

Greater Manchester Equality Panels

Quarterly update

July 2025



Introduction

The Equality Panels have been established to 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 our [website](#).

Disabled People's Panel

In the last three months

The panel have had significant achievements this quarter, including persuading Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) to remove the term “economically inactive” from its employment plans and agree suitable alternatives with the panel. The panel shaped priorities at the Tackling Inequalities Board, Integrated Care Partnership (ICP) and other forums, contributed to the Greater Manchester response to the Pathways to Work Green Paper, and participated in strategic discussions on housing, transport, employment and the Manchester Baccalaureate (MBacc).

Highlights include:

There has been strong recognition of the panels' impact, at the Tackling Inequalities Board and nationally through our open letter to Members of Parliament on the Pathways to Work Green Paper. The panel have launched our Mental Well-Being grants and worked closely with GMCA, ICP and the Mayor of Greater Manchester to progress the Greater Manchester Health and Social Care Commission. In addition, the panels advocacy has led to accessibility being added to Housing First priorities and secured a compensation ruling on the force fitting of pre-payment meters.

In the next three months

The panel will continue to work on Welfare Reform, engage at strategic level on transport issues, and seek to build involvement in the panel from Trafford and Oldham.

Faith and Belief Advisory Panel

In the last three months

The panel approved their Community Cohesion and Resilience Mobilisation Plan, which will enable Faith, Belief and Interfaith networks to connect and coordinate unified messages if community issues arise. The panel have started to communicate this to a wide range of stakeholders, including Police and Crime Leads, raising awareness and building connections with Community Safety Partnerships.

Highlights include:

The panel elected Rev Ian Rutherford and Manjari Patel to stay on as Panel Co-Chairs for a second year. The Co-Chairs represent the panel at the Tackling Inequalities Board and at a range of other meetings and events.

In the next three months

The Panel is progressing a rolling programme of meetings with Council Leaders and local Interfaith Networks to embed the Faith, Belief and Interfaith Covenant and help strengthen local interfaith networks. The Panel are meeting with the Deputy Mayor of Greater Manchester to maximise the contribution of Faith and Belief to the Police and Crime Plan, in particular helping to prevent hate crime and violence against young people and tackling gender-based violence.

LGBTQ+ Equality Panel

In the last three months

The panel has identified housing, healthcare and education as their three priorities for this year and have met with the GMCA Housing and Homelessness and Education teams and the ICP on these, providing the panel ideas on how they can contribute to key policy areas such as MBacc and Curriculum for Life initiatives. The panel are now underway with their workplans for these priorities, aiming to have completed these by the Mayor of Greater Manchester's attendance at panel later in the year. The panel has also set up a LinkedIn page to update interested parties on panel progress.

Highlights include:

A presentation from a panel member about the Supreme Court ruling on gender, drawing on their professional experience as a lawyer, which was very well received by members and GMCA policy teams.

In the next three months

The panel will continue to work on their workplans, as well as meeting with the Greater Manchester Live Well team and the Deputy Mayor of Greater Manchester.

Older People's Equality Panel

In the last three months

Panel members have attended events, meetings and workshops relating to a range of issues including financial hardship, Ageing in Place, Adult Social Care transformation, digital inclusion, Good Landlord Charter, use of AI tools to support carers and expanding digital mental health support specific for older people.

Highlights include:

The Mayor of Greater Manchester met with the panel to hear about our work and discuss his manifesto pledges for older people. It was a positive opportunity to assess progress and what needed to be done to continue improvement across the city region. The meeting was also attended by members of the Older People's Network and the panel will collaborate with the network on several identified issues, presenting back to the Mayor later in the year.

In the next three months

The panel will build on initial work with Greater Manchester Ageing Hub, GMCA and Transport for Greater Manchester to co-produce and "Our Pass" offer for older people. In addition, the panel will consider national progress to create a Commissioner for Older People and Ageing for England and assess how a similar role might function in Greater Manchester.

Race Equality Panel

In the last three months

The panel have engaged with Deputy Mayor of Greater Manchester and senior officers from GMCA and Greater Manchester Police on progress towards racial equity in crime and policing, with the Greater Manchester Youth Civic Leadership Programme on increasing racial and age diversity in civic roles, and with the Home Office Windrush Team on supporting people impacted by the Windrush scandal.

Highlights include:

The panel hosted a successful Culture, *Care and Connection – Reclaiming Mental Health Together workshop*, with a packed room of providers, commissioners and people with lived experiences sharing what works and what needs to happen to ensure accessible, person-centred, culturally competent and appropriate services. The session will lead to a set of recommendations for policy makers and create a network for future collaboration.

In the next three months

The Panel will continue providing their insight into priority work areas, including new research on racial inequalities in housing and homelessness, community engagement and scrutiny of policing, the Greater Manchester Workforce Inclusion Programme, and in partnership with GMCA Research Team the development of a set of measures that will effectively monitor progress towards racial equity across the city-region.

Women and Girls Equality Panel

In the last three months

The panel's Violence Against Women and Girls group has been working on ways to improve mutual data and information sharing between Greater Manchester Police and the Voluntary, Community, Faith and Social Enterprise Sector. The Education Work and Skills group has welcomed members of the Youth Combined Authority to join them in work on the MBacc and education.

Highlights include:

The panel hosted the Deputy Mayor of Greater Manchester to discuss progress on tackling Violence Against Women and Girls, with an emphasis on those with No Recourse to Public Funds. The panel were also proud to join other equality panels in signing the Disabled People's Panel's letter to Greater Manchester Members of Parliament calling on them to vote against the government's proposals on welfare reform.

In the next three months

The panel will be meeting with the Live Well team to ensure that design and implementation of these services is executed through a gendered lens. Panel members will also receive development sessions on community organising, and women and the economy.

Youth Combined Authority

In the last three months

The YCA met with staff from Our Pass to discuss working together to better promote the 'exclusives' offer for young people. The YCA members also participated in a development day held at Water Adventure Centre, strengthening their communication and influencing skills, and had discussions on the Get Greater Manchester Working programme, Greater Manchester Strategy and the MBacc.

Highlights include:

YCA members met with the Women and Girls Equality Panel to start working together on gender mainstreaming in the MBacc system.

In the next three months

The YCA will support development of the Greater Manchester Youth Plan in collaboration with the Children's Board. In addition, the YCA will explore the Our House pilot and meet with the Mayor of Greater Manchester to share our progress, opportunities and challenges.