

All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights.  
Article 1

Dignity to me is to be free, to be able to be who I am.

WORK

FAMILY

"People have the 'Right to be' who they want to be."

# ARTICLE 10

RIGHT TO FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

Article 2  
EDUCATION

Religion

Right to a fair trial.

We should look beyond the word poverty because it's the same meaning environment. Article 8 + Article 1, protect!

Freedom to say what you want to others.  
- But be fair to others.

RELIGION

POOR INCOME

Human rights are for one and all. Rich and poor alike.

Art 7  
Right not to be punished

Human Rights.  
Power and people

Sanctions?



A recent trip to the cinema for a screening of the Ken Loach film *I, Daniel Blake* left a friend of mine shocked at the brutal and dehumanising treatment of the title character at the hands of the welfare benefits system.

However, I know from the experience of families at ATD Fourth World that this grim portrayal can be terrifyingly accurate; from delays in the payment of Universal Credit to the ruthless application of the Work Capability Assessment, so many parents have to turn to food banks and loan sharks just to meet their children's basic needs.

And yet this is not simply an issue of having no money; the reality of poverty is far more complex. As one parent recently told me, "*I am treated with more dignity by Tesco than I am by the Department for Work and Pensions.*"

# Listening to families



Listening to the voices of the poorest families makes it clear that this experience of being ignored and humiliated, so brilliantly portrayed in the film, is all too familiar; parents, children and young people alike will talk of being utterly excluded from financial security and how they feel that they are not recognised as a human being with a contribution to make in their family, their community and beyond.

It is this ability to focus on the many dimensions of poverty that has made ATD Fourth World unique since its earliest days.

At times we have appeared unfashionable or even out of line with current thinking on poverty and exclusion but we have nonetheless continued to insist that to live in poverty is to be denied access to one's basic human rights.

Amidst the fast-changing landscape of Brexit and other world events, it can be easy to feel surrounded by division and fear. Looking ahead, and with your support, we can continue to build a future based on solidarity and hope.

With thanks and warm wishes,

Ben Cheney  
On behalf of the National Co-ordination  
Team  
ATD Fourth World UK



ATD Fourth World has long sought to instil in the most vulnerable families the confidence to engage in community life and face their challenges as a key component in the fight against poverty.

Central to achieving this goal is a commitment to reaching the hardest to reach families and recognising the roles they play in their neighbourhoods and communities, supporting them through crisis and strengthening their support networks.

Using a family-led approach, we help professional agencies engage better with the concerns of parents and children and increase families' access to local support services as well as social and cultural activities while, at the same time, introducing families to ATD Fourth World's family network provides solidarity, advice

# Plotting a path forward



and understanding from peers who have faced many of the same struggles.

In so doing, our *Community Outreach and Peer Support* project strives to tackle the issues that surround persistent poverty and social exclusion such as social service intervention, limited employment opportunities, debt, insecure housing and poor health.

For one mother, *“The quality of the support I was given made a real difference. Most services offer you six weeks of help or ten weeks of help and it all comes with loads of conditions but this was without conditions...*

*“You don’t make relationships with short-term service provision; you’re told what needs doing and you either do it or you don’t do it but you don’t get into a relationship*

*with anyone else because it’s a one-to-one service.*

*“When you get support from ATD Fourth World, you’re in a relationship with a whole bunch of other people. It lasts because ATD believes that families have huge potential and that they might not have had the chances or the opportunities in the past but, given those, things can happen.”*

It is only through breaking isolation and seeing a family within its full context that real progress can be nurtured and a path forward plotted.

community outreach / peer support





*“Once you get to Frimhurst and you see the open grounds and greenery, you’re totally relaxed. You’ve left your problems behind for a little while. It’s a chance to recharge the batteries; for the children to play and for the parents not to worry about them. It’s an opportunity to spend quality time as a family.”*

A fully-modernised Victorian house set in its own extensive woodland and grounds, Frimhurst Family House is the location for all residential aspects of ATD Fourth World’s Family Support Programme and aims to provide families with a setting in which to make the most of distance from their everyday difficulties, take advantage of space to think clearly and discover new activities to invest in together.

With accommodation for up to thirty people,

# Gathering strength



a carpentry workshop, an art studio, dining facilities and disabled access, Frimhurst is the perfect place for families to meet others in the same situation and to learn together in a respectful, non-judgemental environment.

Over the course of our residential breaks, as well as the annual Summer Fun Day and Christmas Party, families have the chance to engage with a variety of workshops such as creative writing, arts and crafts, calligraphy and baking alongside canal walks, film nights, games of bingo, mini golf and bike rides.

The impact of something as simple as a few days together can have a profound impact on a family's well-being and relationships. In the words of one young father, *"Just look at the smile on my son's face. It's been good to bring him to a different place and to see him*

*running around and smiling. It's important to be able to have a gap between what is going on at home and here at Frimhurst so you are ready to face challenges again when you go back home. You gather your strength to face things. I have been able to be myself here."*



getting away from it



*Our Skill-Sharing Workshops and Access to Volunteering* initiative are designed to open up volunteering opportunities to disadvantaged adults and young people and so support them in taking practical steps towards gaining real work experience, broadening their horizons and fulfilling their potential.

