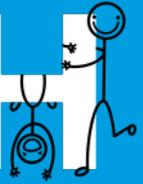


# ATD FOURTH WORLD UK ANNUAL REVIEW 2022-2023



ALL TOGETHER IN DIGNITY TO OVERCOME POVERTY



What most distinguishes our work in the UK this past year is the success of our outreach efforts in getting to know additional families in poverty — particularly families with young children. This is something we've aimed to do for a long time, in part because the children of many families in the ATD Fourth World community are now grown up, and we need to understand what situations families are coping with today. We also want to broaden our network of activists so that when we get opportunities to speak publicly we can train one another with peer support.

Our success in this outreach is thanks to about four years of partnership with two different organisations. One is located in Surrey, and it's called Home-Start. The other, in London, is PACT: Parents and Communities Together. Both groups focus specifically on struggling families who have children under the age of five.

To give an example of one of the situations of a new family we have met: we have been supporting a single mother seeking asylum for herself and her young son.

She is very vulnerable and isolated, having been referred to Home-Start by another charity that supports victims of human trafficking and modern-day slavery. She and her son have been residing in Surrey for a year now, alongside others seeking asylum. However, prior to this, they had been moved around the country on ten different occasions. This was for their own safety because the traffickers kept finding them again. Life since, in the residence, is very difficult. She tends to spend time with her son alone in their room, as the playroom is rarely open. She also says that she tends to keep to herself to avoid conflict with other asylum seekers, because all of them have different values and cultures, as well as past trauma.

ATD Fourth World's Frimhurst Family House provided an opportunity for her to cook something herself, which is one of the things she misses most. She said:

*"This house makes me want to cry. It feels like a home. It's been a very long time since I felt like I'm inside a real home, where everyone is nice and makes you feel like a real person."*

The links with this family and others in the asylum centre are very important. They're flung into a place where they can't even cook the way they used to do in their country. Going forward, we plan to host asylum seekers more often at Frimhurst. By inviting them to get to know families and activists from the UK, we can help them integrate into the community.

*- Murielle Double and Thomas Mayes, for the support group of the National Coordination Team*





# About ATD Fourth World

ATD Fourth World - **All Together in Dignity** - has worked in partnership with people affected by poverty since 1968 to tackle inequality and promote social justice. Those with the most difficult lives hold the key to understanding and overcoming persistent poverty and are thus at the heart of everything we do.

**'Together in Dignity'**, our family support programme, offers vulnerable families resources to get through times of crisis, build upon their strengths, develop support networks, and broaden their skills, confidence, and knowledge in order to pursue their goals and aspirations.

Our **'Giving Poverty a Voice'** programme aims to raise awareness of persistent poverty, counter prejudice and discrimination and improve policy and practice. To this end, we empower people to speak out and shape their own narrative, while offering policy makers invaluable insight into overcoming poverty from the bottom up.

**Our vision** is a world without persistent poverty, where all people are valued and can participate fully in society.

**Our mission** is to build a network of people, groups, and organisations committed to overcoming persistent poverty.

We take people seriously by recognising the strength, determination, and resourcefulness it takes to just get by. We are committed to accompanying people at their own pace, over the long term. We believe every voice matters, particularly the voices of people who are ignored or rarely heard. We work inclusively with our full-time core team workers, families in persistent poverty, allies, and volunteers, who are all involved in every aspect of what we do. These are **our values**.



*We are a part of an international movement of solidarity and collaboration. If you have a camera phone, find out more about the International Movement ATD Fourth World by pointing your camera at the QR code above and tapping the banner that appears on your screen.*





## Community Outreach and Peer Support

Central to ATD Fourth World's ethos and aims is a commitment to reaching the hardest to reach families and recognising the roles they play in their neighbourhoods and communities, as well as supporting them through crisis and strengthening their support networks. By 'hardest to reach', we mean the families and individuals in extreme poverty who are isolated from much of society as a result of the stigma and discrimination they have experienced because of their circumstances. Because of this, they also often face difficulties accessing the support services and resources they are entitled to. Actively reaching out to and getting to know the community helps us make meaningful connections with people most in need of support.

We recognise that those inside any community know the most about what is going on there. They play invaluable roles in their neighbourhoods. In reaching

out to community members, we benefit from the value of their insight. As a result, a large part of ATD Fourth World's 'Together in Dignity' programme is **community outreach**. This includes when members of our team go out into the communities close to our centres — Addington Square in Southwark (London), Frimhurst Family House in Surrey — to get to know families and individuals who are experiencing extreme poverty (often facilitated through other community-based organisations). Community outreach also happens when families and individuals already involved with ATD reach out to other families they know in their communities — families they think may find benefit from the support ATD provides — and invite them to our events and activities. Our ATD community grows through this **peer support** effort.

