



ATD Fourth World Annual Review 2018



ATD Fourth World has long insisted that poverty needs to be understood in terms of human rights in order to truly make the case for structural change. To make this happen we need politicians, decision makers and society as a whole to hear the insight, knowledge and understanding of people with direct, lived experience of poverty.

It is only by bringing people from all walks of life together to discuss, analyse and understand together the lives of the most vulnerable families that the issues made real by poverty, disadvantage and social exclusion can be faced and real reforms proposed.

This is exactly what has driven ATD Fourth World's work over the past year in two distinct fields: the *Understanding Poverty in All its Forms* participative research study

# For constructive dialogue



and within the APLE Collective: Addressing Poverty with Lived Experience network.

Both endeavours are informed by the multi-dimensional nature of poverty and the vital importance of seeking to develop a broad, constructive dialogue on overcoming it. At the heart of this is a belief that the skills and contributions made to society by people in poverty often go unrecognised and that individual resilience is no substitute for better systems, structures and policies.

In the words of one participant, *“I believe that people with lived experience of poverty need to be around the table. More than that, we need to be at the forefront every step of the way...”*

*“I do not just represent myself; I represent others that are in poverty who might not*

*be ready to speak out. I have learned to give give voice to other people’s struggles and suffering and also share from my own experience...”*

*“Now we’ve got to knock on doors to get people to listen to us so that they understand more about poverty and so that we can figure out tangible solutions.”*

This is the message we need to get out far and wide.

Thomas Croft  
For the National Coordination Team  
ATD Fourth World UK



Through ATD Fourth World's Family Support Programme, accompaniment is offered to families in long-term poverty in times of crisis concerning poor health, insecure housing, debt, limited employment or educational opportunities, and social service intervention.

Moraene Roberts, who is part of our National Coordination Team, describes the importance of cultivating peer support among people with lived experience of poverty: *"When I first came here, I didn't think of myself as being 'in poverty'.*

*"But here, I met other people going through the same situations I was. That made me think about the fact that certain aspects of my situation were because of choices that I'd made, while other aspects came from what had been imposed on me. I began to*



# Cultivating support



*recognise the fact that poverty is created. Poverty had been normalised before because so much was completely out of my control.*

*“These realisations made me feel that we have to really fight, and to decide what we want to build in place of poverty.*

*“It felt like a struggle for years. It was a rage: how dare they impose this and then blame us for it! Eventually you can get over the rage — but you can’t do that alone. Realising you’re with others gives you courage. It makes this sustainable.*

*“For ourselves, we’re often so battered down that we accept it. But when you see others suffering, you feel indignant. You begin looking for people to support. Here, you’re not becoming dependent, asking for help. ATD Fourth World listens and learns*

*from people who’ve been kept out of social movements. Here, I don’t just receive. I give back something of value.”*

The *Community Outreach and Peer Support* project is how ATD Fourth World helps the most vulnerable families to manage the pressure of dealing with anxiety, having numerous professionals in their lives, or looking for non-judgemental understanding.

By leaning on the experiences and validation that a family network can provide, people in poverty can also feel empowered, as Moraene describes, to offer their support to others as part of long-term relationships built on trust and positivity.



*“The Family Fun Day is something I always look forward to. It was nice to be able to share it with my daughter and granddaughter, as I had not seen them in a while. It was such a good day.”*

This comment from a proud grandfather sums up the importance of nurturing connectedness, community and friendship, which is the aim of the celebratory events and residential respite breaks in our *Getting Away From It* project.

During our annual Family Fun Day in July, more than eighty people travelled to Frimhurst Family House to spend time together. Children were treated to a game course that included sponge throwing, bucket ball and croquet, finishing in a lucky dip. In the meantime, adults were invited to join a percussion session, art activities,

# Nurturing community



and even watch a live stream of England's World Cup quarter final match. Toddlers were not forgotten; they had a soft play area, bouncy castle and face painting. Everyone had a great time; the weather was so hot that the cold juice offered by the team and the sponge throwing was a hit!

*"The day was very enjoyable. My grandchildren loved the face painting and the bouncy castle!",* commented one mother.

