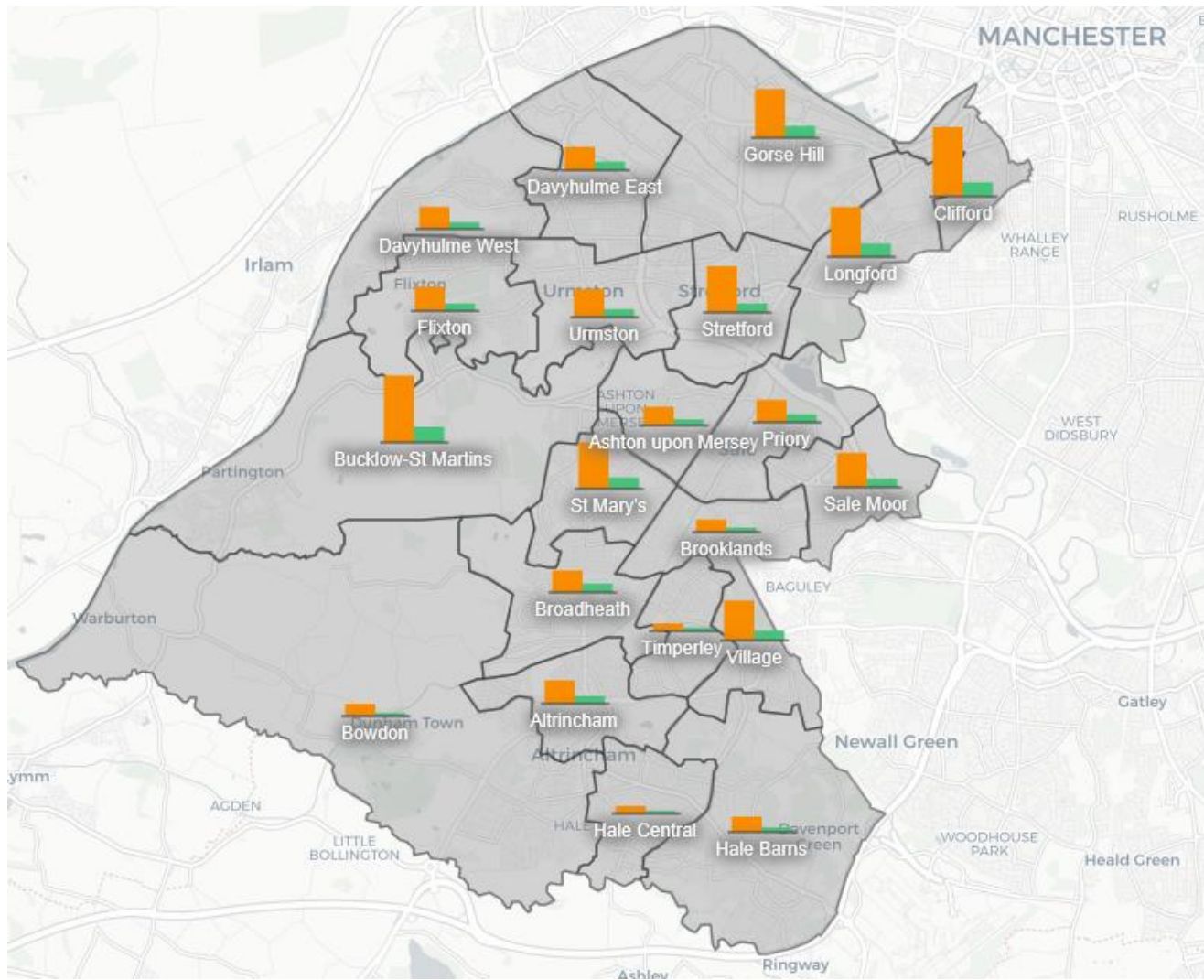
- Provide more direct targeted support for people experiencing difficulties paying council tax and experiencing debt
- Poverty proof council services so that they do not unfairly discriminate against people in poverty

"I don't know the statistics but it is an observation that we see a lot of malnourished children here and in many ways this affects energy levels and focus."

Headteacher in Trafford speaking about experience of poverty

The map below illustrates council tax support claims from Trafford residents in 2019/20

In Trafford there is a different need and take up of council tax support in the wards, as shown. Orange bars indicate full support and green bars indicate partial support.



3. Debt and Credit

We will ensure that services are available to support people experiencing debt by providing dedicated advice to people in need.