Although the pandemic caused many of our activities and the support we offered to be moved online, throughout 2022 we transitioned most of our activities back to being in-person, much to the joy of our core team, activists, allies, and families in poverty. In the

context of post-pandemic life, where increased isolation, financial turbulence, and social policy changes have placed new stresses on families and individuals, it has been more important than ever to reach out to and support vulnerable members of the communities near our centres.

We continue to run a well-being group in Feltham, where we open the doors for a break from isolation through socialising, community building, and providing opportunities for peer support. Here, people with lived experience can ask one another questions, talk over their experiences, and work together to find solutions. We also continue to offer crisis support as and when it is needed, and to provide the personal, one-to-one support to families that distinguishes our work. This includes supportive home visits, non-judgemental phone calls, friendly 'cuppa-chat' mornings, and other well-being activities.



## Getting Away From It

Providing positive experiences for children, young people, and families can — in link with other aspects of our family support programme — build a foundation for the longer-term relationships necessary to tackle the more challenging issues faced by families. Our **'Getting Away From It'** project strives to offer families and adults time away from the day-to-day pressures and anxieties of life, as well as an opportunity to share experiences, strengthen relationships, and form new friendships. Residential breaks at Frimhurst Family House and well-being days at Addington Square — hand-in-hand with other celebratory events and outings — enable families to invest in activities and workshops together, alongside others in similar situations, and feel part of a wider community.

The months of March and April saw a variety of exciting activities integrated into our well-being days and stays, such as rock painting, soap making, quiz nights, and an outing to "Pitch 'n' Putt" golfing at Frimley Lodge Park.

In the warm and sunny summer months, we enjoyed two outings to Frimhurst Family House: our Victorian Manor House that extends across eight acres of shaded forest parkland and boasts a library, art studio, games room, nursery, and computer room, as well as four purpose-built family flats. It also happens to be filled to the brim with all manner of games, toys, and books, as well as two children's playgrounds and a well-stocked bicycle shed.

Due to the drought and resultant hosepipe ban, our initial plan for a summer London well-being activity — a trip to the water fountains at a local park — had to be abandoned. However, one of the families saved the day with a suggestion to instead take a trip to Battersea Park Zoo, which delighted both families and team members alike.

October and November saw both family and adult well-being day trips to Frimhurst, where games, art activities, and picnic lunches provided distraction from the cooling weather and impending onslaught of winter. During our family well-being stay in October, parents

# Together in Dignity

and their children both had fun dressing up and putting on spooky makeup for a Halloween celebration. During the adult well-being stay in November, the group went to the cinema, with some people mentioning it was the first time in years that they'd had the opportunity to go. We also got creative with cushion making, prepared cards for Christmas and New Year's, and enjoyed a crisp winter walk along the canal to appreciate the fresh air and take in the beautiful nature that surrounds Frimhurst.



*Scan the QR code to find out more about Frimhurst Family House!*





# Together in Dignity



## Understanding Poverty

Two core tenets sit at the heart of our '**Understanding Poverty**' project: supporting project participants to develop their thinking on poverty and place a value on their own lived experience; and empowering them to prepare to speak out and have a say on the decisions that affect their lives.

In the words of one activist:

*"I get so much out of it: knowledge about systems and politics, understanding how government works, understanding the way things are run and the negative impacts on people in poverty. It is so important to be informed. The more you know, the easier it is to defend yourself. The fact of being informed gives me confidence, takes away fears. Knowledge breaks down barriers. I am learning a lot every month."*

To amplify voices, much of this preparatory ground work is done with the support of outside campaigns and other networks.

As part of the '**Talking About Poverty**' programme run by **Heard**, ATD Fourth World activists have received media training and peer-to-peer support. Focused on building confidence and reinforcing well-being, this programme aims to tell better stories about poverty and challenge unhelpful media narratives.

Highlights of our ongoing participation as part of the **Addressing Poverty with Lived Experience Collective** (APLE) include regular residential sessions where activists can prepare for public events while bonding and relaxing over meals and meaningful activities, such as being given a guided tour of York by an APLE member who was previously sleeping rough in that city.

