

# GM Moving In Action - Shaping a strategy together for the next decade: with and for people living in poverty

24 March 2021



## Overview

On 24 March 2021, we co-convened with GM Poverty Action Group, a conversation with the newly forming GM Poverty Reference Group. We had a brilliant group of 20 people with lived experience of living in poverty in GM. The session was run by Tracy, an independent facilitator who has been working with the reference group, to help create a safe space for honest and open dialogue.

Introduction and ice-breaker from Eve and Nick as GM Moving leads for GM Moving Strategy and Workforce.

## Key Questions discussed as a group, including small breakout discussions:

- What is the relationship between inactivity and poverty?
- What helps people move more?
- What gets in the way?
- Aspirations and ideas for future?
- Priorities and next steps?

## What we heard:

### Opportunities – These are the things people said they want to see...

#### Communication

- Consider how to communicate so reaches people
  - Communicate through ongoing groups locally to encourage people, building local relationships
  - Look for people already active in community, see them as local community and street champions, talking directly to people, keep really local, have relationships to mobilise and inspire. e.g. people volunteering in community groups & foodbanks. They can help by signposting and telling people what's available, cutting down on barriers
  - Use billboards in local communities
  - Enable digital access
  - Build people up, not making people feel bad and worthless or shaming
  - Start from the children and schools, poor children should know it's good to move
  - Advertise through local schools

#### Decision-making (voice, co-design & representation)

- Give money to communities to feedback their own ideas, rather than impose
  - Give existing groups grants as they'll know how to make things happen
  - People as community leaders can take forward, e.g through the food bank
  - Want to involve more people who experience barriers themselves not talked about as 'these people' – stop othering language
- Advisory groups often exclude people who rely on the money - should be offer of an incentive, voucher scheme,
  - Stop asking for volunteers, need to be paid to do this work, offer discounts, on gyms etc so there is an incentive
  - Encourage people to come forward and have a say, not been heard before
  - E.g. wanted to give time to do voluntary work but it was not made easy

#### Health

- Talk about mental health – people are feeling stressed out
  - E.g. Groundwork help people overcome mental health, to engage with next steps
- Make it part of health - social prescribing, GPs need to promote & signpost
  - E.g. Work with professionals who support those with LTHC, mental health challenges, local GPs etc
- Needs to be a more holistic picture
  - Body and mind
- Poverty and health need to be addressed together - how do I feed my children, pay my tax, stay healthy?

## Physical environment & travel

- Want more green spaces
  - Oxygenated spaces – space to breathe
  - Stop creation of a concrete city
- Free gym equipment in our parks
- Safety is important - 'there are 68 flats in our block. There used to be lots of activities in the park next to us and there needs to be some reorientation into those, not currently safe for people'
- Enable and encourage more active travel
  - Move car parking further away from shops, so have to park and walk further.
  - Make public transport more accessible e.g. bus passes
  - Safer walking and cycling
- Lots of empty buildings and empty spaces rotting E.g. in Old Trafford, Moss Side.
  - But if you go to Cheshire the space will be used.

## Facilities

- Join people from communities – need to bring back community centres
  - There are empty buildings we could use – eg in Ardwick
- More inclusive gyms & sports centres
  - Women only gyms needed & creches e.g North Mcr gym has a creche
  - Make swimming pools, gyms, activities more accessible
  - Gyms are too expensive and aren't well kept
  - Concession pass for gym - give passes, get cheaper
  - Concession passes for families e.g. for gym, swimming pools, could be worked in through govt, universal credit
  - Timing of activities/ opening times of facilities, doesn't work for all - Run anti-social hours, to fit with shift patterns

## Organisations

- Work with businesses/workplaces, housing, schools, gyms, VCSE.
  - Consider what do people need to access services & how they can help support and roll out activity.
  - Need opportunities during work day, employers should offer longer lunch breaks, so can move during lunch
  - Need to work better, more collaboratively with VCSE, can help introduce into gyms, offer pilot of taster sessions, time given just for them to access,
- E.g. Bury, working with leisure services, families, disabilities
- E.g. Providing support during pandemic - 'during the lockdown I got in touch with housing associations and asked them to invest in doing something in the street.. everyone gets a letter, family housing are doing a session on your street.. just like the clap for nurses, everyone on their front door. Giving out packs and equipment. Some street stuff for people to come and try on their doorstep. Same with the schools, let's get families fit together stay together. Not just after school for children but for families.'

## Activities

- So long as moving more than normally do, all good
  - Could be pottering in garden doesn't need to be a sport
  - Be that stretching from home
  - Family walks, the dog, grandma, auntie, children

- Return to street games - used to play rounders outside, cricket and football
- As families, learn about nature, seasons, plants, keep learning
- Make activities free or subsidised
- Get people out on streets. Dance, street dance, close the street for an hour
- E.g. Herstory - run a group with women to go walking and cycling - trying to get as active as they can
- E.g. Radcliffe - collaborative work, litter picking, clean street, positive pottering. Even if just do a street or part of street, makes you go out
- E.g. Ethnically diverse community in Bury, zoom exercises
- E.g. Community groups etc for veterans, joined Moving Forces programme, good to get the full family involved, fully inclusive
- 'For community by the community'
  - Get right people to do it/ run it
  - Train them up and pay to do this work
  - Activity in flats, or in support groups
  - For people who don't feel safe
  - Families together, inter-generational spaces and activities
  - Pockets of things going on - need to expand on that
- When people are depressed they don't want to go out, and you need to have the support groups, get people to set them up and involve the people in their area who are like them

### **Individual basic needs & perception**

- Feed children, ensure families have basics like gas and electric – share info and packs at food banks, have access to free lunch. People have been struggling for years.
- Some incentive schemes help. E.g incentives if they complete things, fitbit drives people e.g. trip to Alton towers, for the community/group – needs to be social.
- Create welcoming spaces, make people feel comfortable, feel good, no need for makeup
- Show ways to be active without needing expensive equipment, just use cups, don't need weights, e.g. bands shared with CAHN, through community packs
- Not just buddy schemes, need personalised support

## **Next steps - These are the immediate priorities we heard people share**

- Increase representation at all levels of decision making and across workforce
- More involvement in grassroots stuff
- Pay community champions to spread the message and develop ideas
- More co-designed, inclusive facilities and activities
- Take action