

Oldham Poverty Truth Commission

The Oldham Poverty Truth Commission draws on experiences of people who have been in poverty alongside Civic, Business, and Voluntary Sector leaders to delve deep into the causes of poverty in Oldham and what can be done about them.

The Commission was launched in September 2021 with a focus on the experiences of people who've faced hardship in Oldham and developing a deep understanding of how their stories relate to the story of everyone in the borough.

nothing about us
without us
is for us

What has been coming through?

At the mid-way point, experiences and ideas have started to align around three key themes:



WELCOMING POINTS OF CONTACT

Services that have time to listen well & show understanding & empathy towards people who contact them for help



REDUCING STIGMA AND RAISING HOPE

Helping to meet peoples basic needs whilst also giving them opportunities to thrive & achieve.



PLACES OF BELONGING, KNOWLEDGE & HOPE

Places where people can belong to a supportive community

Ideas and Examples from the Commission

Health visitors for new parents experiencing Post-natal depression

Offering support to staff in health and social care services about financial worries

Response when people miss health or other appointments

Enterprise, employment and training opportunities accessible through debt/advice services.

Co-location of health services alongside housing and assets like local Libraries

Food clubs where people socialise and support each other

Resident led Community Centres in district hubs

Town Centre Strategy

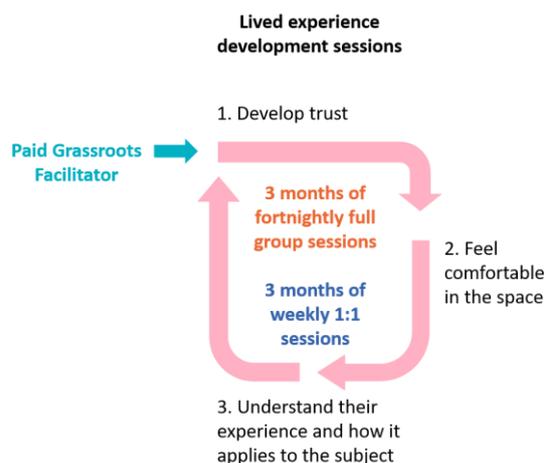
Neighbourhood peer groups cooking, signposting and providing for each other

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What else have we found?

Underlying the themes above which can be applied to a range of situations, the Commission has also given us an opportunity to test out a really high-spec model of co-production between professionals and people with lived experience. So far, we are seeing this to work really effectively, especially when it comes to creating equal power relationships, high quality non-judgemental discussions on all sides, and shared understanding of the issues.

The result is a blueprint which could be applied to help other initiatives and spaces in Oldham better involve residents and be co-produced. It involves significant time, resource, preparation, and adaptability to different people's requirements – all of which are cheaper than the cost of continually failing to include people who've experienced the issue in efforts to address it.



Project sessions

Together	Launch	Understanding each other, our perspectives, and our experiences	Meet in 1:1 Pairs	Mid-point review: Apply emerging ideas to current issues	Crafting the response
People with lived experience	Invite Share experience	WhatsApp chat for peer support	Suggest Voucher to pay for coffee etc	Group social meet ups	What does good look like?
People with professional experience	Invited Listen and respond to experience	Calendar invites and email updates	Respond	1:1 check in with Facilitators	What would it take to get there? Whose permission do we need?

3-6 mths
6 weeks
3-6 mths

Where are we going?

The first phase of the Commission was about creating the relationships and a shared understanding of the problem rooted in people's experience. The second phase is about actively applying this understanding to parts of Oldham where it can change the story for the whole place. To do so, we will continue to draw on people experiences, alongside the levers, connections and parts of the system which our diverse Commissioners are connected too.

Our aim by the end of the process is to have a [clear manifesto for how we respond to poverty](#) across Oldham, is [deeply understood](#) by those responsible for delivering it, and which has been and can increasingly be [applied to more and more parts of the system](#).