The **Growing Rights Instead of Poverty Partnership** (GRIPP) held a residential session in October where five ATD Fourth World activists began developing friendships with activists from three other groups, two of which were founded by people seeking asylum in the UK.

# Giving Poverty a Voice

Within our own Giving Poverty a Voice monthly workshops, project participants have explored and debated issues such as the cost-of-living crisis, budgeting, food banks and homelessness, all the while noting the impact of these themes upon family life.



*From our 'Understanding Poverty' project comes research like 'The Hidden Dimensions of Poverty', which was published in 2019. If you have a camera phone, scan the QR code above for more information!*



## Poverty Experts

*"I find it shocking that all of a sudden people are acting like poverty is new. This happened during the austerity crisis too. But poverty has never gone away. When you live in poverty, all your energy is depleted, your mindset is constantly fatigued by this rat race where you're chasing the same things all the time. You have no resources or freedom! You must give people a toolbox to create change."*

This quote was from a 'Poverty Expert', drawing on her lived experience to address the Stakeholder Advisory Council of the Nuffield Family Justice Observatory. The topic of their meeting was the cost-of-living crisis; this activist focused her remarks on the psychological impacts of poverty.



This is the essence of our '**Poverty Experts**' project. People with lived experience have an expertise that is different from that of professionals, and in our public-facing work and events they help society to understand the hidden dimensions of poverty.

# Giving Poverty a Voice

One of these events was to launch the film **“Through the Eyes and Values of Lived Experience Activists: Listen to Level Up”**. The film was co-created by **Poverty2Solutions**, a network led by lived experience that ATD helped to found in 2016. Its aim is to develop solutions for problems that can lock people in poverty. For the film launch, ATD activists were among the key speakers for a large event in Westminster, attended by MPs and members of the House of Lords. To prepare smaller community film launches, ATD activists joined others to screen-print promotional tote bags and t-shirts. We also hosted a community film launch in Bermondsey, London.

As part of the **APPLE Collective**, ATD activists made a presentation to the **All-Party Parliamentary Group on Poverty** about how the digital divide impacts individuals and families in poverty. At the House of Lords, ATD activists distributed APPLE’s briefing paper on the digital divide during an event run by the **Digital Poverty Alliance**.

We had several invitations from other organisations to contribute to their projects. **Church Action on Poverty** published a book called **“Dignity, Agency, Power”**, which includes a poem written by an ATD activist entitled **“To Restore One’s Soul”**:

*“You feel ashamed or judged for how you look, how you talk,  
Or how you are perceived by others – because poverty can just simply fry your brain. [...]  
I am not a number, nor am I a commodity that you can push from pillar to post. [...]  
You will not silence me and I will have my say.”*

The **Social Rights Alliance** (supported by **Just Fair**) drives social change from a rights-based perspective on the issues identified as priorities by communities experiencing inequality and injustice. ATD activists joined this alliance for a focus group examining knowledge about co-production, and also to create a video called **“Human Rights Defenders Claim Their Rights”**, which was filmed in ATD’s London centre.

## The Right to Family Life

In this project, people who have lived experience of social service intervention in their family life lead collaborations with social work academics and practitioners. We seek to develop a new anti-poverty paradigm of child and family social work, by setting in motion new concepts of change and possible courses of action. This can include public-facing work as well as policy, practice, research development, and training. The voices of families in poverty are at the forefront of this project.

### 'Poverty Is Not Neglect' webinar

We are part of the **Parents, Families and Allies Network** (PFAN), which is dedicated to social justice for families affected by the child protection system in the UK. PFAN runs support groups, training, and research aimed at promoting, developing and supporting parent advocacy and advocates. In October, we jointly organised a webinar titled **"Poverty Is Not Neglect"**. Attendance neared 200 people. The core of the



discussion was shifting the perspective on poverty and challenging the way in which "povertyism" leads to confusion between poverty and neglect in child welfare decision making.

### Submission to the United Nations



Since May 2022, we have undertaken extensive research with **Human Rights Local**, a project of the Human Rights Centre of the University of Essex, to write a submission to the **United Nations Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights** (CESCR).