During the afternoon, we were treated to a dance demonstration by local children from the Shuffles Dance Group and everyone was invited to join in.

Shortly afterwards, Seamus Neville and Moraene Roberts, both long-standing activists of ATD Fourth World, gave a very moving tribute for their dear friend Derek

Asker, a friend and fellow anti-poverty campaigner who had recently passed away. Then Georgina Simmonds read a poem she had written about beauty.

To conclude the day, Julian the Magician impressed everyone with his tricks, and the children were invited to do a lucky dip. Everyone then returned to the bus to enjoy a peaceful and quick journey back to London, reflecting on the great day that they had.

getting away from it



*“These weekends have built my self-esteem enormously. Before, I would never have imagined I could go to a job interview. Now, look at me: I did it and I got the job!”*

Everyone has something valuable to contribute. Our *Skill-Sharing Workshops* and *Access to Volunteering* project enables people to overcome the constraints of poverty and to fulfil their potential.

During one October weekend, twenty-five people met at Frimhurst Family House for manual work projects. Participants in the skill-sharing project were joined by many local residents from the #DoingMore at Frimhurst



# Fulfilling potential



project. It was a lovely dry weekend that allowed the group to do a lot of outdoor work. Among the jobs accomplished were rebuilding a low wall near the game room, clearing overgrowth away from the fence at the back of the garden, and removing thirty builder's bags worth of autumn leaves to clear the roadway.

During the same weekend, a painting workshop inspired by Mexican folk art created decorations for bedrooms in the main house.

During the evaluation, one participant explained why this project matters:  
*"When I first started coming I was really shy, keeping myself away from everyone and my stuttering was so bad. Coming*

*here and spending time together building friendships has helped me a lot, I now speak with everyone and my stuttering is nearly gone."*

skill-sharing / access to volunteering



*The Understanding Poverty in All its Forms* participatory research study, being conducted in collaboration with researchers at the University of Oxford, began more than two years ago. Because people with lived experience of poverty are part of the research team, this work is developing a nuanced understanding of hidden dimensions of poverty.

In the first phase of the project, members of the research teams took time to get to know one other. They defined the roles and responsibilities of each person to ensure a well-functioning project. They also allocated time for training on the ethical requirements and methodology of merging knowledge.

After experimentation with various tools and approaches, they chose the ones they found most appropriate. They also

# A nuanced understanding



identified characteristics of poverty for adult populations of working age in urban and rural areas.

The second phase of the project involved creating and facilitating groups of people from similar backgrounds and experiences to discuss poverty among working age adults.

Three sets of peer groups were established: one for people living in poverty, a second for academics and a third for practitioners.

In order to establish these peer groups, the national research team tried to reach the most excluded people. They also sought people living in a wide variety of situations in order to ensure that as many poverty characteristics as possible could be explored. Time was built in to create trust, which was essential between group members. In

addition, the various activities had to be conducted in a way that would allow people who worked more slowly and who had the least developed vocabulary to express what was important to them.

Participants sorted the characteristics of poverty into coherent dimensions of poverty. The groups then met together during merging knowledge sessions to summarise the characteristics identified by each group of peers into a single set of poverty dimensions that everyone agreed on. The research findings will be released in 2019.

understanding poverty in all its forms



A decade after *The Roles We Play* project first began, its architects spent 2018 developing new tools to evaluate and make known the highly participative approach they used.

In a new, seven-minute film called *The Roles we Play: A Model of Genuine Participation*, people in poverty speak about the oppressive atmosphere that led them to begin this project: *"I remember being treated with a lot of suspicion by most people... There was a change of tone away from being part of a society that believed in a net to support people. It was moving rapidly towards: 'Everybody that claims benefits is a fraud and we have to weed out frauds, there are very few who are genuine.' It felt like it was going to get worse. And it did."*

To challenge the widespread negative

# Celebrating co-production



stereotypes about people in poverty, ATD Fourth World created *The Roles We Play* book and toured the country with a multimedia exhibition. The activists who ran interactive workshops during that tour have honed their facilitation skills and now run training sessions independent of the exhibition called *An Audience with #PovertyExperts*.

