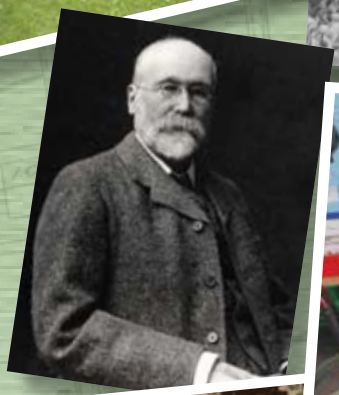
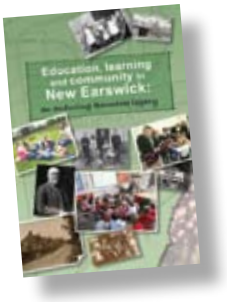
Education, learning and community in New Earswick:

an enduring Rowntree legacy





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JOSEPH ROWNTREE FOUNDATION

Education, learning and community in New Earswick:

an enduring Rowntree legacy

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It would be a huge task to give individual thanks to all the people who have contributed to the production of this book. Some of them are named in the body of the book, but there are many others who have helped us to gain an understanding of what life in New Earswick was, is now and could be in years to come. It is difficult to pick out individuals or groups for special mention but we would like to thank the staff of the Family Tree at New Earswick Children's Centre, New Earswick Primary School and The Joseph Rowntree School, whose dedication and hard work we have tried to do some justice to in what follows. We are also grateful for the support and welcome we received from many busy individuals at Carillion, the Joseph Rowntree Housing Trust and of course the Joseph Rowntree Foundation. The Foundation has offered constructive guidance, advice and feedback throughout, via the programme manager Philippa Hare, the project advisory group and the Homestead library. We would also like to thank Liz James who was instrumental in the early planning and research for the book and Pam Smith, a local resident who provided some images and an introduction to the village. Most of all however we would like to thank the parents, families and children of New Earswick for the welcome they gave us, the opinions expressed and the interest shown in our work.

One thing we have learned over the three years spent preparing this book is that New Earswick is a very special place – one that is understandably held in real affection by very many who live and work in it.

Christopher Noden
Barbara Spender
Alison Stott

Project advisory group members

Foreword

A story of education, dedication and innovation

It's nearly 100 years since Joseph Rowntree opened New Earswick School – even longer since education was first provided to local people – yet his aspirations for education and the community are at the heart of learning in the village to this day.

In 1912, the school's design and ethos were ahead of their time. It was spacious, ensured pupils had plenty of fresh air, and boys and girls were taught the same subjects. Since 1942, the village, on the edge of York, has also had its own secondary school, named after Joseph Rowntree.

This book was inspired by major changes at both schools, which are milestones in the history of learning in New Earswick – the creation of a new Joseph Rowntree School and the primary school's refurbishment and the development of a Children's Centre.

The book also looks back on Joseph Rowntree's vision for education in the community, and objectively records and assesses what has happened in New Earswick, setting local developments within the context of national policy. It highlights innovation and links between schools and community.

The Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF) and Joseph Rowntree Housing Trust (JRHT) have worked on – and learned from – a number of pioneering community and construction projects in New Earswick over the years and we are proud to have been part of the developments at both schools.

Joseph Rowntree's work and vision is a strong part of the new secondary school's value base and heritage. JRHT's work with the school has included:

- community consultation, so the school could hear local people's views before building even started;
- providing an architect who worked for the school;
- appointing fundraisers to attract additional funding;
- working directly with the project management board and helping to appoint the design team and the council's project manager;
- handling any complaints about construction traffic;
- commissioning New Earswick resident Pam Smith to take photos;
- ensuring JRF research was fed into the process.

Our role in the primary school is slightly different as we own the building and have a responsibility for capital improvements.

As well as part-funding the capital works, we provided advice and support for these works, along with support for engaging the wider community.

We deliver a direct service at the Children's Centre – our Little Rowans nursery, moved from the Folk Hall after 80 years and pulled in a wider range of services.

Between the writing of this book and its publication, the way Children's Centres are funded has changed significantly. Pressures on budgets and funding have resulted in cuts to the Children's Centre budget in York from April 2011. The service is being restructured to prioritise targeted activities for those families most in need while trying to maintain a broader service.

Although policies come and go JRHT and New Earswick's commitment to education and community continues with many people working hard to bring a high standard of education to past, present and future generations of children.

This book is their story. I hope you enjoy it.

Jacquie Dale
Director of Housing and Community Services
Joseph Rowntree Housing Trust

Introduction

This book, written over a period of three years between 2007 and 2010, is about the village established by the Rowntree family at New Earswick near York and, more specifically, about education, learning and the community there. Other writers and village residents have produced detailed and vivid accounts of its development and this book owes much to the dedication of enthusiasts like the late village postman Joe Murphy and director of the Joseph Rowntree Memorial Trust (later the Joseph Rowntree Foundation) Lewis Waddilove. Our task was twofold: firstly to build on this work – looking at how some of the ideas that underpinned the creation of the village have worked in practice, and at their ongoing relevance today; and secondly to celebrate and reflect upon the creation of two new projects in the village – the Family Tree at New Earswick Children's Centre within the renovated New Earswick Primary School and the brand new Joseph Rowntree (secondary) School.

The book has been written with a number of audiences in mind; it is hoped that it will be of interest to many, including local residents of New Earswick and the surrounding area and people with a more specialist interest in education, community development and social justice from either a historical or contemporary perspective.

The book has been written in two distinct parts. It begins with a reflection on the first 100 years of education and community in New Earswick. This is followed by an account of the planning, building and early operation of the new projects.

Part One – The first 100 years

The first half of this book focuses on the historical perspective – setting the scene and describing key developments over the past 100 years.

Chapter One explores the religious and social values held by the Rowntree family and their practical expression in business, philanthropy and education, with particular reference to how they influenced the foundation of New Earswick.

Chapter Two looks in more detail at the village itself – its planning and building, its residents and the changes and challenges these have faced over the last 100 years.

Chapter Three outlines the history of the two schools in New Earswick, against the backdrop of changing local and national education policy.

Chapter Four considers the history and importance of opportunities for wider community-based education and learning in New Earswick.

Part Two – A view to the future

The second half of the book brings the story of education, learning and community in New Earswick up to date exploring the specific development of the children's centre and rebuilding of the Joseph Rowntree secondary school.

Chapter Five traces the recent national events, policy initiatives and agendas which led to the introduction of children's centres and the rebuilding of some secondary schools across the country.

Chapter Six describes the planning, development, opening and first 18 months of operation of the children's centre and the renovation of New Earswick Primary School.

Chapter Seven describes the planning, design and rebuilding of the Joseph Rowntree secondary school and its first months after opening.

Chapter Eight picks out some of the lessons learned during these recent redevelopments, and reflects on the potential they have for the village and wider community.

In the early years of the twenty-first century, 100 years after its inception, New Earswick is once again at the forefront of educational development. The two new ventures at the heart of this book open up exciting possibilities for the whole of this small community – and may have much learning to offer the wider worlds of education, design and community development.

Part one

The first 100 years

"We shall never thrive upon ignorance"

Joseph John Gurney,
Religious Society of Friends 1831

CHAPTER 1

Quaker values in practice

The Rowntree legacy

Many books have been and could yet be written about the Rowntree family, such has been their influence on the lives of everyone in the city of York that became their home. Many more would be needed to describe the imprint of their thinking on successive British governments and wider society, through the direct impact of their personalities and beliefs and through the work of the trusts and foundations that are part of their legacy. Moreover, Rowntree is still a household name, seen on goods on supermarket shelves up and down the country. But who were they? Who are they? What prompted their interest in housing and education? How did they come to turn their principles and ideals into bricks and mortar? And how has a generation that grew up and prospered before the First World War extended a real influence into the twenty-first century?

This opening chapter traces what led a Yorkshire family to focus on the grave social problems of its day and then to turn thought into action in the community of New Earswick. The chapter offers a brief overview of the Rowntrees' Quaker background, the growth of their prosperity and how they came to understand the desperate conditions endured by so many impoverished families in the city that witnessed and supported their own rise to wealth and influence. The founding of New Earswick was a significant step on the road to a better society. The chapter ends with a look at how the family ensured that its aspirations would exercise a lasting influence on thinking about communities, about how families should live and about how, primarily through education, they can be helped to lead better, more productive lives.

Directors of the Rowntree Cocoa Works, 1923. L–R: Joseph Stephenson Rowntree, Benjamin Seebohm Rowntree, Joseph Rowntree, Arnold Stephenson Rowntree and Oscar Frederick Rowntree.

The Religious Society of Friends – Quaker values

The Religious Society of Friends, with members known as Quakers or simply 'Friends', is generally acknowledged to have been founded by George Fox in England in the late 1640s, as part of the increasing popularity of non-conformist Christian practices. Fox believed that individuals could directly experience Jesus Christ without the need for clergy and that all men (and indeed women) had access to God within them. It is something of a paradox to discover that the Rowntree family and their fellow Quaker industrialists, now regarded by many as major influences on social policy over the last 200 years, had their origins in this religious organisation which, from its earliest existence, was marginalised and excluded from mainstream society and education. Until the nineteenth century, their refusal to take oaths – because trust and integrity were not to be moderated according to forms of words – debarred Quakers from public office. Restrictions designed to limit their influence on the wider world meant that not until 1871 could Quaker students be admitted to Oxford or Cambridge. The result of these prohibitions was to focus their efforts on success in commerce and industry.

The same uncompromising approach to truth that prevented Quakers from entering public office gave their business enterprises a reputation for reliability and trustworthiness. Honesty, coupled with business acumen, set them at the forefront of the banking industry and by 1900 many had founded and grown businesses that remain household names today – Allen and Hanbury (pharmaceuticals), Huntley and Palmer and Fox's (biscuits), K shoes and Clarks (footwear).

In the industrial world the Quakers were renowned for iron and metalworking and in the design and manufacture of clocks and watches (increasingly necessary as the spread of the railways rendered time-keeping based on sunrise and sunset unsuitable for the industrial age). Nowhere was this pre-eminence more apparent than in the supply of chocolate. In name, if not necessarily in family ownership, Messrs. Cadbury, Fry, Terry and Rowntree maintain their hold on the British palate to this day.

As a proportion of the population Quakers were never numerous. By 1800, numbers in England and Wales had declined to fewer than 20,000 (compared to 40–60,000 in 1680). The scale of their commercial success was therefore remarkable. In a talk given in May 2003 Sir Adrian Cadbury attributed many of these economic achievements to the practical application of Quaker values in business life – respect for individual worth, absolute integrity and reliability in financial matters, openness and honesty. In an earlier study of Quaker industrialists James Walvin suggests that these obvious and acknowledged strengths were underpinned by the existence of a close-knit network, formed through family connections and, most critically, through shared experiences of education.

A selection of Rowntree chocolates from 1913.

Quakers and education

From its earliest beginnings the Society of Friends recognised the importance of education. In 1695 the Society's London yearly meeting recommended that:

'...schools and schoolmasters who are faithful Friends, and well qualified, be placed and encouraged in all counties, cities, great towns, or places where there may be need. And that such schoolmasters... sometimes correspond with one another, for their help and improvement in such good and easy methods as are most agreeable to the Truth, and the children's advantage and benefit.'

Quaker children studied with private tutors, in small private schools or through apprenticeships. Adult study was continued in the practical arena of business and through adult schools. The entitlement of both sexes to a good education was a notably forward-looking feature of Quaker belief and practice. Commitment to equality of opportunity and lifelong learning are fundamental to the history of Friends' educational practice.

In 1779, a school for Quaker children aged between 7 and 13 years opened at Ackworth, near Pontefract. The school taught the basics that would be of practical use to children in adult life – English language, writing and arithmetic. Girls learned housewifery, spinning and needlework while boys were taught accounts. Later, geography, history, science, Latin and French were added to the curriculum. The school placed a strong emphasis on a stable family life, although many of its pupils came from distant parts and were more or less permanent boarders. An environment of quiet industry produced successful and prosperous adults. Sustained proximity fostered lifelong friendships and a lasting network of contacts with fellow believers working in a multitude of commercial environments. The school was a model for similar foundations elsewhere in Britain, Ireland and America.

Quaker women were particularly influential and education was often the focus of their activity. Encouraged by the success of Ackworth and wanting to improve schooling in York, Esther Tuke (second wife of William Tuke – founder of The Retreat Quaker hospital for the treatment of mental health issues in York) opened a girls' school in Trinity Street in 1785. Equivalent establishments for both girls and boys followed in succeeding decades, including Bootham School where several of the Rowntree men studied and taught.

Quakers organised their business lives using the contacts they acquired to make the most of the opportunities they were given. This combination of hard work and networking underpinned the thinking behind later experiments in social welfare which were, and still are, very much based on the idea of helping people to help themselves. No matter what problem a Quaker industrialist faced, the chances were that it could be resolved through correspondence with former schoolmates scattered across the geographical and commercial landscape of Britain.

While many former pupils of York's Quaker schools dispersed to other parts of Britain and overseas, the concentration of Quaker commerce and education in the city and its surrounding area attracted entrepreneurial young spirits. It is no great surprise that Joseph Rowntree senior, father of New Earswick's founder, should have combined his practical experience of the grocery trade with a spirit of adventure that was perhaps inherited from his seafaring uncles, choosing York as the location for his own new grocery business.

The Rowntree family – from Pavement to the Cocoa Works

Joseph Rowntree senior opened his first grocery store in Pavement – one of York's medieval streets – in 1822 at the age of 21. He quickly formed a friendship with Samuel Tuke, step-grandson of the founder of the Trinity Street School. Joseph shared the Tukes' commitment to education and welfare. He became honorary secretary of the York Quakers' boys' and girls' schools and, with Samuel, established the Friends' Educational Society to promote education among the city's poor. In July 1862, following the death of Samuel Tuke – neither

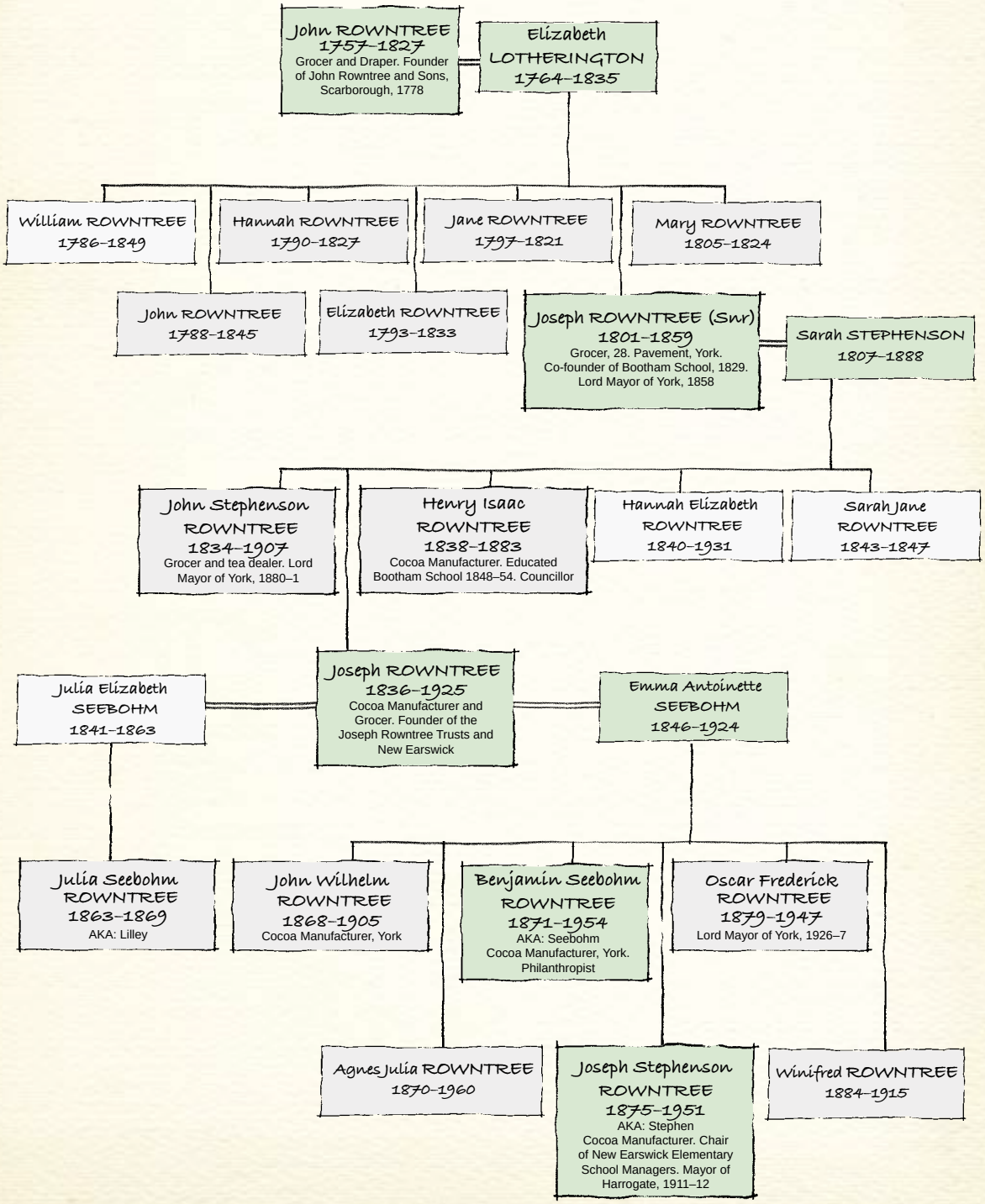
The bow-fronted windows of No. 28, Pavement, York – the first shop owned by Joseph Rowntree (Sr).

of whose sons wanted to run the family business in York – the Tuke family sold its chocolate manufacture business to employee and friend, Joseph's son, Henry Isaac Rowntree. At that time annual sales were estimated at less than £3,000 and the early years of Rowntree ownership saw the business descend into financial difficulties. The Quaker reputation for integrity and reliability meant that business failure carried a real stigma within the Society of Friends and in 1869, to stave off financial and personal disaster, Henry brought new blood into the family firm in the form of partnership with his brother Joseph (the founder of New Earswick and of the Rowntree trusts).

The Rowntrees' subsequent wealth was founded on Joseph's business acumen and on a huge expansion in demand for chocolate in the last decades of the nineteenth century. Joseph was also quick to pick up on the commercial potential of new developments, such as the manufacture of fruit pastilles in the 1880s. By 1914 the annual chocolate sales of Rowntree exceeded £1.2 million. Growth in the market and therefore in production led to a move to a new site – the Cocoa Works – and an expanding workforce. It also meant changes in management style and methods and in ways of engaging with the local community. Expansion may have loosened individual relationships between the Rowntrees and members of their workforce, but it encouraged more systematic approaches to welfare.

Alongside their commercial success many Quakers were noted campaigners on major social issues, notably in the anti-slavery debate and on prison reform. By the time of Joseph's prosperity this interest was increasingly focused on the problem of poverty. In England the nineteenth century witnessed a massive population growth, well in excess of the growth experienced by other major European powers. By about 1850 most of this

Key members of the Rowntree family.



expanding population dwelt in urban areas, many of them in abject poverty. The work of social researchers like Henry Mayhew and Charles Booth highlighted the dreadful living conditions endured by many in London and their readers began to wonder how far these conditions were replicated in their own towns and cities.

The founder Joseph's son Benjamin Seebohm (known as Seebohm) was a pupil at Bootham School and then studied chemistry at Manchester University, leaving before he completed his degree. Although he was employed at the Cocoa Works, much of his adult life was dedicated to social reform. In the last years of Victoria's reign he co-ordinated a team of researchers who carried out a house-to-house survey in some of the poorest parts of York. These researchers recorded basic information gleaned from the residents they surveyed and to this they added their own observations, occasionally supplemented by inferences and reflections on the families they saw. Their findings, published in 1901, were the basis of Seebohm's highly influential book *Poverty, a Study of Town Life*. What they found was a shocking and depressing accumulation of atrocious housing, hopelessness and malnutrition.

Home No. 4. Two rooms. Seven inmates. Walls, ceilings and furniture filthy. Dirty flock bedding in living-room placed on a box and two chairs. Smell of room from dirt and bad air unbearable, and windows and door closed. There is no through ventilation in this house. Children pale, starved looking and only half clothed. One boy with hip disease, another with sores over face…

Home No. 5. Two rooms. Six inmates. Brick floor in holes. Cupboard door broken off. Wall-paper falling off. Walls in holes in many places, plaster having fallen away and bricks much broken. Staircase very rickety, containing only one sound step. Children very dirty and ragged…

Husband in asylum. Four rooms. Five children. Parish relief. Very sad case. Five children under thirteen. Clean and respectable, but much poverty. Woman would like work. This house shares one closet with another house and one water-tap with three other houses. Rent 3s 9d…

Polisher. Married. Four rooms. Two children. Parish relief. Wife washes. Husband is an invalid and capable of little work. One child, cripple. Man not deserving; has spent all large earnings on drink. Fellow-workmen have made several collections for him. All speak badly of him. Has written begging letters. House very dirty. Rent 3s. 10d.

Poverty, a Study of Town Life,
Benjamin Seebohm Rowntree, 1901

Families living in York's slums, c1900.

In addition to these shocking descriptions of squalid and insanitary housing, Seebohm revealed that many families had little choice but to live in direst poverty. In several accounts their condition was said to have been made worse by some form of incompetence, for example where one or more parent drank or gambled, a man was lazy or his wife a poor manager, which Seebohm attributed in large measure to the lack of a good education. However, more than half of the poor in the survey's sample endured what he described as 'primary poverty', the hardship that resulted from wages set too low to enable sober and hard-working families to live decently and certainly too low to enable them to support children beyond the most basic compulsory education.

'The importance attaching to the earnings of the children in the families of the poor reminds us how great must be the temptation to take children away from school at the earliest possible moment, in order that they may begin to earn. The temptation is also to put them to some labouring work where they can soon earn from five to eight shillings weekly rather than to apprentice them to a trade in which they will receive but low wages until they have served their time.

There are many persons... whose natural ability and moral qualities would fit them to occupy higher positions in the industrial world were they not prevented by lack of education.'

For typical accommodation – a single living room entered directly from the street, a scullery, a backyard and two bedrooms upstairs – York's poor paid an average rent of five shillings a week, nearly a third of their income. Seebohm notes that the city's more affluent residents lived in far superior conditions at an average cost of less than one tenth of their income.

Poverty, a Study of Town Life influenced leading national figures such as Winston Churchill and Lloyd George in their developing ideas of social reform. It marked the beginning of the Rowntrees' influence on national policy and a tradition in which Rowntree research both informed and learned from practice, which became important in the development of national approaches to social agendas. The research on which the book was based also inspired Seebohm's father to follow the example of other leading Quaker industrialists by designing and building homes fit for workers and their families to live in on the 123-acre site he had bought next to the Cocoa Works to the north of the city.

A scenic view on the way into New Earswick c1988.

New Earswick – the Garden Village

Others had already attempted to realise Utopian concepts of housing for the working classes. The Rowntrees had the advantage of being able to learn from these earlier experiences, for example through correspondence with the Cadburys at Bournville, and of being able to use developing understanding of what makes for good town planning. Seebohm certainly applied contemporary concepts of good quality housing in comparing the old and dilapidated dwellings of the poor to lighter, better ventilated, new dwellings set in new streets whose construction, spacing and sanitary arrangements were determined according to standards set by the Public Health Act of 1848. He was also attracted by the newly articulated concept of the garden city. Ebenezer Howard's 1898 publication *The Garden Cities of Tomorrow* was known to be a major source of inspiration for Rowntree's vision of New Earswick and for its design by Raymond Unwin and later his brother-in-law Barry Parker. Parker and Unwin developed their craft in New Earswick before going on to plan both the first garden city at Letchworth and Hampstead Garden Suburb.

While the building at New Earswick was a new venture, in many ways it also embodied a continuation of the welfare systems that were well established at the Cocoa Works. The employees had access to many social and leisure facilities, replicated at New Earswick through the early construction of the social centre the Folk Hall. The factory's outdoor and sporting activities were the forerunners of the sports fields, football and cricket clubs that were a prominent feature of social life in the new village. Outdoor recreation and

Raymond Unwin's preliminary plan for New Earswick, 1903.

Leisure and education activities provided by the Rowntree Cocoa Works.

healthy living were brought to the doorstep in the gardens that came with the new homes. The factory library, domestic school and practical classes in dress-making (for the largely female workforce) developed into the establishment of formal and informal education in New Earswick elementary and Sunday schools and, later, in the nursery. Entitlement to education and opportunities for betterment were key elements of the Rowntrees' Quaker philosophy as were the cleanliness and order that Seebohm observed were absent from the lives of so many children. 'Too often the home life of a child is spent amidst dirt and slovenliness, and its only chance of seeing and learning to appreciate clean, airy, orderly rooms is at school.' (Seebohm Rowntree, 1901)

Attention to the whole person is captured in this memory of one of the earliest young residents of New Earswick, recorded by village historian Joe Murphy in 1987:

'The Folk Hall was our first school... I remember we had to go without shoes or stockings sometimes to strengthen our feet and our mothers were not too pleased, especially when it was cold weather, but we had a lovely fire in the ingle-nook in the small hall... and our own grey blankets to rest on in the afternoon.'

Working for tomorrow – the Rowntree Trusts

Joseph Rowntree undoubtedly saw the foundation of New Earswick as a long-term project. Of the three trusts he established as part of his philanthropic legacy in 1904 only the Joseph Rowntree Village Trust was intended to be permanent. The Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust and the Joseph Rowntree Social Service Trust were expected by their founder to have a life of around 35 years, by which time they would come to a natural end as the problems they were meant to tackle ceased to be relevant or, more prosaically, as the money ran out. The trusts were the practical expression of the Quaker expectation that Friends should, in making their wills:

'...have a strict regard to justice and equity... Friends are advised not to make large bequests to relatives or others who do not need them; and to remember the pressing claims of religious and social concerns.'

The Society of Friends, 1782

Over the years since their foundation and through diverse changes of name and focus, these trusts became highly influential, covering the key issues of their day and projecting possible solutions to future problems. In the early years they focused on the need to ensure diversity of press ownership and tackle the problems created by alcohol – Seebohm had noted that a high percentage of York's licensed premises were located in the poorest areas of the city; none were included in the design for New Earswick and, to this day, the village continues to be famous locally for having no pub. By the 1950s and 60s continuing interest in education was channelled into the expansion of higher education with land and funding given to the newly founded University of York. The trusts provided additional financial support for research into the continuing and evolving problems of housing and poverty. More recently social housing, housing for older people, community care, special needs and asylum-seekers have all been the subject of Rowntree-commissioned research. In 2003 *Tackling UK Poverty and Disadvantage in the 21st Century* (Darton and Strelitz, 2003) identified six key components of social inequality – family poverty, geographic disadvantage, income for vulnerable groups, affordable housing, long-term care and education.

More than a century ago Seebohm Rowntree made explicit connections between poor quality education, poverty, bad health and 'stunted lives'. He wrote that:

> '…no view of the ultimate scheme of things would now be accepted under which multitudes of men and women are doomed by inevitable law to a struggle for existence so severe as necessarily to cripple or destroy the higher parts of their nature.'
>
> **Seebohm Rowntree, 1901**

His successors continue to remind government and its advisers of the urgency of this problem through the Joseph Rowntree Foundation's extensive research programme and publications, some of which are included in the timeline on page 28.

Joseph and his contemporaries would no doubt have been dismayed, but perhaps not surprised, by the persistence of so many social evils. They might, however, have been heartened to see how the work they initiated and inspired continues to stimulate and inform the search for workable solutions. In a survey in 2003 (Crawford et al, 2003) two-thirds of New Earswick respondents said the village was still a good or very good place to live, and the researchers commented on high levels of trust and a sense of community in the village. Growing emphasis nationally on the importance of community and of equal access to high quality education shows how far government thinking has become aligned with the beliefs of the guardians of Ackworth, Bootham and Trinity Street Quaker schools.

In this latest phase of its development, with the opening of major new facilities, New Earswick continues to support access to the best education. The secondary school and children's centre promise new opportunities for the practical application of traditional Quaker values. These values have been embedded in planning for new developments and are evident in

extensive consultations, commitment to inclusion and emphasis on the need to provide for more stable families and democratic partnerships in the education process. But these developments are not in themselves easy solutions. In 1937 the Society of Friends' World Conference declared:

'... we believe the world is in the process of making. Creation... is a continuous process. [This] teaches us humility and the understanding that whatever we may do, we are not going to establish a perfect, final, ideal order in a finite world...Thus we find the strength to keep on struggling for better economic conditions, for the rule of justice...'

In the founding memorandum for the three Rowntree trusts Joseph had emphasised the need for action rather than building. He knew that money would always be found for bricks and mortar but he also knew that buildings alone cannot remedy social evils. Underpinning Quaker liberalism is a hard-headed understanding of the importance of providing opportunities, coupled with an acknowledgement that there will always be those who choose not to take them. The work of the Rowntree trusts continues to look for ways of giving people access and opportunities. Real change comes from what people do with what they are given.

'I do not want to establish communities bearing the stamp of charity but rather of rightly ordered and self-governing communities... I hope that the Institutions to which contributions are made from these Trusts may be living bodies, free to adapt themselves to the ever changing necessities of the nation and of the religious Society of which I am a member... seeking to search out the under-lying causes of weakness or evil in the community, rather than... remedying their more superficial manifestations...'

Joseph Rowntree, 1904 (Joseph Rowntree Foundation, Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust and Joseph Rowntree Reform Trust, 2004)

The trusts

Snapshot history 1904–2001

2009
New post of executive director of JRHT established.
2007 Establishment of JRHT board.
2001 Housing staff move to converted offices at The Garth, New Earswick.

1990
The Joseph Rowntree Social Service Trust is re-named the Joseph Rowntree Reform Trust.
1990 Tenant participation is strengthened by increasing residents' representation on JRHT committees. The newly named Joseph Rowntree Foundation moves to The Homestead.

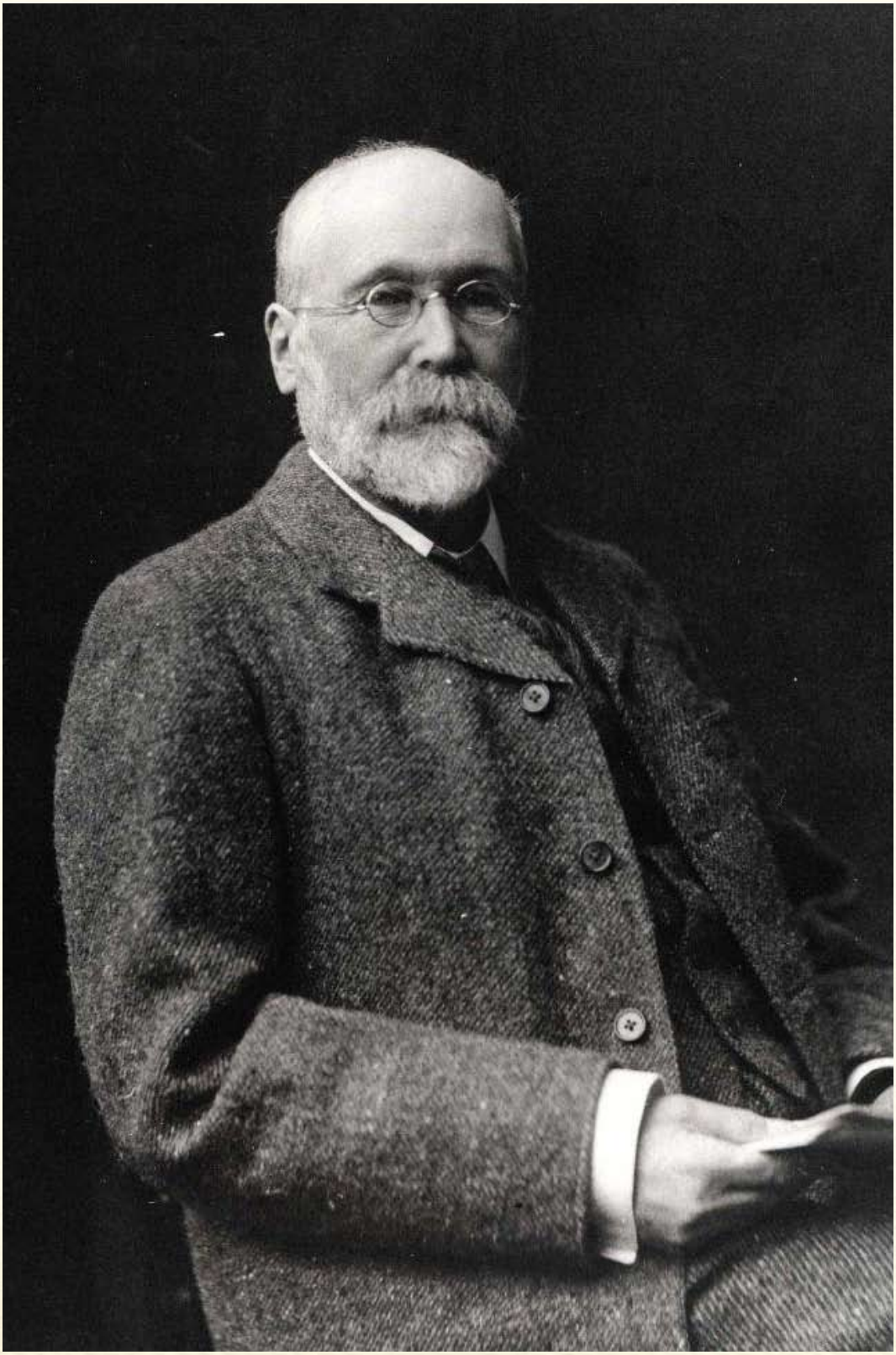
1988
The Joseph Rowntree Memorial Trust is re-named the Joseph Rowntree Foundation.
1982 The JRHT wins a high court case determining that leasehold schemes for the elderly qualify as charitable housing.