This submission to the United Nations is to inform its review of the UK's human rights compliance. To gather evidence, we have been running a series of **study groups** on poverty, social work and the right to family life where parents in poverty lead open discussions with academics, social workers, and other professionals. ATD Fourth World's **"Merging of Knowledge"** approach opens doors to a rare cooperation that expands minds and perspectives. In order to triangulate our findings for this research, we also ran a series of **peer-led focus groups** and in-

# Giving Poverty a Voice

depth **interviews**. Some focus groups were reserved for parents in poverty; others were for social workers; and some were for young people in poverty who have had experience with the care system or who were adopted. One powerful quote from these interviews came from a young woman in Derbyshire:

*“Children’s Services placed me in adult accommodation when I was 15. They didn’t explain anything to me or my family. They just removed me and housed me with seven grown adult men over the age of 18. I was abused by all of them. I was groomed and sexually trafficked in that accommodation.”*

In response, the United Nations has now asked the UK Government to “provide information on the measures taken to regulate and monitor private and for-profit providers of child protection services... such as children’s homes”.



ATD also contributed two group submissions for the same UN committee: one by the **Growing Rights Instead of Poverty Partnership** (GRIPP) and one by the **End Child Poverty Coalition**.

## GRIPP



Launched in spring 2022, GRIPP is led by activists with lived experience of poverty from four grassroots organisations: **ATD Fourth World**, **Intisaar**, **Refugee and Asylum Participatory Action Research (RAPAR)**, and **Thrive Teesside**. GRIPP is also supported by **Amnesty UK**, the **Human Rights Centre** at the **University of Essex**, and **Just Fair**. The lived-experience activists met up weekly for an “Action Learning Space” in order to share ideas and act as an overall support network. ATD’s section of the GRIPP submission to the UN challenged contested closed adoptions.

## End Child Poverty Coalition and Youth Voices

‘Youth Voices’ is a project run by **ATD Fourth World** and **Teen Advocacy**, who are independent peer advocates offering support for young offenders, young carers, teens with disabilities and those experiencing complex family dynamics or divorce. As part of the End Child Poverty Coalition, Youth Voices also wrote a submission for the United Nations CESCR.

Every year, the United Nations chooses a theme for the International Day to End Poverty. The theme of 17 October, for 2022 to 2023, is "Dignity for all in practice".

## United Nations International Day to End Poverty

*"Our people are pursued by poverty into death and after death. We have lost, and continue to lose, brothers and sisters in arms who are killed by poverty; who are cut down far too soon. We are sometimes the only witnesses. We carry within us lives that have not been honoured, lives that even in death counted for nothing. But we know how much courage they showed, their daily struggle to face the impossible, their intelligence and their capacity to love. Their history is scratched into us and we cherish it."*

It was to bear witness to the lives of people in poverty that in 1992 the United Nations gave official recognition to the **International Day to End Poverty**, which was first marked by ATD Fourth World on 17 October 1987.

The quote above was spoken at the conclusion of "**We Make Our Mark**", an original theatre performance performed by twelve ATD activists — in collaboration with the Journeymen Theatre and with support from



Watch our performance here!



# International Day to End Poverty

London Challenge Poverty Week — to commemorate the UN Day. The play retells the history of the unmarked graves in Brookwood Cemetery, where victims of London's cholera epidemics were buried in the Victorian era.

Four days before the performance, staff from Brookwood Cemetery welcomed thirty members of ATD for a commemoration, including a moment of silence before the graves of paupers — most of which are unmarked. Handmade wreaths were laid, and messages were read aloud from Ireland, Tanzania, and the UK.

During the performance itself, before an audience of sixty in Cherry Hall Gardens in Bermondsey, London, the activists proclaimed:

*“What about those who leave no trace behind? Doesn't their time on earth count for something? People who fall on bitter times, their lives devalued. Their loves and laughter, struggles and suffering reduced to a faded reference in a parish register. Mark our words. We WILL make our mark!”*

Bearing out that determination, this event concluded with a screening of a film created by these same activists as members of **Poverty2Solutions**. **“Through the Eyes and Values of Lived Experiences: Listen Up to Level Up”**, filmed at ATD's London centre, shows why policy-makers should consult directly with people in poverty.

The **APLE Collective**, like ATD, has also always emphasised the importance of this UN Day, and 2022 was no exception. From podcasts in Stoke-on-Trent to a commemoration in George Square in Glasgow, APLE members “lit up the UK map” with many events. One key APLE event included members of ATD who took over the agenda of the **All-Party Parliamentary Group on Poverty**. Lived-experience activists explained how the digital divide is holding back communities, presented their campaign on the digital divide, and proposed workable solutions for the future.



