

JRF AND JRHT STRATEGIC PLAN 2015–2017

INSPIRING
SOCIAL
CHANGE



JRF JOSEPH
ROWNTREE
FOUNDATION

JRHT JOSEPH
ROWNTREE
HOUSING TRUST

Our **purpose** is to realise our vision of a prosperous, poverty-free UK

TO SEARCH

Investigating the root causes of poverty and disadvantage, understanding the experience of people and places in poverty, and identifying and developing solutions

TO DEMONSTRATE

Taking the evidence from research and experience, and using it to deliver high-quality services in mixed neighbourhoods, develop innovative models of service provision and pioneer new forms of developments

TO INFLUENCE

Using the evidence gained from research and the experience of developing and providing services to influence positive, lasting social change

And apply this to our **strategic aims**

INDIVIDUALS AND RELATIONSHIPS

- How individual and collective actions can prevent or reduce poverty
- The role of relationships in reducing poverty in communities
- Empower communities to be rich in positive relationships

WORK AND WORTH

- Employers recognising the business and social case for better pay and jobs
- Reduced debt and increased employment, education and training among JRHT residents
- Public policy based on our evidence about the future and nature of work, and the value of contributions beyond paid work

PLACES WHERE PEOPLE LIVE

- Vibrant, strong, healthy and poverty-free New Earswick
- More affordable, sustainable, high-quality housing
- Economic growth that benefits people and places in poverty

Themes that run through all our work

Digital

Diversity

Power

Partnerships

OUR PURPOSE AND VISION

The Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF) and Joseph Rowntree Housing Trust (JRHT) were established to search out the underlying causes of social 'evil' and influence social advancement. Our founder wanted funds to be used to "change the face of England", not to treat the symptoms of social problems.

We believe that poverty is still the most pressing social evil today, so JRF and JRHT are working together for a prosperous and poverty-free UK where everyone can thrive and contribute.

Introduction

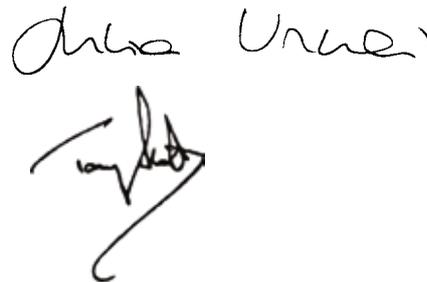
Today more than one in five people in the UK live in poverty. We want that to change. Our long-term prosperity and economic potential will be hampered if we fail to address the level of poverty and disadvantage in the UK. All of us are affected by poverty, but it is not inevitable, and it is in all our interests to tackle it.

JRF and JRHT, along with partners across the public, private and voluntary sectors, individuals and communities, see ourselves as part of the solution.

Our strategy for the next three years is to focus on the areas in which we can contribute most. Our approach brings together evidence and practical experience to help shape positive, lasting social change.

Over the next three years, our staff will work with our local, national and regional partners to support practical solutions, working across policy and practice. We will measure our success by the changes we achieve or contribute to.

If we do not tackle high levels of poverty, the human and economic cost will only increase. Our purpose remains as relevant as ever.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Julia Unwin', with a large, stylized flourish below it.

Julia Unwin, Chief Executive, and
Tony Stoller, Chair of Trustees

Our heritage

Joseph Rowntree, the successful Quaker businessman and social reformer, and his son, Seebohm, left us two enduring legacies:

- the legacy of a reforming businessman who created fair conditions at work and secure homes in a beautiful environment;
- the intellectual inheritance of enquiry and investigation leading to social reform.

We build on these two legacies by supporting local communities to thrive, and by investigating the root causes of social evil to inspire positive change.

Who we are

JRF and JRHT work together for social change in the UK by researching the root causes of social problems and developing solutions. We use our evidence and our practical experience of developing housing and care services to influence policy, practice and public debate.

The two organisations share the same trustees, staff and directors. We are politically independent, but we are not neutral about poverty. JRF and JRHT together contribute to positive, lasting social change through our unique approach:

Search – by investigating the root causes of poverty and disadvantage, understanding the experience of people and places in poverty, and identifying and developing solutions.

Demonstrate – by taking the evidence from research and from experience, we aim to deliver high-quality services in mixed neighbourhoods, develop innovative models of service provision, and pioneer new forms of developments. We will also support others to demonstrate solutions to poverty and disadvantage. We are exploring what it means to be an employer and a landlord with a commitment to ending poverty.

Influence – by using the evidence gained from research and the experience of developing and providing services, to influence positive, lasting social change.

THE WORLD WE WORK IN

This strategy is written at a time when the country is emerging from a prolonged recession into an economy where the underlying causes of persistent poverty and disadvantage have not been addressed.