We will do this by:

- Promoting the ‘vulnerable customer’ policy that exists within most banks to enable people to understand where they can access support
- Working in partnership with agencies and voluntary and community organisations who provide debt advice
- Continuing to provide support for people to fully access the benefits they are entitled to receive

We aspire to:

- Work with the Trafford base of Manchester Credit Union to support people requiring credit
- Support and implement the 60-day breathing space policy
- Provide additional support to those experiencing debt through specialist debt advisors
- Work with companies i.e. utility, credit cards to review their debt recovery process
- Improve the energy efficiency of properties to reduce fuel costs

“People clearly feel very strongly stigmatised and they come in very, very apologetic for getting into debt even when it’s not their fault because it’s due to things like bereavement, a loss of income or a relationship breakdown. Clearly there is a lot of guilt and shame and people feel very embarrassed.”

Volunteer with the Citizen’s Advice Bureau, speaking about experiences of supporting people with debt

4. Food Insecurity

The best means of addressing food insecurity is ensuring people have enough money to access affordable, good quality food. We can do this by supporting individuals into secure employment and by ensuring individuals and families are in receipt of the benefits they are entitled to.

We recognise that over the coming 12 months many people in our borough will be unable to afford food. During this time we will:

- Support voluntary and community groups who offer food provision to people experiencing poverty, and who provide opportunities to learn cooking skills
- Promote Trafford’s Local Welfare Assistance Scheme and develop relationships between this service and Trafford’s Food Banks to provide targeted support to people living in poverty

We aspire to:

- Increase the uptake of healthy start vouchers by families, by streamlining the application process for eligible families
- Create a sustainable and coordinated holiday hunger programme for Trafford

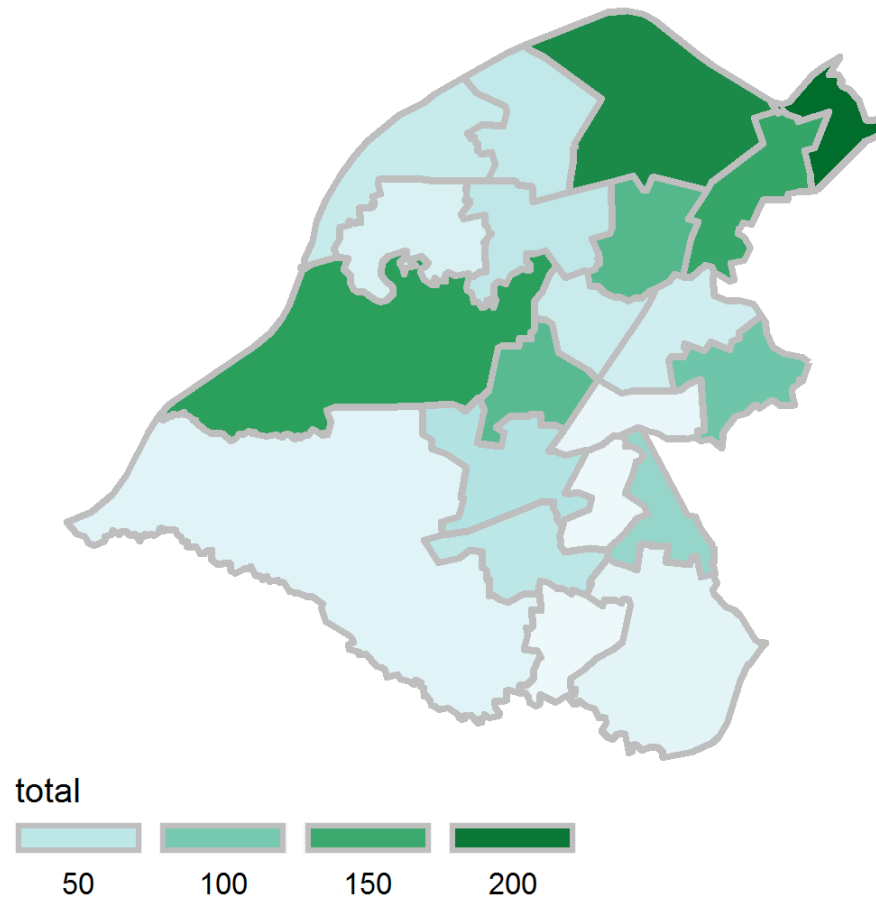
“A packed lunch that I have seen recently is for a child, who came to school with nine bourbons and a plum in the lunch box. Nine bourbons and a plum is not a suitable lunch for anyone.”

Headteacher in Trafford speaking about experience of poverty

The map below illustrates the variation in the number of Trafford Assist food vouchers awarded across the borough between March - July 2020. The highest number of food vouchers were awarded in Clifford (Old Trafford), followed by Gorse Hill, Bucklow St Martins (Partington and Carrington) and Longford.

Total food vouchers by ward

March - July 2020, Trafford



5. Poverty Premium

To ensure that people's household income is sufficient to enable

7. Carers

Carers are often at risk of poverty; in some cases, unpaid caring responsibilities reduce the ability to take on paid employment which limits household income.

We will ensure support is available to carers that prevents or alleviates financial difficulties and poverty because of their caring role.