1968
The Joseph Rowntree Housing Trust is established to take over responsibility for housing operations. The special link between the trusts means that research and practice complement each other.

1959
The Joseph Rowntree Village Trust is re-named the Joseph Rowntree Memorial Trust.
1959 The objectives of the original Rowntree trusts are widened to include research and development – this continues to be the Joseph Rowntree Foundation's purpose today.

1939
The initial lifespan of the three Rowntree trusts – envisaged by the Founder as 35 years – comes to an end but the trusts continue, taking on new projects and developing their output to address new and continuing social issues.

1904
Joseph Rowntree sets up three trusts; the Joseph Rowntree Village Trust to manage housing in New Earswick, the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust and the Joseph Rowntree Social Service Trust.



Joseph Rowntree, 1910.

'I have lived in New Earswick for 71 years and I have had a very happy life here. I live alone as my family have passed on. I have many friends here and have seen many changes. It's a lovely village to live in.'

New Earswick resident, 1986

CHAPTER 2

New Earswick

The Rowntree Utopia

'...the old, crowded, chaotic slums of the past – will be effectually checked, and the current of population set in precisely the opposite direction – to the new towns, bright and fair, wholesome and beautiful.'

Ebenezer Howard, 1898

Every generation has its own, imagined Utopia. Most are visions of idealised approaches to democratic government, education and ethics; few reach anything approaching reality. In Chapter 1 we saw how Joseph Rowntree's vision of the ideal community grew from his Quaker roots and was informed by the newly acquired scientific knowledge of the nineteenth century and the benefits of an enlightened and increasingly well-informed consideration of practical living conditions. At the same time, a growing interest in social sciences, the bedrock of Seebohm Rowntree's work on poverty in York, cast the lives of the poorest in society in a new light, showing that their income was likely to be at its lowest in times of greatest need – when there were young children to be fed or when ability to work was past – and that many industrious men and women were denied even the possibility of earning sufficient to escape poverty. This new understanding drove the argument for new communities and high quality, affordable housing of a type and at a price that was accessible to all.

Opportunities and limitations

Barry Parker wrote 'When [New Earswick] was established housing was almost the undisputed realm of the speculative builder'.

In 1904 building by-laws and public health legislation, like the Public Health Act of 1848, offered the only major limitations on planning. The first planning legislation was passed in 1909 and a comprehensive system of planning control did not emerge until 1947.

A New Earswick conference on 16 March 1906 determined that five types of housing should be built, ranging from small dwellings with no bath or hot water supply, to be let at 4 shillings a week, to larger models with separate parlours and bathrooms to be let at 7 shillings. In practice it was never possible to let New Earswick housing for as little as 4 shillings and it was accepted from as early as 1908 that the very poorest would not be able to afford to live in the village.

The Rowntrees were not the first to attempt the realisation of a new Utopia. Their work was preceded by, among others, that of Robert Owen at New Lanark, Titus Salt at Saltaire and fellow Quakers and chocolate manufacturers the Cadburys at Bournville. These new settlements were reflections of their makers' beliefs that it was possible to succeed in business while providing the workforce with a decent standard of living. They also exemplified a particular view of how workers should be managed and encouraged to be productive. Their originators saw them as models or templates for what could be achieved through thorough planning and attention to detail.

New Earswick was inspired by the ideals of Quakerism and by the vision of Ebenezer Howard, set out in his highly influential 1898 book *Garden Cities of Tomorrow*. In this work Howard deplored both the evils of city life, such as over-crowding and poor sanitation, and the complementary ills of rural dwelling – lack of employment and opportunity, boredom and isolation. His garden city would banish such evils in a fusion of the best that science and nature, assisted by 'various charitable and philanthropic institutions', could offer. The book offered a Utopian future to set against the savage realities of life in York's slums described by Seebohm Rowntree.

Howard's planned Utopia was about much more than mere design. The garden city was a holistic and self-sustaining community which, he proposed, could be created and maintained at relatively low cost. It was the blueprint for an advanced economic and social system in which a properly nurtured humanity could achieve its full potential.

Of the many influential authorities on design and planning who followed Howard, Raymond Unwin has been called unique in truly understanding what the visionary creator of the garden city intended. He was an obvious first choice of architect for New Earswick, being heavily influenced by the socialist arts and crafts movement ideals of John Ruskin and William Morris. He was also a close friend of socialist philosopher Edward Carpenter who had established a small commune at Millthorpe in Sheffield, based on his Utopian community ideas.

The first village

By 1939 the village had 518 houses and its own shops. Services and amenities such as sewerage and lighting were paid for by the Joseph Rowntree Village Trust and funded by a proportion of the rents received. Approximately half the housing stock had been built before or during the First World War, according to the designs of Unwin. These are the houses that feature in the earliest photographs of the village, that housed the first children to be educated in the village school and that were viewed with such wonderment by their first inhabitants. Stan Rodder, one early resident of the village, recalled how '…my parents… came to New Earswick in 1906, and of course when my father saw these gardens it was just what he wanted; he had a long garden which went down to the river to grow his sweet peas and roses, so he was made up from then on.'

The elusive goal of creating high quality housing for York's poorest, without the need for subsidy, was never achieved at New Earswick. In the very early stages of building and at every stage thereafter, the Village Trust had to face the dilemma of cost versus quality. The original intention that every dwelling should have its own bathroom and hot water supply was an early casualty. Nevertheless the earliest houses, set in their tree-lined streets, remain the most attractive in the village.

Early housing development c1913, including gardens and innovative designs like providing a bath under the kitchen work surface.

Maintaining quality – cutting costs

The second major phase of building from 1919–1936 saw plans being simplified and standardised to cater for higher paid artisans. By this time there was an acknowledged shortage of affordable housing nationally and government became more closely involved in house building through the provision of subsidies and new building legislation. Shortage of materials and rising costs meant that Unwin's successor, his partner and brother-in-law Barry Parker, had to use ingenious devices to retain the aesthetic appeal of the village without exceeding budget. His solution – to cut the costs of road-building and the installation of below-ground amenities by building a series of closes – won widespread acclaim but was never popular with the founder.

Making better communities – social mixing for a brighter future

'...identifiably different municipal housing – particularly the deeply unpopular tower blocks, peripheral estates on the edge of big cities and impersonal concrete environments – have undermined any sense of community. And in the private sector there has been an equal disregard for the integration of amenities, for a mix of incomes, and for the opportunities for neighbours to meet and share responsibilities and facilities.'

Joseph Rowntree Foundation et al, 2004

In the nineteenth century the late Victorian preoccupation with the problem of Britain's 'two nations' – the rich and the poor – generated new thinking about the nature of communities, which began to be seen as opportunities for more than just an upgrading of living standards. In the first quarter of the twentieth century the horrors of the First World War helped to feed the demand for 'houses fit for heroes to live in' and, as the century progressed, the design of social housing and communities assumed ever greater importance as family sizes and structures changed, generating growing demand for different types of housing.

In the face of rapid change there was continuing interest in the impact of earlier experiments with planned communities. In 1978 a joint English and Australian study (by researchers Sarkissian and Heine) reviewed the effectiveness of the Utopian experiment at Bournville, the settlement from which the founder drew so much of his inspiration. They summarised the broad range of hopes and expectations that had attached themselves to the Cadbury village and others like it. In addition to high quality housing, a key factor in the design of such communities was the commitment to a social mix. While some housing was to be available to those on the lowest wage, it was always intended that it should stand alongside the homes of more affluent residents – an idea that lives on today in developments at post-Second World War Andover in Hampshire, in the Prince of Wales' model village at Poundbury in Dorset and in mainstream planning guidance.

The supposed benefits of social mixing were certain to hold an attraction for the Rowntrees as they appealed to an egalitarianism that was fundamental to Quaker philosophy.

Raising standards and expectations – community leadership

'As citizens you should study and discuss plans. The city plan should express the ideals and provide for the needs of the citizens'

Raymond Unwin (quoted in Sparks et al, 2001)

The formation of a democratically elected village council in 1907, at a very early stage in the New Earswick building programme, is a clear indication of the Rowntrees' commitment to local democracy and to residents' control of their environment (see Chapter 4). The relative remoteness and lack of amenities in the early days of the village also increased the likelihood that those who chose to live there did so because they were in sympathy with the ideals of the community. The early settlers were people who wanted to improve their own lives and the prospects of their children. We may imagine them as what used to be termed 'the deserving poor', those described by Seebohm Rowntree's investigators as 'steady… respectable… sober and industrious' – men and women who worked hard and lived frugally but who were prevented by external circumstances from lifting themselves out of poverty. Such individuals wanted a chance; having got it they were full of ideas and suggestions for what would improve their lives further. The speed with which demands for space for worship and social activities led to the provision of a club house and to the building of the Folk Hall is a testament to their drive for improvement and to the trust's willingness to listen to and support any reasonable proposal.

However, satisfaction with the efforts of the village council was not universal, perhaps because of the limitations implicit in the supposed virtues of social mixing. And, while a high percentage of village families continued to be active in local events, only a handful, said by some to be always from the same few households, were actually on the village council.

New Earswick carnival, 1920s.

The carnival

Many residents were willing to give their time and ingenuity to local events such as the annual carnival, which was managed through the elementary school.

'My father was a local coal merchant and once a year his cart was scrubbed clean and decorated with flowers and bunting... by the ladies of the carnival committee... they were used to take the carnival Queen in parade around the village... [there were] children and adults in fancy dress, races followed on the rec... followed by tea in a marquee. Everyone looked forward to the carnival and nearly everyone took part.'

Win Odley, nee Griffiths

'...many of the older people will remember my father, Alf Glover, and Jack Ray being the leading lights of the carnival over many, many years. They used to put up marquees on the night before and take them down the day after...'

Betty Woodcock, nee Glover

The carnival ran every year from 1912 to 1952 when it was taken over by the village council for the coronation year. Support has dwindled since and the carnival no longer takes place.

New Earswick Carnival, 1920s.

Neither could New Earswick be regarded entirely as a normal village community. In the early years, residents' accounts of the pride Joseph Rowntree took in his creation carry unmistakeable overtones of an established, if benevolent, social order: 'I always remember Christmas, because Mr. Joseph Rowntree used to come in his motor car which was one of the first cars, to give us chocolates at Christmas, and he dressed as Father Christmas,' (village resident, 1987). Nevertheless the development

of strong community leadership remains a significant factor in the village's development and the village council frequently entered into lively debate with Rowntree family members and their representatives. Recent research from the Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF) concludes that such leadership has a vital role to play in securing the stable and prosperous communities needed to address today's priorities and also in dialogue between schools and communities about the delivery of key local services.

Promoting equality of opportunity and freedom of choice

'Both in town and site planning it is important to prevent the complete separation of different classes of people which is such a feature of the modern English town.'

Raymond Unwin (quoted in Sparks, et al, 2001)

The earliest practical exponents of model communities tended to view them as extensions of their commercial activities. The villages created by Robert Owen and Titus Salt were closely associated with their factories and largely inhabited by their own workers. Towards the close of the nineteenth century the new philanthropists recognised the limitations this placed on workers' aspirations and were more likely to advocate letting property to a broad range of occupations or to put a ceiling on the proportion of properties inhabited by their own employees. At Bournville the proportion of houses occupied by Cadbury employees remained static, at about 40 per cent, up to the late twentieth century. At New Earswick the comparable figure would have been closer to 30 per cent.

However, Edwardian York offered a very different economic environment to that of today. A large part of the working population was employed in a handful of industries. Chief among these were chocolate manufacture (Terry's was also a York-based, Quaker-run concern) and the railways, with the printing trade and sugar manufacture (from 1927) also acquiring some prominence. Outside the city a large number of working people continued to be employed on the land with York remaining a major centre for the trade in livestock up until the Second World War. By 1939, the chocolate industry accounted for 29.4 per cent of York's mainstream employment and this situation continued until the last quarter of the twentieth century. As recently as 1982 a Joseph Rowntree school leaver commented: 'When I was 16 there was only three Rs we used to say – you went to Rowntree Mackintosh, you worked for the railway or you threw yourself in the river'. For much of New Earswick's history employment prospects for village youth have been far from diverse and the emphasis on practical skills – gardening, cooking and household management – in the early curricula of both the village's schools reflects what were actually expected to be the long-term destinations of village boys and girls.

Jobs for villagers – employment in New Earswick

The early village was provided with dairy produce from its own farm, perhaps reflecting concerns over the quality of nutrition in poor families. In addition, the Rowntrees were anxious to encourage residents to grow their own food and provided gardens with fruit trees and allotments.

Other goods and services came from a range of local shops…

'I started working for Miss Fairweather at the Post Office which was where the fish shop is now... And then at the outbreak of war, my husband was on contract work for Rowntrees and I looked after the cycle shop and post office, and they had three postmen coming in to sort and deliver letters in the village and we used to keep open from five in the morning until half past seven in the evening and men used to come from work and do the pools in the shop, before they went home...Howard's Haberdashery was at the corner of Chestnut Grove... [it] is now the pet shop. Mrs Farrell whose shop is opposite and is now the baker's shop had a little sweet shop... Ernie Wood used to keep the chemist... his father... was also a chemist... Fred Wiley had the cobbler's shop where the estate office is now...'

Reminiscences of a resident of New Earswick, 1987

The economic situation in York today is very different. City of York Council's economic intelligence in January 2008 listed four employers which each had more than 3,000 employees, of whom the largest was the city council itself with more than 7,500, followed by a major insurance company, the primary health care trust and a building group. Former giants Rowntree (now Nestlé Rowntree) and the railways were in the second rank with between 1,000 and 3,000 staff each, alongside British Telecom and the University of York. By the 1990s, less than 1 per cent of the population of Yorkshire was employed on the land. The past predominance of agriculture and large industrial employers has been substantially replaced by public sector and commercial organisations employing high numbers of professional staff. Alongside these institutions there are myriad medium and small enterprises, many of them attached to the tourist trade. Today's teenager is less likely to contemplate a lifetime's career in a single occupation – hence the growth in school curricula and qualifications based on generic skills such as communication and team-working.

The relative decrease in the significance of the large employer has ended one of the major ties that bound past communities together. It is likely that today's New Earswick residents actually do have greater equality of opportunity and more choice of occupation but they are also less likely to have working and social opportunities to meet their neighbours. The cohesion of community life has been weakened, and has to rely more on geographical proximity and schooling than shared employment and social interaction.

Creating stable and self-supporting communities

'The link between the lack of social stability in an area and its physical decline and degeneration has been well documented… Whilst landlords cannot control behaviour or social values they can create the conditions which are conducive to the development of supportive communities.'

Martin and Watkinson, 2003

From the start, New Earswick was intended to be more than just a solution to housing needs. It was to be a flourishing, viable and self-regulating community. In reality New Earswick has never operated in the same way as other villages that lack the advantage of links with a major social research organisation. Just as the original model elementary school could never truly be a model for schools everywhere, owing to the readiness with which the Rowntree trusts subsidised worthwhile activities, so the community at large has continued to benefit from the broad-ranging resource at the disposal of JRHT and JRF in terms of both money and access to the latest ideas and research on community life.

Nowhere has the direct intervention of the Village Trust and its successors been more overtly apparent than in the management of New Earswick's population. Almost since the beginning there was disagreement over who should be admitted and on what terms. Early struggles to provide quality and affordability were replaced by complaints from tenants that rents were too high and their belief that the trust gave preference to Rowntree employees – particularly as the company funded additional building to house key workers during the housing shortage between the wars. At the same time, housing shortages and the lack of new building in the village led to stagnation in terms of new tenancies.

From the Second World War the trust's growing interest in a variety of social and political issues – visible in New Earswick in the form of experiments such as new housing for single people, older people and those with special needs – had an impact on the nature of the village population. In part these developments were reflections of a stable community as older and young single residents began to demand different types of housing. However the challenges faced by JRHT and JRF in New Earswick are the same as those faced by every authority in the UK. Their responses are not merely answers to local demand, they also offer potential solutions to national issues. For example, successive local developments in the provision of housing for older people – the Garth in 1949, Hartrigg Oaks in the 1990s and two new extra care schemes in 2008 and 2009 – reflect JRF's research which shows that older people prefer to be supported within the communities of their own choice. National economic pressures have since encouraged central government to emphasise these personal preferences in instructions to local authorities to spend more wisely, by supporting older people in their own homes rather than in institutions.

New populations

From 1936–46 no houses were built in the village, perhaps because all the available resource at a time of national shortages had to be put into building the new secondary school. The post-war landscape was very different, opening up a range of new possibilities and needs. To begin with, the village that was originally designed for families now wanted different types of housing to suit young and single professional men and women and to accommodate those long-term residents who had brought up their children in New Earswick but could no longer manage the family home. Both nationally and locally the housing environment had changed. Before the war, comparatively high rents and the isolation of the village effectively excluded poorer and less sympathetic residents. By 1946 New Earswick rents had become more affordable and the Rowntree trusts were beginning to be more actively involved in working with disadvantaged families.

By the 1990s it was recognised that the village's attractiveness to new residents was diminished, largely through the combined impact of general economic decline and the presence of a higher than average number of older residents. This combination meant that New Earswick was in danger of becoming a predominantly low-income social housing village. JRHT's solution was to revisit the founder's original intentions with an examination of ways of attracting new residents into the village. Existing inhabitants were quick to attribute problems to the presence of incomers and particularly to young people. In fact there is evidence to show that New Earswick experienced far fewer social ills than many of its neighbouring estates, but JRF's own research confirms that rented housing attracts families with two or more children and that a high child-to-adult ratio has a negative impact on perceptions of bad or anti-social behaviour. This was also the perception in the primary school of the 1990s as teachers noted that a rapidly increasing school roll was accompanied by a decline in children's standard of behaviour.

SAVE – a recipe for social mixing

The Joseph Rowntree Housing Trust (JRHT) offered opportunities for tenants to buy their homes at a discount in the Existing Tenants Home Ownership Scheme (ETHOS) of 1995. However this had only a limited success and did not greatly advance the drive for a greater social mix. In 1997 the Selling Alternate Vacants on Estates (SAVE) scheme was introduced. This involved selling 50 per cent of the properties that fell vacant each year. At first there was some doubt about the likely success of this scheme – why would incomers pay market prices for properties in a village they refused to inhabit as tenants? JRHT quickly found that such sales could be made if they followed these simple rules:

- houses are more saleable than flats
- properties need to be offered for sale in good condition
- the skills of professional estate agents are needed to market properties for sale and get a good price

• some control must be retained through the use of covenants (for example to exclude buy-to-let purchasers).

Martin and Watkinson, 2003

In August 2010, of the 1,158 properties in New Earswick, 874 were rented, 98 in shared ownership, 145 were privately owned and 41 were residential care.

Different experiences – developing understanding and tolerance

'...arriving at decisions by agreement [is important]. Voting could mean that the views of minorities were disregarded and overridden. The aim was to arrive at a 'sense of the meeting'.'

Sir Adrian Cadbury on Quaker beliefs, 2003

The idea of social mix is perhaps predicated on larger communities than the village at New Earswick. The garden village was never intended to become a town and so has never encompassed the breadth of social and cultural diversity Howard envisaged in his garden city. The village, like York and its surroundings, has continued to be predominantly mono-ethnic.

The aspects of conflict that are most marked in New Earswick lie in differences of outlook between existing and new residents and between young people and everyone else. In a completely new community nobody can claim or imagine a higher status based on length of residence. But, as time passed, there emerged differences of outlook between long-term residents and newer arrivals. Some believed that JRHT forfeited its control over who should be accommodated when it signed up to the York Housing List, a needs-based register, in 1994. In fact the trust's SAVE scheme represented an explicit commitment to a mixed community with some houses being let and others made available for purchase.

There has always been a tendency for older residents to complain about what is now called 'anti-social behaviour' by young people. The New Earswick population initially comprised a large number of families with young children, and now, conversely has a higher than average proportion of long-term and older residents, in part owing to the existence of Hartrigg Oaks. This may account for some of the discontent. In reality, New Earswick continues to be an area of social stability with a relatively low crime rate. A survey published in 2003 revealed that 80 per cent of respondents had lived in the village for more than 20 years and that two-thirds thought it a good or very good place to live.

Exposure to diversity and choice

'It is the stigmatising effect of having a tenure that identifies its occupants with failure and poverty that has contributed to the decline in the value of social housing, difficulties in filling homes and loss of morale on the part of residents.'

Richard Best former director, Joseph Rowntree Foundation (in Martin and Watkinson, 2003)

A century after the foundation of New Earswick the social conditions that prompted its building are no longer so evident. To a large extent the drive for better housing standards has been replaced by worries about the environmental impact of building. Problems of malnutrition have been replaced by concern over obesity. In education, the campaign to provide universal access up to degree level has been replaced by a constant need to update the system we have in order to match national needs. And JRF research shows that nearly four million children in the UK continue to live in poverty and there remains a gulf between the aspirations of the young and the needs of the nation. Research also confirms that 'education enhances people's labour market outcomes and significantly impacts on their life chances' (Machin and McNally, 2006) but casts doubt on its ability to remedy the problems of poverty as long as existing inequalities continue to be tacitly supported by accepted – rarely challenged − social structures. In spite of the stated intentions and successive policy waves of the Blair and Brown Labour governments, improvements in social mobility remain elusive. No matter how energetically small scale social mixing is attempted, something more is required if there are to be fundamental changes.

Keeping what works, changing what doesn't

'[Joseph Rowntree's refusal] to accept a separation of charitable and political action was the practical expression of his witness against the partitioning of the spiritual from the secular – that mounting divorce of human attitudes and practices that has led to our present unparalleled experience of global crisis.'

Richard S. Rowntree, 2004

While housing policy and regulations have changed over the century of New Earswick's existence the various trusts founded by Joseph Rowntree have continued to work for the benefit of communities at New Earswick and elsewhere. Throughout its history the New Earswick community has been uniquely privileged in benefiting from continuing close ties between the Rowntree trusts. As the Joseph Rowntree Housing Trust acknowledges, 'The special link with JRF enables research to inform practice and practice to inform research'. The timeline on pages 46-7 shows how building work diversified over the years to cater for a wide variety of disadvantaged groups, while rents and lettings policies and the democratic nature of community governance responded to constantly changing needs. Though open to charges of paternalism, particularly in its early years, the New Earswick experiment has been commended by more thoughtful observers:

'[New Earswick] represented a new vision of what industrial life might be in a planned, controlled environment... it is not difficult to poke fun at the 'pantomime vision of bucolic England' [but]... whatever their mistakes, these were serious and highly influential attempts to... propagate the belief that housing which approached middle-class standards and amenities was, and should be, attainable by wage earners.'

John Burnett, 1986

A hundred years on from the foundation of the village, the quality of housing is much less of an issue. But in spite of the Rowntrees' continuing emphasis on the importance of education and the trusts' influence on national policy, there are still major concerns about the gap between the skills our education system provides and those the country needs. However, the priorities of government are not necessarily those of individual families and some commentators have begun to suggest that personal happiness may be as useful a test of successful government as economic prosperity. John Burnett, an energetic and broad-ranging collector of working-class life stories, observed that of all the stories he had gathered:

'...the happiest memories of child life generally came from large working-class families which, by modern standards, had no luxuries and few comforts... [In] this section of the 'respectable' working class... the virtues of education, hard work and self-improvement were respected but not usually at the expense of a close, affectionate family life. In many such households, 'family' extended into neighbouring houses where

grandparents or other kin lived and into the nearby streets which served as an extension of 'home' into the open air...'

Burnett, 1982

The Rowntree model recognises this reality in its combination of opportunities for the future with comfort in the present. One of the trusts' major challenges, through the medium of education, has been to stimulate aspiration and the potential for social and geographical mobility while it continues to support the stability of a secure and happy community. In the early years of its existence the New Earswick experiment was in the forefront of engineered community development and it had some success in persuading residents of the benefits of education. The next two chapters are an account of the parallel development of the New Earswick schools and an examination of the interrelationship between the lives of adults in the village and the educational opportunities provided for them. Together these set the scene for the change and growth in the village's learning provision for both children and adults which has been a hallmark of the first decade of the new century.

New Earswick, c1915.

New Earswick from a balloon, looking North, away from York, and showing New Earswick's relative remoteness and rural aspect, 1910.

'The community is a fellowship wherein each man and woman should find a place of significant service and creative living. All are members, all share the duty and should enjoy our right of helping to determine its policies, whether political or economic, industrial or social.'

Religious Society of Friends' London Yearly Meeting, 1960.

The village

Snapshot history 1904–2001

1904–1919
229 houses are built.

1907
The Folk Hall is built and a democratically elected village council is established (see Chapter 4).

1902–1904
Joseph Rowntree (the founder) buys land at Huntington; Raymond Unwin is appointed architect and draws up first outline plans of New Earswick. 28 houses are built.

1914
St. Andrew's Anglican Church is built.

1919
Barry Parker becomes the architect and remains in post until his death in 1946.

1919–1936
259 houses are built, mostly with subsidies, to more simplified and standardised designs.

1927
The Methodist Church opens.

1935
The Folk Hall is enlarged.

1942
Louis de Soissons is appointed consultant architect.

1946–1954
104 new houses are completed, starting with 12 old people's cottages in 1946. The White Rose estate programme runs throughout the 1950s and includes more varied accommodation.

1948
A modernisation programme begins for individual houses. The nature reserve is developed on the site of the old brick works.

1951
Old people's accommodation is provided at The Garth.

1958
The Garth is extended to provide old people's bungalows. 'Swedish' flats for single people are built.

1960 Ray Fraser becomes consultant architect.

1966 Older people's flats are completed on Lime Tree Avenue.

1967 The swimming pool is built.

1968–1979
The village council is reconstituted as the 25-member New Earswick Village Association.

1970–1979
Surveys of village opinion lead to the east side modernisation programme, involving a new road, pedestrianisation and systematic reconstruction of house interiors.

1971 Maple Court flats replace the older houses demolished in Station Avenue.

1973 The fair rents system is adopted.

1976–1983 The Red Lodge is extended to provide sheltered accommodation.

1978 The Homestead is converted into offices for Rowntree Mackintosh.

1979–1980 33 dwellings, built on Willow Bank as community leasehold, have to be sold on 99 year leases because they are deemed not to be charitable housing.

1979 The New Earswick Village Association is reconstituted as a 12-member village council.

1984 A hostel for people with learning disabilities opens at Dormary Court, in partnership with York Mencap Hostels' Association.

1987 A new doctors' surgery is built.

1988 The UK's first 'mixed tenure' scheme is pioneered at Juniper Close, with homes available for renting, shared ownership and outright sale. The Friends' Meeting House opens.

1989 The building programme to complete the south west corner of the village continues with flats and houses at Alder Way and Hazel Close (flexible tenure).

1991
The Red Lodge offers flexible care and new warden control. The village becomes a conservation area.

1992–1994 The Woodlands estate is built – the first that wholly meets Lifetime Homes standards.

1994 Alder Way hostel for adults with cerebral palsy is built with the York and District Cerebral Palsy Society.

1995 Existing tenants home ownership scheme (ETHOS) is launched (later replaced by the government's voluntary purchase grant scheme). Housing estates with mixed and flexible tenure are completed at Woodlands.

1996 Following local government reorganisation, the village becomes part of the city of York.

1997 The selling alternate vacants on estates (SAVE) scheme is introduced.

1998 The first residents move into Hartrigg Oaks, a continuing care retirement community. The New Earswick Residents' Forum and New Earswick Community Association are established.

1999 The Garth is used by Kosovan refugees.

2001
The census records 2,812 New Earswick residents living in approximately 1,100 units of accommodation. These are mostly rented but also include a variety of other tenures, including full or leasehold sale, shared ownership and Homebuy.

2006 Prime Minister Tony Blair delivers lecture at Folk Hall on social exclusion.

2007
Centenary celebration of Folk Hall opening, 'Any Questions' broadcast from Folk Hall.

2007 Establishment of JRHT board and Residents' Voice group.

2008 Elm Tree Mews opens – six eco homes built to Lifetime Homes standards.

CHAPTER 3

'...the end of education is to produce... good men and women'

Joseph Rowntree at the opening of New Earswick School, 1912

The village schools

A century of education

'What are our ideals for the future of the school? We want to appropriate the spirit of Utopia and what is good in its methods, supplementing them by that which experience has proved necessary.'

Joseph Rowntree at the opening of New Earswick School, 1912

The history of education in the last 100 years has been characterised by the shifting of forward-looking Utopian experiments like those in New Earswick into the mainstream. Ideas that were once merely paper suppositions have been converted into reality by the practical dedication of men such as Joseph Rowntree and the organisations they founded. What they attempted at a local level has been taken up by successive generations of politicians as potential answers to the major problems of their – and our – day. The history of the schools in New Earswick is to a degree a benchmark of the successes and failures that have accompanied this transition. It is proof of the constant need to revisit familiar problems and to find 'new' solutions that suit their current manifestations. The schools' successes are evidence of what can be achieved by a few far-sighted, dedicated individuals. Their challenges and failures all too often stem from limitations imposed by the same governments that have applauded their achievements. This is the context for a more detailed look at contemporary solutions in the form of the children's centre (Chapter 6) and the rebuilt secondary school (Chapter 7).

In their lifetimes New Earswick's two schools have repeatedly confronted major educational and social issues, many of which remain today. In this chapter we trace the story of formal education in the village. For more than 30 years from the laying of the first foundation stone at

New Earswick, the only formal provision was for younger children, broadly speaking those we would now regard as of nursery, primary or middle school age. In 1900 compulsory schooling applied only to children aged 5–13. Many of them were taught in cramped and unsuitable conditions and poverty meant that most left school before reaching any worthwhile attainment milestone. Successive reviews and commissions, notably the influential Hadow Reports of the 1920s, recommended the extension of secondary education to all, but these recommendations were not translated into legislation until the 1944 Education Act. This established a clear division between primary and secondary education and, most significantly, gave an entitlement to free secondary education for everyone up to the age of 15. As recommended by Hadow in 1926, the education to be offered was to be differentiated according to academic ability. Those children who attended the new secondary moderns were to combine academic training with the development of practical skills. Accompanying this development was an expectation that the leaving age would be raised to 16 as soon as possible – an aspiration that was not realised until 1972.

New Earswick was an early beneficiary of forward-looking practice. Its first school, the New Earswick Elementary School (known initially simply as New Earswick School), became New Earswick Primary School in 1942 and was based on the best of contemporary design. The construction of the secondary modern Joseph Rowntree Senior School, known locally as JoRo, pre-empted the 1944 Act and embodied many of Hadow's recommendations. The opening of this school established a clear division between primary schooling up to the age of 11 and opportunities for secondary education that were previously unattainable for the majority.

Building by design – schools for the future

New Earswick Elementary School

'It was the baby of [Joseph Rowntree's] old age, it had everything money could buy, nothing was too good for it.'

