

Greater Manchester Equality Panels

Quarterly Update

October 2025

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The Equality Panels advise, support and challenge political leaders and policymakers to tackle the discrimination and disadvantage that cause injustice and inequality in society, and champion Greater Manchester as an inclusive city-region. For more information on the Equality Panels, including previous updates, please visit <https://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/what-we-do/equalities/>

Disabled People's Panel

In the last three months:

Transport was the theme in July, with both our Easy and Standard meetings raising questions for Transport for Greater Manchester and Councillor Tracey Rawlins, Disability Advocate for the Bee Network. Also, this quarter, the panel have been involved with health anti-poverty work, engaged nationally on welfare reform and the Timms review, and contributed to the United Nations Committee on the Rights of Disabled People.

Highlights include:

The panel finished developing the Social Care Commission. This included drawing together stakeholders in social care to the commission (for example Directors of Social Care, Roadmap to Independent Living Coalition, Social Care Futures, commissioners and providers) and securing a Disabled People's organisation to run the Commission. Embrace Wigan and Leigh and Disability Stockport were chosen for their joint expertise.

Over the next three months:

Continue work on Welfare Benefits and Social Care, focus on Live Well, follow up on transport issues, and plan the for the International Day of Disabled People on Wednesday 3rd December.

Faith and Belief Advisory Panel

In the last three months:

The panel undertook a workshop with Deputy Mayor of Greater Manchester Kate Green about the Police and Crime Plan, developing actions to tackle hate crime, violence against young people and gender-based violence. A panel workshop was also held with the Live Well team to explore how Faith and Belief can contribute towards the development of Live Well Centres, Spaces and Offers. The panel have also commenced meetings with Council Leaders to embed the Faith, Belief and Interfaith Covenant and help strengthen local interfaith networks, with successful action planning sessions taking place with Bury and Wigan Council.

Highlights include:

Co-Chair Reverend Ian Rutherford and Panel Member Councillor Eve Parker presented an update report about the Faith, Belief and Interfaith Covenant to GMCA leaders, highlighting case studies relating to Migration and Homelessness, contribution to Early Years, development of the Trafford Faith Action Network, and the Panel's new Community Cohesion and Resilience Mobilisation Plan.

Over the next three months:

The panel will continue to work proactively and collaboratively across Faith and Belief communities to strengthen community cohesion through unified messages. The rolling programme of meetings with Council Leaders will continue, and the next panel meeting will welcome the Mayor of Greater Manchester, Andy Burnham.

LGBTQ+ Equality Panel

In the last three months:

The panel has discussed with the Live Well team how to ensure Live Well provision is LGBTQ+ culturally competent and met with Deputy Mayor of Greater Manchester Kate Green to discuss tackling hate crime and violence against LGBTQ+ communities. The panel is also progressing to its housing aims through attendance

at the Greater Manchester Homelessness Action Network and moderating content for the Curriculum for Life Website.

Highlights include:

Attendance at Manchester Pride, with 140 unique engagements discussing the work of the panel and collecting sign up information for upcoming recruitment days.

Over the next three months:

The panel will meet with Mayor of Greater Manchester Andy Burnham in November and will present data and insight on LGBTQ+ inequalities in sexual health services, homelessness provision and trans inclusive spaces. The panel will also host two open days for new members to learn about the panel and sign up to join.

Older People's Equality Panel

In the last three months:

The panel focused on the Greater Manchester Baccalaureate (Mbacc) and All Age Career development. In addition, the panel has contributed to a range of issues including financial hardship for Older People, Ageing in Place, the Adult Social Care Commission, Digital Inclusion, and the ground-breaking Ageing in Place Pathfinder Project (phase one). The Panel and Older People's Network have also met together exploring the potential creation of a Greater Manchester Commissioner for Older People and the development of a transport offer for older people similar to the younger person's Our Pass.

Highlights include:

In July several panel members attended the launch of the Greater Manchester Strategy and welcomed the trial of lifting restrictions on the use of the concessionary passes for Older and Disabled people. Members of the panel supported the successful promotion of the trial which saw a marked increase in people using their passes. The panel look forward to the second trial in November and assessing the outcomes and benefits.

Over the next three months:

The panel will meet with the Mayor of Greater Manchester Andy Burnham in October to report their recommendations on creating a Commissioner and the Our Pass offer. Also, the panel will be working with the Ageing in Place project groups and the Ageing Hub as the next phase dovetails with the work being done with Live Well in Later Life.

Race Equality Panel

In the last three months:

The panel explored the opportunities and challenges for tackling racial inequalities through two key priorities; technical education and the Greater Manchester Baccalaureate (MBacc), and Live Centre centres, spaces and offers. In addition, panel members have been supporting a new research project into racial inequalities in housing and homelessness, advising Transport for Greater Manchester on approaches to diversifying their workforce, and discussed the Real Living Wage City-Region Campaign. The panel are also working with the GMCA Research team on developing a race equity performance dashboard aligned with the new Greater Manchester Strategy.

Highlights include:

The panel have been celebrating the diversity of the city-region with a focus on South Asian Heritage Month and East and South East Asian Heritage Month. The panel have also secured a new facilitating organisation, Inclusiviti, led by Aduke Onafowokan, who bring a wealth of local, regional and national experience to the panel.

Over the next three months:

The panel will be progressing recommendations from their successful multi-agency Culture, Care and Connection – Reclaiming Mental Health Together event, reviewing the findings of the housing research and will welcome the Mayor of Greater Manchester to their December meeting. In addition, panel members will be

championing Black History Month through involvement in local and regional events. The panel will also be working with the new facilitators to improve ways of working and deepen the panel's impact across the board.

Women and Girls Equality Panel

In the last three months:

The panel's Violence Against Women and Girls subgroup has established Housing as a key area of focus over the next year. The Health subgroup has had to pivot its activities due to the pause in implementation of the GM Women's Health Strategy but will remain interested in improving access to high quality and accessible health information through Live Well. The Education, Work & Skills group has continued to work with the MBacc team exploring how the panel can remain involved in its delivery.

Highlights include:

Hosting the Live Well team to understand the core principles behind the programme with panel members providing their insights from a diverse range of experiences. Some members also enjoyed a summer social event with creative activities such as block printing.

Over the next three months:

The panel will be meeting with Mayor or Greater Manchester Andy Burnham to share and reflect on our work throughout 2025, and present key asks that reflect our current priorities and concerns for women and girls in the city-region.

Youth Combined Authority

In the last three months:

The YCA met with staff from Cooperatives UK to discuss the Our House (halls for apprentices) pilot, as well as meeting with the Live Well team to talk through Live Well ambitions and their opportunities for young people. The YCA also talked about

key themes to be featured in the upcoming Greater Manchester Young People's Plan, supported by the Children's Board.

Highlights include:

YCA members met with Mayor of Greater Manchester Andy Burnham to ask him questions on topics including community cohesion, education, mental health and transport

Over the next three months:

The YCA will continue development of the Greater Manchester Young People's Plan in collaboration with the Children's Board. In addition, the group will revisit topics such as Good Employment Week, mental health for young people and also take part in skills development for the final development day of their term on the YCA.