Economic growth varies widely in different parts of the UK, the housing market is unstable, too many people rely on low-paid, insecure work, and costs are rising rapidly. There is deep inequality between places, generations, and individuals. As the economy returns to growth, there is a risk that the worst-off people and places will get left even further behind.

Longer-term environmental and demographic changes – including an ageing society, increased diversity and climate change – have significant economic, health and social consequences, particularly for people and places in poverty. Population shifts can be a source of great richness, both culturally and economically, but can also be challenging for communities and individuals.

Digital technology is fundamentally changing the way we communicate, connect and interact. Traditional hierarchies and existing lines of power are being challenged by the different kinds of digital networks that are emerging. Rapid technological change is making data and information more readily available and changing the relationship between the public and authorities.

The UK's constitution is under scrutiny in the four nations. It is possible that during the life of this strategy there will be a greater variation of powers, duties and responsibilities between and within each nation, including between cities and regions. The shape of – and expectations on – the modern state are changing. The general election of 2015 and subsequent Comprehensive Spending Review will shape politics during this strategy.

Poverty is not just material deprivation – it is when a person’s resources do not meet their minimum needs, which includes participating in society – but income and costs matter. The period of austerity that has followed the financial crisis is having a profound impact on people and places in poverty in the UK. Despite efforts, the opportunity to create a new settlement between the people and the state, fit for the twenty-first century, has not yet been achieved.

However there are opportunities for progress. National and local policy-makers and practitioners in the four nations of the UK are exploring localised solutions to problems Westminster has grappled with for decades. The rapid rise and widespread use of digital technology is enabling previously disconnected people to be heard. And as well as posing risks, uncertain times open up possibilities for positive social change and new ideas.

JRF and JRHT aim to stay ahead of the changes that occur around us and to work with people and places in poverty as we navigate those changes.

HOW WE WORK

We deliver our vision and strategic aims by working in the following ways:

- We believe that our ability to bring people together and initiate discussion, exploration and inquiry is a powerful force for change.
- We will work to ensure that public debate recognises that poverty affects us all, and that we all have an interest in ending it.
- We are a place to get the facts about poverty and take an evidence-based approach to policy and practice solutions.
- We work in the four nations of the UK, with a particular focus in the North of England, where we are based.
- We engage people and places in poverty and work together to influence change.
- We aim to make effective use of digital technologies to increase our influence and to connect and empower the communities we work with.
- We will take every opportunity to promote diversity with our partners, communities and our workforce.

- We will partner with people from all sectors, and work across the political spectrum.
- We aim to make the best use of the resources available to us and gain maximum impact from our combined role as community service provider, research funder and national influencer.

During 2015–17, four themes will run throughout our work:

- **Partnerships**, because good partnerships are essential to achieving our vision.
- **Diversity**, because continuously increasing the diversity of our networks and workforce makes us stronger and more effective.
- **Power**, because how we work should support people who have direct experience of poverty and disadvantage to achieve change.
- **Digital**, because digital technologies are powerful tools for building strong communities and relationships.

What we have achieved in the last three years

We are proud of our work in the last three years. Some of our achievements include:

- building award-winning homes during the first phase of Derwenthorpe, a new mixed-tenure community in York built to high standards of energy efficiency;
- becoming a Living Wage employer throughout JRF and JRHT and supporting other employers in York to do the same;
- contributing to the development of dementia-friendly communities and employers;
- informing the development of legislation on modern slavery in the UK;
- working with communities in the North of England to address loneliness;
- stimulating evidence-led debate on how to create a more stable, sustainable housing market through the work of the Housing Market Taskforce;
- providing accessible and useful data through our JRF Data website;
- identifying in-work poverty as an issue and starting public debate on the changing nature of poverty;
- commissioning a comprehensive evidence review of how to reduce poverty in the UK, to inform the development of anti-poverty strategies for the four nations;
- delivering high-quality housing and care in the North East of England;
- investigating the nature of care homes in the 21st century and completing an inquiry into risk and regulation;
- establishing strong partnerships with the three devolved administrations in the UK.

We are embedding the learning from all of our work over the last three years into this strategic plan.

STRATEGIC AIMS

Our strategy is to combine the work of JRF and JRHT so we can understand, demonstrate and influence the best ways of supporting a prosperous and poverty-free UK.

We aim to change policy, practice and public debate on poverty by developing anti-poverty strategies for the nations of the UK.

The strategic aims have been shaped by our historic legacy from the Rowntrees as reforming businessmen at work; social change in the places they were part of; and progress by the people whose prospects they helped to shape.

This strategic plan commits us to understanding more about the future and nature of work and worth, the places where people live, and individuals and relationships, and how these can all contribute to a prosperous and poverty-free UK.