Miss Townsend, kindergarten teacher at New Earswick School 1922–1953

In both elementary and secondary provision New Earswick acted on demand rather than waiting for legislation. However, although its houses were always intended predominantly for families, the very first residents did not immediately have their own village school. The impossibility of expecting young children to walk to the Haxby Road school 1 ½ miles away in the height of a Yorkshire winter quickly led to negotiations with the local authority on provision for the growing population, but the authority was slow to react. Only when the Village Trust took matters into its own hands in the winter of 1908–09, providing a professional teacher to

At New Earswick children liked school and dressed smartly c1920 (see page 53).

run classes in the Folk Hall, did the local authority capitulate, agreeing to work in partnership with the trust in operating a 'non-provided' school – one in which the buildings were funded, designed and built by the trust and the education within them overseen by the authority.

It is clear from the outset that the founder intended the new school to occupy a central place, both geographically and symbolically, in the life of the village. Unwin's earliest plans place the school, not the Folk Hall or any other public amenity, at the heart of the community, surrounded by green space. The design of this building – the centrepiece of the community – was to be as forward-looking and inspirational as the concept of the garden village itself and there is widespread agreement that Unwin's building, opened by the President of the Board of Education on 23 November 1912, was truly inspirational.

The Earswick Elementary School…will, when completed, provide accommodation for 352 children in ten classrooms, six of which are only intended to be occupied by classes not exceeding 32 children, while four are made larger, and will accommodate classes up to 40 children; the basis of accommodation is 15sq.ft. of floor area per child, instead of 10ft., the amount required by the Board of Education. All the classrooms have windows to the south, and the main lighting windows on the left side of the children. The corridors, cloakrooms, etc., are roofed with flat, concrete roofs at a low level, so that all the classrooms may have ventilating windows high up in the walls on the opposite side to the main lighting windows. The hall is detached from the classrooms and entered from a corridor. The conveniences are attached to the school buildings, but isolated by passages and lobbies; access to them is therefore obtainable under cover. In this school, it was desired to secure the maximum practicable amount of open air, and to attain this end the windows of the classrooms are constructed after the manner of folding partitions, so that the portion below the transom falls back each way and leaves an opening about 14ft. wide... and the full benefit of open air classes is secured without having to duplicate the accommodation, or move the partitions, or in any way disturb the classes and teaching. The lights above the transom all swing, and the window-sill is kept low enough for the children to be able to see out …two open verandahs have been provided, one facing east and the other west, so that on the days when the heat of the sun is oppressive there will be shaded open-air classrooms, available at all times of the day…Provision is made in the scheme for adding a gymnasium, laboratory, cookery school, workshop, and mess-room, in two wings as may be found desirable…The roof space is occupied with storerooms, teachers' rooms, etc. The whole of the building is heated with a hot water, low pressure system, an excess area of radiating surface being provided to keep the classrooms comfortable, even when the whole of the window is open. A large compass, sundial, etc., have been laid out in the courts to familiarise the children with these, and ample area is provided for school gardens in front of the building, the play-grounds and play-sheds being at each side. As the school faces the village green, plenty of additional ground is available for organised games...

The Building News, 31 January 1913

This description and the comments and reflections of those who worked and learned in this environment show that it was explicitly designed to suit the needs of children and teachers rather than to match contemporary building regulations or to conform to any superficial ideas of aesthetics. The school was to provide the best possible learning spaces. It exceeded the best that the York Board Schools, praised by Seebohm Rowntree, could show and, apart from minor changes to floor surfaces and lighting, it continued to satisfy increasingly stringent building regulations up to and beyond the Second World War. While other schools built at the same time remained 'Victorian' in design, even those built 50 years later could not improve on Unwin's design.

A pupil who moved to New Earswick in 1922 compared her new school with the York Church School she had left behind, describing it as a place of light, space and fresh air, with clean heat provided by radiators, not log fires. The freshness of the building was reflected in the relationships with teachers and the attitudes of pupils:

'The pupils themselves were bright and clean. At York clean white pinafores had covered shabby clothes; school was a place one had to go to but didn't care about. At New Earswick children liked school and dressed up smartly to go, I never saw aprons there.'

New Earswick School pupil, 1965

New Earswick Primary School, painted by Alan Stuttle, whose daughter Caroline had been a pupil there and who was tragically killed in Australia in 2002 at the age of 19 whilst on a gap year. See also: www.carolinesrainbowfoundation.org and www.alanstuttlegallery.co.uk

Joseph Rowntree Secondary School

'The whole estate is the school garden.'

Anon, Joseph Rowntree Secondary School, 1947

The old school crest.

While there had been a requirement for children to undergo compulsory elementary education from 1870 onwards, successful transition to secondary education remained patchy until the middle of the twentieth century. Early attempts to secure opportunities for all children, such as those recommended by the Bryce Commission of 1895 and the 1902 Education Act inspired by Robert Morant, were only partly successful. Too often, the good intentions of those behind the legislation failed to survive transition into actual provision. When it opened in 1912, New Earswick Elementary School provided education for children aged 5–13 years, but Joseph Rowntree was keen to see young people living in the village have access to suitable education beyond this age. He was a keen supporter of the views of Michael Sadler who called for the provision of appropriate and differentiated secondary education for all.

'We may hope that before long the compulsory school age will be advanced, and continuation schools during daytime be introduced, in which scientific teaching would take a practical and illustrative character. Whether this could be carried on in a small village it is too soon to say. Possibly if a good continuation school were started at New Earswick it might form a centre for two or three of the neighbouring villages – Haxby, Old Earswick etc. These possibilities should, I think, be kept in mind, and sufficient land retained near to the [New Earswick Elementary] School for any possible extensions.'

Joseph Rowntree, Draft Memorandum, 1916

By 1930 the local authority had approached the Village Trust with a view to building a new school for younger children and converting the existing elementary school building into a senior school for New Earswick and the surrounding villages. The trust refused this proposal, which in any case foundered on the economic difficulties of the 1930s depression, but further legislation in 1936 allowed for a joint venture of building a senior school on the outskirts of the village. This school – the Joseph Rowntree Senior School – catering for 480 pupils, was opened by R.A. Butler, President of the Board of Education, in 1942.

Joseph Rowntree School, with large, fully opening windows, similar to those of the first New Earswick School.

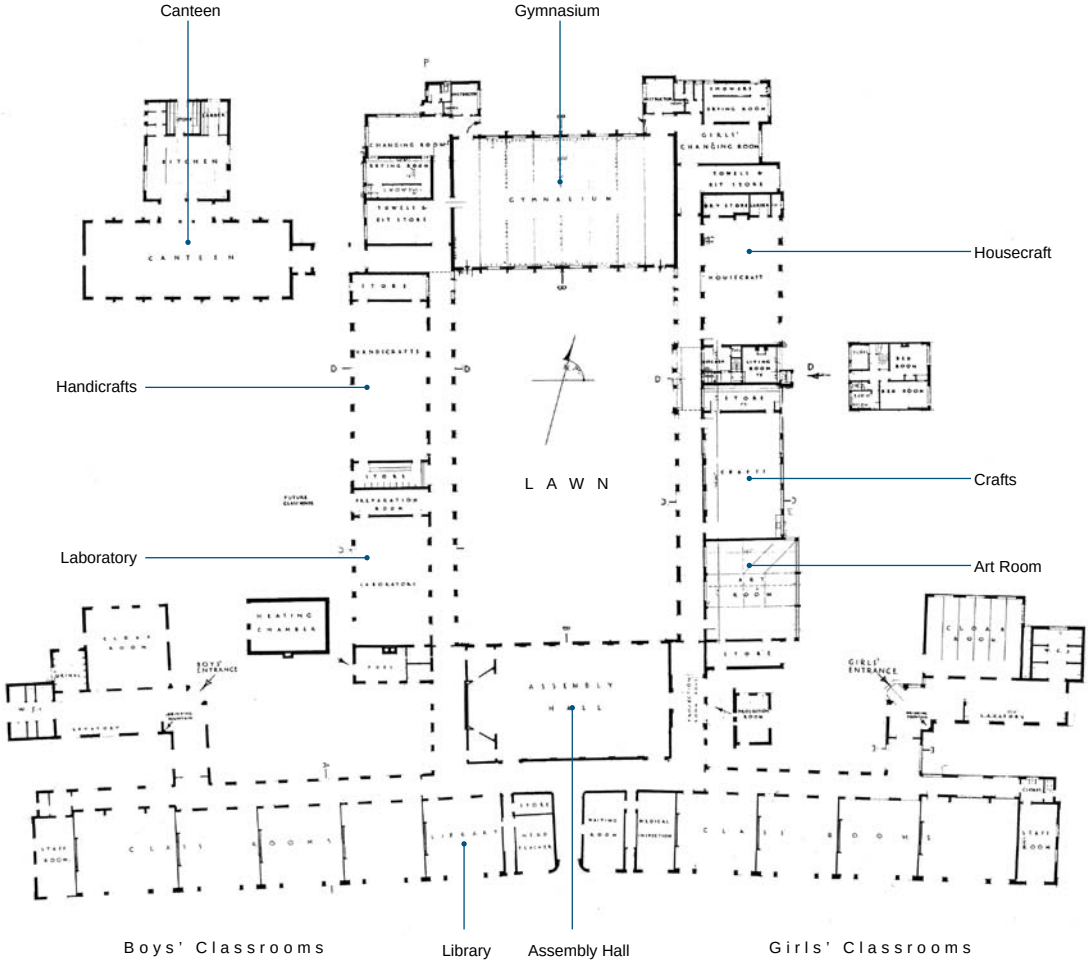
Once again the trust funded building work and sought to surpass the minimum statutory requirements. Just as overseas visitors came to New Earswick in its early years to see design brought to life, so the trust wanted to learn from the best of school building elsewhere, as well as seeking the advice of psychologists on heating, lighting and ventilation. In spite of these efforts the new school, though pleasant and appropriate for its purpose, could not claim to be the equivalent of its elementary counterpart as a design breakthrough. The building project suffered from the onset of war and subsequent shortages of materials. Even more significantly, the rest of the world had begun to catch up with New Earswick. Growing interest and investment in the design of public projects actually made it increasingly difficult to produce anything truly original.

... The building consists of a range of form rooms all facing south, with assembly hall, practical rooms, gymnasium, etc., grouped around a grass court. The usual practice in schools of this size and type has been to use either the gymnasium or assembly hall for the mid-day meal. There are grave disadvantages in such duplication of purpose, and the Trustees have provided a separate dining-room with kitchen attached. Particular attention has been paid to ventilation, lighting and heating, and the advice of the National Institute of Industrial Psychology was sought before building was undertaken. The form room windows are of a new design. They are very large and capable of any required degree of opening. In winter they can give enough circulation of air across the ceiling to remove used air, while the heating panels in the ceiling check the downward drift of such a current. In summer they provide for full opening of one side of the form room down almost to knee level ... It is believed that this type of window is unique in its capacity for adaptation to varying atmospheric conditions ...

Throughout the school the corridor width is determined by the volume of traffic normally expected, the greatest width being reached outside the main hall to provide a crush space when the hall is emptying. This section of corridor can be sealed off, so isolating the hall from the rest of the building when necessary; it also carries a range of lockers, providing each child with a place in which to keep books and personal possessions. The long principal corridor is slightly curved so as to minimise noise transmission by means of skin friction.
The floors, like those of the rest of the school, are of polished hardwood. The walls of the corridors have been left unplastered and are of painted brick. This gives a pleasing texture, and has proved extremely durable in use.

Joseph Rowntree Secondary School prospectus,1947

Nevertheless the new school provided pupils with the space they needed, both indoors and outside and, in keeping with the principles on which secondary moderns were founded, it offered opportunities to develop practical skills as well as exposure to cultural provision. Early film and photographs – many of them created by the first head, Edward Lightowler, show the first generation of pupils with an entitlement to secondary education enjoying facilities for science, domestic science and manual working. A curriculum combining practical and academic education had some unusual requirements – for example a teacher's flat where girls could practise cooking and social skills in an authentic domestic setting, and a typesetting and printing facility for boys. The fresh air so much favoured and advocated by Seebohm Rowntree was visible in the emphasis on outdoor work, gardening and nature study, undertaken in the surrounding grounds. This school was designed to meet the demand for an education that was simultaneously practical and academic, one from which every pupil would emerge 'with something he knows well and something he can do well' (Whitehead, 1929).



An early plan of the Joseph Rowntree Secondary School, c1947.

Curriculum conundrums – what should we learn and how?

'...it is hoped that, when the time arrives for the children to go out into the world, they will know how to seek out knowledge for themselves and will desire to go further in some branch or other of learning. If this objective is attained then, throughout their adult life, they will return in their leisure hours and the school will be recognised as the natural centre for the cultural, educational, social, and recreational activities of the whole of the wide area which it serves. The "leaving age" will, in fact, never be reached.'

Lightowler, 1947

Many ideas and principles that were still relatively new within education in 1912 have since become unquestioned commonplaces. Our views of Victorian education are too often shaped by Dickens into a bleak uninterrupted landscape of poor quality 'crammers' and schools for unwanted children. In fact, the nineteenth century saw a growth in appreciation of child-centred activity and the beginnings of an understanding of untapped potential among the 'uneducated poor'. Opportunities available to girls were particularly limited and this too was widely acknowledged. The real difficulty lay not in identifying the issues but in developing solutions and, as each generation tackled this conundrum, it is striking to note how the same difficulties recur in relation to different disadvantaged groups.

Obligatory subjects	*Options may include*	*For children in the upper levels*
Reading	*Singing by note*	*Elementary Science*
Writing	*Recitation*	*Domestic Science*
Arithmetic	*English*	*French*
Drawing (Boys)	*Geography*	*Drill*
Needlework (Girls)	*Elementary Science*	*Cookery (Girls)*
	History	*Manual Instruction (Boys)*
	Domestic Economy inc Health Care (Girls)	*Some schools to offer advanced scholars:-*
		Science
		Art

Boys and girls to be taught swimming and life saving in corporation baths

Board schools to have daily, non-sectarian assemblies and Religious Education

Seebohm Rowntree's suggested elementary curriculum, 1901.

Both girls and boys involved in gardening at the first New Earswick school, c1918.
Image courtesy of the Imagine York collection, www.imagineyork.co.uk

In his opening address at New Earswick School in 1912 Joseph Rowntree referred to the corrupting impact of a late Victorian system in which schools received payment by test results based on a narrow and limiting state curriculum:

'No doubt the best teachers broke through the bondage of this mechanical system, but its general effect was to turn out children who might perhaps pass examinations but whose mental activity was stunted, and who had little capacity for meeting the varied demands of daily life.'

By 1867, a gradual broadening of outlook had brought history and geography into the curriculum and subjects such as drawing, book keeping, chemistry and agriculture became available from the 1890s. By 1904 regulations had come into force to promote a more child-centred curriculum that would fit boys and girls for life according to their respective needs. In his review of York board schools' provision in 1901 Seebohm Rowntree outlined an elementary curriculum (see table page 58), almost all of which is still reflected in primary schools today.

Pupils were to be encouraged to develop personal qualities that are as relevant to today's world as they were in the Edwardian age, though the chief resource for this work – its foundation in Christian faith – is no longer explicitly evident in the practice of the majority of Britain's schools. Late Victorian school board regulations demanded that:

'The greatest importance will be attached… to… moral and religious teaching and training. In all departments the teachers are expected to bring up the children in habits of punctuality, of good manners and language, of cleanliness and neatness, and also to impress upon the children the importance of cheerful obedience to duty, of consideration and respect for others, and of honour and truthfulness in word and act… teachers… are expected to use the Bible for illustrations whereby to teach these duties, for sanctions by which what is taught may be practised, and for instruction concerning the help given by God to lead a sober, righteous, and godly life.'

Seebohm Rowntree, 1901

New Earswick Elementary School, led by headteacher Thomas Barnes, applied a curriculum based on the belief that reading was the key to learning and that reading at an early age offered the best opportunity for children to learn for themselves. Many at the time favoured a project-based approach to elementary education that would help children to think and learn for themselves. So Miss Townsend, a kindergarten teacher at New Earswick School from 1921–1953, observed that 'children should learn to read, write and add up but beyond that academic "cramming" of facts was not encouraged'.

Welcome as these developments were, until the secondary school opened, they stopped short of the complete education envisaged by more ambitious reformers. The adult and continuation classes in which various members of the Rowntree family taught were an inadequate substitute for universal entitlement.

'If the best results are to be obtained the school life should not be cut short: it is the view of experienced teachers that the most fruitful period in the life of those who attend an elementary school, both boys and girls, is the time between 13 and 15.'

Joseph Rowntree, at the opening of the New Earswick Elementary School, 1912

Under the 1944 Education Act 75 per cent of pupils were to be taught in secondary modern schools. These were to be free of the constraints of examinations so that they could develop curricula to suit all pupils. As in the original elementary school, emphasis on personal enquiry and study was a significant feature of the curriculum at the Joseph Rowntree Senior School. On entry to the school, almost all students followed what was essentially a common curriculum. Thereafter provision was increasingly tailored to individual need. The curriculum as a whole was designed to offer a carefully maintained balance between practical and academic work with a strong emphasis on doing and making things – 'A humane or liberal education is not one given through books alone, but one which brings children into contact with the larger interests of mankind.' Hadow Report, 1926.

Personal study in the context of the 1940s school was intended to fit the child for life, not just for earning a living. However it proved difficult to establish the optimum balance of academic and practical work and many who experienced secondary modern education felt that, far from opening up a new world of possibilities, it imposed yet another ceiling on potential achievement. For the Joseph Rowntree Senior School these limitations were quickly apparent. Within a year of the school's opening inspectors expressed concerns about the quality of the school's literacy education and there was a rapid change in headship.

Ultimately, reactions to the divisiveness of selection at the age of 11 generated the social and educational revolution of the 1960s and 70s, with a number of high profile causes célèbres offering lurid accounts of educational failure and poor teaching. In something of a return to the prescription of the past, the government's response was to bring in greater direction of the curriculum. Miss Townsend, New Earswick Primary School's long-serving teacher could teach what, when and how she wanted to; her successors have been increasingly directed by the national curriculum introduced in 1988 and the additional requirements of, for example, national literacy and numeracy strategies.

In the secondary school too, some of what was distinctive about it disappeared when it became a comprehensive school and subsequently with the introduction of the 11–16 national curriculum. The emphasis on manual skills decreased – typesetting could only now be taught as a somewhat esoteric craft – to be replaced with new skills based on ICT. Recent years have seen a loosening of the curriculum once more, with a growing recognition that students should be given the opportunity to take on a mix of vocational and academic study at secondary school. In the twenty-first century schools have pursued distinctiveness through different routes – The Joseph Rowntree School has joined the large number of secondary schools that enjoy specialist status as technology colleges.

Highlighting inequality

'The new curriculum is not just a set of content to cover. It is an entire planned learning experience, which includes lessons, events, the routines of the school, the extended day and learning that takes place out of school, often directed by a range of partners in the community.'

Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, 2007

Attempts to engineer a curriculum that engages students and is not entirely driven by examinations have continued. As one under-privileged group begins to succeed, another takes its place. As far back as 1923, a consultative committee suggested that the existing curriculum was too male-oriented and that 'female' subjects – art and music – should have equal status. The same report echoed the words of Walter Runciman, President of the Board of Education, at the opening of New Earswick School, that 'the boys and girls should have a fair share in cooking the meat as well as a fair share of the cooked product'. And yet there is a quaintly archaic feel to early films of the secondary school's facilities in which boys are seen in workshops and fields while girls bake and serve tea. Only in the last 30 years have girls begun to have equal access to the full range of opportunities open to boys. It has taken several centuries for Quaker beliefs on the value of women's education to be widely accepted in practice.

Children reading books in a classroom at New Earswick School with the windows open, c1912.

Today the educational spotlight rests on new, or newly recognised, inequalities. Underperformance of students from particular ethnic backgrounds, students in the care of local authorities or those with particular learning needs has been rightly spotlighted. The rebuilt Joseph Rowntree School has integrated autistic pupils into its provision while the City of York education authority has embraced government plans for 14–19-year-olds' diplomas, combining academic and practical work in ways that are designed to encourage greater post-16 participation. Contemporary emphasis on inclusion has broadened concepts of education to cover informal and community-based learning, leading government agencies to invite us to think of 'community', 'education' and 'inclusion' – formerly separate and distinct concepts – as interlinked and interdependent.

Teaching – then and now

'We desire that all [the School's teachers] should be sensible of the greatness of the teacher's vocation, that they should be apt to teach, fond of children, and know how to win their respect and affection; and further, that they should possess that incommunicable gift of government, which enables the best teachers to secure good discipline by gentle means.'

Joseph Rowntree at the opening of the New Earswick Elementary School, 1912

In a century of change the principal features of effective teaching have remained the same – sound knowledge of teaching methods and subject knowledge, good management and organisation, concern for pupils and students and the ability to enthuse and inspire. While the curriculum in the New Earswick Elementary School was unremarkable, the founders ensured a best return on their investment in the school by insisting on employing only the best qualified teachers and on maintaining class sizes of no more than 30. Often this could only be done through buying in teaching resources that were additional to local authority requirements and by paying salaries in excess of those that were generally agreed to be appropriate for rural teachers according to the pre-1945 Burnham scales. The benefits of more advanced provision were felt by pupils at the school who thought that specialist teachers 'made things far more interesting'. In its early years The Joseph Rowntree School catered for 480 pupils with a teaching staff of 15 – the headteacher, and 14 assistants (7 men and 7 women) – every one of whom had a specialist qualification.

As the scale of schools grew and national expectations of attainment rose, so demands upon teachers necessitated a different kind of training. The comparative novelty of the school's specialist teachers in 1947 and the trust's insistence that both schools should be staffed by the best qualified professionals now represent the norm in state education. A degree, professional training and regular updating are basic requirements. One consequence of

this change has been to bring teachers into closer contact with higher education. In 1900 many elementary school teachers had not even completed secondary education. Rising expectations led to a growth in training establishments linked to universities, demand for higher-level qualifications and the creation of specialist training centres for teachers and school leaders.

While a stereotypical view suggests that many teachers elsewhere retained a persona of disciplinarian authority figures, making regular use of the cane (not abolished until 1987), pupils' reminiscences suggest that in New Earswick teachers mixed with and talked to children and seemed much more human as a consequence. Joyce Smith, who recorded pupil and teacher reminiscences in 1965, placed them in the context of developing educational thinking derived from the work of Froebel or Montessori, but these more humane and egalitarian relationships were also evocative of the early Quaker schools. The Joseph Rowntree School now has nearly 1,400 pupils, 200 of them in the sixth form, and the great majority of its students come from outside New Earswick. Nevertheless the quality of relationships between staff and pupils continues in the tradition of the 1912 elementary school with the most recent Ofsted report saying:

'Students are treated as individuals and every effort is made to ensure that they are following programmes of study or "pathways" that match their needs and aspirations... As one student said, "(here) the staff are not just interested in grades."

Ofsted, 2007

Pupils at Joseph Rowntree School with Headteacher Mr. E. Lightowler, c1944.

Another striking feature of the early school community was its seamless integration in village life. Several pupils remember teachers living in the village. 'The teachers were all well known, and they all lived at the Red Lodge.' But such community ties weakened as the schools grew and, by the late twentieth century, very few, if any, of the teachers at either of New Earswick's schools lived in the village.

Perhaps the biggest change in the last century lies not with community relations or with qualification levels but in the growing presence of the state within the classroom. As recently as 1975 it was possible for Keith Evans (1975), a commentator on the education scene, to say '… teaching is a highly individual and professional matter which admits of no official straitjacket, and this view is accepted by all interested parties involved in English education'. Now, in many ways, we have replicated the late Victorian scene with a state curriculum, payment by results and rigorous inspection processes. There are further radical changes now planned, with government again considering moves towards more flexible curricula and a raft of new roles for teachers and the large numbers of support staff who have taken up posts in schools as facilitators of learning, brokers and advisers for pupils with other agencies.

'As the school becomes a learning community and traditional school boundaries dissolve, teachers need to accept that they are not in direct control of everything that happens in the classroom… A range of new skills for the twenty-first century teaching professional is beginning to emerge… [They will be] curriculum architects…commissioners of learning…account managers… [and] managers of quality.'

Horne and Spender, 2008

The school community

'The head master has told me that he hopes the school life will be closely associated with that of the village… he is sure that the people of the village will be quite ready to stretch out a friendly hand to the children, guiding rather than restraining, and taking a real interest in their affairs.'

Joseph Rowntree at the opening of the New Earswick School, 1912

Part of the inspiration for the New Earswick settlement came from Seebohm Rowntree's study of poverty. The village was intended to provide decent accommodation for the poorest families and to model how other agencies, such as local authorities, might do the same. In the last chapter, we saw how this intention faltered as it became impossible to build at the desired standard for the lowest rents. As a consequence, the earliest villagers were not drawn from the poorest of York residents. While the commitment to those we might now describe as 'excluded' remained, opportunities to provide for them in New Earswick were limited. The combined effect of no house building between 1936 and 1946 and low turnover in tenancies meant that, for a long period, the nature of the school population remained not only stable but also static.

Two events, one national and one local, changed this situation. The Second World War brought evacuees into the village to be billeted with local families. These new, temporary residents brought with them a reminder for local people of more difficult living conditions in England's major cities. They also had a direct and immediate impact on the lives of village children.

'The evacuees came from Hull and Middlesbrough and doubled the population as far as I can remember of our school, at first they brought some of their own teachers with them, and some didn't settle at all and had to go back, I remember there was much crying and much sort of adjusting and re-adjusting and some people were upset by the kids and some kids were upset by the people, there was all that sort of thing going on, but eventually it settled down and really it was quite exciting having them.'

'I... [had] to go to school half a day, mornings for one and afternoons for the others, because there was too many children to be taught at one time.'

New Earswick residents reminiscing about the village during the Second World War

The second event, the opening of the senior school in 1942, brought the village and the trust into closer contact with surrounding villages, bringing in pupils and teachers whose previous connections to New Earswick were tenuous. In some respects the Village Trust

capitalised on this new audience, for example by spreading its influence in the funding of specialist music teachers to work with feeder primaries.

'Through the Senior School, which now serves some 15 villages, New Earswick is having an influence for good upon the other villages. Parents of the "outside" children are interested in the school and (especially those in the nearby villages) in New Earswick activities ... It is surely a mistake to seek to isolate New Earswick and to give the impression that we do not encourage contact with our neighbours. This is not a case of expenditure of Trust money upon villages which have no claim upon us. Finance does not enter into the matter at all ... Children from some of the other villages are already taking part in some of these activities. They stay on after school hours or return after tea. Not only does the present day school concern all the surrounding villages, but so also do both Evening Institute and Youth Club. There is even an outside class of the institute functioning at Haxby, but controlled from New Earswick. This is a development worth fostering.'

Joseph Stephenson Rowntree, response to proposals to establish a schools council in New Earswick, 1944

Engaging parents

'Engagement and inclusion are particularly important for preventive services such as those delivered through schools, family centres and children's centres... preventive services usually rely on parents actively seeking help. Yet parents most in need of services are often the least likely to access them.'

Utting, 2007, summarising Katz et al, 2007

While it is difficult to determine how accurate comparisons with the village of the past are, there is some evidence to show that both the New Earswick schools have had to face the challenges of working with some less than fully supportive parents – some unsupportive of the work of the schools, others unsupportive of their own children's education. These parents are in a very small minority but they have a disproportionate impact on the work of both schools and on pupils' experience of education.

'There is... a small but quite vociferous number of parents who make an unsatisfactory contribution to their children's learning at school and at home... [some] do not present their children with opinions that demonstrate that the school and learning are valued by society.'

Ofsted, 2002

This is a major challenge for the children's centre, as one of its key tasks is to engage with parents who are 'hard to reach', some of whom are at best sceptical about the value of education and who do not see supporting their children's schooling as a central role of parenting.

Narrowing the gap

The provision of elementary education for all highlighted the gulf that existed for poor children between the education they received and the education they might be capable of. A child leaving school at 13 in 1905 might attend continuation and evening classes but this route was highly unlikely to allow them to win through to a university education. Although the school leaving age was raised to 14 in 1918, for most children the gulf between compulsory schooling and higher education remained insuperable. At the outbreak of the First World War, only one in forty elementary pupils benefited from a free secondary education. The education gap has narrowed significantly since 1905 but it has not disappeared and it is accentuated by rising national expectations for a skilled workforce. At Joseph Rowntree's suggestion the Village Trust provided a scholarship scheme which supported two (or more, at the trustees' discretion) pupils each year from the New Earswick Elementary School to attend grammar school in York. Selection was based on a written examination, as well as their school record, and where necessary also an interview. These scholarships, in some respects reminiscent of today's Education Maintenance Allowance, enabled bright children to continue their education beyond the normal school leaving age.

'...whoever was good enough went, the year I went there was just two of us, a boy and a girl, and we stayed there until leaving age, our parents got a small amount of money

for letting us go and we were told by the teachers ours was the best scholarship because we were the only ones who had our books paid for... When we got the scholarships the boys went to Archbishop Holgate's School and the girls went to Queen Anne's, our parents were sent so much money at the beginning of each term to pay for our clothes or equipment we wanted, and we were the only scholarship that received any payment like that of any sort and it came from the Joseph Rowntree Memorial Trust.'

Excerpt from unpublished interviews collected by late village postman Joe Murphy

After the Second World War, New Earswick pupils were more than twice as likely as those from other North Riding schools to attend grammar schools and a small but significant proportion of these children progressed to degree or professional studies. But even today, with a vastly expanded array of opportunities for degree level study, many under-qualified students leave formal education at the age of 16, and despite significant efforts to broker change young people from lower socio-economic backgrounds remain on average far less likely to study in higher education than those from wealthier backgrounds.

Ironically, financial restrictions continue to interfere with student attainment to this day, with The Joseph Rowntree School's latest Ofsted report suggesting that the good performance of sixth formers could be even better if it were not for the fact that so many feel obliged to do part-time work in holidays and at weekends, principally in York's tourist industry.

Educating for the future

'The function of education is to foster growth. The end which the teacher should set before himself is the development of the latent powers of his pupils, the unfolding of their latent life.'

Edmond Holmes (educationalist, writer and poet), quoted by Joseph Rowntree at the opening of the New Earswick School, 1912

Education is now widely acknowledged as the single most influential factor in determining national and individual success. There are fewer and fewer jobs available for unskilled workers and research consistently establishes clear links between lack of qualifications and

poverty, criminality, poor health and reduced life expectancy. While much in the schools and communities of 2005 would have been unrecognisable to the originators of New Earswick a century earlier, these underlying social drivers would be very familiar.

At a local level New Earswick has finally achieved some of the basic amenities it asked for half a century and more ago. Nursery education, recognised as important but, practically speaking, unattainable in the economic conditions of the mid-twentieth century, is now accepted as an essential and may prove to be effective in bringing the community together to talk about child welfare issues, just as the informal provision in the Folk Hall was after the Second World War.

In both primary and secondary education the pattern of the last century has been to move from a patchwork of provision of variable quality towards a supposed uniformity, either in free schooling provided by the state or in education at a price in the independent sector. The Labour government of 1997–2010 set targets that 50 per cent of the nation's young people should benefit from a university education and that opportunities for lifelong learning should be available to all. However these ever increasing opportunities for higher level education showed signs of coming to an end with huge spending cuts to higher education and other adult learning provision predicted for 2011.

For much of the last 100 years the New Earswick schools have taken a lead in putting advanced educational thinking into practice – whether in the design of new buildings or in the application of child-centred curricula. Much of what has been achieved has been done partly through two means that remain, or have become, increasingly controversial. Firstly, though not explicitly faith-based, the schools' status as non-provided or voluntary-aided institutions has set them slightly apart from the majority of state schools. Secondly, the history of partnership-based provision (largely in partnership with the trusts) has somewhat pre-empted models such as the private finance initiatives in the current round of school building.

It was always the intention of the Rowntree family that developments at New Earswick should provide a model for provision by other agencies and the early success of the New Earswick Elementary School was indeed a good contemporary exemplar.

Joseph Rowntree himself recognised that to a certain extent the very nature of the experiment hampered the ability of others to replicate the model in its entirety. The Village Trust's generosity and dedication to the aspirations of the founder meant that both the village schools benefited greatly from additional funding in a way that could not be matched elsewhere. At the same time other key agencies such as local authorities have increasingly been constrained in what they can do and what they can fund.

A striking feature of New Earswick's early years was the ability of the trust to predict and pre-empt demand, for example in asking for and then building a new school before population levels made it unavoidable. Local authorities and other larger agencies too often have to be reactive rather than proactive and so their influence has sometimes been felt as a dead hand on educational progress. While it was a compliment to the original vision that many of

the features of the New Earswick schools became adopted nationally, the increasing central control from local authorities and other large agencies meant that the village schools had their ability to exercise independent judgement and serve local needs diminished. There became much less to distinguish them from schools elsewhere than there would have been 50 or 100 years previously.