One such workshop in early 2018 was held for the staff of the Joseph Rowntree Foundation. A staff participant said about the workshop: *“I was struck by how strongly people in poverty spoke about the importance of owning their image, the impact of having limited input into how they are written about and how disempowering an experience this is. This workshop made me think much more about participation and the difference it makes allowing the space*

*and time for people to have full ownership and to shine so brightly through doing so.”*

The final tool developed to look back on this project is a 46-page report to accompany the new film. In the report, people in poverty reflect on the methodology behind their collaboration, which began during residential sessions with wide open agendas, continued with training for communications techniques, and was facilitated through ongoing peer support.

*The Roles We Play: A Model of Genuine Participation* was made possible by support from The Joseph Rowntree Foundation.

**JRF** JOSEPH  
ROWNTREE  
FOUNDATION

the roles we play





*“The burden of proof should be on me, as a social worker, to say that I have evidence from the police, for example, that contact presents a risk to the child and to their placement or would be unsafe... I have worked with many parents where they are clearly no risk whatsoever. And I had one case in particular where I was pushing for an open adoption, the mum was, the adopter was; it was the adoption team and their manager who weren’t.”*

This reflection came from a *Social Worker Training Programme* study group which examined the British Association of Social Workers-commissioned report *The Role of the Social Worker in Adoption*. Drawing on the specific experiences of parents, practitioners and academics, the study group challenged a number of myths around adoption and the place of adoption within

# Examining adoption



the context of wider social policies on poverty and inequality.

In addition to running this study group, ATD Fourth World's *Social Worker Training Programme* delivers a teaching module at Royal Holloway, University of London to foster dialogue between social work professionals and adults living in poverty who have experienced social service intervention in their family life. The students and newly qualified social workers reacted appreciatively to this module, saying:

*"It's been an eye opener about how our position as social workers is viewed by service users. The power we possess can make or break them. What I'll take with me from today's session is not to necessarily go by a service user's past experience to decide whether a child should be removed*

*from home but rather try and see if I can work with that family to meet an achievable goal."*

*"If you help parents, you help the child, as children are naturally attached to their biological parents."*

*"Thank you for being brave enough to talk to us when you feel other social workers have discriminated against you."*

social worker training programme



*“Poverty2Solutions is not just about having a voice. It’s about finding a way to use our voice that will hold politicians to account for the very real impact that their decisions have on millions of people’s lives.”*

— Tracey Herrington, Thrive Teeside

In 2018, ATD Fourth World amplified the voices of people living in poverty by further developing national grass-roots networks. Work begun in 2016 as a group called Poverty2Solutions (together with Thrive Teeside and Dole Animators) continued.

This work led to the founding of a national collective of individuals who experience poverty, which named itself the APLE Collective: Addressing Poverty with Lived Experience. With participants living in Bradford, Cheshire West, Leeds, London, Stockton and Stoke-on-Trent, this collective

# Finding megaphones



aims to speak out nationally as they did in a letter published by The Times urging the minister for work and pensions to meet them so they could help her to fix the many flaws of Universal Credit.

On Road Media and the Joseph Rowntree Foundation made it possible for members of ATD Fourth World to be heard in the debate about Universal Credit: in a Channel 4 report by Jackie Long and in the “Real Britain” Daily Mirror column by Ros Wynne-Jones.

ATD Fourth World also participated in a panel discussion, *From Input to Influence: How can the participation of people in poverty shape research and influence policy?*, hosted by the London School of Economics Centre for Analysis of Social Exclusion. Speaking jointly, Tom Croft and Moraene Roberts said, “*People struggling*

*with the crisis of poverty can feel absolutely abandoned by society. It takes time to feel ready to participate in research.*” Professor Tania Burchardt of LSE summed up the panel’s conclusions: “*People in poverty have a particular expertise. Participatory research has enormous transformative potential — if care is taken so that it is not exploitative or extractive. Too often people in poverty are treated like a problem to be addressed. They have a right to be at the table.*”

giving poverty a voice



*"I know what it's like to be sanctioned."  
"I know what it's like to go hungry."  
"I know what it's like to feel trapped and  
tormented by a system that claims to be  
helping me."*

These voices and others rang out around the room in the 'Let Me Tell You' local tradition in Glasgow. The *Hunger for Justice* event was organised by Bridging the Gap, the Poverty Truth Community, and the Lodging House Mission Choir.

