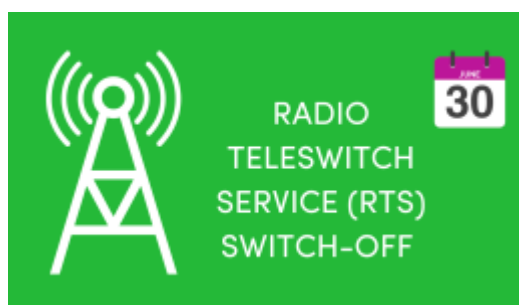


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## GMOPN Newsletter: May 2025

### Opportunities, News & Events



### Important news about possible changes to electricity meters

On the 30th June 2025 the Radio Teleswitch (RTS) service will be switched off, which may impact households using RTS meters. RTS was introduced in the 1980s and is now reaching the end of its natural operational life.

You may have an RTS meter if:

- your home has a separate switch box near your meter with a Radio Teleswitch label on it
- your home is heated using electricity or storage heaters
- there is no gas supply to your area, including households in rural areas and high-rise flats
- you get cheaper energy at different times of day, for example, you might be on an Economy 7, Economy 10, or Total Heat Total Control tariff

Get in touch with your electricity supplier if you're still not sure which meter is in your home.

Suppliers are required to proactively contact customers who currently use RTS meters to inform them about the upcoming switch-off date and the need to upgrade to a smart meter.

They must make sure you have a suitable meter installed, and that your service is not disrupted.

OFGEM expects electricity suppliers to replace all RTS meters before the Radio Teleswitch Service technology ends.

To read more about this issue click on the button below which will take you to the OfGem website.

[READ MORE](#)

# Singing for the Brain Salford

**Start the summer with music and song!**

**Feel good and meet new friends!**

**Get advice and support from our friendly trained staff**

Our Singing for the Brain group is run by Alzheimer's Society for people living with dementia, carers and families.



A new free group starts on Monday 2 June 2025, 1.30-3pm and then at that time on the first Monday of every month: 07 July, 04 August, 01 September, 06 October, 03 November and 01 December. No singing experience needed.

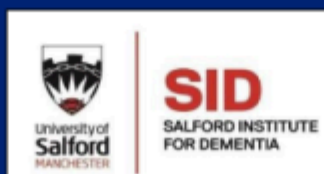
Join us every month at

The Salford Institute for Dementia Hub, University of Salford, Allerton Courtyard,  
Broad St, Frederick Road Campus, Salford M6 6PU

Refreshments available. Free Parking on site.

For more information and to book a place, please contact Maggie Murdoch  
Tel: 07703 715449 Email: [maggie.murdoch@alzheimers.org.uk](mailto:maggie.murdoch@alzheimers.org.uk)

For general support or advice about dementia please contact our Dementia Support Line on



Registered charity no. 296645. Alzheimer's Society operates in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

## Music in Mind: Music Café's

Are you looking for a local dementia support group? Take a look at our schedule to see if we are visiting your area. Our Music Cafés and events are designed to provide support and connection for people living with dementia, their loved ones, and their carers.

Find the full schedule [here](#)





## Manchester Advocacy Alliance Introductory Workshop

If you are someone who wants communities in the City of Manchester to be heard, we want to hear from you.

### What we're trying to do

We're building a network of individuals and organizations interested in developing a **Manchester Advocacy Alliance**. Our goal is to create a shared understanding of the barriers that prevent people being heard, especially communities that are already marginalised. We aim to work with members of those communities to co-design solutions that remove these barriers and reduce inequities. The Advocacy Alliance will serve as a central platform to share resources, drive community engagement, and empower more people to advocate for themselves, their families, and their communities.

Come along to this introductory workshop to learn more about what we're trying to achieve, share your views on the barriers and gaps, explore what different organisations are already doing in this area and imagine the potential of what could be achieved through an Advocacy Alliance.

We're eager to engage with people, organizations, and communities to shape this initiative into something that's meaningful and effective for all citizens of Manchester.

[Register here](#)



# Greater Manchester Older People's Equality Panel is recruiting!

The panel has been established since April 2022 and is now in an excellent position to influence decisions affecting older people in Greater Manchester. We have been able to ensure that many developments and changes to policy and services are informed and, when necessary, challenged.

We are recruiting new members to continue this work and add to the reach and effectiveness of what we can achieve.

We would like to hear from you if you can help amplify the diverse voices of older people in Greater Manchester.

We are particularly interested to hear from people with lived experience of financial hardship or have worked with organisations



supporting older people affected by financial hardship.

We will be prioritising new members from Wigan, Oldham, Rochdale and Bolton but will consider all expressions of interest.

You can find out more by clicking on the button below.

[READ MORE](#)



## GIVING VOICE TO GRIEF

 **Monday September 22nd 2025**  
10:00 - 16:00

**Lunch provided**

  
The Met  
Market Street  
Bury  
BL9 0BW

  
**Polly Kaiser**  
Semi-retired old age psychologist

**Beth Allen**  
Music therapist & voice coach

Exploring grief and loss through breath, body, voice and silence.

Come along to explore grief and loss in a safe space, learn new skills and have meaningful conversations!

This workshop is for people aged 50+

Spaces are limited, sign up by scanning the QR code below or calling 0161 834 9823

Transport support is offered for attendees if required



# **Exploring grief and loss through breath, body, voice and silence.**

GM Mature Minds Matter invite you to our upcoming workshop,  
Giving Voice to Grief.