However, with the opening of the new secondary school and refurbished primary school New Earswick can once again claim to have some of the most modern buildings and facilities, incorporating some of the newest ideas about the management and delivery of education in the twenty-first century. Once again, New Earswick has the opportunity to show what can be achieved when dedicated individuals, with the benefit of intelligent support, devote time and ingenuity to local educational provision.

Now the task of influencing a wider audience has moved beyond New Earswick and includes the work of the Joseph Rowntree Foundation in its research and publications and its support for practical action – a combined approach that mirrors the concept of knowing and doing which was the basis of New Earswick education.

'I believe these open windows, these open walls, will have a mental as well as a physical effect. They will carry the mind far outside the narrow and trying confines of the class-room.'

Walter Runciman, President of the Board of Education at the opening of New Earswick School, 1912

The schools

Snapshot history 1912–2010

2010
The new Joseph Rowntree Secondary School (known as The Joseph Rowntree School) opens (see Chapter 7).

2008
New Earswick Primary School wins Best school project in 2008 York Community Pride awards.

2008
The Children's Centre opens on 1 July. It is attached to the newly renovated New Earswick Primary School but has separate management (see Chapter 6).

1942
New Earswick Elementary School is renamed New Earswick Primary School.

1942
The Joseph Rowntree Secondary School opens (see Chapter 3).

1912
New Earswick Elementary School opens on 23 November

Prefects, from Autumn term 1961.

'...a group of people learning together'

A young member of New Earswick's Community Philosophy Inter-generational Group

CHAPTER 4

A learning community

A century of community

'The vision is of an urban village which values every member of the community and encourages them to reach their full potential.'

Les Sparks, et al, 2001

The previous chapter explored the significance and continuing relevance of lessons learned over the last 100 years from the ground-breaking schools established in New Earswick. However, the aim has always been 'not merely to build houses and schools, but, far more important, to build a community', (William Wallace, Chairman of the Joseph Rowntree Village Trust, 1954).

Joseph Rowntree wanted civic responsibility, citizenship and democracy to be realities in the daily life of New Earswick, and said that that there should be 'nothing in the organisation of these village communities that should interfere with the growth of the right spirit of citizenship'. He was a firm advocate of the role that education should play in achieving this ideal, believing that rather than simply providing individuals with the vocational skills they needed for employment, education should equip them with 'the faculties upon the exercise of which a progressive civilised community must primarily depend' (from Waddilove, 1954 and Freeman, 2004). The relationship between education and community is clearly reciprocal – just as education can contribute to strengthening communities, so can communities and community-based learning contribute to the development of individuals within those communities.

'Citizenship is not to be learned in good government classes or current events courses or lessons in civics. It is to be acquired only through those modes of living and acting which shall teach us how to grow the social consciousness. This should be the object of all day school education, of all night school education, of all our supervised recreation, of all our family life, of our club life, of our civic life.'

Mary Parker Follett, social worker and renowned management guru, 1918

New Earswick Village Council – citizenship in action

The New Earswick Village Council grew out of an embryonic meeting in 1903. By 1907, a formal constitution and relationship with the trustees of the Joseph Rowntree Village Trust had been established. This defined the main functions of the council as:

a) the working and management of the Folk Hall
b) the arrangement of lectures and classes
c) making suggestions for the improvement of the estate, and the use of the influence of the council for the protection of its amenities
d) commenting on house plans, elevations, and site plans prepared for the development of the village
e) other business affecting the village as a whole.

New Earswick Village Council Constitution, 1907

The Council provided the vehicle through which residents (via locally elected resident members) could directly contribute to planning and development decisions as well as more pragmatically managing social, recreational and educational community-based facilities and activities. Lewis Waddilove (1954) suggested that direct participation in the council was itself a learning opportunity for members, noting that 'Its discussions show the increasingly informed view which members took of problems of housing and site planning'.

Many members of the Rowntree family were acutely concerned with the need to support alternative and often community-based avenues for personal learning and academic development – for both children and adults. A survey of education undertaken in 1843 by a group including the founder's father, Joseph Rowntree Senior (1801–59) and under the

chairmanship of his friend Samuel Tuke (president of the Friends' Educational Society, established in York in 1837) served to highlight this need. It revealed that among the 'labouring classes' in the city:

- 17 per cent of children aged 6–10 did not attend a day school
- 25 per cent of children aged 10–12 did not attend a day school
- 15 per cent of children aged 12–14 could not read
- 56 per cent of children not attending a day school attended a Sunday school

Tillott, 1961

Examples of the Rowntree family's practical concern for the provision of learning and education included a close association with the two Quaker schools in York (Bootham School for boys and The Mount School for girls), involvement in establishing York City Library, their commitment to teaching in the York Adult Schools (which grew out of the Quaker First-Day (Sunday) School founded in 1848) and their contributions to the development of St. Mary's Educational Settlement in York and Swarthmore Educational Settlement in Leeds. As already noted in Chapter 1, this commitment extended into the family's conduct of their chocolate business:

'Rowntree's own cocoa works are often cited as a model of the enlightened late Victorian factory: as well as educational projects, there were workers committees to manage the hospital and library, and there were football, cricket, hockey, tennis, cycling, camping, rambling, boating, swimming, horticultural, allotment, angling, singing, lecture, drama, savings, medical and funeral benefit clubs.'

Mark Freeman, 2004

Workers at the Rowntree's Cocoa Works were well provided for in terms of leisure and 'improving' activities.

In New Earswick, Joseph Rowntree sought to bring to life an innovative new model of community based on lifelong learning and active community engagement that would stand as an exemplar for communities elsewhere.

Building for community learning

Given the desire to create a cohesive community it is no surprise that, in addition to housing, Unwin's first plan for New Earswick (see page 23) incorporated 'ample provision of public buildings of every kind, some indicating the habits of life prevailing at the time, others pointing forward to the kind of healthy activities which it was hoped to encourage' (Waddilove, 1954). The plans allocated space for a 'central building for community use', a library or institute, an art and industry institute and three churches or chapels with separate Sunday school buildings. In reality, this early plan was never fully realised and the development of community and public buildings has occurred in a more organic and incremental pattern over time.

When the village was first occupied various social amenities were provided in two houses set aside to provide a social centre for the village. This became known as the Earswick Assembly Rooms. The later decision by the village trustees to approve the building of the Folk Hall was taken primarily in response to the inadequacy of this accommodation for religious services. Opened in 1907, though not on the site originally allocated to it, the Folk Hall clearly assumed the role of 'central building for community use' as specified in Unwin's 1903 plan. In his speech at its opening, Joseph Rowntree suggested that 'if a village is to have a united life and a common interest in things affecting its welfare, it is almost necessary that it should have a place for meeting' and he voiced his expectation that residents would 'have many interests and activities which will naturally centre around this building'. This expectation has been amply fulfilled, with the Folk Hall having played host to a wide range of social, recreational and educational activities over the years.

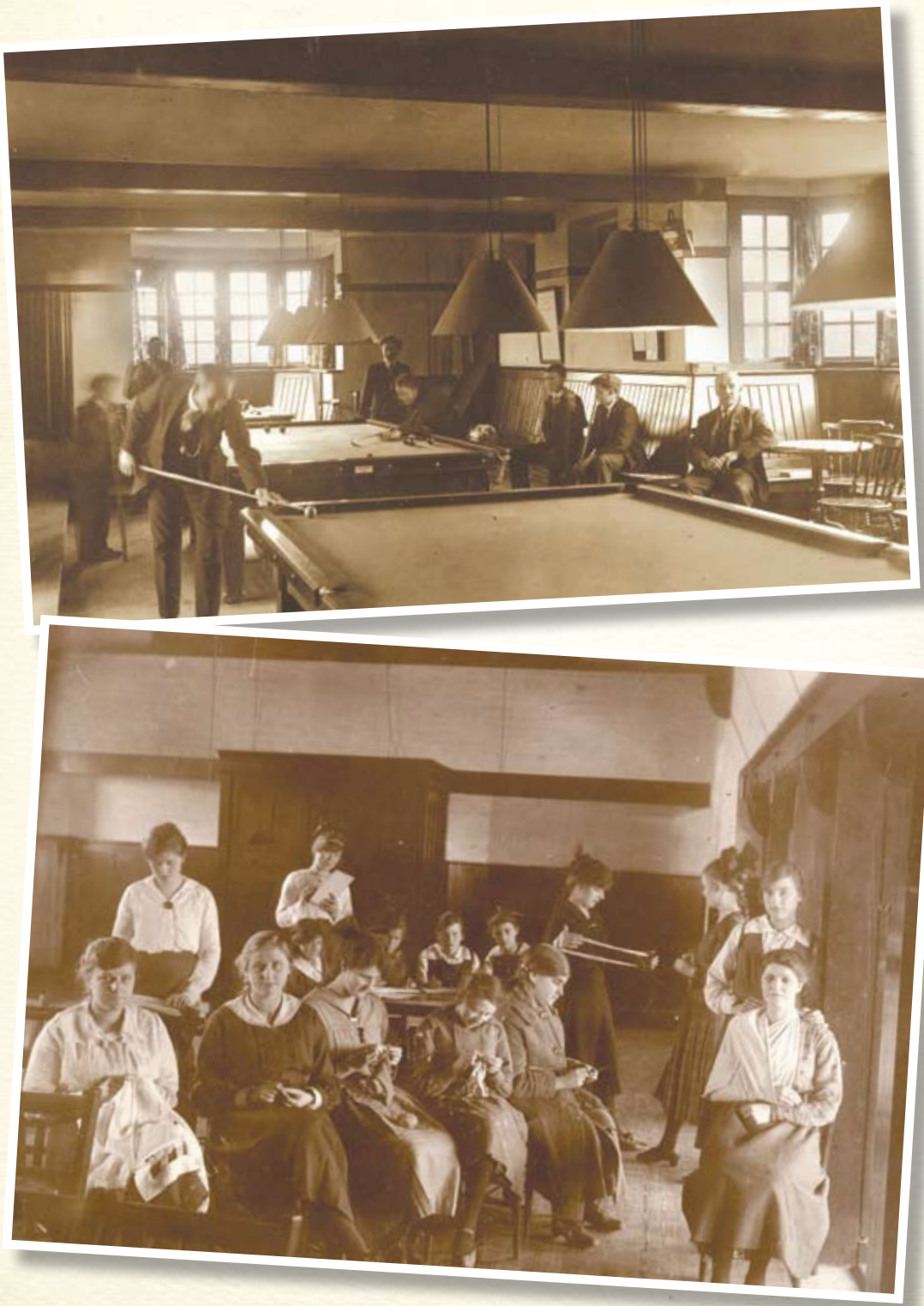
The Folk Hall – community in action

The Folk Hall housed a wide variety of social and leisure facilities, including the earliest school. An early pamphlet describes the facilities available: 'The social life of the village centres round the Folk Hall. This building comprises a large hall used for meetings and concerts, a billiard room, and a number of smaller rooms used for committees and other gatherings. It is also the home of a Social Club… Adjoining the Hall is a Bowling Green.'

When the building was extended in 1935, the opening of the new section was celebrated with a review, New Earswick 1903–1935, to which 20 local clubs and societies contributed, from the camera and tennis clubs to the operatic society and the Children's Welfare Centre.

'…everything centred round the Folk Hall, all the things that happened was at the Folk Hall, which was only a small hall to what it is today, but we all enjoyed ourselves very much there… we went to whist drives there on a Saturday night and enjoyed them ever so much, everybody was sociable…'

Mary Days (born in Ivy Place)



Social club - snooker - and girls club, c1910. Both images courtesy of the Imagine York collection, www.imagineyork.co.uk © City of York Libraries, Archives and Local History Department, www.york.gov.uk/archives

'It may be asked why we do not look to the establishment of a number of different places of Worship throughout the village. Our action has been determined by the wish to create as far as possible a united village life, and to banish from it everything that tends to the creation of separate interests. Whether this ideal is one which we shall be able to realise, only time will show.'

Joseph Rowntree, speech at the opening of the Folk Hall, 1907

The construction of St. Andrew's Church (opened in 1914), New Earswick Methodist Church (opened in 1927), the movement of the members of the Roman Catholic community to worship at the new St. Paulinus Roman Catholic Church in neighbouring Heworth in 1969, and, more recently, New Earswick Friends' Meeting House (opened in 1988), suggest that this experiment in interdenominational co-operation was of negligible success. A report by social anthropologist Paul Morpurgo in 1960 suggested that 'The community life of New Earswick could certainly be strengthened if more earnest attempts were made by the religious groups to unite at least some of their social activities'. By 2008, the only religious group using the Folk Hall for regular public worship was the Christadelphians for their Sunday afternoon services, Sunday school and bible class.

In marked contrast to the remainder of the estate, which was expected to yield a reasonable return on financial investment, the Folk Hall was the gift of the founder to the people of New Earswick. Joseph found much to admire in the 'corporate life' of small village communities:

'The villages of Joseph's day were little units of their own, without many contacts beyond their parish boundaries. People were obliged to take some interest in each other, and some responsibility for their neighbours. Class distinctions were as rigid as anywhere else, but there were common interests to make them less obvious.'

Vernon, 1958

On this basis and despite his own arguments to the contrary it has been suggested that the Folk Hall embodied Joseph's 'partly conscious attempt to re-create a ruralised, paternalistic atmosphere in the village' (Freeman, 2004) just as in his factory he 'gave his employees such things as he thought it good for them to have' (Vernon, 1958). The Folk Hall unashamedly harks back to a rural village hall idyll of earlier times while at the same time anticipating the post-war reconstruction trend towards well-equipped local community centres. A Ministry of Education report in 1944 (cited in Smith, 2002) suggested that:

'A community centre should be regarded as an essential amenity of normal community living in normal circumstances … The provision of communal facilities for the rational and enjoyable use of leisure is a necessary part of the country's education system.'

In 1908, at the end of the first full year of the Folk Hall's operation, the council's specially-formed social and education sub-committee reported that there had been: eight lectures, two concerts, three social evenings, four whist drives and three excursions. A similar programme was reported in 1908–9 and:

'In addition to the entertainments etc … the Hall has been freely used for Sunday services in connection with the Adult School; Church of England, and Wesleyan [Methodist] bodies. A kindergarten school has been opened by Mr Joseph Rowntree during the early part of the financial year under review. This has proved a great boon to the village, and has been highly appreciated by the parents of the young children attending it.'

The New Earswick Folk Hall after the new extension, c1935.

Memories of the Folk Hall

'...we used to have a girls' club doing all sorts of hobbies such as sewing, knitting, pen painting, dancing and first aid, all of which came in very useful.'

Resident who moved from Leeds in 1905

'A great highlight of the year was the Women's Guild supper. Each member invited their husbands and children and it was often a rabbit pie supper. We all made our own fun – giving little sketches etc. there was also a Girl's Guild – we met one night a week. Among the things we did was first aid and we would finish the last hour dancing and invite the boys from their billiard club to join us. This all happened before the large hall was built. There were also some very good ballroom dance classes held every week.'

Resident who moved into New Earswick in 1910

'We used to have a lovely social club in the Folk Hall. All the old gentlemen used to come in for the billiards. It was properly conducted, nice tables, well organised. All that seems to have fallen away now ... It's faded out in the last twenty years.'

Resident born in New Earswick in 1909

As well as providing for the kindergarten and other activities, the founder donated the first 100 books for the library which opened in the Folk Hall in 1908. Over time the library received other gifts of books as well as paying a subscription of one guinea per year for borrowing 50 books per quarter from the Yorkshire Village Library in Leeds. In fact this facility proved so popular that in 1924 shortage of space meant the lower age limit for membership had to be increased from 12- to 14-years-old. In 1973 a purpose-built library building was opened behind the Folk Hall and most recently, the library – now rebranded as an explore library learning centre – has been moved again as part of the new facilities being provided at the children's centre.

Learning and leisure

Long before his great commercial success Joseph Rowntree was involved in the adult school movement – having taught his own adult school class, based at Lady Peckitt's Yard in York, for more than 40 years. Though established by the Society of Friends, adult schools were always open to all and provided an opportunity for individuals to learn to read and

New Earswick School clock and weather vane, thought to show a Quaker (Joseph Rowntree himself?) reading to two children.

write but with the broader aim 'to deepen understanding and enrich life through fellowship, study, social service and concern for religious and ethical values' (Feeney, 1984). An adult school for men, meeting in the Folk Hall on a Sunday morning, was established in 1907, and a corresponding school for women opened, somewhat belatedly, in 1940.

Joseph Rowntree's son, Joseph Stephenson Rowntree (known as Stephen) continued his father's interest in education for all ages. He compiled annual reports for the New Earswick Village Trust. From 1921–1935, in addition to summarising the work of the village school each year, these described other activities including a young persons' guild and junior club, a choral society, orchestral society and dramatic society, a women's guild and numerous courses and classes in subjects such as French, folk dancing, physical training, cookery, hobbies and handicrafts.

Healthy minds in healthy bodies

'I spent quite a lot of time helping Mr. Sorenson at his farm, played football, cricket, went swimming in the Foss and Yearsley baths, played street games that aren't heard of now... Peggy, Tally Ho, marbles – this was possible because there was no traffic.'

New Earswick resident, 1987

Joe Murphy's excellent pictorial history of the village contains several photographs of the village's sporting teams, but it is evident that they struggled to obtain the facilities they wanted. The village council managed sports fields from 1927 but the opening of the secondary school in 1942 placed an additional burden on the playing fields, which were also used by the school. This extra wear and tear rendered the land unsuitable for the level of competition local teams aspired to. In 1950 the trust finally made 16 acres from a vacant farm available to the village council and subsequently bought a second-hand pavilion. All were provided to the council rent free.

In addition to the clubs and societies that make use of the Folk Hall, a still broader range of sporting and leisure facilities is provided within the new secondary school.

New Earswick's football club is one of the village's long-standing sporting teams.

As already mentioned in Chapter Two, New Earswick has not been immune to the issue, real or perceived, of the behaviour of some young people:

'The most glaring fault in the village life has for some time been the unruliness of the youths of both sexes. It would appear as if the circumstances of the village, coupled with a declining sense of parental responsibility, have produced a situation which is not without precedent in other places, but which is intensified in New Earswick by reason of the great proportion of children there … In front of the stores they have made themselves infamous by the damage done, and residents in other parts have had reason year by year to complain of the way in which gardens and orchards are raided and robbed.'

New Earswick Village Council report to Joseph Stephenson Rowntree and the New Earswick Village Trust, 1925

The parallel with the so-called 'hoody generation' of young people almost a century later is unmistakable. Part of the social and educational programme put in place early in the life of the village was a response designed to counteract this specific problem. In 1924, 'half the hut at the far end of the village' was allocated for the use of a junior club which was open several nights of the week during the winter months, though it was acknowledged this was a far from ideal situation.

'The village is very much alive to the big problem … in connection with post-school education and recreation facilities … There are people in the village who are willing to give their time and abilities in the service of the young men and women in the village but there are no premises entirely suitable to club work, and there is no money to finance it. It can hardly be said that the army hut is better than nothing. The position is bad, and of course the hut is not really attractive. I propose to sanction much more use of the school premises…'

Joseph Stephenson Rowntree. Report to the New Earswick Village Council, 1925

By 1925, proposals that anticipated the national promotion of 'full service' and 'extended' schools 80 years later were being considered. These were to lead to the foundation of the Joseph Rowntree Secondary School which it was hoped would offer a setting for formal and non-formal education, 'the nucleus for a considerable amount of social [and educational] activity' beyond the extent of the normal school day. A range of activities – provided under the auspices of an evening institute and social club – were based in the schools with local authority support.

Evenings in the secondary school

'Each evening sees the assembly of further students, most of them for activities organised by either the Evening Institute or the Youth Club. Both these organisations are sponsored by the Local Authority, and, broadly speaking, the Institute arranges all groups of an educational or cultural nature while the Club caters for social and recreational activities. There is no limit to the age of members. The classes organised by the Evening Institute are of a very wide variety, some are designed to lead up to recognised examinations, or carry entry to higher grade classes elsewhere, others are in the nature of cultural classes, craft classes and the like. The activities of the Youth Club cover indoor and outdoor games, physical training and sports of all kinds, as well as various social activities such as camps, and visits to places in this country and abroad. The members of the two organisations have their own canteen and library. Every encouragement is given to them to take a full share in the various activities, and there is a council of elected student-members as well as the official committee under the Authority.'

Joseph Rowntree Secondary School Prospectus, 1947

Other village venues that have accommodated leisure and learning-related activities have included the churches (Sunday schools and youth clubs), a new scout hut, described in the Village Council's Annual Report in 1963 as 'an admirable building well situated' and a swimming pool built in 1967. Today, there are numerous clubs and societies based in the Folk Hall – during the first two weeks of July 2010 there were 32 events at the Folk Hall, including tea dances, embroiderers guild, musical society, tumble tots, budgie club, whist drive, line dancers and over-50s keep fit. Other activities in the village include the community arts and community philosophy projects, directly funded by the Joseph Rowntree Housing Trust to promote intergenerational communication and understanding within the community. The various activities of the community philosophers provided specific opportunities for New Earswick residents to engage in philosophical discussion and enquiry.

Being a learning community

'It was the view of those with experience elsewhere that New Earswick was provided with a quite unusually generous scale of accommodation … the wonder was not that a problem of inadequate use existed now, but that the accommodation was ever fully used by the community at all.'

New Earswick Village Council Constitution and annual reports 1907–1978

Partly by design and partly by accident, New Earswick has secured considerable accommodation for social, recreational and educational community-based activities. The buildings, as the founder predicted, were a good starting point but not necessarily sufficient to guarantee a future for New Earswick as an active 'learning community'.

Folk Hall audiences

In spite of some residents' glowing memories of the Folk Hall, the early years in the village brought disappointment that there was not more support for the 'improving' entertainments – concerts and lectures – that some villagers wished to promote. The first annual report of activities at the Folk Hall (1908) concluded: 'Without any desire to disparage the work that has been done during the past year, it is to be hoped that the Hall will become the centre of a fuller and richer village life in days to come.'

A year later, in 1909: 'Some of the entertainments were well patronized, but generally speaking they have not received the support one would wish. In view of the amount of labour involved in arranging the syllabus, and the high tone of the concerts, lectures etc, there should be no lack of support ...'

In 1954, Lewis Waddilove reflected that 'The repetition of this view over the years indicates that the difficulties of securing a reasonable audience for such functions are not so recent in their origin as is sometimes supposed.'

As early as 1959 an enquiry undertaken to compare provision in New Earswick with community centres and facilities provided elsewhere pointed to the many benefits derived from the existence of the Folk Hall. Nevertheless, the last 50 years have seen declining participation and financial difficulties for the hall as the focus of a learning community and it has been the subject of several independent review processes. Derek Adams' report of 1979 concurs with the level of generosity involved, but also suggests this actually contributed to the root cause of the problem:

'The trust is still looked upon as the universal provider of benefits, not with gratitude but more with annoyance that more benefits are not provided … It is important to emphasise again the privileged position of [New Earswick] in receiving such substantial financial support with little or no effort on its part.'

Adams, 1979

Indeed, there is evidence that activities at the Folk Hall have often been more highly supported by those living beyond village boundaries – participants who perhaps suffer less from the burden of unrealistic expectations and are more easily able to appreciate the facilities and activities provided.

Over the course of the last century improved transportation and the gradual transformation of New Earswick from a distinct rural village into a suburb of York have together conspired to compound the problem of local participation and to erode the sense of community derived from the 'pioneer spirit' of the early residents. For these first residents, making a commitment to live in New Earswick meant 'leaving the advantages of an established urban neighbourhood to live in the country, with poor roads, no public transport, no street lighting and the minimum of public services' (William Wallace, Chairman of the Joseph Rowntree Village Trust, in the preface to L.E. Waddilove, 1954).These deficiencies were quickly remedied and the village was privileged in the provision of buildings and activities to support both individual and collective community learning. As the village grew, transport improved and links with the City of York strengthened and changed the tastes and demands of local people. Residents wanted new and different community facilities and some, particularly younger people, complained that the Folk Hall no longer offered what they wanted while others, often longer-term residents, commented on local apathy:

'The Folk Hall was 100 years old last year [2007] and they had an open day with lots of stalls, trying to show people the sort of people that came to the Folk Hall and to encourage more of the villagers to take part and nobody came – there were about half a dozen people.'

'…when do you get the village people coming anywhere – today they don't come.'

Older residents and members of the Community Philosophy group

The changing nature of demand reflects the fact that no social experiment can be completely successful (just as the original trusts could not resolve the major social issues with which

they were charged). If the new facilities (children's centre and new secondary school) in New Earswick succeed in catering for a changing population and in creating new communities, the village's pre-existing facilities, such as the Folk Hall, will face the challenge of finding new and complementary purposes and new activities. Once again the village will be more than generously provided with facilities for learning and community involvement.

If this ongoing social and educational experiment is not wholly successful that may be in part due to the sheer generosity of provision. It is however an experiment that reflects current preoccupations with building viable and effective communities and supporting families. Where shared experiences of work and an established and unchanging social order once provided the glue that held communities together we now look to education, leisure and the digital world to create and maintain the social relationships that are the bedrock of communities.

Continuing innovation

In recent years the rapid pace of social and economic change has highlighted the need for new forms of provision for both adults and children. The old conundrum of how to maximise participation continues to be relevant but now it is joined by the need to cater for new concepts of equality and the creation of new local and global learning communities. These challenges have continued to occupy the trust, which has developed a range of programmes and projects that try to engage all local people, groups and organisations in village life. Some of these projects have been innovative, and not tried before – others are models from other parts of the world that have been modified for the locality.

In early 2000, one of these programmes – Communities that Care (CtC) – was tried out in New Earswick. Based on a United States model, established and funded in a number of cities across the UK by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, the project brought together a range of service providers and interested adults, including both schools, to form a steering group. This group, supported by the national CtC organisation, asked each student to complete an in-depth questionnaire under exam conditions. The questionnaire explored responses to actual experiences and/or perceptions of young people in relation to a range of personal, educational and social areas, including for example students' and parents' attitudes to education, absences from school, completing homework, peer pressure, use of alcohol, drugs, smoking and pregnancy. The results of the surveys were then processed by CtC and a report produced that highlighted some of the key issues. Interestingly and unusually for the UK the CtC approach not only identified those areas of concern but also those areas where there were protective factors present that mitigated the issues. The steering group, armed with this information, was then able to draw on a range of evidence -based interventions to address the key risk factors, with a programme called Promising Approaches. This programme was very successful in bringing together a diverse group of people who were responsible for delivering services and who lived in the village, and resulted in a number of programmes linked to both schools and the wider community being implemented. The programme also provided a platform for more innovative projects being developed, including the community philosophy project, which, after some initial support

from JRHT and JRF, continued to develop through the commitment of both young and older local people.

The second half of this book looks at how New Earswick continues to be a centre for innovation in education and community cohesion, continuing to tackle many of the issues identified through the Communities that Care initiative. The early years of the twenty-first century have seen the largest upheaval in the provision of education in the village since New Earswick was established – through the creation of a new children's centre, new secondary school and enhanced primary school. We will consider whether these new buildings have indeed sparked the re-imagining and re-vitalising of learning and community for the village that was intended.

> 'Be zealous that education may be continued throughout life, and that its privileges may be shared by all.'
>
> **Christian faith and practice in the experience of the Society of Friends**

Part two

A view to the future

'Vision without action is merely a dream, action without vision just passes the time, vision with action can change the world.'

Joel Barker, Futurist

CHAPTER 5

New beginnings

Changing times

'The twenty-first century school system... will look and feel very different to the one we have been used to. It will be one in which...schools look beyond traditional boundaries, are much more outward-facing, working in closer partnership with children, young people and parents... other children's services; the third sector, the private sector and employers; and the local authority and its Children's Trust partners.'

DCSF, 2008a

As has been shown in the first part of this book, New Earswick was founded on revolutionary and forward-thinking principles. The century that has passed since its foundation has been one of immense social, political and economic turmoil, bringing radical change to every aspect of British society. The original aims of the founder and his family, to provide good homes, a strong community and a comprehensive education for all, sit at the heart of much of the political debate in twenty-first century Britain. Today's politicians, social leaders and educational thinkers continue to look for ways of meeting these ideals and there is increasingly a consensus that catering for the aspirations of the people is the core purpose of government.

On a global scale, the close of the twentieth century saw technology bringing people much closer together and saw some great shifts in economic power. The economies of the western world no longer dominated. Manufacturing and production shifted to the growing economies

of the east and it became increasingly clear that, in order to compete effectively, the UK needed a workforce with higher levels of skills and knowledge – which demand a relatively high level of education. Where once Joseph and his family promoted education as a route to a better life, government now prioritises educational opportunity as the key to a more prosperous society. Contemporary divisions centre upon educational context and content in a climate of increasing awareness, informed by Joseph Rowntree Foundation research, that inequalities rooted in social background and education persisted as the early gains made by the incoming Labour government of 1997 stalled. While some of the indicators of absolute poverty, such as preventable disease and malnutrition, have been tackled in this country, commitments to end relative child poverty are no nearer realisation now than they were when Seebohm Rowntree and his inspectors catalogued the conditions in which so many of York's children grew up a century ago. Some progress was made towards the then Labour government's pledge to halve child poverty by 2010 and eradicate it by 2020. However the Child Poverty Action Group estimated that the target for 2010 looked likely to be missed by at least 600,000 children.

Examples of recent JRF work on poverty in the UK. JRF continues to be a significant contributor to the debate on poverty, its causes, effects and solutions.

While contexts and political languages change and cyber networks begin to assume as much social significance as geographical communities, social problems persist. Poverty and exclusion – concepts that were certainly familiar to Joseph Rowntree and his fellow pioneers – remain two of the preoccupations of national and local policy-makers. Increasingly, governments have seen access to education and work as substantial solutions to these problems and successive initiatives have been launched to address these key issues.

New government, new priorities

Few now see political debate in the UK in the polarised terms of the mid-twentieth century. The major political parties occupy a narrower centre ground and are grouped around a consensus that the state has a significant role in providing social structures and services which encourage cohesion and a sense of community. Just as Joseph Rowntree aimed to create a new community through artificial means 100 years ago, so government now looks for ways of helping to build communities and cementing them together through what is called community cohesion. The emphasis on communities has been reflected across a wide range of policy areas including education, the environment and law and order, with higher government spending in these areas from 1997–2010.

However the Conservative–Liberal Democrat Coalition Government which came into power in May 2010 acted quickly to announce two shifts; firstly a significant reduction in government spending; and secondly an intention to be less active in trying to directly influence concepts such as community and cohesion, but rather to encourage individuals to become more involved in shaping their own local communities. The new government's response to the public spending deficit led to the immediate announcement of cuts, not least the cancellation of the Building Schools for the Future programme. And while the new Prime Minister, David Cameron, continued to stress the importance of communities and cohesion, his early rhetoric placed increased emphasis on local and personal responsibility to achieve these goals. In July 2010 Cameron launched his 'Big Society' agenda. He identified one of the three main strands as community empowerment:

'We need to create communities with oomph – neighbourhoods who are in charge of their own destiny, who feel if they club together and get involved they can shape the world around them.'

David Cameron, launching 'the Big Society' in Liverpool, 19 July 2010

So the era of high public spending and direct government involvement in trying to create strong communities may have gone, but this era has left significant legacies. In recent years New Earswick has, along with most areas in England, seen the creation of a children's centre to support 0–5-year-olds and their families, attached to the founder's newly renovated original primary school. It has also been one of far fewer areas to witness the building of a brand new secondary school. So what was the local context in which these new facilities were created?

The local challenge

'Community means people looking out for each other… somewhere you can rely on other people.'

A New Earswick Community Philosophy team member, 14 April 2008

After a century of rapid change, York, the busy railway and manufacturing city of the late Victorian age, has come to be seen as an affluent tourist destination. Even so, it is not immune to social problems. A snapshot of today's younger population is far removed from the desperate poverty of 1902 but it is also far from perfect.

If York had only a hundred children… …this is what they would have looked like in 2009

Ninety-three are white British and seven are from ethnic minorities, probably white European, Asian or Chinese.

One speaks English as an additional language.

Most are happy, healthy and successful at home and at school but, by the age of 16, some have already experienced significant problems.

Fourteen live in poverty.

Two have an allocated social worker.