In London, almost one hundred members and friends of ATD Fourth World packed into a House of Lords panel discussion on meaningful political participation by people with direct experience of poverty. Hosted by the Baroness Lister of



# A hunger for justice



Burtersett, the event premiered the film *The Roles we Play: A Model of Genuine Participation* while speakers represented On Road Media, RAPAR (Refugee and Asylum Seeker Participatory Action Research), Community Pride CIC, Poverty2Solutions and Dole Animators.

Up and down the country other events were held to mark the day. In Stockton, Thrive Teeside set up a Speakers' Corner and informational stalls to highlight actions that challenge poverty while, in Salford, the Poverty Truth Commission ran an inclusion workshop at the Social Audit Network.

Dole Animators ran workshops to create and share narratives in Leeds and

Church Action on Poverty marked *End Hunger Week* by collecting signatures for a national petition calling on the UK government to fix Universal Credit.

Elsewhere, Stoke Expert Citizens, the West Cheshire Poverty Truth Commission and others co-ordinated social media campaigns using the hashtags #EndPoverty, #PovertyTakeover and #SolveUKPoverty. Also, the newly founded Addressing Poverty with Lived Experience (APLE) Collective launched its Twitter account, @ApleCollective, which quickly gained more than six hundred followers.

world day for overcoming poverty



Volunteering at ATD Fourth World provides a chance to develop new skills and experience discoveries for anyone willing to invest their time, energy, and talent toward making a difference. Volunteers play important roles in our projects whether through direct contact with families living in poverty or supporting advocacy and communications. Every effort is made to take into account the background and interests of applicants.

Residential volunteering is based at the ATD Fourth World national centre in London and at Frimhurst Family House in Surrey, with accommodation and basic living expenses provided.

Dinesh Biere spent two years as a residential volunteer with ATD Fourth World in London. For him, *“Everybody should have*

# Pursuing happiness



*the opportunity to pursue happiness but people in poverty are denied that right.*

*“ATD Fourth World gives a voice to the voiceless. When someone like Bill Gates speaks, everybody listens. But when you are poor, nobody listens to you. They even start telling you what you should do. But ATD Fourth World tries to give people in poverty a platform to speak out.*

*“Here in London, you see many homeless people and people struggling to eat every day. This was the situation of two men sleeping in the park next door.*

*“For seven years, B. and P. were best friends. Last year when B. was arrested, it was too much for P. to handle. He stopped taking his heart medication, and he stopped eating because he did not want to eat*

*without B. A few days after the arrest, P. passed away. I wanted to visit B. in jail and to tell him the news — but it took me six months to find out where he was being held and to be authorised to visit. After learning a lot about the justice system, I was finally able to visit B. Recently, B. was released and he came to help us prepare a Community Lunch.*

*“I have seen life getting increasingly difficult for many but some people like to help others. At the Cycle Hub where I go on Saturdays, they fix up old bicycles so that local children can have a healthy way to play without getting into mischief. Helping other people makes me happy.”*

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

|                        | January 2018 -<br>December 2018 | January 2017 -<br>December 2017 |
|------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <b>INCOME</b>          |                                 |                                 |
| Donations and legacies | £384,785                        | £389,323                        |
| Charitable activities  | £33,766                         | £40,421                         |
| Investments            | £1,821                          | £99                             |
|                        | <u>£420,372</u>                 | <u>£429,663</u>                 |
| <b>EXPENDITURE</b>     |                                 |                                 |
| Raising funds          | £4,166                          | £4,245                          |
| Charitable activities  | £439,679                        | £423,926                        |
|                        | <u>£443,845</u>                 | <u>£428,171</u>                 |

**Board of Directors** Tish Mason (chair), Caroline Davies, Rev. Nicholas Edwards, Anna Gupta, Margaret Guy, Rev. Saju Muthalaly, Thomas Mayes, Isabelle Pypaert-Perrin and Ajanta Sinha  
**Company Secretary** Daniel Kenningham

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