We will ensure that organisations in Trafford work together to provide carers with the support they require, that they are supported to maintain employment where possible, and they are provided with the information and advice they need.

We will do this by:

- Setting up Trafford Carers Partnership Board, bringing together all partners to support carers
- Developing a carer, family and friends strategy with a detailed action plan
- Ensuring that carers are identified as early as possible and get the personalised support they need
- Making income maximisation services available to carers including advice related to carers' allowance and in work benefits
- Ensuring that information, advice and support is available to working carers regarding their employment rights and options
- Encouraging Trafford employers to adopt carer friendly policies such as flexible hours and carer leave so individuals with carer responsibilities can balance work and caring responsibilities
- Ensuring that a dementia advisor service is available for carers supporting those with dementia

6. Housing and Homelessness

The reasons why people become homeless can be as a result of a number of reasons factors. Overall since 2010, the main

8. Go with the flow

In Trafford it is estimated that up to 950 young people are unable to afford sanitary products. This can result in economically disadvantaged young people being unable to attend school or higher education during their periods, or those who are unemployed being unable to work during their periods as they cannot afford sanitary products.

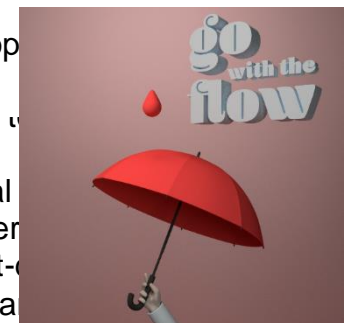
The best means of addressing this is by ensuring people have enough money to access the products they need through supporting individuals in to employment and ensuring individuals and families are in receipt of the benefits they are entitled to.

In Trafford, we aspire to establish a donation scheme to:

- Ensure young people have access to free sanitary products at school
- Ensure that new mothers with financial constraints have access to free sanitary products through Early Help Hubs and the Health Visiting Team

Our Trafford campaign to support young people with access to sanitary products is called 'go with the flow'.

- Ensuring effective outreach services to identify need
- Ensuring those presenting at hospital receive information on community support services so they can receive the support they require post-discharge
- Ensure individuals who get into rent arrears are supported, so as to ensure debts do not escalate and the risk of homelessness is minimised



9. Disability and Vulnerable Adults

Disabled adults can face some of the highest rates of poverty, and poverty rates are consistently higher for families that have a disabled member than those who do not.

Accurate figures at a local level are difficult to obtain; however, across the UK, almost half of the 14.2 million people living in poverty are from families with a disabled person.

We will ensure that people in Trafford do not face poverty due to disability and ensure that help and support is available for disabled people who are living in poverty.

We will do this by:

- Focusing on alleviating and preventing the disproportionate impacts of poverty on persons with a disability through the work of the Poverty Action Group
- Actively sourcing accurate information on the numbers of those with a disability who are in poverty in Trafford
- Ensuring those with a disability are able to access advice and guidance, including information on entitlement to benefits and support to maximize household income
- Working closely with partners and voluntary groups who support disabled and vulnerable adults

We aspire to:

- Establish a mechanism for reporting issues related to disability and poverty



Inclusive Economy

In addition to helping those who are already struggling with poverty, we must look to prevent people from falling into poverty in the first place and create pathways out of poverty by creating an inclusive economy in Trafford. This would provide sustainable employment opportunities and create mechanisms for growth to ensure that its benefits are felt more uniformly across all segments of society.

Economic growth has not always resulted in reductions in inequality or improved living standards so the concept of an inclusive economy is one where economic growth benefits everyone; supports people out of poverty; and addresses the circumstances which cause people to fall into poverty.

An inclusive economy in Trafford is one where, as the economy grows, so do the aspirations and opportunities for residents which harness their potential and improve their health and wellbeing.

We are on our way to creating an inclusive economy in Trafford by:

- Working together to create better job opportunities
- Working with employers and training providers to upskill employees
- Supporting communities to make change in their areas
- Supporting the voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise sector
- Planning for the future: housing, transport, green space, climate change, community and sports facilities
- Championing digital inclusion
- Promoting Trafford as a place to live, work and enjoy with world class sporting events

Employment and Skills

Being employed no longer assures a route out of poverty; around two thirds of working age adults and two thirds of children living in poverty are in households where at least once person is in work. This may be because work is low-paid, prospects for progression are limited or because an individual is on a casual agreement with their employer such as a zero hours contract.

In 2018, in Trafford, the percentage of jobs paying below the Real Living Wage (£8.21 per hour in 2018) was 23.6%; this is almost a quarter of employees being paid below the Real Living Wage.