Almost half have seen their parents divorce.

Twelve are obese.

One is under the supervision of the Youth Offending Team.

Twenty-three live in lone parent families.

Outcomes and experiences at school can be very different

Sixty-eight leave school with five or more GCSEs at grades A*-C and most go on to further education, but three are not in any form of education or training at age 16.

Fifteen struggle to read fluently at the age of 11.

Seventeen have a special educational need; two have a statement, probably for emotional, behavioural or social difficulties.

Five are bullied at school at least once a week; three are bullied almost every school day.

Adapted from The City of York Children and Young People's Plan, 2009–2012

New Earswick, though not an area of extreme deprivation, has also experienced these changing concerns. Research by Robertson Bell (Robertson Bell, 1993 and 1995), funded by JRHT, showed that by the mid-1990s the number of single parent tenancies in the village had risen to 14.2 per cent, in line with national figures. Rising house prices, coupled with other economic trends, led to an increased likelihood that non-pensioner couples would share their homes with adult children. Twenty per cent of non-pensioner households surveyed in 1995 contained no adult in full-time work. Two in five households did not possess a car and the majority of these were occupied by pensioners and single parents. Residents continued to complain of 'kids hanging around' or 'gangs of youths' while longer -term inhabitants reported a decline in community spirit. A resident who grew up in the village made a distinction between the 'mischievousness' of himself and his friends as children and the 'malice' of today's youth. The same research reported that teenagers saw the village as a good place to live but said that they were bored, that the village was designed to suit the needs of an older generation and that many of that generation were intolerant of them and unwelcoming.

'You're not allowed to enjoy yourself in New Earswick. If you make any noise, they ask you to stop. If you put up a rope swing, they take it down. You can't have this, you can't have that. You can't have satellite TV. You can't do this, you can't go in there.'

13-year-old boy surveyed by Robertson Bell, 1993

JRHT's housing policy was and is, however, consistent with other social landlords i.e. the aim is to make best use of properties in creating balanced and sustainable communities. The current policy for the rented housing does assess housing need in awarding priority, however this takes into account of current housing circumstances and medical needs as well as wider social needs. While this can lead to certain groups gaining higher priorities, JRHT tries to mitigate against risks and increase diversity through a range of policies, including allowing lettings from nominations, general waiting lists, transfer lists and 'others'. The trust's pioneering work in mixed and flexible income and tenures, including, since the late 1990s, the SAVE programme (see page 40), has had significant impacts in bringing greater income and home-ownership levels to the village, avoiding the over-polarisation of low income, single parent families, and creating a more diverse community.

Nevertheless, as in many towns and villages, there has been a partial fragmentation of established relationships and an increasing trend towards smaller family units and a social life centred on contacts determined by age. Children learn in nurseries and schools; adults work outside the village; increasingly, some older people live separately – in specialist accommodation or settlements like Hartrigg Oaks – and they socialise in venues dominated by their own age group, like the Folk Hall. Occasional encounters between older and younger residents reveal the potential dangers of such divisions but also offer hopes for re-establishing all-age communities.

The Folk Hall works hard to attract younger local residents.

'...to me, the younger generation... were completely alien – I didn't know what they thought, what their values were or anything about them, and it was rather a relief to find that they have the same doubts and fears that I had at their age, and they have the same thoughts and the same things that they want to do as my children did when they were growing up... It is nice to find out that they are just like us.'

Brenda (an older resident) speaking in a New Earswick Community Philosophy Group discussion, 14 April 2008


THE FOLK HALL

The place of the Joseph Rowntree Foundation and trusts

According to the then Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) a new emphasis on community cohesion was intended to help to create:

'...a society in which there is a common vision and sense of belonging by all communities; a society in which the diversity of people's backgrounds and circumstances is appreciated and valued; a society in which similar life opportunities are available to all; and a society in which strong and positive relationships exist and continue to be developed in the workplace, in schools and in the wider community.'

DCSF, 2007

Schools have a pivotal role in knitting together populations that are no longer united through a single shared faith, agreed moral values and the common interests derived from occupations based on seasonal rhythms and labour-intensive mass production.

Contemporary government policy, at least up to 2010 – aiming to deliver socially inclusive and cohesive communities through education and tolerance for diversity – adopted some of the same Quaker ambitions and aspirations that drove the village's foundation, and the Rowntree trusts continue to adapt and expand upon them. Over the century from their foundation they have taken on the role of supplying key information for government as well as exploring and trialling viable solutions to major social problems. (There is an outline

The Homestead, site of Benjamin Seebohm Rowntree's family house and home to the JRF since 1990.

of the development and scope of the trusts' work on page 28). Just as the village of New Earswick is now incorporated into the City of York, so the Rowntree trusts now work in closer partnership with the authority to tackle major local issues.

In the remainder of this chapter we outline the national context for the two school initiatives in more detail and in the following chapters we examine how they have been implemented in New Earswick.

Sure Start and children's centres

'Our aim is to improve outcomes for all young children, and in particular to close the gap between the outcome for the most disadvantaged children and others.'

DCSF, 2006

The early years of a child's development play a massive role in later life chances. Seebohm Rowntree's inspectors could easily observe the impact of poverty on children's diet, growth and general health. In the intervening century improved availability of food and mass vaccination programmes have made substantial differences to the visible effects of poverty on the young. Now we are increasingly concerned with the less obvious effects of deprivation and their impact on long-term development and life chances.

The last 30 years have seen a growing acceptance that education from the age of five does not, on its own, guarantee equality of opportunity. In fact, many experts – for example those involved in the Cambridge Primary Review of 2009 (Alexander, 2009) – suggest that entry into formal education should be deferred until the age of six or seven, as it is in many European countries and in the United States. They suggest that early years should focus on the development of the social skills that underpin later academic success. So far UK governments have been reluctant to accept this proposal in full but there is a general agreement that something needs to change. By their fifth birthdays many of our children already lag behind their peers in terms of personal and intellectual development. Investment in improving opportunities for pre-school children has therefore become a priority, particularly for those with complex needs and those in areas of deprivation. Children's centres have a specific role in targeting provision at these children and their families.

By 2000, multiple disadvantage for young children was acknowledged to be a severe and growing problem that greatly enhanced the chances of social exclusion later in life. The quality of service provision for young children and their families varied enormously across localities and districts, with unco-ordinated and patchy services being the norm in many areas. Provision was particularly dislocated for the under-fours – an age group that tended to be left out of other government programmes. The scale of demand – the DCSF estimated that 200,000 families needed significant, multi-agency support – and clear evidence of failure in existing provision required radical new solutions.

Every Child Matters

In February 2000 the death in London of a single child, Victoria Climbié, resulted in a transformation of the way in which services for children and young people were delivered. It highlighted critical inadequacies in the existing system and in communication between the different branches of state provision dedicated to helping children in difficulty and danger.

Victoria had contact with three housing departments, four social services departments, two metropolitan police service child protection teams, a specialist centre managed by the NSPCC, and two hospitals to which she was admitted because she was thought to be the victim of deliberate harm. One of the many key failings identified by Lord Laming's 2003 report on her death was the lack of integration between children's services which could have led to a life-saving intervention.

The government's key response was to launch Every Child Matters. The aim of this policy was to ensure that all children have the support they need to achieve five key outcomes :

1. Be healthy
2. Stay safe
3. Enjoy and achieve
4. Make a positive contribution
5. Achieve economic well-being.

As part of this major new initiative, in March 2003 the government announced that it was to create a network of children's centres across the country.

Children's centres built upon the success of the Sure Start initiative, which was launched in 1999. Its early aims were to improve outcomes for children, particularly those experiencing disadvantage, through provision of integrated services that included high quality, affordable and accessible childcare, early learning, health and family support services. The focus on child care by the government was signalled by the publication in 1998 of a seminal green paper, *Meeting the Childcare Challenge* (DfEE, 1998). There was compelling evidence from long-term studies of programmes like Head Start and the Perry Pre-School programme in the United States, as well as from experimental programmes in the UK, that comprehensive early years programmes could make a difference to children's lives.

Sure Start cost about £200m a year and was intended to provide an upgrade in the level of services to young children and their parents. These local programmes were aimed at improving the health and well-being of families and children from before birth to the age of four. Early programmes were concentrated in neighbourhoods where a high proportion of children lived in poverty and Sure Start local programmes opened in waves, starting in 1999.

What is poverty?

There are many and varied definitions of poverty, views about how it should be tackled and by whom. The Joseph Rowntree Foundation has certainly made a major contribution to this debate through its regular updates on what poverty means in contemporary UK society. Foundation research has sought to answer questions such as:

- What constitutes an acceptable minimum standard of living in the UK?
- At what point does household income drop below what is needed to supply it?

JRF's resources, far in excess of those available to Seebohm Rowntree, have enabled it to expand on his work and to explore what he deduced were the larger effects of poverty – its impact on educational opportunities and outcomes, health and criminality.

A complete list of JRF publications is available at www.jrf.org.uk/publications.

One of the earliest aspects of this increasing focus on children's services was the plan to rebrand early excellence centres (Sure Start projects that offered childcare) and neighbourhood nurseries, as children's centres. By 2010 these would be universally accessible – a principle considered so important that it became a statutory requirement for local authorities to provide children's centres.

The then government department for Children, Schools and Families led the launch, management and branding of the new Children's Centres.

The services offered varied in each centre, partly dependent on the level of deprivation found locally, but could include:

• early education combined with childcare – all centres offering full early years day care provision had to employ a qualified teacher
• support for parents – including advice on parenting, local childcare options and access to specialist services for families
• child and family health services – ranging from health screening and health visitor services to breast-feeding support
• links to the local Jobcentre Plus and training to help parents into work.

Children's centres continue to act as a 'service hub' within the community, offering not only a base for childminder networks, but also a link to other day care provision, out-of-school clubs, and extended schools. Centres may also offer services such as training in the form of parenting classes, tuition in basic skills and English as an additional language, benefits advice, childcare services for older children and toy libraries.

The work done by the children's centre in the unique context of New Earswick is described in detail in Chapter 6.

Building schools for the future

'School buildings should inspire learning. They should nurture every pupil and member of staff. They should be a source of pride and a practical resource for the community.'

DfES, Building Schools for the Future, 2003

By the end of the second millennium the UK's secondary schools faced a new challenge. Many of the schools built to provide better access to secondary education for the teenagers of the 1930s and 40s, were themselves of pensionable age. Only 14 per cent of the nation's school buildings had been built after 1976 and many millions of pounds had to be spent annually on repairs and maintenance while technological change meant that money was being spent to render habitable buildings that were no longer fit for purpose. Neither could the old building stock meet the demands of new, environmentally responsible sustainability agendas.

Building Schools for the Future (BSF) was announced in 2004 as a £45 billion, 15-year programme for the rebuilding or renewal of around 3,500 state secondary schools. The aim was to get new projects underway in more than a quarter of all local authorities by 2007/08. By 2011 projects were to have begun in every local authority in the country and around 60 per cent of all authorities were to be engaged in at least three major school rebuilding projects. Like Sure Start, this programme was to be implemented in waves. It

also offered some local authorities a 'trial run' in the form of One School Pathfinder projects, which would not only further the authority's own strategic development of education and services, but also contribute to a pool of experience that could inform future phases of BSF. This phase enabled local authorities to explore the BSF process in the rebuilding of the secondary school they deemed to be in greatest need of renewal. York was selected as one of 25 pathfinder authorities and selected New Earswick's Joseph Rowntree School as its first rebuilt school.

In July 2010, just before publication of this book, the incoming Conservative–Liberal Democrat Coalition Government announced a complete overhaul of capital investment in England's schools, bringing to an abrupt end the BSF programme. The new Secretary of State for Education, Michael Gove, said he was making tough, immediate decisions to help get the best value for money and that in the light of the public finances, it would have been irresponsible to carry on regardless with an 'inflexible, and needlessly complex programme'.

At the time of this announcement 186 schools had been rebuilt or renovated. Of the 1,433 schools which had begun the process of planning for rebuilding or renovation, 735 were stopped, 151 were categorised as 'for discussion' and 547 were unaffected.

Despite this abrupt cancellation of the BSF programme, capital investment will still inevitably be made into the rebuilding of our secondary schools, if at a much slower pace. There are lessons to be learned from the wider programme and from the experience of the rebuild of The Joseph Rowntree School. It is therefore worth reflecting on the original aims of the programme and how these have played out in New Earswick.

It was inevitable that such substantial government investment should be accompanied by government control and prescription. As we shall see in Chapters 7 and 8, the opportunities offered by government funding have been partly constrained by the red tape and restrictions that came with the money. What is more, even before the BSF programme was cancelled the global economic recession and the depletion of government funds led to expenditure being more closely scrutinised. Control, prescription and the pressure for evidence of value for money were intensified and both government and project managers faced increasing pressure to balance ambitious aims with an absence of risk.

While the primary focus of the One School Pathfinder and BSF programmes was to improve educational opportunities and outcomes for young people and adults, these initiatives also made explicit demands for high quality design. In what Prime Minister Tony Blair described in 2004 as '…the greatest school renewal programme in British history' not only should the new buildings offer the best possible facilities for provision, including traditional academic routes to qualifications and new and diverse vocational programmes, they should also be sufficiently flexible to accommodate future developments, encourage new and innovative approaches to teaching and learning and foster inclusion. All of this resonated with the forward-looking attitudes of the Rowntree family and trusts throughout the twentieth century and opened up new prospects for yet more radical change.

'Building Schools for the Future will deliver tailored classroom facilities to support innovative teaching styles; high-quality facilities to support subject specialism; and integrated ICT; all to help deliver personalised learning tailored to the needs, interests and aptitudes of every child.'

David Miliband, Schools Minister, 2004

Exemplar designs were made available to schools with a view to improving the design quality of the new buildings. These designs – five primary schools, five secondary schools and one 'all-through' school – were created by eleven leading architectural practices. Their purpose was to develop a shared vision of what 'schools for the future' could be as well as offering design benchmarks and promoting innovation and inspiration. However, government limitations on how to select architects and builders, and on who was eligible, meant that the best of forward-looking modern design was not always made available to Pathfinder and BSF schemes. As we see in Chapter 7, at New Earswick these limitations inhibited the authority's ability to capitalise on JRF expertise in the management of innovative design projects.

Moreover, although new buildings had become essential owing to the state of the accommodation to be replaced, there was not a great deal of evidence that they would necessarily lead to improved attainment. Many commentators and government sources relied on PricewaterhouseCoopers' review of new school building (PricewaterhouseCoopers 2003), largely based on US evidence, as providing proof that well-orchestrated capital expenditure brings measurable educational gains. In fact PricewaterhouseCoopers identified some aspects of primary school and ICT based work that could benefit – in the latter instance from provision of up-to-date facilities – but were extremely cautious in making any broader claim. In areas of extreme deprivation, where many other factors work against education, they found that new buildings alone made no difference at all – 'In such schools, the broader learning environment was so adverse that headteachers struggled to see how capital investment, on its own, could help to improve pupil performance.'

Success may depend in part upon the school's ability to capitalise on the availability of the latest technology to engage students. In 1900 the new council schools offered pupils from deprived backgrounds a glimpse of order, cleanliness and culture that was, for many, alien to their experiences of home and family. A century or so later in 2008, education experts like Marc Prensky (2008) observed that schooling had fallen behind the times. The twenty-first century child mostly comes from a home where central heating, good lighting and ventilation and comfortable furnishings are the norm. For the majority, school no longer offers the only available model of cleanliness and comfort. In fact, going to school too often requires students to 'power down', leaving behind them the iPods, mobile phones and other technology that is an integral part of their daily lives outside the school gates. The new Joseph Rowntree School has the new technology to keep pace with the expectations and needs of its young people.

Building communities

'Schools are no longer just about what goes on in the classroom during school hours. The modern vision of extended schools sees schools as assets at the heart of the community, which everyone can use and benefit from.'

DCSF, undated

Both children's centres and the BSF programme were to be about much more than young people's learning. The government's drive to improve skills levels in the adult workforce through lifelong learning led to increased demands for communities to use the new facilities and, as part of this wider commitment, government suggested that rebuilt schools might act as outreach centres for further education, particularly for those who would feel ill at ease in a college but would be happy to walk into the familiar surroundings of their local school. Children's centres were to be places in which parents could access help, advice and practical skills while school spaces were to be opened up to other users. Design was to incorporate ideas of inclusivity and open access alongside measures to ensure security and safety. Not only was this new openness to benefit adults looking for learning opportunities, it was to help children through:

'Approaches to integration which attempt to link the learner's experience and approaches to learning outside of school... [and] recognise the intrinsic value of such learning to the individual development of the learner.'

Hadfield and Jopling, 2008

In fact, other influential thinkers proposed that 'Schools cannot avoid but to be engaged with their communities… Unless schools can build new relationships with their communities, they will miss vital opportunities to influence how children learn' but with the major caveat that '…as they are currently organised, schools are ill placed to be able to engage in this wider mission.' (Leadbeater, 2008)

The underlying values that created the original Joseph Rowntree Secondary School curriculum lived on in demands for schools to be involved in '…productive, social enterprise – such as a recycling centre – so that children associate learning with work, get pleasure from working productively together and contributing to business.' (Leadbeater, 2008)

And yet large-scale projects that cater for the long term carry great challenges. The world of 2010 is much more than a lifetime away from the world in which the original Joseph Rowntree Secondary School offered agricultural and homemaking classes as appropriate

training for the boys and girls of 1950. The young people of the twenty-first century will need some skills as yet unknown if they are to be economically successful. The challenge is providing a building which can cater to the development of these skills as they become clearer.

By 2070 the concept of school and its building as a single entity may have ceased to exist. Children and young people may spend much of their educational lives in their homes, linked to resources via the internet and virtual learning environments – '…the radical use of ICT to facilitate personalised learning to meet individual needs ultimately raises more profound questions about whether there is a future for the school as a physical site/entity.' (Valentine, undated). There is a possibility that the school building of 2070 will be a space given over as much to adult social and learning activities as to those of young people.

Those who have been involved in designing and providing the new facilities in New Earswick therefore faced the difficult, perhaps impossible, task of creating spaces and opportunities that will retain their usefulness beyond their own lifetimes. As this book was being researched and written New Earswick continued to be a focus for real life experimentation, spanning every area of community life. The impact of the extended services primary school and children's centre will certainly be felt within the village. What emerges from the rebuilding of the secondary school and its re-launch as a new centre of wider community activity will have an impact on New Earswick and on the City of York as a whole. These two new ventures are the subject of the next two chapters through which we move to a consideration of the potential futures of the village and its schools. These changes have much to say about the nature of educational and community change, the challenges they involve and how we can navigate the complexities around them. There may also be much to learn about the resilience of New Earswick as a distinctive community and its ability to meet the challenges produced by changing economic and social times.

'…that's the best way to learn, via the community. You are learning every day. You learn the basics about your life, usually through the community, by teaching others and learning from them. You can get educated without having to go to school.'

John (a school-age resident) speaking in the New Earswick Community Philosophy Group, 14 April 2008


YORK
New Earswick
Children's Centre
New Earswick
Primary School
MAIN ENTRANCE


The Joseph Rowntree School

'I think the Rowntree family would be wholeheartedly in support of the aims of the children's centre to narrow the gap between those children who would do well because of their family circumstances and those children for whom potential outcomes are poor because they live with disadvantage.'

Juliet Burton, Locality Children's Centre Manager, City of York, 2010

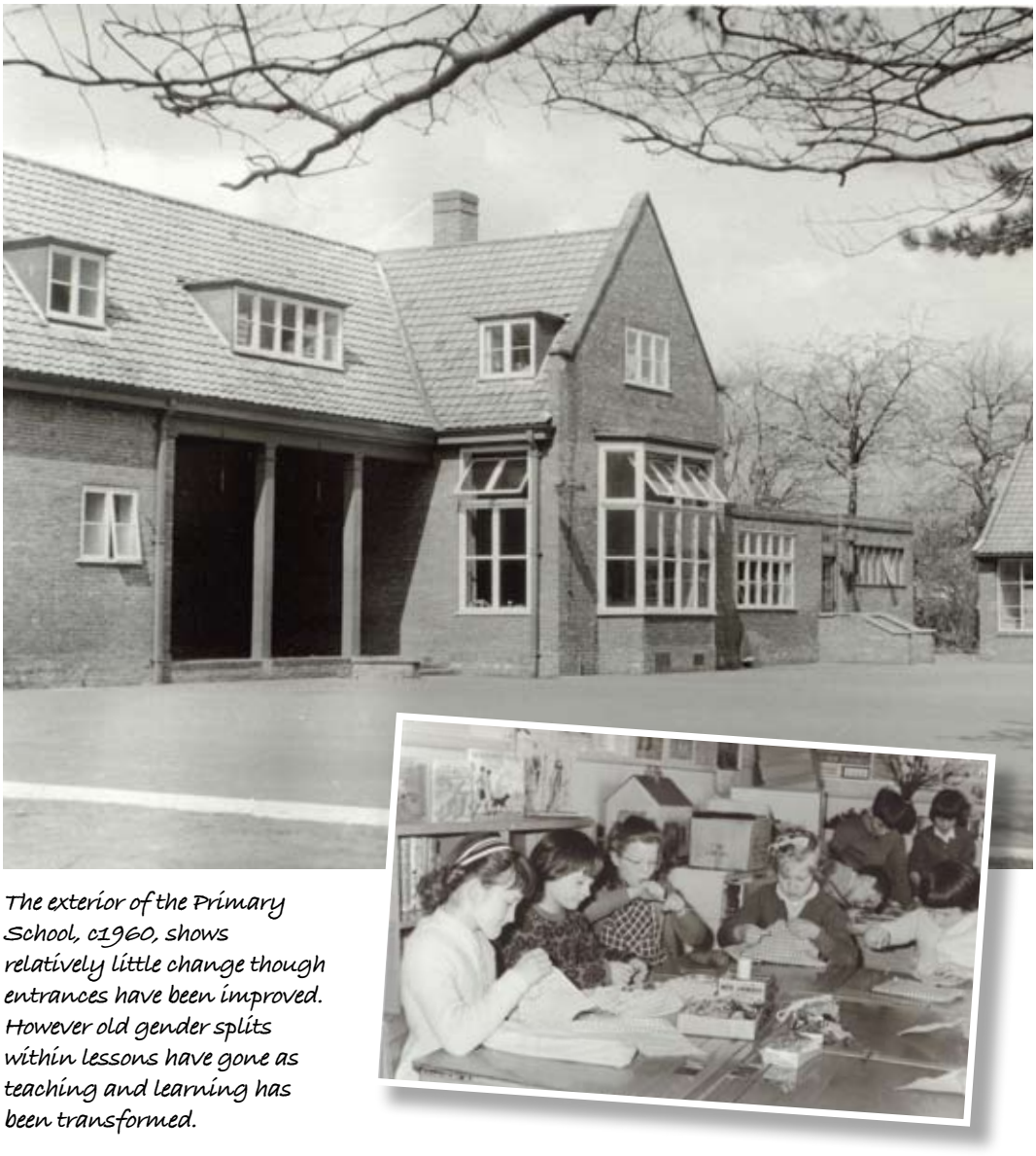
CHAPTER 6

A new children's centre and a modernised primary school

Investing in the early years

The opening of the children's centre in New Earswick in 2008 and the refurbishment of the primary school marked the most significant improvement in provision for young children and their families in the village since the original elementary school opened in 1912. Services for families with young children aged from 0–11 were consolidated, integrated and brought together on one site.

The children's centre was the physical embodiment in New Earswick of national policies aimed at better supporting pre-school children and their families. At the same time the primary school itself benefited from what was planned to be the largest buildings improvement programme since 1912, with bigger and improved teaching spaces, a new IT suite and a completely revamped reception and office area alongside many other improvements. The fact that the primary school was not considered in need of complete rebuild, unlike many other schools, was a testament to the quality of the original school design. While the exterior of the building in 2008 would still have been entirely familiar to the children of 1912, it is the interior and what goes on there which would be a revelation to those children and parents of 100 years ago.



The exterior of the Primary School, c1960, shows relatively little change though entrances have been improved. However old gender splits within lessons have gone as teaching and learning has been transformed.

The children's centre, named the Family Tree Children's Centre at New Earswick (the 'Family Tree'), was in the second wave of the nine centres to be opened in York. It was set up to support families in New Earswick village and also those in the surrounding areas of Haxby, Wigginton, Strensall and Huntington. Indeed, as we shall see, one of the centre's key challenges from day one was to avoid being viewed as a resource only for New Earswick families. In fact the area it serves is so large as to require satellite services in other villages. When it first opened the centre reached out to 809 children under five years of age and their families. With the opening of a satellite centre at Strensall, the number of children touched by this new provision increased to approximately 1,400. The number of pupils attending New Earswick Primary School at 2010 had begun to increase for the first time for a few years, reaching slightly more than 200 children.

The remit for children's centres nationwide was aspirational. They were to provide a range of services to all families with pre-school children. In particular they had to find ways to engage with vulnerable families who often choose not to access support. Aspirations for primary schools in the new millennium also remained high – to continue to help children achieve well in national tests, while also providing a more holistic, personalised, inclusive and challenging curriculum for all – the three Rs plus an awful lot more.

The opening of the new and improved buildings was indeed a landmark in the life of New Earswick, but it is the way in which these buildings are used and owned by local families which will determine their impact on the life of the village and its residents. In the same way that every school has its own character and culture, each children's centre has begun to evolve in very different ways.

Access to the refurbished buildings at New Earswick Primary School has been much improved.

From government policy to local reality

Many of the services now delivered from the Family Tree pre-dated the centre by many years. What the centre has done is:

- bring together services and professionals who previously worked with families in greater isolation
- highlight the reality that giving children the 'best start in life' cannot be left until they start school
- raise the profile of pre-school provision
- guarantee that every family is offered a minimum range of services.

Ambitious aims

'The government's aim is to establish a network of centres across the country offering information, advice and support to parents/carers, as well as early years provision, health services, family support, parental outreach and employment advice for disadvantaged families. The mix of services on offer will differ between centres, reflecting the particular make-up and needs of individual communities. However, there will be an expectation that resources are concentrated on those children who are in greatest need of additional help to achieve their fullest potential. Importantly, it is intended that children's centres should become an enduring means of delivering mainstream community services and that parents/carers and the local community should be actively involved in the planning and delivery of services provided by and through children's centres.'

Sure Start, 2005

There was early enthusiasm for the centre from those working in the area:

'I think the integrated children's centre is a fantastic concept. Children will have access to every facility within the school and become familiar from an early age. Children will be there from birth, as it will be used for health visitors to see mums and babies. Then children will go on into reception at primary school. So it will be a very smooth transition, as they will be very familiar with surroundings. Even when children have left primary

school they will be able to return to the building as the library will be housed within it.'

Julie Boyes, Joseph Rowntree Housing Trust Community Development Officer, 2007

The Children's Plan for the city of York, drawn up by the local authority in consultation with all the agencies that support children, put a high value on the potential of the nine York centres:

'Our recent work to tackle child poverty in York has focused on our new children's centres which have deliberately been sited in the areas of greatest disadvantage, so that families can benefit from, for example, targeted benefit take-up and awareness campaigns.'

City of York, 2009

At the same time the Labour government embarked on a significant rebuild and refurbishment of primary schools, with the intention of renewing at least half of all those in England by 2022/23. The New Earswick Primary School was an early beneficiary – though it had to be persistent, submitting three bids before funds were granted. The children's centre benefits from sharing the primary school site, but it is not a part of the school. It is separate, albeit a very close neighbour.

Once national, regional and local government support for children's centres and for improvements to the fabric of primary schools was in place, the next stage was to gather the views and tap the enthusiasm of local parents and children themselves.

Below we look separately at the planning and consultation for the centre and the school improvements, before considering how the two together might meet the needs of young families in New Earswick in the twenty-first century.

Consulting and planning for the children's centre

Consultation with local people and families began in early 2006. Parent researchers and members of the York Sure Start team planned a number of events to find out what local families and people working in the field wanted from their children's centre. The first was a 'listening to the community' event at the Folk Hall in July 2006 for parents, children and workers, with each worker encouraged to bring at least one local parent with them. Other events throughout 2006, some targeted at fathers, others at new mothers, continued to ask 'what do you want from your children's centre?' More than 100 children, parents and workers were consulted face-to-face and 11 parents filled in a detailed questionnaire.

What families said

Most parents (93 per cent) thought that existing services were very good or good. Parents and workers said their priorities were:

- groups where children could play, try new things and meet other children
- meeting and talking to other parents
- parenting and child development advice
- information about local services
- a toy library bus.

Children said they wanted 'messy play and outside play'.

An additional benefit of the lengthy consultation was that it engaged with some parents who became keen to get more involved − several went on to join the parents' forum and management board.

From the New Earswick consultations, 2006

A primary school for the new millennium

For a much longer period of time the primary school had been aware of the limitations and poor quality of some of its buildings and facilities. It had begun to plan its own vision for a 'school of the future'. A new headteacher, Carole Farrar, was appointed in 2001 and immediately noted the poor state of the school buildings. Plans for improvement had been drawn up and agreed as far back as 1975 but had to be shelved. The school waited a further 30 years for modernisation and was well aware of the transformative effect improvements could have:

'Ahead of its time when it was built... New Earswick Primary School could not only demonstrate the value it places on education and community, but once again set the standard for other schools if it can take a programme of modernisation forward.'

Carole Farrar, 2001

Carole Farrar, Headteacher of New Earswick Primary School

The need for change

The headteacher conducted a condition survey and its conclusions were echoed by the children at the school who said in 2002:

'Some of the classrooms are too small and the ceilings are too high.'
'The classrooms are too hot or too cold.'
'The ceiling leaks and the sinks get blocked and there is no hot water in the classrooms.'
'There is not enough room to do work like art and design & technology and no room to show work.'
'The seats are too hard and the sun is too bright.'
'There's no room to store stuff so the class gets messy.'

The survey also pointed out that asbestos in ducts prevented heating repairs, there were defective windows and inadequate toilet facilities, six classrooms were smaller than the recommended size, acoustics were poor, storage woeful and there was no separate outdoor play area for under-5s.

A 'school of the future' day in 2002 invited children, staff, governors and parents to be involved in the competition for planning. Local architect Chris O'Neil led conversations about what could be achieved in new school buildings. Three funding bids followed and it was not until the end of 2004 that a grant of £880,000 was finally awarded under the government's targeted capital funding for voluntary aided schools. A series of critical choices followed in which the school acknowledged its place as a key resource in the village. Planning for the refurbishment complemented other key developments – the children's centre, the relocation of Little Rowans pre-school groups and the relocation of New Earswick library. All these elements became part of one major building programme.

Bricks and mortar: the children's centre appears

Planning permissions were all granted by November 2006 and building began in January 2007 though there were initial delays owing to poor weather, problems with a gas main and electricity sub-station and the care needed in working with a listed building. The school continued to function with only half its rooms available for the best part of a year.

Some of the school's corridors were transformed.

Old and new: keeping the best

In 1912 New Earswick Elementary School's design was revolutionary, especially in terms of the space and light available in classrooms. Teachers' comments in 2008 confirmed that the refurbishment had maintained and enhanced many of these features:

'It's much better – as soon as I moved from a big echoing classroom I could use my normal speaking voice without shouting to reach the back of the classroom... the noise of the children is what I remember from before – maybe they weren't even being noisy but the echo was there and it's not now.'

'They look brighter and it's nice to see the children in space. It makes such a difference when you take the same class into the big room and they've been in the cramped room – it's more relaxed, calmer. I don't know who thought of making the classroom bigger. I think they were originally going to use half of each of the classrooms that they got rid of for offices and push out that way... But then we wouldn't have that opening out. I think that makes a huge difference, that space. I always used to think the headteacher's office was in a silly place. Going all down that long corridor... that's half the fear of going into a new building if it's not obvious where you go.'

'It's improved for parents coming in. They find it much more welcoming as a school. It's warm and the colours are there and the carpet and also those doors break it up. It's much better.'

'There used to be a library in the entrance hall, the front door wasn't used, the staff room was horrendous – those sofas!'

The 'Tree House' sessional care building is shared by after-school clubs and here children's centre pre-school groups.

Some of the winning postcards, designed by children, which celebrated the opening of the children's centre.

The primary school refurbishment included:

- a new ICT suite, accessible from both the school and the library
- nursery and reception (foundation stage) classrooms at the west of the school which were completely reconfigured and shared a comfortable room for small groups and one-to-one work with Little Rowans pre-school
- a new outdoor learning area which was also designed to be shared by the foundation stage and Little Rowans
- a large room named 'the studio', including work benches, kitchen and music equipment
- new toilets and cloakrooms
- creation of a teaching room upstairs for quiet small group work.