The *Skill-Sharing* residential camps continue to represent something of a unique space for isolated and marginalised young people. By living and working as a group, as well as helping to plan the work undertaken, they form bonds, learn to better resolve conflict and profit from a positive experience of community and communal life.

As one young man says, *“I enjoy the experience; we achieve a lot and I have the opportunity to socialise. As someone*



# Making a contribution



*who struggles to socialise usually, I feel comfortable to do so at Frimhurst.”*

Across the two residential camps held in February and July young people learned basic skills in, amongst other things, painting and decorating, kitchen installation, laying parquet flooring and constructing timber raised garden beds.

Alongside this, our *Access to Volunteering* initiative enables project participants to share in the success of our *Getting Away From It* residential breaks by contributing to the organisation of different workshops which, over the past year, included an outing to go fishing and a fireworks display.

A number of parents have also undertaken training in kitchen hygiene in order to assist in catering duties on residential breaks and

the weekly Community Lunch.

For one young father of two, “*Some of the people who have come to the Skill-Sharing residential camps were scared of their own shadows at first but now join in totally and we have made friendships that will last a lifetime, which is a rare thing.*

*“Any time I have needed to take stock of where my life was heading, all I’ve needed to do is think about what we’ve achieved, how we did it and take that away with me.*

*“I can see the change in all of us now being able to take on the outside world head on. I enjoy it immensely.”*

skill-sharing / access to volunteering



*“Over the last two years I have learned that human rights affect us in so many ways. They are there to safeguard us, especially when we need to be represented in court or by other means. I have really enjoyed doing this work and think we have only touched the tip of the iceberg. We have still so much more to learn about it, from the Magna Carta to the United Nations’ Universal Declaration.”*

*Giving Poverty a Voice* is designed to enable and support participants to better understand the political context of the issues that affect their lives, to be prepared to speak publicly and to take advantage of opportunities to engage in the democratic process.

In continuing the previous year’s work on human rights, the project held a number of workshops to explore in depth what it

# A better understanding



means to have freedom of expression and, in the midst of the referendum campaign, the importance of exercising one's right to vote. In December a delegation then attended the European Fourth World People's University 2016 in Brussels and made a presentation on how illiteracy, insecure housing and financial costs infringe upon access to one's fundamental rights.

Outings to museums and exhibitions were organised later in the year to provoke participants to consider their relationship to both the history of London and the poverty that has long existed in the city. The first of these new outings was to the Museum of London Docklands to see the *London, Sugar and Slavery* exhibition.

A second outing to the Museum of London looked at how the city has grown from

its Roman origins through the plague, the Great Fire and up to Charles Booth's Poverty Maps. A first-time participant said afterwards, *"It was my first time and I am lost for words. It is fascinating to see history in front of you. I think I'm still in shock. I was impressed."*

*Giving Poverty a Voice* is supported by The Wakefield and Tetley Trust.

The Wakefield and Tetley Trust

giving poverty a voice



From the very beginning, *The Roles We Play* has aimed to highlight the efforts of, validate the achievements of and challenge the negative attitudes and stereotypes often held towards people living in poverty through positive self-identification and self-representation. Following on from the publication of a book in 2014, and subsequent multimedia exhibition and tour in 2015, the project continued to take this message to different venues and events across the country.

At the start of the year the exhibition featured prominently at the Old Fire Station in Oxford and was hosted at Ulster Hall by the Belfast Strategic Partnership. In response to the discussions and workshops that accompanied the exhibition, a project development officer for the Belfast Health Development Unit said, *"The event reinforced for me how important it is that those who develop policy*

# Removing barriers



*listen to the real experts, understand the barriers that people face day-in, day-out and work to remove those barriers.”*

A seminar featuring the experiences of project participants was then held at King's College London in March as part of a series on life writing, led by Visiting Professor at the Centre for Life-Writing Research Timothy Ashplant, while a further event took place at the church of Holy Trinity and St Mary's Guildford a month later.

A workshop with second year students of the Department of Sociological Studies, University of Sheffield in November had a profound impact. According to one student, *“Having talked about concepts like social exclusion and poverty beforehand, it was refreshing and important to talk to people who actually have experience of these things. It*

*made me more aware of the people who are affected, and the variety of people who are affected.”*

Such a reaction tallies successfully with the outcomes of three evaluation sessions run at Frimhurst Family House that looked at the results of touring the exhibition. *“Being part of The Roles We Play is important to me because a lot of people on benefits or on low incomes are judged for it and it's a way for me to say, 'Yes, I am on benefits but don't judge me before you get to know me. Get to know the person first before you make any decisions or judgements'.”*

the roles we play



Throughout 2016 the *Social Worker Training Programme* continued to engage with social work professionals and academics through a wide array of different actions.

