

Improving support for young people facing exploitation as they turn 18



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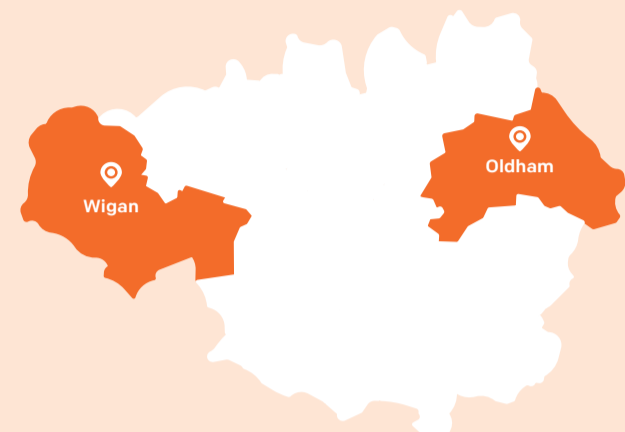
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Start

Daunting

Exciting

Thought-provoking



Our starting point

Exploitation does not stop at 18. Unfortunately, evidence shows that support for victims of exploitation often does stop. This cliff edge continues to claim young lives across the UK. Through small experiments carried out in Wigan and Oldham, we have pushed for innovative system leadership and accountability, working to bridge the gaps between children's and adult services. Through these experiments, we have learnt about what it really takes to change systems, so that they better protect young adults from the harms of exploitation.

Prevention

Reducing inequalities

System barriers



Leadership exercised primarily within organisations and job descriptions

Exhausted front line teams focused on managing demand and risk

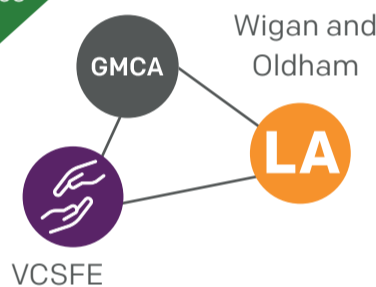
Power, resources and decision-making concentrated in statutory services

Formal governance primarily accountable to national government rather than local people

Community organisations operating at the margins, on short-term funding

Our system shifting trio

Our quartet gathered perspectives from different angles: children's and adult social care, GM-wide policy making, and nationwide best practice. Driven by the same passion to secure better outcomes for young people, we formed a tenacious and resilient team, which has taught us that leadership is not tied to roles or job descriptions: it resides within us.



Lightbulb moments

This experiment has incited us to value and secure protected time for reflection, taking a step back to identify and analyse the nature of the gaps to be addressed.

One thing we have learned is the importance of timing and persistence in progressing our system-shifting agenda and securing the authorising environment that would give us the permission, tools and agency to do things differently. This lightbulb moment has helped us build momentum, recreate a sense of urgency, and feel listened to.

The opportunity to link up with other passionate individuals through the GLGM System Shifting Leadership's peer meetings and webinar series has been surprisingly helpful in clarifying our vision, unlocking ideas, and reinforcing our motivation.



Our biggest challenges

Leading change takes time and energy. Our main challenge has been keeping momentum high whilst juggling other priorities - regular team meetings have helped us stay resilient. Securing additional resources would have been helpful. We now have support from our colleagues and we hope this will result in future cross-sector working and funding opportunities.

Our insights and breakthrough

- Achieving a clear collective vision within our respective partnerships.
- Obtaining traction for the creation of transitional safeguarding policies.
- Reinforcing relational practice between children's and adults' services.
- Building enthusiasm in this area of work across GM.
- Unlocking new funding through new partnerships.
- Being recognised as champions for the cause at senior leadership level.

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Next Steps

- Working towards an event for GM senior leaders in Summer 2025, to share progress and encourage others to challenge systems that repeatedly failed victims.
- Continue to progress our local experiments, implementing a work plan, and rolling out multi agency training, to bridge knowledge gaps between services and deconstruct misconceptions.

Now

Possible

Empowering

Inspiring



A strategic partnership between Innovation Unit and Greater Manchester Combined Authority