Offices, access points and waiting areas were moved and redesigned for greater efficiency and comfort. Amid so much new provision the best of the original features were retained, with internal reconstruction creating four larger classrooms on the south side – two of them a third bigger than previously – still with their large sliding windows but now screened with electric blinds and curtains.

In the main school building a new room was set aside for the children's centre – the 'family room', including a small kitchen area, large table and comfortable sofas. The centre had shared use of the sessional care building, 'the Tree House', which was also to be used by out of school clubs.

By February 2008 the second half of school refurbishment was completed and the children's centre was 'officially designated' by the Department for Children, Schools and Families. At the same time Little Rowans pre-school group moved from the Folk Hall to the children's centre and in June a new New Earswick library, renamed Explore: New Earswick Library Learning Centre, opened on-site. These new beginnings were marked by a celebration day on 1 July 2008, at which parents, children and workers made the clay tiles of faces and handprints which are now displayed at the entrance to the centre. A public vote decided the centre's name, The Family Tree Children's Centre at New Earswick.'

This was only the first stage of the building programme. There were also plans to develop more unused space upstairs at the school, to be shared with the children's centre staff, health visitors and others.

'The core' and more: services at the children's centre

Children's centres were given a clear and unambiguous brief to help achieve good outcomes for children and their parents by providing:

- the best start in life for every child
- better opportunities for parents
- affordable good quality childcare
- stronger and safer communities.

All this was to be done by building on existing good practice.

The challenge for the Family Tree was to meet these tough national aims while also responding to local need. As with so many government initiatives, aspirations seemed to outstrip what was achievable with the resources available, but the Family Tree succeeded in making early progress in tackling local need and found innovative ways of engaging with and supporting local families.

Its work began in early 2008. By November 2009 it had achieved 'core offer status'. This recognised its success in providing what the government set down as the minimum core services; integrated early learning, childcare, family support, health services, outreach services and access to training and employment advice for adults. This brought the centre under the remit of Ofsted, meaning that periodic formal inspections were to follow.

The core offer in 2010

Information and advice – the centre is the focal point for advice about support for children aged 0–5 and their families.

Services for families

- 'Stay and play' – the first Family Tree group was open on Wednesday afternoons to any parent with a pre-school child. It offers indoor and outdoor play, story time and a snack. The group hosts up to 40 people on any Wednesday. Attendance is voluntary but parents who miss a few sessions are contacted and encouraged to come back.
- 'Under ones' – a drop-in group for parents of children under one-year-old, providing companionship, peer support, and advice from qualified staff.
- 'Small talk' – 1–2-year-olds experience play, music, books and activities to promote language and communication skills.
- 'Play with language' – a speech therapist supports 2–3-year-olds, especially

those identified with potential language delay, and their parents.
- 'Boogie time' – trained staff use music, movement and play to improve the physical development and coordination of toddlers.

Little Rowans – provides sessional care for up to 16 pre-school children throughout the week. It moved to the children's centre early in 2008 after many years in the Folk Hall. A toy bus visits every fortnight to lend toys, books and equipment to families with 0–5-year-olds.

Library – New Earswick library has relocated to the children's centre site and rebranded itself Explore: New Earswick Library Learning Centre.

Family learning and parenting support – a range of courses has been available to help families and carers. These include education-based work on designing and making story sacks; play and language; maths for everyone, and how do children learn to read? Practical support is also available in the form of courses on strengthening families, strengthening communities; first aid in the home and a budgeting workshop.

Employment support – Future Prospects, an established local charity, provides one-to-one help and advice on jobs, training, education and benefits, with drop-in sessions for individuals at the children's centre and Folk Hall, while Job Centre Plus provided a training and employment adviser who was attached to the children's centre for a year from 2009.

Health services – for the first year a health visitor was attached to the centre part-time – attending several of the groups to weigh babies and give advice and guidance. Health visitors and midwives continue to be available at the centre after the first year. Breastfeeding workshops are run bi-monthly and other local centres offer stop smoking and teenage antenatal groups with on-going support for individuals from health visitors.

Home visiting – two children's centre core staff make home visits, especially to those most in need of support. These visits complement the work of other professionals, such as health visitors, employment support staff and family learning development workers.

Ensuring quality in early years – an early years leader (who is a qualified teacher) provides support and advice to those working in child care, such as child-minders and nursery staff.

Home safety scheme – any local family in receipt of benefit can get up to three stair gates, a pack of socket covers and a fire guard fitted in their home at no cost.

Little Rowans and the new library: key partners

The Family Tree centre and school buildings are flanked on the east and west by two important services – Little Rowans pre-school group and the Explore: New Earswick Library Learning Centre. Their relocation to the Family Tree site guaranteed that families would be drawn to the centre from the day it opened and will ensure a steady flow of visitors to it in the future. The centre's challenge is to identify those visitors who could benefit most from additional support and guide them to it.

Little Rowans pre-school group was originally a nursery class, established at the Folk Hall by the Joseph Rowntree Village Trust in 1945. It catered for working parents and those who needed respite. Its new home at the centre could only accommodate16 children at any one time, compared to 40 at the Folk Hall, but its new location means it is now well positioned to access a wider range of children's centre services. Little Rowans employs four experienced and qualified staff to provide sessional care for pre-school children. Two of the 2010 staff had worked at the group for 10 years, having originally started as parent volunteers. The move to the centre saw good relationships with the school blossom further for the benefit of children, as we shall see in the description of integration of services later in this chapter.

Children have a teddy bears' picnic at Little Rowans, prior to its move to the children's centre, while Sandra Marshall, manager, cuts the cake to celebrate the move in 2007.

The new 'Explore' public library, co-located with the children's centre – a much more flexible and comfortable space than the old library.

'The decision to move [Little Rowans] was not a difficult one... It was a clear case of economics, with the government offer of funding for integrated children's centres and a brand new venue... the new centre represents progress and progress that has to work. It will also be a challenge but we are all up for it.'

Geoff Bunce, primary school governor and parish council chair, interviewed 2007

The York library service had been looking for a more prominent and accessible site in New Earswick for a number of years. The move to the Family Tree was timely, meaning the library was transformed into the city of York's second 'Explore' library learning centre. The emphasis in the new library is on flexible space – all bookshelves are on wheels, allowing the room to cater for groups of learners as well as offering a traditional library environment. The atmosphere is comfortable and relaxed. Tea and coffee are available, as are internet access and laptops for flexible learning courses. The greatest change is that children from Little Rowans and the primary school can access the new library without even having to go outside. Unsurprisingly, footfall in the new facility doubled within months of opening.

A parent's story – an early user of the centre

'My daughter is now 18 months old. I went to a breastfeeding group when she was four months and someone told me about the stay and play group at New Earswick, which fitted in with my days off work. It has a lovely baby corner with lots of cushions and soft toys. It's a lovely room with hanging mobiles made by school children, they keep changing the friezes on the walls depending on the season – they are pretty and eye-catching for the babies. The group is fantastic, my daughter loves the interaction and there are different activities each week, outside on the bikes if it's good weather. I have attended nearly every week now for a year. The workers do a healthy snack each week – apples, fruit or raisins. It's also a great place to meet other mums.

I've taken some friends there and they all enjoyed it. It's a good place to get advice about things – one of the workers gave me some good information on potty training. Different people had told me different things so I asked once at the group and straight away I got some really helpful information from one of the workers. The health visitors also pop in sometimes to weigh babies. One of my friends is pregnant for the second time and got some good advice from the health visitor about C-sections last week.

I also went to the 6-week small talk group on speech development. I got lots of one-to-one time there. Then through meeting a worker I went to boogie babies at Strensall community centre. There was a waiting list but only for a couple of weeks.

There's no pressure to attend anything, which I like. The workers are all a bit younger than me but I don't mind that. They are helpful and friendly to everybody. Most people who go to the groups come back again which is great.'

The Family Tree as a hub: serving more than the village

New Earswick retains its own identity, partly due to its distinctive appearance, its unique history and its geographical position. But it became much less self-contained in the century following its foundation as the flow of people in and out of the village, for work or for schooling, rose. Indeed the opening of the new secondary school building will probably increase this flow as the new building is likely to attract parents and young people from further afield. The Family Tree reflects these changes, aiming to position itself as a hub, serving children and families beyond the village, from the outlying areas in Strensall, Haxby, Wigginton and Huntington.

The Family Tree serves the village and other villages within the area, including Strensall, Haxby, Wigginton and Huntington.

This wider remit was acknowledged in the centre's name − The Family Tree Children's Centre at New Earswick − not 'for' New Earswick. In the first year of operation a number of parents brought children to the centre from outlying areas, and the first parents' forum included members from Haxby. Nonetheless, parents with pre-school children who were willing and able to travel were in the minority. Moreover those parents with the confidence and resources to travel were also least likely to be the target families who could benefit most from centre support.

Consequently 2010 saw a considerable investment of staff time in developing satellite activity in outlying areas. Various venues were looked at as satellite centres. One which was used was Hurst Hall in Strensall, a community hall owned by the military base but serving both military and civilian families. The development of satellite work away from the main hub was designed to enable the Family Tree to reach out to as many as 1,400 children under five, compared to the original local population of 800 children.

After Easter 2010 a first dads group was set up at Strensall. A local arts organisation was commissioned to work with fathers and their children on positive self-expression through art. Art work included canvasses picturing fathers with their children and was the spark for children and fathers to explore and express their feelings for each other. Other groups, including boogie babies, were run out of satellite sites such as Strensall barracks. These initiatives proved a good way of embedding the Family Tree in outlying areas but setting them up was inevitably time-consuming and finding the right times and venues for each one proved to be constant challenges.

As always, centre staff had to find creative ways of using finite resources for maximum impact while not forgetting their core objective of finding and working with the families in greatest need across a large semi-rural area. Noting their responsibility for children from birth onwards they initiated a pilot scheme in 2010 which brought a local registrar to the Family Tree to register births each week, saving parents the need to travel into York city centre. In the first seven weeks there were at least two births registered at each session. Centre staff then wasted no time in informally telling parents what other services were available. The children's centre and primary school are among the first places these new babies from New Earswick and their parents will visit after birth, introducing them to the place which will be central to the next 11 years of education and development.

The work of the children's centre means that families now have easy local access to a raft of support that might previously not have been offered until their children entered primary school. The New Earswick Primary School will build on the work done by the centre, taking children from three years of age and helping them to develop educationally and personally – then preparing them for the secondary school environment and ultimately to adulthood.

New Earswick Primary School: 'to have the best, to do our best, to be the best that we can be'

'Primary schools are highly valued by children and parents, for some they are the one point of stability and positive values in a world where everything else is uncertain.'

Alexander, 2009

The Family Tree changed the context in which New Earswick Primary School operated. Nevertheless the school retained its own, separate identity and its priority remained the education of local children from ages 3–11. It had its own strengths, challenges and aspirations which are explored below, before we return to a more detailed look at the school's work in relation to the Family Tree.

Carole Farrar, the headteacher of the primary school since 2001, articulates her vision for the school as:

'A constant aspiration that is shared by all the adults working in the school, and increasingly by the children and parents, is to be the best that they can be. There is a real and constant drive to do better and improve – staff will say "...if we did it this way, maybe if we did this, tried this, things would be better for the children". There is a moral culture within school to do better.'

'Doing better for the children' in a primary school context means looking at the whole child (that is, personal and social development as well as the more conventional aspects of education). The aims of government's Every Child Matters (ECM) agenda encourage a multi-agency approach to children's services, pinpointing the five key outcomes for children: be healthy, stay safe, enjoy and achieve, make a positive contribution, and achieve economic well-being.

Schools used to be focused chiefly on only one of these – achievement – but, in response to both local need and government directives, New Earswick Primary School has broadened its purpose to include the other four outcomes for its children.

The school's priorities: government directive and local control

The current priorities for New Earswick Primary School can only be understood or judged by reference to national changes over the last 20 years. The period from the mid-1980s to the mid-2000s was characterised by a centralisation of government power and influence over schools. Previously governments had held a much looser grip on the day-to-day

business of education. But this changed as education and skills became a policy priority. For example, by one count, between 1996 and 2004 government and national agencies issued 459 documents on literacy teaching alone, more than one every week for eight years. This tendency towards centralised intervention covered most aspects of the classroom and school life.

The creation of Ofsted in 1992 was an attempt to hold schools to account by 'improvement through inspection' and in 1993 government also began publishing school league tables, ranking schools by the attainment of their children in national tests such as Standard Assessment Tests (SATS) and GCSEs. Parents inevitably began to judge a school by its position in the league tables and schools came under pressure to respond to the newly competitive environment that resulted. Over the same period the primary curriculum became more prescriptive, most obviously with the introduction of 'literacy and numeracy hours' in which the structure, content and methodology of literacy and numeracy teaching were centrally directed.

There is an argument − to be had elsewhere − that Ofsted, league tables and the narrower curriculum together helped to raise standards of teaching and learning, but they also generated strong negative reactions. League tables and inspections were seen as inadequate to the task of reflecting the richness of what schools did to support children, while the national curriculum inhibited teachers with flair and creativity.

The last decade has seen some signs of a loosening of central control − to the relief of the leadership team at New Earswick Primary School. Ofsted remains, but with a broader framework and a less rigid inspection regime that now focuses on schools in their communities as well as on academic results. The political climate is shifting towards fewer national pupil tests, while league tables now attempt to take into account a school's catchment area, intake and other variables. The curriculum has become more flexible than it was, with a new emphasis on improving teaching and learning, personalisation and cross-curricular work, to suit the needs and learning preferences of each child.

Throughout these changing times New Earswick Primary School worked hard to reach the targets it was set. SATS results in maths, English and science improved each year almost without exception from 1992 to 2010. In 2008 the school was congratulated for being one of the top performing schools in York for progress in maths and science. The school was proud of its academic achievements but saw the danger inherent in constantly trying to hit externally imposed targets, particularly when those targets rise from year to year.

The leadership team focused its energy where they felt it was most beneficial for their children. In terms of teaching and learning they implemented the principles of assessment for learning, based on the idea that pupils improve most if they understand the aim of their learning, where they are in relation to this aim and how they can achieve it. It used assessing pupil progress (APP), a structured approach to the periodic assessment of mathematics, science, reading, writing, and speaking and listening which relies less on testing and more on classroom observations.

At the same time that some central controls were loosened, other initiatives were launched for schools which began to focus attention on areas outside traditional teaching, learning and attainment. There was a drive to open up schools in the extended schools programme – maximising the use of school buildings by children and creating wider learning communities involving parents and adults. Schools were required to respond to the perceived crisis of childhood obesity through healthy schools' initiatives, and increasing awareness of environmental issues led them to incorporate eco-sustainable principles into teaching and practice.

An extended school

The extended schools initiative had obvious synergy with the aims of the children's centre, providing a wide range of opportunities for every child. In autumn 2007 a focus group, drawn from New Earswick Primary School governors and staff, was set up to consolidate and grow the existing out-of-school services. Key principles were agreed, including that:

'Children and families are at the heart of our community – this must not be just "lip-service", it must be evident in practice and not be just because the government tell us to do it… extended provision must be of the highest quality and must contribute to the five ECM outcomes for children and families.'

Extract from New Earswick Primary School Extended Services report to governors, 2008

Extended provision already included: after-school and breakfast clubs, parenting support, after-school activities, family learning, room hire, referral to other support services and adult learning in the library. Detailed consultation showed that parents had a high regard for this provision. By spring 2010 the newsletter *Study Support* gave details of more than 30 out-of-hours learning opportunities for primary school children – some were school-based (such as magic maths and the art, homework and sports clubs) while others were children's centre-based (such as breakfast and after-school clubs and story, song and craft time in the library). Yet more were located in the wider village, such as church-run brownie and cub groups or trampolining at the secondary school. Parents could see at a glance what was available to stretch, entertain and challenge their children.

The school had already demonstrated its commitment to the 'whole child' in a variety of ways, many of which recognised the importance of supporting families and providing opportunities for the personal development of children. A part-time home–school support worker was the focal point for maintaining good relationships with parents and families. Her brief in 2010 was a wide one – identifying vulnerable children in need of additional support, helping to settle new children into the school, being a listening ear for children, parents and staff and focusing on children in need or with child protection issues.

The primary school won best primary school project in York in 2006, with particular praise for deputy headteacher Sally Wadsworth. A series of ventures included the launch of a healthy school week, focusing on good diet and exercise and the formation of a healthy school task group culminating in a citizenship week in which pupils visited Red Lodge retirement home to entertain residents.

The school's commitment to community and life beyond the classroom was also recognised in the award for the best primary school project in the York Community Pride Awards, 2008. A unique pupil volunteering scheme was instigated in September 2007, with the aim of supporting children's personal, social and citizenship education and development. Children in years 3–6 were offered the opportunity to apply to join, stating why they thought they would make good volunteers. Stars were issued for different types of volunteering, including activities undertaken outside school, such as contributing to a charity fundraising event, serving food regularly at lunchtimes or being a school council member. Children were awarded bronze, silver or gold medals embossed with a large V. Children who were judged as 'doing the right thing' for their community received recognition and the value of commitment, responsibility and reliability was promoted across the school.

In autumn 2009, the National Centre for Early Music (NCEM) worked with more than 500 primary school children from New Earswick Primary School and 11 other schools in York to prepare a short piece of music to perform at the schools prom at the Royal Albert Hall, celebrating the 350th anniversary of Henry Purcell. The young people performed the piece to more than 1,000 people at York Minster then to more than 5,000 people at the Royal Albert Hall and were praised by all for an outstanding performance. Following on from this project, the NCEM developed an on-line educational resource for Key Stage 2 teachers, including special arrangements of Purcell's music for young voices and activity ideas for teachers.

In the context of these existing and varied projects outside of the classroom, the school was keen to unite some of its extended schools work with that of the children's centre.

'I think that we can hook a lot of things the children's centre is doing onto the extended schools banner because our core offer and theirs are very similar except that they finish at [age] 5 and we go on to 11. It also makes sense for some things to be advertised jointly – for example family learning which is available to all adults.'

Carole Farrar, headteacher, from interview 2009

A school building worthy of its learners

So the school continued to work to its mission, to be 'the best that it can be', and to respond to the myriad expectations that the government and local community had of it. The buildings and internal environment were now of a high enough standard to support these aspirations. The pooling of resources which enabled comprehensive refurbishments was

indeed timely. Behaviour management became easier following the refurbishments – 'The new layout of the school has made a difference in terms of helping children managing their own behaviour and us managing it…' The building indeed seemed ready to support and transform education and learning for children and adults into the twenty-first century. The quality of these improvements and the pace of change within New Earswick Primary School are perhaps best summed up in some examples of reflections on the new buildings:

'It's funny trying to remember how the building used to be. The new classrooms have only been open just over a year but we have got used to them already. I can't even remember what this classroom was before… I think it was the boys' toilets!'

Reception teacher, 2009

Pupils exhibited pride in the new buildings but also acknowledged the importance of people and relationships inside them:

'The library [is best]… and all the teachers are nice… The school has all been renewed and we have got a brand new IT suite… lots of people really like it… now we have got the children's centre, so younger children come in as well.'

School council members, 2008

What difference has the children's centre already made?

The opening of the Family Tree – with its complementary range of services for young children and parents – accentuated the importance of working with the 'whole child' and with families whenever possible, rather than with individuals. Much of what was offered in New Earswick was a reflection of similar developments across the UK. So what has been the unique impact in New Earswick? How has the village begun to mould its children's centre?

Support and education targeted at the right family, at the right time and in a manner which suits the individual parents and young children can have a transformative effect on lives. This knowledge inspired Joseph Rowntree more than 100 years ago and continues to inspire those who work at the Family Tree today. But effects on young children necessarily take many years to become visible. The renowned Perry pre-school project in Michigan,

USA, which provided specific targeted support to 3 and 4 year olds and then followed up their progress over more than 30 years, helped to justify the government's original investment in Sure Start and children's centres. Some of the Perry project's most startling positive outcomes – for example on subsequent adult earnings, family stability and offending behaviour − were not apparent until 25 years and more had elapsed. Nonetheless, even after one year there were encouraging signs that the Family Tree in New Earswick had begun to make its mark.

Children enjoy outdoor activities at the Stay and Play group.

New Earswick mother, 2009

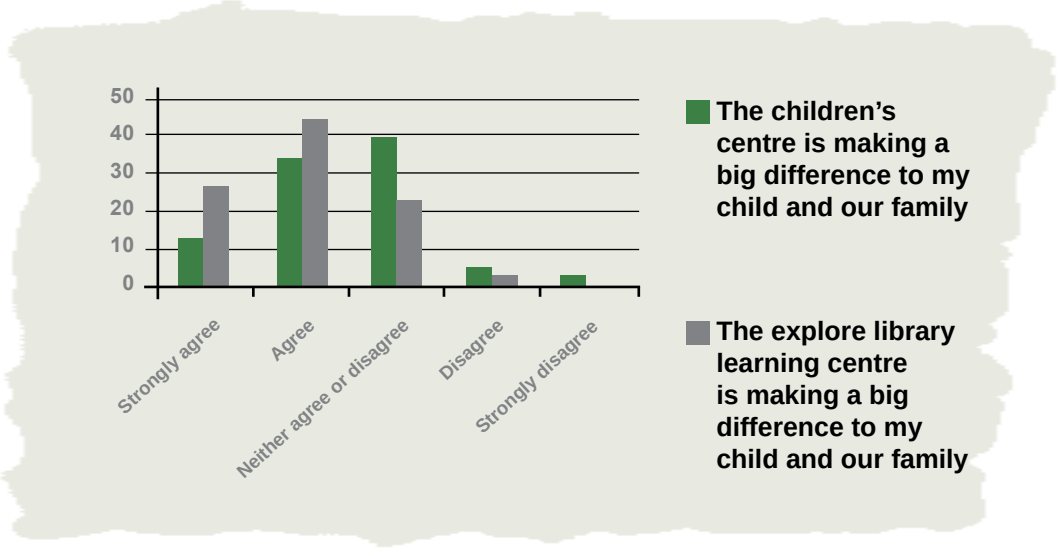
'The best thing for me is that the groups are free and high quality – other groups are £3 per week and the money soon adds up. Staff are brilliant, very approachable. On a Wednesday I can't get my son to have his lunch because he says 'there will be a snack at stay and play group' and he is just so excited to get there. I've just done the boogie group with him and James absolutely loved it. I've already told the staff if there are places on another course then I'd like to do it again. There were 40 children at one of the groups so it's popular.'

Ofsted recognised the impact of all of York's children's centres in an inspection soon after their opening:

'Exemplary early identification, integration and intervention work is being implemented through very close multi-agency work and the sharing of posts. Integrated children's centres provide a wide range of high-quality multi-agency services that parents find easy to access and are of consistently high quality.'

Ofsted, 2008

The annual survey of parents and carers of children at New Earswick Primary School asked two additional questions relating to the Family Tree centre in 2009 – one about the children's centre generally and one about the new library in particular. The responses are shown in the graph below.



It was striking that after less than a year of operation both questions elicited predominantly positive answers from the 77 parents who responded. The library was most positively rated of the two, unsurprising perhaps as it would have been used by the children of all of the parents surveyed.

'The new library is great. During the small talk session they took us all in there and it's fantastic – they seem to change the books more often there and there's a great children's corner. I get three or four books for my daughter every three weeks.'

Parent, 2009

All families who used the children's centre during 2009 were also surveyed. Of the 14 New Earswick families who responded, 10 were very satisfied and three satisfied with

the service they received. The competence, friendliness and helpfulness of staff were particularly highly rated, and users trusted the advice they were given and its clarity.

The impact of the Family Tree cannot be adequately gauged simply through short questions and answers after a few months of operation. Working with families with young children in challenging circumstances is often a complex and long-term project, one whose outcomes might not be visible for many years.

'I visited one young mum … every week for a year. She made no conversation, I had to lead everything. I felt like I was getting nowhere so I changed tack – I gave her a camera to take pictures of her child. She seemed excited and took lots, stuck them in an album, even her scan picture. It surprised me how positive she was, then the very next week she texted me to say she did not want to see me again – it's very frustrating for me as I have no idea why, but we have to respond to what people want and I know I had supported her with her young child up until that point.'

Family Tree development worker, 2010

Some parents will benefit from a one-off piece of advice about child care or access to a drop-in toddler group for companionship and respite. Others, such as the parent described above, might need more intensive and ongoing support. The first 18 months of the Family Tree saw hundreds of children benefit from early work, but lasting impact won't be seen for many years to come.

Nevertheless, by 2010 the Family Tree staff were excited about what was being achieved and could see the potential to grow:

'Things feel exciting now, like things are really positive, but I still think you'd need to come back here in another year or two to really see what impact this children's centre could make.'

Family Tree development worker, 2010

Reaching, engaging and involving parents

Throughout the first 100 years of New Earswick's existence there were periodic concerns about the number of local people who made use of support in the community, social activities and adult learning opportunities. These concerns were evident even though New Earswick had many more facilities than most – if not all − other villages of its size in the area. Indeed perhaps because the village benefited from the Rowntree family's greater investment in community facilities it was more obvious when they were not fully utilised. Creating facilities is one thing, enticing local people to use them is quite another.

Having managed the creation of the new facilities, the challenge for the leadership and staff of the primary school and children's centre was to find ways to encourage new families to use them. The primary school roll had been falling (along with the national trend) since a change in local catchment areas in 1999, but in 2010 the roll is on the increase again for the first time for a number of years. The larger classrooms and enhanced facilities will no doubt be a factor in parents considering the school as their first choice in coming years.

The Family Tree was asked to aim for what the Labour party of the late 1990s termed 'progressive universalism'. Put simply this meant that services should be available to everybody, but directed particularly at those in greatest need. This was a concept that chimed well with the Rowntrees' original aims for New Earswick. In its second year therefore the Family Tree began to target 'hard to reach' families, often those living more chaotic lives which may leave children vulnerable. The attractive and green external appearance served to hide the extent of family need in parts of the village – one long-term community worker commented: 'New Earswick looks leafy and posh to many eyes but there are certainly hidden pockets of deprivation'. In many respects this has been one of the conundrums for the village. It has maintained a look of relative prosperity and affluence, and indeed many residents confirmed that it also retained features of 'old fashioned community and friendliness', but there is significant deprivation, often coupled with an instinctive suspicion of 'official' offers of support or guidance. Priority groups included teenage and lone parents, families living with disability or homelessness, prisoners' families, victims of domestic violence and asylum seekers, as well as any others locally identified as being vulnerable or marginalised, such as black and minority ethnic (BME) families. The progressive element of 'progressive universalism' demanded that the centre should reach out to people from the poorest and most challenging backgrounds.

'Engaging with families and parents' was an aspiration much quoted during the 1990s, but

one which in reality was notoriously difficult to achieve. The new millennium saw signs of the 'local community' becoming increasingly fragmented – gone were the days when most people were employed by a small number of local companies and their social lives revolved around local buildings and neighbourhood events. The globalisation of the economy and improvements in affordable technology and transport meant that social lives and support networks were more likely to be fluid or online, rather than permanent and local. Adults wanting to find advice, information or companionship became increasingly likely to turn to the internet rather than to a local community centre or group. The children's centre was not established as a social venue, but if families were voluntarily to come to find out what it offered it had to be welcoming and accessible. Reception staff were regarded as extremely friendly and approachable from day one, and despite some teething problems with security and arrangements for access to the building, the building was viewed as welcoming and well resourced.

Engagement with target families was inevitably slow, requiring patience and sensitivity.

'We are, rightly, increasingly being asked to target "hard to reach families". It is difficult work because by definition they are hard to reach! Progress can seem slow sometimes but we will get there.'

Family Tree development worker, 2009

One of the family learning workers with many years of experience in New Earswick recognised the difficulty not only of engaging with parents, but of 'holding on to them' when things became difficult or challenging for them:

'Those who might benefit most from what's on offer at the children's centre are the families we find it hardest to reach and then find it hardest to keep on board. I don't want to harass people if they drop out of our courses but at the same time I don't want to let them disappear either – I want to avoid them feeling a sense of failure. It's hard to get the balance right.'

Family learning worker, 2009

The challenges inherent in community engagement were evident in other ways in New Earswick. Late in 2009 the local community facilities group – a loose network of all the local social, community and sports groups which met every few months – arranged a community services treasure hunt. The hunt was organised to lead people to visit each of the services, from the Garth to the nature reserve to the primary school. Despite wide publicity, only 2 of 3,000 local residents took part, confirmation of the challenges inherent in attracting village families to what was on offer.

Strategies to bring people into the Family Tree

The centre's early practical outreach strategies could be summarised under three themes; clarity, accessibility and persistence. Clarity was important in the marketing of services and led to simple measures such as improved signage and simplified leaflets and adverts. Parents responded better to a straightforward invitation to attend one pre-school drop-in group than to lengthy leaflets which tried to describe everything on offer at the centre.

'Still local people ask me 'where is the children's centre?' despite all this time and the signs and things. It just shows how long it will take for local people to know about it – you've just got to keep hammering home the advertising to get it well known.'

Parent, 2009

Much time was devoted to discussing access arrangements for parents attending the centre – how to make the building welcoming but secure − and it was not until late 2009 that centre workers, school reception staff and parents became happier and clearer about arrangements for entering the building. Recognising the importance of easy access, 2010 saw work start on a new reception to the children's centre via the library lobby entrance at the east side of the school building. A full-time receptionist was appointed, able to 'meet and greet' from 8.30am–5.00pm 52 weeks a year, and a reception desk in the library lobby planned. This separate reception had been part of the original plans for the children's centre.

Improving access for parents with young children also meant providing groups and courses at times to suit school pick-ups, with high-quality affordable child care available during adult learning. Open learning courses in ICT were set up at the new library, allowing adults to learn at their own pace and at their own convenience.

Persistence was essential. Families in need are often suspicious of any support service. It is a big step for them to engage with a new service. Most of the parents interviewed who had used the centre spoke of bringing friends along to various groups and this is a strategy outreach workers have used to bring in new people. Workers at the Family Tree have also introduced themselves to parents in the school playground, outside Little Rowans and at the entrance to the local supermarket. These individual initiatives have been complemented by strategic work such as the CAF Plus highlighted on page 143.

Another initiative with the potential to promote parental involvement was the establishment of a volunteer programme – recruiting parents to assist with tasks such as reception work or gardening, with a view to ultimately taking them on as paid staff or helping their career development.

By contrast the school has many years experience of the challenges inherent in establishing positive relationships with some parents. For a parent who had a negative experience of school, simply going back into a primary school can be a daunting prospect. For an adult who did not achieve well educationally, enrolling on a course might be equally intimidating. An adult who did not experience consistent values or a loving environment as a child could find talking to someone about their own parenting skills extremely threatening. But there have been signs that the work of the Family Tree to attract families into the centre may have trickle-down impact – making parents feel more comfortable about coming into school when their children are of school age.

'What I have seen – which has been nice – has been ex-pupils coming back into school as mothers – they all seem to have very fond memories of their time at our school. It is good to see them as young mothers who are going to access these services at the children's centre.'

Carole Farrar, headteacher, 2009

Involving parents in governance

The excitement generated by the consultation phase for the children's centre galvanised a group of parents who were very keen to take an active role in its creation. This group went on to become the parents' forum, meeting regularly from January 2007 to discuss progress at the centre and make suggestions for improvement. The forum was supported and attended by children's centre workers and good relationships were established, with a flow of ideas for improving early activity at the centre.

'A very early high for me was finding a group of interested and committed parents who "got" exactly what the children's centre was about and who have been inspiring us with ideas and enthusiasm since then.'

Juliet Burton, locality children's centre manager, City of York, 2010

In May 2008 the small leadership group which led the building development was disbanded to make way for the first partnership board meeting. Half the members of the board represented the services at the centre and half were to be parents, mainly representatives from the forum. For two years this structure worked well. Parents received training to give them the considerable skills, knowledge and confidence required to make contributions

to board meetings, and some were trained to be members of interview panels for the appointment of centre staff.

A New Earswick parent's experience of the parents' forum

'I first learned about the parents' forum from a friend who had seen an advert – it promised lovely nibbles so that was enough to get me there! Both my children were under school age then. I thought it was a great idea to involve parents in what's available, instead of someone in an office somewhere deciding "this is what they need".