There are a number of initiatives in Trafford to support residents into employment, such as the GM Working Well Early Help Scheme and the Trafford Pledge. The Trafford Pledge matches local residents with local job opportunities; in particular those residents who are disadvantaged in the labour market such as older people or those with long term health conditions. There are currently 52 businesses signed up to the Trafford Pledge. Trafford council has also signed up to the Ethical Care Charter

We aspire to encourage employers in Trafford to:

- provide good quality, sustainable jobs
- invest in upskilling their existing workforce
- provide employment, training and work experience opportunities to long-term unemployed residents
- to become Real Living Wage Employers; there are currently 56 accredited Real Living Wage employers in Trafford

Trafford Council is also committed to the Greater Manchester Good Employment Charter and Industrial Strategy.

Education

Poverty affects education, with a consistent gap seen in educational attainment between those children entitled to free school meals and those who are not.

Poverty and education are co-dependent as education can influence whether a child experiences poverty as an adult.

In Trafford, the average number of young people aged 16-18 years who are not in education, employment or training (NEET) is 2.87%. This, however, varies across the borough with 7.25% of young people in Partington and Carrington aged 16-18 years classed as NEET.

Time spent not in education, employment or training at a young age increases the likelihood of unemployment, low wages or low quality work later on in life.

To improve the chances of young people securing future employment, we will:

- Work with schools and further education facilities to develop consistent teaching packages around personal finance
- Ensure that people leaving school have the support and advice needed to move successfully into further education, training and the labour market
- Work with employers to place them at the centre of the education and skills system, providing opportunities for those in employment to gain new skills and progress
- Ensure climate change is included is taught in education facilities across the borough

Climate Change

The impact of climate change affects us all, but the most disadvantaged are often those that are most vulnerable and most severely impacted.

Trafford Council was one of the first local authorities to declare a climate emergency in November 2018, and Greater Manchester has committed to being carbon neutral by 2038.

We commissioned consultancy Anthesis, experts in the climate change and carbon reduction field, to produce a Carbon Neutral Framework and priority action plan and this was reported to the Council's Executive in September with further updates in December 2020.

Since the climate emergency declaration, the Council has continued to work across its service areas, and in partnership, to deliver climate change and carbon reduction initiatives in a number of areas including

- Recycling
- Active travel and sustainable transport
- Electric vehicle infrastructure planning and policy
- Tree planting and the creation of 'urban forest'
- Natural capital and biodiversity
- Operational estate decarbonisation
- Support for green business and skills
- Warm homes and green homes
- LED street lighting
- Renewable and low carbon heat and energy
- Carbon literacy and behaviour change

The council and Trafford partnership are continuing to make progress with measures that will reduce our carbon footprint and in doing so, help to improve the health and wellbeing of our communities.

Housing

Housing provides a stable foundation from which families can live and poor housing has been linked to impacts on mental and physical health. Good quality and energy efficient housing can also reduce the cost of fuel whilst tackling climate change.

As housing costs have risen, the number of families spending more than one third of their income on housing costs has increased. This has impacted those experiencing poverty more significantly than those who are not.

Trafford is committed to affordable housing and the Affordable Housing Fund was set up to address the significant affordability issues that the borough faces. The fund invites bids from Registered Providers / Housing Associations to build new affordable housing in the borough including working with Trafford Housing Trust in Timperley and with a registered provider in Hale.

The Greater Manchester Spatial Framework provides a challenging target of 1,155 new homes to be built in Trafford each year, and Trafford's 2019-2023 Housing Strategy highlights the need for increased affordable housing in the borough.



Final Words

To deliver our bold vision for Trafford for reducing the effects of poverty for individuals and families, the activities and aspirations in this one-year Strategy will be overseen by Trafford's Poverty Action Group over the next 12 months. This will be chaired by the Executive Member responsible for this area.

During this time, and as the post-pandemic situation becomes clearer, we will be establishing and working with the Poverty Truth Commission to bring together some of Trafford's key decision makers and partners with those living at the sharp end of poverty.

This will involve inviting people who have directly faced poverty to consider becoming a member of the commission to tell their story and explore what poverty means in Trafford. It will underpin everything we do.

We will launch the commission, set up working groups and make decisions on the issues to be tackled – the process of what we do is just as important as the outcome. We will work together towards overcoming poverty ensuring that those affected by decisions are central to the decision-making.

The Poverty Truth Commission will work closely with the Trafford Partnership Board and the three strategic boards which sit within the Trafford Partnership: our Health & Wellbeing Board, Inclusive Economy Board and Stronger Communities Board, to inform and shape the development of a longer-term Poverty Strategy for 2022-2025 and how we all work in the borough to tackle poverty.

If we are going to take the opportunity post-covid to build back better and fairer, the Strategy will need to support the development of a long term inclusive economy model, which will ultimately put support for our social infrastructure on the same footing as hard economics and traditional physical infrastructure.

We look forward to developing the longer term Poverty Strategy to mitigate the impact of poverty and improving the long term outcomes for the residents of Trafford.