ATD Fourth World activists made presentations at both the Joint Social Work Education and Research Conference in Milton Keynes and the *Talking about the Future of Social Work* conference organised by the British Association of Social Workers in London. Following the latter event, the presentations were reprinted in the publication *Professional Social Work*.

At the same time, the social science journal *Families, Relationships and Societies* published the article *Giving Poverty a Voice: Families' Experiences of Social Work Practice in a Risk-Averse Child Protection System*. This article, written in collaboration



# Highlighting key issues



with Dr Anna Gupta of Royal Holloway, University of London and independent researcher Hannah Blumhardt, covered themes that had emerged from a series of study groups convened over the previous eighteen months.

Furthermore, we embarked upon the participatory research project *Valuing Us: Social Work and the Capability Approach* to look critically at how social work practice responds to the capacities and aspirations of parents in child protection cases.

Focus group discussions and one-to-one interviews with parents, social workers and family support workers began to highlight issues often overlooked in research and social work literature: the situation of children living at home when other children have been taken into care, the focus on negative

case histories during court proceedings and the lack of forthcoming support and engagement once court proceedings are finished.

Alongside this, a number of parents submitted evidence to a UK-wide enquiry established by the British Association of Social Workers to consider the role of social work in adoption, with a special emphasis on ethics and human rights.

Reflecting on all this work, one father said, *“With the social workers I’ve met through the Social Worker Training Programme, I can see things in a new light now. I can see how much social workers want the system to change as well. They realise it’s not all about coming in and taking kids away from their parents; some of them want to work with the parents but their hands are tied.”*

social worker training programme



A residential internship at ATD Fourth World can offer new skills, discoveries and experiences to anyone willing to give their time, energy and talents towards making a difference.

Volunteers have an important role to play in the running and organisation of a number of our projects in the UK and there are opportunities to work directly with families living in poverty or supporting those who do. Every effort is made to take into account the location, availability, background and interests of the applicant so as to make it possible for those that wish to get involved to do so.

A limited number of residential internships are made available throughout the year, ranging from supporting specific projects and campaigns to fundraising or general maintenance. Often based at the ATD Fourth

# An opportunity to learn



World National Centre in London or at Frimhurst Family House in Surrey, these full-time internships last a minimum of three months and accommodation, work-related travel expenses and basic living expenses are provided.

Gwennaëlle Horlait spent three months as an intern before deciding to join the UK team full-time and says of her experience, *“In working at a grassroots level, always trying to reach the poorest people, ATD Fourth World’s vision of collaborative and participatory work is very dear to me.*

*“It is only when we try to reach the most excluded and take time to understand their difficulties, their strengths and their aspirations, working with them and not for them, that we can truly aim for a world where nobody is left behind.*

*“Since the beginning of this eye-opening experience I have made so many new connections and have learned so much from them.*

*“Being shy myself, I know how important it is for people to have confidence in their own value and skills. I am constantly impressed to learn that some activists were very timid before but are now able to speak up at conferences, sometimes at short notice. This significant achievement is essential because they are their own best spokespeople.*

*“This is an experience that I am genuinely thankful for.”*

For more information on ATD Fourth World volunteering opportunities, visit our website at [www.atd-uk.org](http://www.atd-uk.org).

volunteering opportunities

# How can I get involved?

Our **Friends and Supporters' Network** is a way for everyone to get involved in the fight against poverty.

Friends and supporters help us in many ways from the running of our projects, housekeeping, gardening and fundraising to maintenance, special events, administration, family support and a whole lot more.

Whether you like to work alone or in a group, in an office or outdoors, on the front line or in a support role, we can always use the help and we are very flexible according to your available time and skills.

It is also a great way to meet a lot of new and interesting people!

Call us to find out more or visit our website at [www.atd-uk.org](http://www.atd-uk.org).

**ATD Fourth World Volunteer Corps members** make a long-term commitment to working alongside families living in extreme poverty and are involved in projects here and overseas.

Members of the Volunteer Corps agree to live on the same basic wage and make themselves available to go where their expertise and skills are most needed.

Families, couples and individuals of all ages, from a variety of backgrounds and with an assortment of practical skills and qualifications, make up this diverse group of dedicated, full-time workers.

There are a number of steps to joining the Volunteer Corps, the first being involvement in ATD Fourth World projects here in the UK.



## Summary of accounts

### INCOME

Donations and legacies

Charitable activities

Investments

January 2016 -  
December 2016

January 2015 -  
December 2015

£309,076

£301,450

£36,273

£28,936

£1,026

£446

£346,375

£330,832

### EXPENDITURE

Raising funds

Charitable activities

£3,864

£3,803

£347,734

£321,025

£351,598

£324,828

finance

**Board of Directors** Rev. Nicholas Edwards (chair), Caroline Davies, Anna Gupta, Margaret Guy, Tish Mason, Thomas Mayes, Maeve McGoldrick, Isabelle Pypaert-Perrin, Veronique Reboul-Salze, Ajanta Sinha, Mark Smith and Greygory Vass

**Company Secretary** Daniel Kenningham

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