'I've been involved from the start: I was on the interview panel for one of the children's centre staff so I feel part of it all. The parents' forum was really good for a while but it's struggling now (November 2009) – we just got a new person but also lost one. It's very difficult to get people in – people don't like discussions. We had a thought about doing a "meet the staff" group at the centre, then doing a parents' forum at the end of it. We've got to keep trying different ways to get people involved. There are lots of people with strong opinions locally but not many of them will do anything about it – I didn't want to be one of those so I got involved.

I'm also on the children's centre board. Juliet did organise some training for us at the start – giving us confidence to ask questions, not be nervous to get involved in the meetings. It is difficult to get involved sometimes though, especially early on when there were so many official people there. I think there were more than 20 professionals at the early meetings and the membership changed each time as well so it was hard. There are fewer people going now which makes it a bit easier. We also try to have a parents' forum meeting before the partnership board so we know exactly what we want to say in advance.'

During 2009 the children of several of the most active parents reached school age and their parents therefore stopped attending the forum. This natural lifecycle of parental involvement threw up the need to engage the next generation of parents in the governance and development of the Family Tree, a task which proved difficult. Several strategies were tried – adverts in the school newsletter, varying the time and place for forum meetings, personal invitations to attend – but, despite these efforts, in early 2010 the forum had only a handful of regular attenders. Re-energising this group was made a priority for the following year,

as parental involvement in governance was seen as vital if the Family Tree was to really understand and meet local need.

A review of governance arrangements was carried out by the strategic managers of the children's centres across York in 2010, in light of local and national experience. It was decided that the partnership board for each of the three children's centres in the north locality should be merged into one joint advisory board, meeting three times a year, each having two parents from each centre as members (a greater number than national guidance required). The parents' forum was also to change, from monthly meetings attended only by a few parents who had the confidence to participate, to parent events held in each locality on a regular basis but less frequently than once a month. Parents would have the opportunity to drop in to pick up information, give feedback on services on post-it notes or in comments boxes, make suggestions for services and talk to centre staff and other agencies. There would be staffed areas for parents and children to play and to receive (or even give) advice and support. It was felt that an event such as this would be more accessible for parents, who could be supported to attend, and probably more enjoyable. It would also achieve the aim of consultation with parents and information sharing on a regular basis. Strategic management of the Family Tree was responding to real local experience and trying to find ways of better engaging with parents.

Integration and partnership working

'By 2010… every organisation offering services to families with young children should be working with Sure Start by this stage, as centres become the first port of call for parents for advice and support.'

DCSF, 2008b

The main driving force for the creation of children's centres was the need to integrate services which already existed but which were relatively isolated and unconnected. There had been several high profile cases of individual children suffering severe neglect and harm – including the tragic death of Victoria Climbié – and these highlighted how often professionals were aware of problems within a family, but did not always share their knowledge sufficiently to create a complete picture that would enable them to prevent serious harm. The government proposed service integration as the key solution, to prevent episodes of serious harm and, more importantly, to identify and work with families at risk at an early stage, before a crisis point was reached.

Integrated working demanded that services should share information about families, should share good practice and know enough about each other to point families towards the services which suited them best. Integration of services at the Family Tree at New Earswick was visible from an early stage and, encouragingly, was a feature of the first 18 months of operation, promising to become the norm. It was most visible simply in the

proximity of the services based at the centre itself and in the joint advertising and marketing of the offer to parents and their children. On a day-to-day basis children's centre workers had contact with health visitors, Little Rowans, school staff, language therapists, family learning workers and others. Relationships inevitably took time to develop but, by 2009, cross-referrals and exchanges of information between practitioners were strong. This groundwork was further developed through the introduction of the Preventative Planning and Co-ordination Arrangement (PPAC) (see CAF Plus box below).

Common Assessment Framework Plus (CAF Plus)

CAF Plus emerged in 2010, out of the Preventative Planning and Co-ordination Arrangement (PPAC) a powerful local process developed by the York Children's Centre programme management team during 2008 and 2009. This was to aid the early identification of potentially vulnerable unborn children, and children under the age of five. It was a positive step in enabling the Family Tree to reach more families in need of support and offered a formal process by which inter-agency planning for families in need could take place.

Workers with a concern about a family or child, or with an idea for appropriate support, could feed into the process. Monthly inter-agency PPAC panel meetings were held within each children's centre area, including New Earswick. These meetings planned the way that several services would work with families who were identified by practitioners such as health visitors as well as those who sought help for themselves. This was an early and tangible example of how integrated working could be improved by introducing new structures, rather than depending on professionals to find their own ways of better communicating with each other.

From May 2010 PACC was re-launched as CAF Plus. The focus after the re-launch was supporting practitioners with the most complex cases at early intervention level as a sort of 'multi-agency supervision' – practitioners who had become 'stuck' with planning and required additional discussion and provision of services to support a family with children under the age of five were to be given ideas and expertise from other professionals.

Real integration and partnership working has had early benefits:

'It's a lot easier with better joined up working – it's easier to get referrals to courses – I still do outreach work because we target adults without children – but links we have made through the children's centre have made it much easier for me to talk to parents of young children, to encourage them back into learning.'

Family learning outreach worker, 2009

Another initiative led by the children's centre locality manager was a strategic review of all the organisations that carried out home visits to families. More than twenty agencies took part in the review that aimed to create a more co-ordinated and seamless approach to supporting families and to identify core and common skills, share information about training and identify when joint visits would be helpful. There were to be agreed criteria for action, 'selling' the benefits of home visiting to families.

More detailed work followed to ensure that everyone knew what others were doing and how they would communicate about their work with particular families. The Family Tree locality manager continued to lead work between many of the agencies, developing protocols and pathways to improve integration between them.

Children's centre staff worked to improve partnerships with many agencies. For example, the police service began to refer families to the centre (with their permission) in the hope that early intervention could prevent the escalation of trouble. Similarly the Joseph Rowntree Housing Trust started to refer families with young children who were identified as being in need of additional support.

'Integration is very good, especially with health visitors. In a strange way I think we work better with them despite not sharing office space with them all the time – as they do at some of the larger children's centres. If you're in the same office then you kind of forget that you can ask them things and advice. I'm always on the phone to them.'

Family Tree development worker

There was rapid development of integrated and partnership working between Little Rowans and the foundation stage in the school. The room which the two share allowed children and staff to mix and get to know each other. Little Rowans has 'free flow', so its pre-school children use the new outside play area at the same time as older school children, increasing their confidence about transition to school. Links between Little Rowans staff and foundation teachers helped to aid transition.

'We can also go to the foundation teachers for advice – say on preparation for phonics, we can ask exactly what level the school would like children at when they move up. They have given us advice about pre-sounds. One of the foundation teachers comes in pretty regularly, meets the children several times before they start – reads occasional stories to them. There's much more contact than when we were at the Folk Hall.'

Little Rowans manager, 2009

There began to be exchanges between children, with pre-schoolers attending and taking part in occasional school assemblies and pupils from the school being the audience for the pre-school Christmas concert and other performances.

These links between the children's centre and the school were tangible evidence of the potential of integrated work. It is hoped and indeed expected that children who benefit from the centre's services (including for example Little Rowans or the stay-and-play groups), whose parents have been supported to provide more nurturing environments at home, and who attend various events at the centre, will adjust better and more quickly to the demands of school life.

'It has been down to a lot of hard work on both our parts I think. The relationship between centre and school has been good – they know us, they see us, so if there are issues we can just pick them up and talk about them.'

Juliet Burton, locality children's centre manager, City of York, 2009

Hopes and aspirations for the Family Tree: 2011 and beyond

'One of the real challenges of this kind of work is that it takes a long time – it can seem very slow … and that is something that it is very difficult to get across to people … you can't just be in there opening the centre and achieving results from day one.'

Juliet Burton, locality children's centre manager, City of York

The hopes and aspirations expressed by both workers and families in New Earswick after two years of the Family Tree's work were very much that growth should remain steady and continuous. It need not be about continually increasing the numbers of services, but should focus on increasing the numbers of families and children that benefited from the centre. 'The centre should be about raising people's aspirations for their lives and their children's lives, but keeping things realistic – we can't change everybody's life immediately. (Parent, 2010)

If the Family Tree was to achieve the goal of prioritising services for those in greatest need, then it would need to continue to find ways of getting vulnerable families and children into the centre. A new database was installed in 2010 to help identify target families, though with the expectation that target groups would change over time. For example, a high priority in York in 2010 was the engagement of teenage parents, especially those who were homeless. The range of services and information at the Family Tree could be crucial to the small number of such parents in this part of York.

Targeted home visits seemed to present the most effective means of informing many families of the centre's work. Centre staff who introduce themselves to a family and are friendly faces on their first one or two visits help to create positive responses from parents and children.

During 2010 there were signs that national economic recession might have a real impact on the provision at the Family Tree. Some services were already under financial pressure, for example with the reduction in staff secondments from the health visiting services to support the work at York's children's centres. Further public sector cuts were expected to reduce provision for pre-school children. The role of the Family Tree – through its leadership team, staff and parent supporters – had to increasingly focus on maximising the use of scarce resources and fighting for local provision.

Meanwhile, improving the engagement of parents remained a real need. The centre could only become a real part of the local community when a critical mass of local parents became involved in its governance. The remodelled advisory board and more flexible parents' forum continued to rely on the input of parents to ensure that services were relevant and necessary.

The Family Tree Children's Centre at New Earswick showed the potential value of working with partners and integrating services – especially through its Common Assessment Framework Plus – to ensure that no pre-school children in vulnerable circumstances 'slipped through the net'. Work with key partners, such as the health services, with universal access for the families of young children, is central to this. Those with responsibility for strategic management of the centre know that continued work with these key partners is vital.

The recent history of primary education offers both incentives and warnings to children's centre managers. Just as schools spent the 1990s responding to a lot of centralised initiatives and demands from local government, there is a danger that the Family Tree will do likewise – becoming so tied up in satisfying national requirements or struggling to meet externally imposed targets that it fails to respond to local need. A member of the centre board expressed this fear: 'My perception is that the Family Tree is nationally rather than locally driven. We have ideas which might not fit with the core offer which I would like to see implemented. Maybe I am expecting too much.' The New Earswick Primary School held firm to its core purpose through some of the most difficult and challenging reforms of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. This focus, on what could be achieved for its own children here and now, may offer a way forward for the children's centre.

'It is important to be aware of external pressure but to make sure things are right for your own school... It's important not to get distracted by the latest initiative. Sometimes it's easy to be manipulated into thinking you are better or worse than you are by external forces. The goalposts are constantly moving – we are just finding our way with the new inspection framework for example. Then the bar is always being raised – we are a school that just gets there and then the bar goes up again. It could be demoralising if you let national pressures weigh on you too much. I have realised as a headteacher you just have to get on with it, for your own children.'

Carole Farrar, headteacher,
New Earswick Primary School

'What he had seen in the school that day had made him wish that he was young and at school again, for if the schools of his day had been like that he was sure he would have learned more and learned it more easily.'

Report of the comments of the Lord Mayor of York at the opening of the New Earswick Elementary School, 1912

CHAPTER 7

The Joseph Rowntree School rebuilt

Perfect pasts, uncertain futures?

'Building Schools for the Future (BSF) provides an opportunity to be innovative in the ways schools work and to explore new ways in which they can involve the local community, adults, families and local business partners.'

Teachernet, undated

The drive to improve provision for children from birth onwards is just one aspect of the immense change in attitudes to education which have been the hallmark of the last two centuries. This change accelerated as the UK moved from an economy that was based on heavy industry and supported by the empire, to one that is based on transferable skills and is in competition with the rest of the world. Increasingly, government has emphasised the need for up-to-date and forward-looking education. This is to offer both an effective route to future economic wealth and also a remedy for contemporary social problems, many of which would have been very familiar to the Rowntree family of the Edwardian age.

As New Earswick entered the twenty-first century it too was no longer a separate enclave, isolated from the social problems and influences of the surrounding area. It came under the remit of the City of York Council and the village's primary and secondary schools were an integral part of York's planning for the future. Yet the village retained its own distinctive character and, as in the early twentieth century, the Rowntrees' Quaker principles continued to guide local development, to inform wider local planning in the city of York and to influence governments in many key areas of social policy.

In New Earswick old complaints continued into the first decade of the twenty-first century, with concerns about the behaviour of some young people and about a perceived decline in community spirit. At the same time, younger residents complained of lack of facilities and the intolerance of older neighbours. As far as the social and entertainment needs of local people were concerned, changing tastes had outstripped what could be catered for within the Folk Hall and the hall had little appeal for local teenagers. A shelter on the green, intended as a meeting place for young people, was viewed as a focal point for troublemakers and its design was criticised for the concealment it provided from public scrutiny.

These were the complaints and regrets voiced by some local residents. And yet JRF research showed that the village had comparatively few problems in terms of petty crime and badly behaved young people. Perception, informed for older people by rosy memories of how the village used to be, did not necessarily reflect a reality in which New Earswick had in fact succeeded in holding at bay many of the troubles of the modern world.

National policy, local need

'Schools, local authorities and sponsors must have the time to research and develop new concepts… they must know and understand what they want before going forward.'

Nick Page, EdisonLearning UK, 2008

The 1997–2010 Labour government consistently prioritised spending on education as an investment in the future wealth of the UK and its people. During its early years, at a time of relative national prosperity, it launched plans for major capital investment with the Building Schools for the Future (BSF) programme. However, within weeks of taking office, the Conservative–Liberal Democrat Coalition Government announced that the BSF programme was to be scrapped.

York was not one of the disadvantaged areas which received early BSF funding, but the Joseph Rowntree new build came under the One School Pathfinder (OSP) programme which gave local authorities the chance to see what could be achieved in rebuilding a single school (see page 105). OSP schools were selected on the basis of numerous criteria including the condition and suitability of existing buildings, school standards and the degree of deprivation in the area. When the City of York Council applied for One School Pathfinder funding, Hugh Porter, then head of The Joseph Rowntree School, was the first to ask for his school to be the chosen testbed. The school, now with specialist status as a technology college, was by this time accommodated in an assortment of buildings that had been erected, as need arose, over the first 50 years of its existence with little thought given to quality of design. It was increasingly difficult to find within the ragbag of school architecture anything that was truly functional in terms of a modern education. Neither did it offer much that was aesthetically pleasing. A review of the school, by then approaching its 65th anniversary, proved how great the need was.

The old school – no longer fit for purpose

- Several subject departments had classrooms spread across the site away from their resource bases.
- The original classrooms on the south side had large ill-fitting windows –'some of the windows were only held in by paint'. The English classrooms were consequently cold in winter and too hot in summer.
- The design & technology graphics room was too small and lacked space for the technology this subject needs.
- There were seven temporary classrooms and two departments were housed entirely in temporary accommodation.
- Two of four art rooms were too small, having been created by the sub-division of a larger room. The pottery kiln was housed in one of the art rooms.
- Four science laboratories, built in the 1970s, were unsatisfactory for modern requirements.
- The buildings were sprawling and students had to travel considerable distances between lessons.
- Compliance with disabled access requirements was difficult because of the age of the buildings and accommodation on two floors in places.
- The sixth form study and social facilities were too small for the numbers in this part of the school.
- The staffroom was too small and lacked an independent staff work area.
- The sports hall was in poor condition, lacked a spectator area and there was no all-weather pitch.
- The reception area and office were too small and difficult to find.
- The administrative offices were based in three areas, causing inefficiencies.

Maggie Tansley, 2006

The old school needed at least £3.2 million of work to bring it up to a reasonable standard. When English Heritage concluded that the original 1942 construction was not an exceptional example of its type, the way was cleared for a complete rebuild.

The old school exterior in the months prior to closure.

From the local authority's perspective, planning for the short- and long-term was based on the view summarised in the words 'You can't put a price on a day's education' (Mik O'Connell, Project Director, 2009). Cutting corners in the short-term to save for longer-term development could mean that a whole generation of children was disadvantaged – so capital funds had to be devoted to immediate improvement, not banked for future large-scale projects. Government funding depended on the strength of the local authority's vision for the whole area – '…matching the scale of the challenge... with the scale of the reform which they propose…' (Tony Blair, 2004). York made an explicit commitment to improving school standards as part of a coherent package of measures designed to deliver the Every Child Matters agenda (see page102). The authority's priorities, developed following extensive area-wide consultation, included:

'…focusing on, and strengthening, leadership across schools, colleges and partnerships… supporting and challenging headteachers, principals and governing bodies to aim for world class standards… providing a stimulating curriculum… and developing the concept of "sustainable schools/colleges" that recognises our responsibility to future generations and responds to children's specific comments.'

City of York Council, Children and Young People's Plan, 2009–2012

The ultimate objective of the project was, of course, to improve educational opportunities for the city's young people. In short the building was to fit round its core activity – teaching and learning – and not vice versa. York underlined this by appointing as successive project directors individuals who had a background in education rather than in construction. Their brief was consistently to ask 'How will this improve attainment?'

The government's intentions in setting up the BSF programme were not simply to remedy poor building stock. The initiative came at a time when the nature of education and of teaching and learning was subject to intense speculation and change. Just as Joseph Rowntree had spoken of the primary importance of good teaching when the first (elementary) school opened in New Earswick, so the new secondary school was intended to support and enhance the best professional teaching practice.

As with the elementary school, those involved in planning the new secondary school were keen to incorporate fresh air, good lighting and cleanliness into the design, recognising that these environmental factors all have an impact on students' ability to learn. Where Seebohm Rowntree and his colleagues sought to remedy existing problems caused by bad air, poor drainage, poor diet and lack of easy access to clean water and sanitation, twenty-first century planners looked to the future and focused on creating aspirational learning and social spaces that could cater for a raft of new learning opportunities. New spaces were to

offer new possibilities for teaching and learning. They were to herald a radical departure from the hierarchical '30 kids in front of a teacher' concept of education that was built into traditional school design, with its forward-facing rows of desks and fixed blackboard. The advent of increasingly sophisticated new technology opened doors to new and different ways of teaching and learning. Retaining the flexibility to cater for future change was an integral part of the planning process. Education and design experts anticipated that twenty-first century learning would encompass individual, small group and lecture-style work covering a wide variety of activities from performance or project-based study to community service and hands-on learning (Nair and Fielding, 2005).

'We need to ensure we do not embody old and outmoded practices in bricks and mortar and glass and steel, but that rather we build in the pedagogies and practices appropriate for twenty-first century learning.'

Lord Puttnam, 2008

Much of traditional thinking about education – its content, delivery and learning context – has been built around the concept of 'educational transformation.'

'We can only really say transformation will have been achieved if we see marked changes in approaches to learning, teaching practices, relationships and school organisation; when we see a fundamental shift away from what might be described as schools as "learned institutions" to the development of "learning communities" where what is learnt, by whom, when, who with and how becomes more fluid, emergent and evolves based on need and opportunity.'

Rudd, 2008

To achieve this transformation teachers would need to rethink and begin to model new ways of working. Institutions would need to rethink their approach to new technology so that they build on what is used by young learners every day rather than expecting them to abandon it at the school gates. A new emphasis on collaboration was reflected in government rhetoric which directed that learner consultation and participation should be integral features of this new teaching and learning landscape and should extend beyond education to the whole range of services that could be made available through schools taking on roles as community centres.

In fact this ambitious project clearly envisioned the school as an integral – and essential – part of its local community. It promised to present the village with further opportunities for improved facilities for young people, their families and the community as a whole. The work of the children's centre, described in Chapter 6, was to be supported and extended by a raft of additional facilities at the new secondary school.

A combination of funding came principally from the OSP initiative, Faraday funds and from the Joseph Rowntree Foundation. (Faraday funding was offered to schools that wanted to be involved in 'demonstration projects' to model creative ways of teaching science to A level and beyond. It demanded a transformed teaching and learning environment and cross curricular working.) The funding supported an extensive consultation, planning and design process and culminated in the official opening of the new building on 1 March 2010 (though the completed building was actually occupied from the February half-term). The old school was demolished and the ground levelled and landscaped to provide playing fields and other amenities.

Maggi Wright, then recently appointed as head teacher, cuts the first turf at the new school site in September 2008.

Consultation and planning

'If anything is unique here it's that the school is at the heart of the community... You can't do anything here without massive involvement from everyone... It's all based on the Rowntree legacy.'

Carol Runciman, City of York councillor for New Earswick and a Joseph Rowntree School governor, 2009

The OSP process demanded extensive advance consultation, both to determine how local authorities were to manage the work and to involve communities. In fact there was evidence from work done by PricewaterhouseCoopers (2003) that new schools offer greater benefits to the community where all parties work and plan together. Within the OSP programme, planning processes depended upon a series of strategic conversations and developing relationships. Some commentators hoped that these conversations would create new opportunities for building capacity within schools.

'Schools are no longer just about what goes on in the classroom during school hours. The modern vision of extended schools sees schools as assets at the heart of the community, which everyone can use and benefit from... Building Schools for the Future (BSF) provides an opportunity to be innovative in the ways schools work and to explore new ways in which they can involve the local community, adults, families and local business partners.'

Teachernet, undated

The New Earswick consultation covered strategy, design and construction. A fourth element – that of determining how the village would use the new building, is ongoing. For a relatively small community this was a massive project requiring professionals from different backgrounds to work together in unfamiliar relationships. However, the Quaker tradition of shared decision-making offered a strong foundation for community involvement. Throughout the process, planners and educators had to consider the past, present and future. Simultaneously, they had to look at how best to serve:

- students who had almost completed their schooling within the confines of the old building
- those who were to make the transition from old to new environments
- the very different needs and expectations of future generations of lifelong learners.

The consultation process involved pupils, parents, teachers, governors, the local authority and community representatives. All benefited from the village's long history of participation in decision-making, from the earliest meetings of the village council, and from JRHT's long experience of consultation '...particularly with hard to reach groups' (Maggie Tansley, Head of Planning and Resources, City of York Council, 2008). '... the plans were displayed in different places and... when people came into the Garth – to pay their rent – the staff they spoke to knew what was going on and could answer their questions'. (Jacquie Dale, JRHT Director of Housing and Community Services, 2009).

Pupils were involved in early consultations about what they wanted from their new school, December 2006.

There were numerous meetings and workshops for members of the school and for the wider community. Those who took part were asked to think about much more than simply replacing a facility. They considered comfort, sustainability, how to make the most of flexible spaces and what the new building could offer to the community. In May 2007, Edunova (one of the Faraday partners) ran a 'school of the future' week enabling school staff and students to explore the potential of new design and new technology. Maggi Wright, the headteacher, encouraged students to draw their ideas, using plenty of colour. Anna Evans, the first project director reflected in 2008 that:

'Our consultation process was very basic compared to some – that made it different – it was hands-on and got lots of people through the doors to look at it all. Basic but effective – it really DID form the basis of our vision and framework.'

JRHT regularly canvasses residents – including young people – for their views on existing and future facilities and the desire for a say in village events has not been restricted to long-term residents or to trust tenants. Experienced trust employees had much to add to the local authority's tried and tested processes and noted that the school's idea of community suffered initially from being too narrow, with its own support staff not being involved in the early stages of discussion. Jacquie Dale, JRHT's Director of Housing and Community Services, ensured that the trust's involvement led to the use of a wider variety of consultation methods being used at all levels of the consultation – in the school, the immediate neighbourhood and in the wider community, including feeder schools. As part of this process it was important to determine in advance what was and was not up for discussion and to find experts and intermediaries who had the right skills, who could talk and listen to local residents. The benefits of the trust's expertise in community engagement

meant that genuine consultation extended beyond the 'usual suspects.' One of its most significant actions was the appointment of Ian Atkinson, an architect who had completed several Rowntree projects and therefore understood the principles of community engagement. His initial brief was to support the consultation and this led to a dual role as a design adviser. He combined highly relevant professional expertise with the people skills the consultation needed and was able to draw together different interested parties in a common understanding of what could be achieved.

There were of course risks in consultation. It can be tempting to assume that the well-reasoned arguments of a vocal minority are representative of the views of a silent majority and inviting people to say what they want can be easily misconstrued as a promise to deliver whatever they ask for. Neither does every consultation generate the insights anticipated. Informal feedback from students both before and after the new school's opening reveal a preoccupation with 'non-smelly toilets' and 'access to drinking water' – preoccupations shared by the Victorians more than 100 years ago. Most significantly, it can be difficult to separate the wider potential of what new provision might bring from views on what already exists.

'When users are asked what they want from their building in future, they often seek to replicate what they already do rather than thinking how they could transform what they do by organising the building in a different way.'

Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE), 2009

By engaging as wide a cross-section as possible from the local community and offering examples of forward-looking design, the project team, supported by JRF expertise, sought to limit these negative possibilities and maximise local involvement. Consultations continued during the construction phase. While regular design meetings enabled school staff to discuss the layout and content of the new building, the construction company, Carillion, worked with the site's neighbours, such as residents at Hartrigg Oaks, to minimise disruption and ensure that unexpected problems were dealt with effectively. Interested neighbours were already involved in the work of the school – Hartrigg Oaks' residents, for example, used their accumulated experience and expertise as mentors and learning partners or in activities such as interview training. They were keen to develop this work in planning for the future.

'We had two open days for neighbours during the design process. They were chances for the community to meet the design team and contribute their own ideas. We wanted the neighbours to enjoy the building as well as contributing to it.'

Matt Patton, Carillion Construction, 2009

The most important constituency of all, the current and future students of the new school, were kept up-to-date with developments throughout the construction phase and, wherever possible, their teachers were keen to follow in the Rowntree tradition of using the school environment, both completed and in construction, as a curriculum resource.

Designing for 2070 – plans become reality

'The best clients have a catalytic role that reaches far beyond individual buildings... such clients succeed by moving into new areas, by resisting formulaic responses, by learning from the past and by imagining a better future.'

Jacquie Dale, JRHT Director of Housing and Community Services, 2009

There were obvious difficulties in planting a major new building in the middle of a historic village that is valued by many residents for its 'chocolate box' appeal. Creativity faced the challenge of a nostalgia that sometimes ran counter to the Rowntrees' belief in progress and improvement. Such difficulties were compounded by the limitations built into the government's rules for the operation of the One School Pathfinder scheme. These rules ignored the Royal Institute of British Architect's recommendation of the use of 'untested architects' who 'respond and negotiate a brief' (Pearman, 2006). Consequently, there could be no national competition for the design and plans for more than one drama space had to be scrapped.

Creativity was further regulated by the need to meet national design quality indicators which demanded close attention to environmental and community factors. These were re-interpreted locally following consultation.

What we wanted

- A 'pathfinder' new school with a 'wow' factor, inside and out.
- A school building that contributes to the urban form and landscape feel of the village.
- An aesthetic that is sensitive to the village but contemporary.
- A welcoming and uplifting reception space.
- A school that is well organised for community and extended use.
- A multi-functional 'street' at the heart of the school.
- Spaces for each year group.
- Covered outside areas for year and departmental entry points.
- Flexible teaching areas to suit emerging curriculum requirements.
- Enhanced teaching areas to support inclusion.
- Toilets that are 'safe' quality spaces, located where we need them.
- Departmental staff work bases (but with a 'central' social staff area).
- Roof areas that can be used socially or for teaching and learning.
- Maximum use of daylight and natural ventilation.
- Maximum height, volume and enjoyability in the space.
- Environmental features to support sustainability.

From The New Joseph Rowntree Secondary School One School Pathfinder – A School for the Future (edited from the 'design brief', unpublished)

Initial feedback on the design of the school (gathered while it was still in construction) suggested that the architects had done 'an excellent job'.

Ground floor plan of the new school clearly shows the 'main street' (beige) with clusters of classrooms coming off it.

At the same time local enthusiasts who saw the potential of the new building project were frustrated by the limitations imposed on them by government – Frank Dixon, chair of governors, contrasted the narrowness of design quality indicators with the aspirational vision of the school's new headteacher, Maggi Wright. Ian Atkinson's view was that: 'The private finance initiative-type process tends to engineer the delight out. That is the danger we are trying to avoid – the vision can become impoverished if it's all about the bottom line.' (Ian Atkinson, design adviser, 2008).

Constant effort was required to maintain and develop the original vision for the school from mere words into reality. The school set up a design group – its membership including school managers, the chair of governors and local authority and Carillion staff. This group made key decisions about the building, its furniture and fittings, while making a conscious effort to learn from the positive and negative features of similar work elsewhere.

The new school

The new school has a cluster of buildings set at angles on either side of an interior walkway – the Main Street. The Main Street replaces the central corridor which was a prized innovation in late nineteenth century school buildings (a departure from a system in which teaching rooms opened directly onto each other). It runs the length of the building and incorporates spaces for socialising and eating. The Main Street is lit by round skylights in the roof two floors above, giving the shared space the natural lighting which was so prized by Seebohm Rowntree and which contemporary psychologists say aids learning and well-being.

Most of the complex is two storeys high. A first floor balcony, overlooking the Main Street, connects the separate areas. At one end of the complex is a third storey housing the autism unit – a new departure for the school – and a staff room. These indoor spaces have exterior terraces overlooking a sedum roof from which rainwater is gathered for the toilets.

Students with autism will be integrated into school provision but have their own dedicated accommodation. A specialist teacher and three additional teaching assistants were appointed during 2010 to begin working with six students with a diagnosis of an autism spectrum condition from September 2010.

Each area houses a cluster of subject-based facilities – for example sports, media, humanities and science. In addition to these specialist facilities there is a hall that will double as a theatre, with retractable Bleacher seating, and a university style lecture theatre, described by one of the contractors as unique in his experience of school building. Large teaching and learning spaces are set alongside smaller breakout spaces. One of these – in the shape of a red blood cell – is held in place by sky hooks, giving the impression that it is suspended over the Main Street.

The exterior is landscaped, with further external breakout teaching spaces and performance areas as well as playing fields.

Green design

During the consultation process students said they wanted to make the new building as green as possible. Their views were supported by government incentives to incorporate green features, such as a biomass boiler (supplemented by conventional gas heating), and heating and ventilation systems controlled by a Building Management System (BMS) to make the school carbon neutral. This system caters for local conditions in different parts of the building, taking into account air pressure and wind speeds on each façade of the school. The first floor lecture theatre is supported by pillars that are also conduits for air drawn from the underground temperature control system. Ventilation is controlled by a separate system that detects fluctuations in temperature and in carbon dioxide levels and opens and closes windows accordingly – fresh air is as important a feature of the new school as it was in the original New Earswick Elementary School. The school's success in maintaining its carbon neutrality is visible to all in a central monitor which displays current levels of carbon production.

Overall commitment to raising environmental awareness, which was a prominent feature of both government directive and consultation outcomes, was compromised by York Council's refusal to allow the construction of a wind turbine as a visibly green addition to the many environmentally friendly features on the new site. However, the school has many other green features, including SUDS – a Sustainable Urban Drainage System – which is designed to moderate the run-off of water from the roof, aided in part by the sedum roof. Water consumption is monitored and the roof itself is partly supported by glulam beams – re-used, laminated and glued timbers.

As the architect's plans began to be realised in bricks and mortar, many questions waited to be answered. Would it be a showcase for the best of innovation (in the tradition of the original New Earswick Primary School) or would it merely conform to current dogma about what a new school should look like (much as the original secondary school building did)? Had enough been done in New Earswick to shift design away from the conventional forms that are easily matched to government criteria? Would the new school embody the genuine creativity that was the hallmark of previous Rowntree projects?

Certainly the first impressions of those who use the building are very positive and the building has already been recognised through receipt of a most versatile learning environment award (as part of the Excellence in Building Schools for the Future scheme).

The new interior is light, airy and comfortable.

First impressions

'When you consider what we see here today – the similarities [to the aspirations of the first school when it opened in 1942] are remarkable. The first impression that you get is of a light airy building, without any narrow corridors and with plenty of space for children to learn. The colours are striking – I am not sure that the original trustees would have expected anything so jolly and uplifting as we have today – but everything indicates that learning is to be enjoyed – not endured.'

Carol Runciman, City of York councillor for New Earswick and a Joseph Rowntree School governor, at the opening of the new school, 2010

'It's smaller and spacier – easier to work in. It's more comfortable with comfy chairs. There's no chewing gum under the tables. We don't get squashed together between lessons like we did in the old corridors.'

Year 7 student

'My little sister Amy... comes to school as often as she gets a chance... just to get another look. She'd be here right now if she really could. And I think [my other sister] Hannah and I slightly envy her. I'm going to get to stay here for another four years at most, and Hannah five, but Amy will get the whole caboodle and be the first Year 7 group to come here in September and have a full blown seven years of learning at most in this fantastic new school. And I know that she will enjoy, as me and Hannah have, every single second of it.'