Individuals and relationships

We will research, demonstrate and influence how individuals and the relationships they have can contribute to a prosperous and poverty-free UK.

We believe that policy and practice to reduce poverty needs to be much more focused on people's own capacity, ability and choice. We believe in the power of individuals, their social networks and organisations, to make positive changes for themselves, their families and others. Individuals and relationships are at the heart of our approach to housing and social care.

As the traditional role of the state changes, we will work to understand how individuals can maximise opportunities to make a positive difference to their lives and communities, both through the decisions they make and through social action and networks.

We will aim to:

- achieve a better understanding of how individual and collective actions prevent or reduce poverty;
- develop evidence about the role of relationships in reducing poverty in local communities;
- empower the places and communities we work with to be rich in positive relationships, building on our work on dementia and loneliness.

The places where people live

We will research, demonstrate and influence how the different places where people live can contribute to a prosperous and poverty-free UK.

There are many things that can be done locally and at community level to reduce poverty, and increasingly we are working with partners who want to make their local economies poverty-free. We know from our research and practice that housing and communities shape people's health, life chances and prosperity. We are connected to local communities in the North of England through our work as a housing and care provider and through our local partnerships. We bring our local experience together with our national policy development to improve our services and influence at local, regional, city and national level.

We will work with diverse neighbourhoods and communities to understand how local approaches can contribute to ending poverty and supporting relationships. We will work with people in the places

we are rooted in to help them become strong, self-reliant and positive places for people of all ages, with our care homes at the heart of their neighbourhoods. We will explore ways that communities can respond to the practical challenges of climate change.

We will aim to achieve:

- a vibrant, strong, healthy and poverty-free New Earswick for people of all ages and backgrounds;
- more affordable, sustainable, high-quality housing nationally, including for low-income groups of all ages, learning from the success of Derwenthorpe;
- evidence-based local, regional and national economic strategies that promote economic growth which benefits people and places in poverty.

Work and worth

We will research, demonstrate and influence the ways people can contribute to a prosperous and poverty-free UK through work, and how their worth can be valued beyond paid work.

The labour market needs to adapt to the challenges of changing populations, and play its part in reducing poverty for people of all ages and abilities. We know from our research that low-paid work, lacking progression and security, can trap people in poverty. We know that work is not the only way to contribute to society. We now want to understand more about

how to improve the future of work, including how to value people's contribution beyond paid work.

With partners, we will seek to understand how to tackle poverty in workforces and communities, and shape the future and nature of work in a changing society and economy.

We will work with our partners and residents in the North of England to explore ways to increase social mobility, digital skills and opportunities for enterprise and good-quality employment, including as an employer ourselves.

We will aim to achieve:

- recognition among businesses and employers that there is a strong business and social case for better pay and jobs;
- a measurable increase in the number of JRHT residents who are in employment, education or training or involved in enterprise, along with consistent reduction of debt and increase in savings for JRHT residents;
- changes in public policy that draw solutions from our evidence base on the future and nature of work, and the value of contributions beyond paid work.

How we plan to achieve our aims

Here are some of the changes we want to achieve, with examples of how we plan to accomplish them in 2015–2017.

JRF

Individuals and relationships

Outcome

Ensure people in poverty have a stronger voice in public and policy debate.

Activity

Support the development of local commissions that bring people in poverty together with people in power.

The places where people live

Outcome

Demonstrate how poverty can be reduced through economic growth strategies.

Activity

Develop practical approaches for linking economic growth and poverty reduction in UK cities.

Work and worth

Outcome

Increase the number of businesses and employers actively working to reduce poverty.

Activity

Work with business and employers to develop the case for reducing poverty through employment and business practice.

JRHT

Individuals and relationships

Outcome

Put relationship-centred approaches at the heart of care and housing services, and change the culture of JRHT by creating greater independence and self-reliance for residents and tenants, and a better balance of power between JRHT and its customers.

Activity

Develop and implement a strategy that defines a new relationship-centred approach to the services that we provide in housing and care.

The places where people live

Outcome

Create a model inclusive neighbourhood in New Earswick that addresses loneliness, dementia, poverty and digital exclusion involving people of all ages.

Activity

Develop an innovative new care and supported community at Red Lodge and in New Earswick; implementing the findings from our work on care risk and regulation, loneliness and dementia.

Work and worth

Outcome

Support JRHT residents to access the services and facilities they need to increase their employability or access to training.

Activity

Develop community champions as a route into employment. Work with local education providers to develop targeted learning opportunities for residents. In particular, we will ensure that employment opportunities in our own services are available to our residents.



www.jrf.org.uk



www.jrht.org.uk

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