Come along to explore grief and loss in a safe space, learn new  
skills and have meaningful conversations!

This workshop is for people aged 50+ and lunch will be provided.  
This workshop has limited spaces, sign up by scanning the QR  
code provided, clicking the link below, or calling 0161 834 9823.

Transport support is offered for attendees if required.

[22nd September Workshop - Register Here](#)





**GREATER MANCHESTER  
MATURE MINDS MATTER**

**Do you have experience of accessing, or supporting someone who has accessed, mental health support as an older person (50+)?**

**We are looking for people to join our network to make a difference to mental health support across Greater Manchester.**

**We're here to have our voices heard, connect with our peers, reduce stigma and represent older people across Greater Manchester!**

**If you would like to learn more and join as a network member, please email or call:**

 **GMOPN@macc.org.uk**

 **0161 834 9823**

**Freepost: MANCHESTER COMMUNITY CENTRAL**



## Join Greater Manchester Mature Minds Matter!

GM Mature Minds Matter are looking for people who have lived experience of accessing, or supporting someone who has accessed, mental health support in mid to later life (50+), to join our growing network, to make a difference to mental health support across Greater Manchester!

We are here to use our combined knowledge to have our voices heard, connect peers, reduce stigma & represent older people

across Greater Manchester, and we welcome individuals and groups who want to be a part of a trailblazing and supportive network!

Members can attend regular meetings and workshops, and we are also happy to discuss flexible involvement. We also support members with their transport needs if necessary.

If you are interested and would like to know more, contact us!

Website: <https://www.gmopn.org.uk/gm-older-peoples-mental-health-network>

Email: [GMOPN@macc.org.uk](mailto:GMOPN@macc.org.uk)

Telephone: 0161 834 9823

Freepost: MANCHESTER COMMUNITY CENTRAL

## Updates from Recent Meetings

### **GM Older People's Network Steering Group (May 1<sup>st</sup>)**

The Steering Group meeting covered updates across key workstreams, including transport, housing, mental health, and regional strategy.

#### Transport & Getting Out and About

Working groups continue to meet online, with one annual in-person meeting. Discussions included the upcoming renewal of the Metrolink contract in 2027, with a call for community feedback to inform future decisions.

#### Housing & Neighbourhoods

The *Places for Everyone* housebuilding strategy has been approved by local authorities. However, concerns were raised about the lack of awareness around existing empty homes that could be refurbished instead of building new ones.

#### GM Older People's Equality Panel

There is an ongoing push to broaden participation in the Equality Panel, which is currently dominated by representatives of organisations rather than individuals with lived experience. A digital inclusion initiative using voice-activated Echo Dots is being developed, with plans to distribute the devices through local organisations.

### GM Mature Minds Matter

Mature Minds Matter will be facilitating a *Giving Voice to Grief* workshop on 22 September at Bury Met. Places are limited, and sign-up details will be shared in the newsletter. In addition, focus groups with *Kooth*, an online mental health platform, will gather feedback to ensure services are accessible and appropriate for older adults. The group continues to engage in mental health service transformation across Greater Manchester, ensuring lived experience shapes future provision.

### Ageing in Place

A Resident's Showcase Event will take place on 16 July, from 11am to 2pm. All members of the Greater Manchester Older People's Network are invited to attend.

### **Transport for Greater Manchester Meeting (19<sup>th</sup> May)**

Chaired by Liz Jones, the meeting focused on improving how public transport services respond to community needs across Greater Manchester. While various reporting channels exist (phone, social media, online), many users are unaware of them, and some feel their concerns are not acted on—despite a five-day response target.

### Safety & Accessibility

Concerns were raised about unclear crime reporting processes and accessibility on newer buses, including inconsistent driver behaviour affecting older and less mobile passengers.

### Network Improvements

TfGM presented a three-tiered approach to network development:

- Operational improvements for quick fixes
- Growth reviews based on community feedback
- Strategic reviews for major route or service changes (often taking 12+ months)

This structure allows urgent issues to be addressed promptly.

### Community Feedback

Issues are prioritised based on urgency, not volume, through a triage system. Direct engagement with local communities remains essential for shaping services.

### Future Plans

Ongoing concerns include service reliability and real-time travel information. TfGM is exploring solutions like digital signage and greater collaboration with local communities.

# Poetry Corner

## The Journey

One day you finally knew  
what you had to do, and began,  
though the voices around you  
kept shouting  
their bad advice—  
though the whole house  
began to tremble  
and you felt the old tug  
at your ankles.  
"Mend my life!"  
each voice cried.  
But you didn't stop.  
You knew what you had to do,  
though the wind pried  
with its stiff fingers  
at the very foundations,  
though their melancholy  
was terrible.  
It was already late  
enough, and a wild night,  
and the road full of fallen  
branches and stones.  
But little by little,  
as you left their voices behind,  
the stars began to burn  
through the sheets of clouds,  
and there was a new voice  
which you slowly  
recognized as your own,  
that kept you company  
as you strode deeper and deeper  
into the world,  
determined to do  
the only thing you could do—  
determined to save  
the only life you could save.

By Mary Oliver

The GM Older People's Network  
Freeport MANCHESTER COMMUNITY  
CENTRAL

[www.gmopn.org.uk](http://www.gmopn.org.uk)  
Email: [GMOPN@macc.org.uk](mailto:GMOPN@macc.org.uk)  
Telephone: 0161 834 9823