Jeremy Brown, Year 9

'I don't like there being so many windows for the staff to watch you from but in the old school nobody knew what happened in the [sixth form] common room because there were no windows. Now we can see in so we see they just sit around chatting like we do. '

'I used to like the small private spaces where people could hide in the old school – bullying hasn't stopped, but it's just less likely now because there are less small areas and more windows for everybody to see.'

'I like the clusters, all your friends being close together is good.'

'My favourite bit is the high winding entrance to the theatre.'

'There aren't many small spaces now, it's all pretty big.'

'My favourite bit is the light and the size – I like the flowers on the tables every day.'

Year 9 students

'People's perception was that [the old school] was a dump – we felt that we had the worst school in the city, which we did – suddenly we have the best and I think the kids are aware of that... For me personally it's better than I thought it would be. The building seems like an organic entity in itself. It has an intrinsic beauty to it, particularly on a sunny day. It's so light that it is an uplifting building in itself.'

Joseph Rowntree School teacher

'We like the new building.'

'...the spaces are a funny shape and they don't all work. In the music practice rooms you can't get four violins up at once with a teacher.'

'It's all cleaner and colourful and bright. There are more windows.'

'Because it's smaller it's easier to find your way round.'

Year 7 students

'This building tells those who work here that we respect them. Respect for our workers – I think Joseph Rowntree himself would be proud of us for that alone... It is now down to the students and staff to realise the opportunities this building makes possible.'

Hugh Porter, former headteacher

Teachers and pupils were asked to give their first impressions of the building:

'I wish I had something like this when I was at school'
'It's like a world class art gallery'
'The kids are going to LOVE it'
'Love the shapes, space and light'
'Beyond my wildest imagination'
'Joseph Rowntree would be proud'
'The best I have ever seen'
'I nearly cried'
'I'm so inspired I can't sleep'
'I feel inspired again'
'A very 'grown up' space for a new generation of learners and teachers! Very futuristic'
'Was really worried before – now looking forward to it'
'The realisation of a dream'

Community and future

'[A Community Learning Centre]... is a part of and not separate or isolated from the community in which it belongs and secures itself in ways that are as far removed as possible from the prisons that so many of our schools have become.'

Nair and Fielding, 2005

As this book was being completed the new building had been open for only a few weeks. Already it had won praise from the staff and pupils who use it as well as from design experts. Its longer-term impact on local people and on the community of New Earswick is still to unfold.

Joseph Rowntree acknowledged, by his willingness to support the building and operation of the Folk Hall, that learning and social activity go hand in hand and JHRT has pointed to the potential contribution the new school could make to New Earswick's facilities:

'[There are] gaps in meeting the needs of young people and the existing facilities tended to be limited in their thinking about what they could offer. There is now a mind shift in the school about seeing itself as part of a wider community.'

Jacquie Dale, JRHT Director of Housing and Community Services, 2009

It is not yet clear exactly how the new building will be used by local adults or to what extent it will open up new possibilities in addition to housing existing activities that have transferred from elsewhere. During the planning and consultation phase there were many suggestions for making the new building a new community centre – as a performance space, a sporting and adult education venue and as the location for extended services to continue and add to provision at the children's centre. The building was designed to allow for adult use, with separate access routes and a separate reception for the sports area.

The sports facilities have their own reception as they will be used by the public and other sports groups outside of school hours.

The early signs were extremely good. By July 2010, only three months after opening, the school had been inundated with enquiries for using and hiring the new premises. There was a wide assortment of local sports and recreational clubs already using the school throughout the week, including taekwondo, rocket ball, badminton, yoga, football, York stage musicals, gymnastics, karate, a church group and a weight loss group. The school's sports facilities were already fully booked during weekday evenings and sometimes at weekends. Other facilities proving to be very popular were the main vaudeville hall and drama area. The lecture theatre was also attracting bookings from external agencies. The flexibility of the school premises means that most early requirements had been met, indicating that Jacquie

Dale's proposal – that the school should '...start by looking at how the community wants to use the school... look at it from a community perspective not just decide what bits they are going to make available and when' – had been well heeded during the design phase. The introduction of a well-known coffee outlet also provides a facility for members of the public.

Dance and drama groups are already presenting shows and rehearsals for a symphony orchestra recital led to a declaration that the acoustics were excellent. The facility to record performances was also praised, along with the radio microphones and ICT infrastructure within the building. Having previously withdrawn from using the old school, adult education providers were planning 30 different courses and classes to begin at the school in September 2010.

At the same time, increasing thought has been given nationally to what schools might look like in 20, 40 or even 60 years' time and how they will continue to contribute to whole communities. As in many contemporary settlements, the accident of geographical proximity is not enough to make twenty-first century New Earswick a community of like-minded people with shared values and objectives. Formal schooling is one of a handful of life experiences that remain common to almost all, but shifting patterns of employment have increased the need to engage adults in their own lifelong learning as well as in the furtherance of their children's education.

While the long-term future of schools as the primary location for formal learning is questioned, their significance as a means of creating social cohesion assumes a higher priority. And yet schools across the UK continue to struggle to build community engagement. Even good schools can find it difficult to create productive and supportive relationships with some 'hard to reach' parents. Some argue that the word 'school' is in itself a barrier to community involvement.

'...so much learning in the twenty-first century will occur outside schools, that we need a different terminology to reflect this expanded concept of education – "twenty-first century learning communities" or "education villages", or simply "twenty-first century learning".'

The Innovation Unit, 2009

Increasingly school has begun to be seen less as a building of bricks and mortar and more '…as a set of relationships between teachers, pupils, parents and the wider community' (Charles Leadbeater, 2008). The priority given by The Joseph Rowntree School to continuing and building on these relationships is visible in the time and resource it has dedicated to working with New Earswick people.

Conclusion

'Well now it is finished, and others can judge... for themselves. But for me, it has exceeded my expectations. It has given us what we dreamt of, but in addition to this, to me, it is a truly inspirational building which I would describe as spiritually and morally uplifting.'

Frank Dixon, chair of governors, 2010

A new era

'Pupils returning to Joseph Rowntree School in New Earswick were welcomed like heroes at a ribbon-cutting ceremony yesterday. The pomp and ceremony was an effort to make the youngsters' first day at their new £29million building exciting and unforgettable.

Headteacher Maggi Wright (pictured) said: 'We want this experience to be as memorable as possible for the children, we want it to be an experience they will remember for the rest of their lives'… Throughout this week the school has been staggering the arrival of each school year with a new one arriving each day. The arrivals are being 'clapped in' by their fellow schoolmates, who cheer from around gallery balconies overlooking the hub. Mrs Wright said: 'We want the students to take in all the excitement and beauty of the new school this week. We are thrilled at the new education opportunities afforded to students by the school's new facilities'.

The new school's design won an award for most versatile learning environment at the Excellence In Building Schools for the Future Awards last November. The school was awarded the prize for its eco-friendly features which include rainwater harvesting, a biomass boiler, the use of natural sunlight and ventilation and a weather station…

The school also hopes to maintain strong links with the local community and it will be holding open mornings on Saturday, March 20 and 27, from 10am to noon, for anyone wishing to use any of the school facilities for parties, local clubs meetings or learning activities.'

The Press, 3 March 2010

Students led the celebrations at the official opening of the new school, 11/12 May 2010.

The ambitious long-term nature of The Joseph Rowntree School project – building a school that would stand until 2070, perhaps outliving the very idea of 'school' as we currently understand it – mean that it is impossible to make meaningful judgements on its effectiveness within a few weeks or months of the building's completion. Post-occupancy evaluation, an essential feature of the BSF programme, cannot encompass all the challenges of a rapidly changing environment. If the new school is to have – as its first headteacher Maggi Wright hopes – a prolonged and useful life, to live up to government expectations, to become a 'beacon for lifelong learning and transformation'. its first occupants will need to continue the programme of expanded community consultation and involvement which was begun in the initial planning phase. Ongoing consultation will need to address content and changing function as well as design and appearance. The new commitment to 'full service' schools – schools that are commissioners and providers of services to the community – cannot be fulfilled without this new and evolving relationship with the outside world.

'Many projects and activities have been generated to make links between schools and the "outside world". But schools are under such pressure that they may well wonder how they are going to meet this latest weight of expectation that is accumulating around them.'

Mog Ball, 2007

Speakers at the new school official opening included (clockwise from top left) Jacquie Dale (JRHT), Gonzalo Carmona (architect for Bond Bryan) Hugh Porter (former head teacher) and Jeremy Brown (year 9 student).

While the new school brings possibilities for major long-term educational benefits, there may also be a short-term risk of falling standards. Much of the government's major schools spending programme was directed at areas of social and economic deprivation and there was some evidence (for example from National College for School Leadership studies), that projects in these areas were often accompanied by a dip in pupil performance, not only at the time of building but also in the period immediately after occupation. Armed with this knowledge, the staff and governors of the new school have taken care to maintain a focus on educational standards throughout the building project. They may now count themselves fortunate. With the scrapping of the BSF programme in July 2010, it appears that the new Joseph Rowntree School, far from being a 'pathfinder' for others to follow, is more likely to be one of a small number of new secondary schools ready for twenty-first century learning, shining as a beacon within a stock of much older and often unsuitable school buildings.

While much thought and effort has been expended on the creation of a truly impressive new physical space, an equally significant legacy of The Joseph Rowntree School building project may well be found in the work with and in the community that contributed to the success of its design and construction. These new community relationships will depend for their success on the involvement of the whole community, not just selected groups within it. The long experience of the Rowntree trusts in stimulating an evolving local democracy and in generating fresh vision may well be more important in designing the village's future than its experience of designing buildings.

'However wisely the buildings may be planned, the real success of the school will depend upon the personnel of the teaching staff ... the end which the teacher should set before himself is the development of the latent powers of his pupils, the unfolding of their latent life.'

Joseph Rowntree, 1912 (quoting a former Senior Inspector of schools, Edmond Holmes)

The entrance to the new school.

Colour, light, space, flexibility and technology – features of the new school buildings.

'All of us have to learn how to invent our lives, make them up, imagine them. We need to be taught these skills; we need guides to show us how. If we don't, our lives get made up for us by other people.'

Ursula K. Le Guin, American author

CHAPTER 8

Final reflections and looking forward

This book is intended to celebrate and reflect on the opening of two new facilities in the village of New Earswick, buildings which will shape the lives of generations of young people and their families. The Family Tree Children's Centre at New Earswick, within the grounds of the remodelled and renovated New Earswick Primary School, and the new Joseph Rowntree School, sit proudly at the heart of the village. The educational experience and the future lives of the thousands of children and young people they serve will in many respects bear little relation to those of the young people of the early 1900s. Nonetheless, the opportunity to reflect in this book on the 'Rowntree legacy' – the vision, aspirations and drive of a remarkable family – has shown that when it comes to creating healthy communities and providing an appropriate and complete education for all, there are some universal needs and themes which endure.

This short final chapter picks out some of these universals and identifies some of the particular strengths and lessons learned from the development and early operation of the children's centre and new secondary school. There are also some reflections on the potential future impact of these two facilities on the local population, in terms of community and education.

National policy on education and community has, intentionally or otherwise, tended to follow and copy some of the changes in New Earswick over the last century. It would be appropriate and gratifying therefore if some of the lessons learned from the new developments are similarly used to shape reform across the UK during the twenty-first century.

Creating a community

At the heart of Joseph Rowntree's aspirations was a commitment to creating a supportive community to which everybody would choose to belong. The Family Tree children's centre shares this aspiration, in its desire to provide a universal service, and has already made progress towards achieving it. By providing a balanced range of free high-quality services which parents and young children can choose from, it is establishing itself as a 'centre' in all senses of the word.

The extension of two trends which are already apparent will be indications of further progress. Firstly, there are already signs that parents and children are actively inviting and bringing along friends to activities and events at the Family Tree. The continuation of this trend in coming months will be critical in making the centre sustainable as a local resource in the longer term. The fact that local authorities are now statutorily required to provide children's centres ensures their future, but each centre needs to provide services which local families view as useful if it is to thrive. In the case of New Earswick, drop-in pre-school stay and play sessions, a relaxed public library, a range of family and adult learning, specialist parenting advice and creative activities are all services which have already proved popular. Engagement with the centre will increase via word of mouth as long as the centre remains welcoming, accessible and responsive to local need.

The second key area of engagement is the Family Tree's appeal to the 'hard to reach' – those families who live in challenging circumstances with vulnerable children and who do not have the capacity or the motivation to make use of local support services. Their voluntary attendance at pre-school groups, parenting workshops or social events will be the second touchstone for the success of the Family Tree. Children's centre workers have the tools to identify families in particular need and will continue the hard task of making contact, visiting them and encouraging them into the centre.

A further challenge which needs to be considered by both the new facilities is their relationship with, and impact on, existing community services and activities. There is a danger that the wider sense of community could suffer if other venues and organisations are marginalised – if family and adult learning thrive at the new buildings then where might that leave the Folk Hall in terms of a community venue? If the new school beauty salon and coffee bar offer cheaper and more comfortable services for local people then what impact will they have on the local hairdresser and the village café? It is too early to know whether they might draw custom away from existing venues, but it is something that the management groups of the new buildings need to consider in their planning.

Sharing knowledge and creating links

Quaker values which were instrumental in helping businesses to flourish and good educational practice to spread included the active encouragement of networking and the sharing of expertise. The Rowntree business benefited from expertise garnered from

across the Quaker community and, in much the same way, teachers at the early schools were explicitly encouraged to visit and learn from teachers at other schools.

One feature of the drive to improve public service reform over recent decades has been a consistent emphasis on the need to work in partnership, to integrate services where appropriate, and to share best practice. The new services in New Earswick are already modelling ways in which these often esoteric and theoretical ideals of 'partnership working' can work in reality, on the ground. Staff at Little Rowans nursery work extremely closely with colleagues at the early years end of the primary school, sharing space, ideas and knowledge about their children. These links are showing signs of helping to improve the transition of children into full-time education. The locality strategic manager for the Family Tree children's centre has been central to the creation of CAF Plus, a process by which professionals who feel stuck in their work with particularly challenging families can receive advice and guidance from other professionals with alternative perspectives and expertise. The piloting of the registration of births at the Family Tree demonstrated an imagination and active partnership that attracted new families to the centre. And the new Joseph Rowntree School has already enthusiastically hosted a number of visits from educationalists from home and abroad, informing them about how the building was designed and how it is being used to provide for the needs of its pupils and of the wider local population.

This commitment to sharing knowledge and establishing close inter-agency links has the potential to maintain New Earswick's reputation for forward thinking and modelling of best practice.

Sharing of skills and closer partnership working between services has already benefited children in the early years.

Effective consultation

The Family Tree and the new Joseph Rowntree School are each the product of many years planning and they have managed to incorporate the opinions of numerous constituents, including most importantly local people. Consultation with local people is central to instilling a feeling of local ownership and providing services which will be valued and used into the future. Again the experiences of those charged with delivering large-scale new services in New Earswick have brought much learning about how this process works best, built on the Joseph Rowntree Housing Trust's decades of experience of talking to local residents about what they want from their local community. Their knowledge helped to frame the consultation for the two new buildings.

Three particular messages stand out from the many months of consultation.

1. Make consultation simple and do it often. Local people and school students had real influence over the designs for the new school. A series of relatively simple events, often led by specialists (such as architects and planners) with a personal interest in the local area, were run over a two-year period. Individuals could speak, write or draw their ideas, many of which found their way into final designs. One local architect who was heavily involved in the consultation was gratified to find on looking back that: 'Many of the ideas which came up at the earliest of consultations with pupils, staff and local residents have found their way into the final school building'.

2. Make consultation realistic. Consultation does not always work best by giving people a blank piece of paper to work from. It is important to provide some parameters to avoid raising false expectations. Consultations at the Family Tree confirmed the importance of saying 'these are the options we have, these are the services which we could offer, now please tell us which ones you would like and when?'

3. Continuity is key. Large scale capital building projects, especially those under the bureaucracy of public funding, are phased over many years. People move on, roles change and enthusiasm can wane, meaning early inspirations can be easily lost or forgotten. Both the New Earswick projects benefited from the involvement and interest of some key people throughout the consultation and building phase. These individuals were able to hold on to the original vision and to remind people at key moments what the earlier intentions for the buildings had been.

Quality in design

There is little doubt that Joseph Rowntree would be impressed with the two new facilities in New Earswick and the ways in which they will be used. He would no doubt also be delighted that the New Earswick Primary School building is little changed on the outside and is still deemed suitable for twenty-first century learning following its refurbishment and redesigned layout. Rowntree was adamant that buildings to be used for education and learning should be spacious, light, airy and comfortable and these are certainly features

of both of the new buildings. Perhaps the greatest difference between then and now is the recognition that physical flexibility and environmental sustainability in buildings are crucial in order to meet the needs of the twenty-first century.

Staff and students at the new secondary school rightly speak about their new building with pride, many referring to its 'wow factor' and its unique character. Of all its features, the sense of space and light are perhaps its highlights. The numerous skylights, the broad main street with its cavernous height and wide communal areas all give a sense of openness and freedom. The decision to position groups of classrooms around individually designed hubs with movable furniture offers flexibility and diversity – there are so many ways in which small and larger groups can work together. The theatres and halls also provide multiple opportunities for large groups to gather, perform or learn. The quality of the design and fabric is borne out by the speed with which the facilities have been booked by external groups.

Frank Dixon, chair of governors (left) with former headteacher Hugh Porter. Frank provided continuity and drive throughout the consultation and building phases of the new school.

The chair of governors, Frank Dixon, was a pivotal person, and is keen to pass on what he has learned. 'I hope the space and light of the building and its beautiful views inside and out can help to open our children's eyes to what is possible for them… I have also learned that good design need not mean extra cost, it just needs time and effort to get right.'

While there is limited hard evidence that new buildings in themselves can make a direct positive impact on student learning and outcomes in later life, early observations from staff about improved student behaviour, aspirations and performance indicate that the new building has already altered the mindset of some of its students and teachers.

A further lesson learned in the building of the new school is the importance of holding on tightly to an original vision against inevitable pressure to compromise. Some of the new schools built before the cancellation of the BSF programme have been criticised for lack of vision and design quality, having sacrificed early ideas under pressure to cut costs. The Joseph Rowntree School has avoided this pitfall, and has already won awards and plaudits for the scale of its vision, design, build quality and flexibility. Even so, in hindsight Frank Dixon believes that, given the chance to do it all again, he would have fought even harder to achieve everything that his students and staff wanted from the new building, despite inevitable pressure on budgets.

The cancellation of the BSF programme will significantly reduce the rebuilding of secondary schools across the country, but the new government has spoken of its commitment to

continuing some investment in rebuilding. People who are granted funding for new or improved buildings would do well to visit The Joseph Rowntree School.

A French student recently visiting the new school as part of an exchange commented:

'The school is very large and very attractive. For me the most impressive things are the tennis courts, the cuisine, the textiles department and the gym. I have never seen this before. It is a very impressive school.'

The building of the children's centre, though on a relatively smaller scale, was also a significant achievement. One of the triumphs of the Family Tree development was that it managed to incorporate rooms for the centre, a full school renovation, a new public library and the new Little Rowans nursery together on one site, without impinging on the integrity of the original school building. New Earswick certainly benefits from its rural setting and consequent availability of land, but some of the design achievements of the new buildings could be shared with any other setting.

Vision and leadership

While there have been obvious benefits to team working – the use of project management groups and the delegation of tasks on such large-scale projects – experience at New Earswick confirms what is surely one of the most obvious lessons to be drawn from the achievements of Joseph Rowntree, namely that large-scale local change needs the drive, passion and commitment of one or two visionary individuals.

At the new secondary school, the key driving forces have undoubtedly been Hugh Porter, headteacher for 11 years until July 2008, his deputy and successor Maggi Wright, and Frank Dixon, chair of governors since 2006. Hugh Porter was instrumental in the school being chosen as the pathfinder for the City of York's school renewal programme. Hugh led the early consultations which informed decisions on the final design for the new school, providing a vision for the future while maintaining existing standards in staff and student achievement in the old building. Maggi Wright took over as headteacher just before the building work began and saw the project through to completion, managing the complicated transition into the new school and setting the tone for the relaxed but conscientious school atmosphere in the early months after opening. She was also responsible for the inspirational colour schemes throughout the building. Frank Dixon was chair of governors throughout this period, providing strategic and operational leadership. His commitment was central to the project's completion on time and on budget and he provided unfailing support to the two headteachers while liaising between the authority, contractors and other key stakeholders. These individuals acknowledge the importance of support from the local authority, architects and contractors in the delivery of the new building, but without their drive and constant focus on the ultimate aim of providing an excellent learning environment for the students of New Earswick, it is unlikely that the new building would have been as spectacularly successful as it is.

At the children's centre, a similar drive and commitment has been shown by Carole Farrar, headteacher at the primary school since 2001, and Juliet Burton, strategic manager for the three children's centres in the north of the City of York. Carole Farrar showed an early understanding of the concept and aims of the children's centre, becoming a key strategic partner while maintaining her main role within the school. Indeed the renovation of the school buildings meant several years' planning, some frustrating delays and the management of staff and pupils in half a building for a full year while the renovations took place. The primary school, under Carole's leadership with the support of the school's governing body, has worked hard to ensure that the children's centre is as integrated with the school as possible, providing that much-quoted but difficult to achieve seamless service. The relationship between children's centres and neighbouring schools in other parts of the country has not been so easily established. Juliet Burton has been the key manager from the local authority, ensuring services at the Family Tree have satisfied the sometimes onerous government requirements and more importantly local demand. She dealt with recruitment of staff, teething troubles with buildings and other operational issues in a calmly assured manner, while always maintaining focus on the primary aim – to provide a hub for support and guidance to young families in New Earswick and surrounding areas.

Students enjoy the new facilities at Joseph Rowntree School (2010).

New Earswick was fortunate to be given the opportunity to develop two new buildings which could become the focus for education for many generations to come. Those who live and work in the village grabbed this opportunity, making the most of it to create some truly impressive, inspirational and beautiful spaces. This achievement in itself is worthy of celebration. It would be equally noteworthy if the coming years see the local population use these spaces to their full potential, ensuring they become vibrant, exciting and busy places for learning, used by all sections of the community, and if the many lessons which were learned during their creation and operation are passed on to be used in other areas of the country. The early indications for these two aspirations are good.

'I believe we can at Earswick offer two valuable local object lessons – the one throwing light upon the housing question, and the other throwing light upon that of the elementary schools, especially in suburban or rural districts ... If the school is to accomplish all that is possible, not only for the village but as an object lesson, it will mean the continuance of a large and probably a growing expenditure upon it ... It is the state which will have to supply a large portion of the funds for a great uplift in education, and so our object should be to offer a specimen of what the schools, especially the suburban schools, of the future ought to be ... I would suggest that the house-building operations should be curtailed rather than the value of the school as an object lesson should be lessened.'

Joseph Rowntree, 1916

Joseph Rowntree

Trust Activity 1902–2002

Joseph Rowntree: Trust Activity 1902-2002

1904	Joseph Rowntree sets up three trusts, the Joseph Rowntree Village Trust (to manage housing in New Earswick), the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust and the Joseph Rowntree Social Services Unit.
1910	First grant to a housing body, the National Housing Reform Council.
1919	Barry Parker appointed Joseph Rowntree Village Trust (JRVT) architect. He retained the post until his death in 1946.
1919	First support given to the Garden Cities and Town Planning Association.
1925	Joseph Rowntree dies on 24 February aged 88.
1926–36	Clifton Estate built beside Joseph Rowntree's old home.
1935	JRVT becomes a founder member of National Federation of Housing Societies.
1936	Seebohm Rowntree retires and moves from York. JRVT buys his property, The Homestead, and thereafter maintains the gardens as a public park.
1939	The initial lifespan of the three Rowntree trusts – envisaged by the founder as 35 years – comes to an end but the trusts continue, taking on new projects and developing their output to address new and continuing social issues.
1942–62	Louis de Soissons is appointed consultant architect to JRVT.
1944–54	JRVT helps fund City of York plan.
1946	Lewis Waddilove joins JRVT as executive officer.
1948	JRVT moves its offices from Rowntree's factory to Beverley House. Modernisation programme begins for individual houses.
1954	Seebohm Rowntree dies on 7 October aged 83.
1959	A private Act of Parliament changes the trust deed to enable the JRVT, now renamed Joseph Rowntree Memorial Trust (JRMT) to support research into housing and social questions. The trust's support for research and development includes a substantial funding programme at the Institute of Community Studies. Research and development continue to be the Joseph Rowntree Foundation's purpose today.

A portrait of Seebohm Rowntree, 1937.

1960 JRMT joins with other Rowntree trusts in supporting the foundation of the University of York with a grant of £100,000.

1968 The Joseph Rowntree Housing Trust is established to take over responsibility for housing operations from JRMT. The special link between the trusts means that research and practice complement each other.

1971 JRMT establishes the Centre for Studies in Social Policy (CSSP), based in London, with funding of £120,000.

1972 JRMT accepts responsibility for the management of the Family Fund which starts in April 1973.

1975–87 Diversification of the trust's shareholdings: the percentage invested in the Rowntree Company drops from 90 per cent to 60 per cent.

1978 The Policy Studies Institute (PSI) is created, a think tank research agent and London base for JRMT. It is formed by the merger of Political and Economic Planning (a British policy think-tank formed in 1931) with CSSP.

1979 JRMT starts to divide its growing number of projects into defined programmes.

1979–82 A scheme of urban renewal, improvement for sale and sheltered housing is developed at Clementhorpe, York.

1982 JRMT wins a high court case determining that leasehold schemes for the elderly are a form of charitable housing.

1985–87 Further schemes with alternative tenures are developed at Heslington, Sturdee Grove and Upper Poppleton in York, and at Danes Dyke and Woodlands Vale in Scarborough. The first flexible tenure scheme is built at Dower Court, York.

1986 Responsibility for research management is separated from the director's role.

1988 Rowntree plc shares are sold when Nestlé takes over the company. This brings increased income to JRMT.

1988–89 Former Rowntree plc warehouses at Rowntree Wharf are converted into flats and offices.

1988–93 A three-way partnership between JRHT and other housing associations (Hull Churches, and Sadeh Lok) is set up to build schemes at Hull, Huddersfield and Monkton Road, York.

1989 Specialist research committees are created to assist trustees and research managers. Project agreements become the basis of research management. The number of

projects funded rises to around 250 by 1992. A dissemination and publication budget is established. An Information Services Director is appointed and the JRF publication programme begins – research, findings and special reports are developed. The Family Fund offices move to Rowntree Wharf.

1990 Tenant participation is strengthened by increasing residents' representation on JRHT committees. The newly named Joseph Rowntree Foundation (formerly the JRMT) moves to The Homestead.

1991 The social research programme is reorganised to separate social policy from community care and disability. Development projects receive increased emphasis. Lamel Beeches residential accommodation for the elderly built jointly with The Retreat hospital.

1992 The income and wealth initiative – a series of research projects founded by the JRF – examines the reasons for and possible actions to halt the rise in the gap between rich and poor in Britain since the 1970s.

1992–94 A programme on housing and the macro-economy. An inquiry into planning for housing. JRHT builds Woodlands – the first estate built entirely to Lifetime Homes standards.

1993 A research budget of £5,112,000 is divided into: housing research (33 per cent); social policy (28 per cent); community care and disability (23 per cent); local/central government relations (7 per cent); housing and community care (5 per cent); and the voluntary sector (2 per cent). Building for Communities, a report by David Page, highlights the need for balanced, sustainable communities, not 'underclass ghettos', in social housing.

JRF provision of PSI's London accommodation ceases; JRF sets up its own London base at Caledonia House. In its twentieth year, the Family Fund distributes 65,000 grants. Over the twenty-year period 151,000 families had applied for grants, and 72,000 were still active cases.

Charles Court hostel built at Strensall, York, in partnership with MENCAP.

1994 Family and parenthood programme.

1995 A housing estate at Victoria Geldof, York, is completed. It offers mixed and flexible tenure options to its residents. Area regeneration research programme commences. ETHOS (Existing Tenants' Home Ownership Scheme) launched, later replaced by government's voluntary purchase grant scheme.

1996 The Family Fund is established as a separate charity. JRF links up to the internet, and creates its website. Local Government in the Twenty-First Century: Leeds Castle summit meeting to conclude local–central government relations programme.

1997 Launch of Communities That Care (UK), a programme for building safer, supportive neighbourhoods for children and young people. First students receive the new JRF Certificate in Care. Community development worker and family support worker appointed.

1998 First JRF summer school held. Department of Policy and Practice Development established at JRF.

1999 Building regulations amended, introducing Lifetime Home requirements.

2000 Advisers appointed for Scotland and Wales. *Drugs: Dilemmas, Choices and the Law* report published. CASPAR (city-centre apartments for people at affordable rents) schemes are opened in Birmingham and Leeds.

2002 First policy and practice development programme on neighbourhoods starts. Agreement signed for purchase of land at Osbaldwick from the City of York. Building works start for a new integrated care community for older people at Bedford Court, Horsforth.

2004 Official opening of Bedford Court. The three trusts founded by Joseph Rowntree celebrate their centenary.

2005 Public Interest in Poverty Issues (PIPI) programme started.

2007 Establishment of strategy groups to advise JRF's trustees on work in its themes of poverty, place and empowerment and to oversee its work in Bradford.

2008 Opening of Plaxton Court housing development for people over 55 in Scarborough and Hartfields retirement village, both based on innovative 'extra care' model.

2008 Social evils research culminates in a book, *Contemporary Social Evils*.

2009 Work on impact of recession started.

2009 Temple Avenue project – two three-bedroomed homes completed next to Derwenthorpe site.

2009 Establishment of intern placements for young graduates.

2009 JRF/JRHT awarded Investors in Diversity status.

2009 Adviser appointed for Northern Ireland.

Adapted from *The Joseph Rowntree Inheritance, 2003*, Appendix 2, pp.51-61.

Glossary

APP	Assessing Pupils' Progress, a structured approach to in-school assessment.
BSF	Building Schools for the Future, capital rebuilding programme of secondary schools, cancelled in 2010.
CAF	Common Assessment Framework, a standardised approach to assessing children's needs.
DCSF	Department for Children, Schools and Families, government department which became Department for Education in 2010.
ECM	Every Child Matters, national framework to support the joining up of children's services.
ETHOS	Existing Tenants Home Ownership Scheme (later replaced by the government's voluntary purchase grant scheme). Introduced in New Earswick in 1995.
Friend	member of the Religious Society of Friends
GCSEs	General Certificate of Secondary Education
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
JRCT	Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust, makes grants to individuals and to projects seeking the creation of a peaceful world, political equality and social justice.
JRF	Joseph Rowntree Foundation (previously the Joseph Rowntree Memorial Trust), an endowed charity funding a large, UK-wide research and development programme into social problems.
JRHT	Joseph Rowntree Housing Trust, a charity and a registered social landlord which owns the freehold of the vast majority of the properties in New Earswick.
JRRT	Joseph Rowntree Reform Trust, funding political campaigns in the UK to promote democratic reform, civil liberties and social justice.
JRVT	Joseph Rowntree Village Trust, established in 1904 to build and manage New Earswick village.
NCSL	National College for School Leadership (now the National College for Leadership of Schools and Children's Services)
Ofsted	Office for Standards in Education (including Children's Services and Skills)
OSP	One School Pathfinder, a government programme which gave local authorities the chance to see what could be achieved in rebuilding a single school.
Quaker	member of the Religious Society of Friends
Religious Society of Friends	non-conformist Christian religious group generally accepted as founded by George Fox in England in the late 1640s.
SATs	Standard Assessment Tests, national tests for all pupils taken at the end of years 2 and 6 (and until 2009, year 9).
SAVE	Selling Alternate Vacants on Estates. Scheme involving the sale of 50 per cent of vacant properties each year. Introduced in New Earswick in 1997.

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Education, learning and community in New Earswick: *an enduring Rowntree legacy*

This book explores the history and development of education, learning and the community in New Earswick, York, since it was founded by Joseph Rowntree in the early 20th century.

It has two distinct purposes:

- to look at how some of the ideas that underpinned the creation of the village have worked in practice, and how they are still relevant today; and
- to celebrate and reflect upon the creation of the Children's Centre within the renovated New Earswick Primary School and the brand new Joseph Rowntree (secondary) School.

The wealth of pictures, information, comment and analysis in this book make it an interesting read for a number of different audiences, including residents of New Earswick and the surrounding area, and people with a more specialist interest in education, community development and social justice from either a historical or contemporary perspective.

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