## **Conversation with Celia Consolini, an ATD Fourth World volunteer and ally**

People living in deep poverty make choices every day to look out for one another and defend the inalienable dignity of all. This effort they make, and work that they do, also requires the support of people from all walks of life. Some, like Celia Consolini, choose to provide this solidarity through volunteering with ATD Fourth World. Below, we interview her about this experience.

### **How did you hear about ATD Fourth World?**

*I had probably heard of ATD even before I came out of the womb. My parents were, and still are, both very involved with ATD in France. I remember participating in multiple projects while growing up: notably, a campaign for children to create their own silhouettes. I also participated in ATD's 'Street Libraries' in Noisy-le-Grand (France) when I was in high school.*



*When I moved to London in September 2022, I immediately wanted to be of help to the UK team. Since then, I volunteer in Addington Square every Friday, as well as some weekends.*

### **What attracted you to ATD Fourth World?**

*I have always admired ATD's participatory approach to solving inequalities. In addition, with ATD, I know that I am making meaningful and lasting change, and I feel that I truly have an impact on society.*

### **Can you tell us about your volunteering experience?**

*I mainly assist with the Together in Dignity project. I have participated in several family well-being days, where we plan games and crafts for parents and children. I particularly delight in seeing families enjoy the activities we have previously tried out for them, and I am often amazed at how creative everyone is. I also help other teams when they need extra hands,*

*be it by cooking, taking photographs, or writing articles. I am thankful for everyone in the London team, who have been extremely welcoming, offering constant support.*

## What stood out to you?

*I hold dear the true connections I've formed with families and activists that I see in multiple projects. More broadly, it is ATD's participatory approach that fills me with optimism and motivates me to keep working towards social change. Volunteering with ATD convinces me every day that there are tangible solutions to reducing inequalities.*



## Our Inclusive Governance and Financial Ethos

ATD is not a traditional service provider, and a collaborative approach is part of our ethos. The ATD Fourth World community includes full-time core workers, families living in persistent poverty, allies, and volunteers. Since our founding, we have worked to build governance structures that allow all our different members to take an active role in the decision-making process, and to contribute their knowledge and experience.

Our organisation depends on the collaboration and dialogue between people of different social, cultural, and generational backgrounds. All are encouraged to get involved in every aspect of what we do, from project planning to evaluation, from fundraising to campaigning, from administration to governance. The way we operate is unique, placing the focus on the experiences and voices of people living in poverty, and giving those voices their rightful credibility.

All ATD core workers receive the same Real Living Wage solidarity salary and reject 'poverty industry' professional salaries. This means that **no wage hierarchy exists at ATD**, regardless of our seniority or level of responsibility. It is an ethical choice which dates back to the founding of ATD, and it is an integral part of our financial ethos.



**Board of Directors:** Letitia Mason (Chair), Caroline Davies, Rev. Nicholas Edwards, Prof. Anna Gupta, Simon Haworth, Pierre Klein, Thomas Mayes, Ellie Suh, Ian Whitefoot, and Aye Aye Win

**Ambassador:** the Right Reverend Saju Muthalaly, Bishop of Loughborough

**Company Secretary:** Thomas Croft

**National Coordination Team (NCT):** Diana Skelton and Thomas Croft

**NCT Support Group:** Amanda Button, Murielle Double, Thomas Mayes, and Gertraud Trivedi

	2021	2022
	(£)	(£)
<b>Income</b>		
Grants	287,776	313,214
Donations and legacies	43,760	43,760
Charitable activities	53,135	44,555
Interest	448	768
Other income	1,439	2,970
	<b>386,558</b>	<b>390,807</b>

## Expenditure

Charitable activities (unrestricted)	301,874	299,360
<i>All Together in Dignity</i> (restricted)	19,026	24,272
Outreach, Respite and Peer Support Programme		
<i>Giving Poverty a Voice</i> (restricted)	10,889	30,064
Policy, Participation and Training Programme		
Other (restricted)	1,438	1,438
Support costs (administration and depreciation)	50,662	52,661
Fundraising	2,682	3,193
	<b>386,571</b>	<b>410,988</b>

With *thanks for their support* over the past year: Trust for London, Joseph Rowntree Foundation, Justice au Coeur du Lycée Français Charles de Gaulle, 4 in 10, RAPAR, The Peter and Teresa Harris Charitable Trust, and Fondation ATD Quart Monde.

We spend



of our income on advertising or external fundraisers,



of our income is spent on directly tackling poverty,



of all donations go towards actions that directly tackle poverty, and only



of our income is spent on administration costs and raising funds.

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