

THE
JOSEPH
ROWNTREE
CHARITABLE
TRUST

Joseph Rowntree

Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust - Visionaries for a Just and Peaceful World

VISIONS OF THE FUTURE: SIX STORIES



A report of the centenary project of the
Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust 2005-10

Extracts from final reports of the Visionaries to the Steering Group of JRCT Trustees:

'It was without doubt the experience of a lifetime.' Karen Chouhan

'It's been the best five years of our lives so far. We really enjoyed our relationship with the Trust.' Heather Parker and Mark Hinton

'It has been amazing, exciting, daunting, life-enhancing but very demanding.' Geoff Tansey

'As every week went by, I became more and more aware that what I was doing was giving birth to a vision. In that sense you

were well ahead of me... I don't think it's an exaggeration to say that the title you gave us became both a framework and an inspiration for me... There's an unconditionality about the way you work, and live your lives, that is, in a way, epitomised by the Visionaries Scheme. It's based on faith and love and empowering people. I've been so proud to be part of that process.' Roy Head

'JRCT provided me with support and legitimacy at an absolutely critical juncture. It gave me invaluable moral

support - an exquisite balance between a very light touch (few demands for reports or pointless bureaucracy - a great contrast with some donors) and profound emotional and moral support... It is a unique offering and of invaluable importance in the establishment of Independent Diplomat. I will be eternally grateful for it'. Carne Ross

'A heartfelt thank-you.' Clive Stafford Smith



FOREWORD

It is a fine thing to be able to give grants. A charitable grant-making foundation is neither a political nor a business organisation. It doesn't have to get votes, or sell anything. It is - FREE. In the words of one grant-maker, it can be difficult, risk-taking, experimental, awkward, challenging, creative.

All those words apply to the £1.6 million scheme that, in June 2005, the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust launched to celebrate its centenary. It was called 'Visionaries for a Just and Peaceful World' and led by Trustees who gave generously of their unpaid time.

The idea was to find six individuals with a vision for just and peaceful change, and to give them money for 5 years to try

and do it.

Emotional and practical support would be provided if needed. But no targets or performance indicators. No need for a constitution or a charity. No complicated evaluations or bureaucracy. Basically, just a request, once a year, to send in a report about how they were getting on and to come in and talk about it.

Five years on, I've been asked to tell the stories and something of what people learned; also to summarise the behind-the-scenes practical arrangements that might be helpful to anyone else considering funding a similar scheme

I had nothing previously to do with the working of the project. I'm a former BBC correspondent, who's worked abroad,

and had experience of various boards.

As a member of the Religious Society of Friends, I have co-facilitated workshops about handling conflict and I know something about the Trust's Quaker roots.

Part One of this booklet shares the stories and learning in alphabetical order of names. Part Two gives factual details about how the scheme was set up and monitored. The booklet ends with a section based on a Quaker tradition of quietly asking open questions, which might benefit further future consideration.

I am glad to have had the opportunity to be involved.

Rosemary Hartill

Northumberland December 2010

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PART ONE

The Joseph Rowtree Charitable Trust

You might think that a charity voted by its peers in 2007 'Britain's Most Admired Charity' might be tempted to advertise the fact. But can you see mention of the award in the literature or publicity of the Joseph Rowtree Charitable Trust? Not a glimpse of it.

The reason? Quaker Trustees tend to feel that competitions (however pleasing to the winners), exclude, rather than include. Also, since charitable money belongs to the people for whom it was entrusted, why they should be admired for merely giving people what is theirs?

It's a small sign of why JRCT is perceived as a unique and distinctive organisation in the world of charitable foundations.

It was founded in 1904 by the Quaker chocolate manufacturer, Joseph Rowtree.

'I feel that much of current philanthropic efforts is directed to remedying the more superficial manifestations of weakness or evil, while little thought or effort is directed to search out their underlying causes.'

Joseph Rowtree,
part of the Founding Memorandum, 1904

So although the Trust has no constitutional link with the Religious Society of Friends, it has a strong unifying Quaker culture. Underpinning all the grants is Rowtree's passion to address causes, not symptoms, and the concerns for truth and integrity, justice and equality, peace and conflict resolution, which Quakers hold dear.

Other distinctive qualities are that the Trustees play a hands-on role and remain in post for many years. JRCT chiefly supports work undertaken in the UK and Ireland.

Examples of grants:

Among the most significant JRCT grants given over the last 30 years were those supporting efforts which have successfully changed the law to:

- protect whistleblowers from victimisation and dismissal
- support the public "right to know" in relation to public bodies
- make it unlawful for any public body to act in a way which is incompatible with the European Human Rights Convention
- make it an indictable offence if the way in which an organisation's activities are managed or arranged causes a person's

death, and amounts to a gross breach of duty of care

- consolidate the complicated and numerous array of Acts and Regulations, which formed the basis of British anti-discrimination law.

Other significant grants have helped get certain ideas into the mainstream, for example:

- the positive economic benefits of migration. This was almost a taboo subject when JRCT first supported the Institute for Public Policy Research's influential work in this area
- the importance of addressing the political and cultural implications of the changing diversity of the UK. The recommendations of the Runnymede Trust's *The Future of Multi-ethnic Britain* were controversial when published in 2000, but ten years later are seen as seminal
- the need for conflict transformation and peace-building. For example, long-term peacebuilding in Northern Ireland is now recognised as having been essential for building the momentum for the political settlement. But for years, it was viewed as a marginal activity.



THE CENTENARY PROJECT

'... there may be no better way of advancing the objects one has at heart than to strengthen the hands of those who are effectively doing the work that needs to be done. Not unfrequently one hears of persons doing excellent work whose service is cramped, or who are in danger of breaking down through anxiety about the means of living.'

Joseph Rowntree

To mark their centenary of radical grant-giving, JRCT decided to 'strengthen the hands' of individuals. People who:

- had a 'vision' of how the world or their corner of it could become more just, more peaceful
- were able to back this up with a strategy and a plan - aims, objectives, tasks
- had leadership qualities
- were able to resource the idea through to reality and to a demonstrable, measurable result
- were creative, inspiring and could also be a sustainer
- had a track record of success in making projects work.

Why 'Visionaries'?

The word suggested dreamers and thinkers as well as planners and actors. It also hinted at, or assumed, a comparatively rare and welcome spiritual dimension to this scheme.

How did the scheme differ from other support given to individuals?

a. It was different in amount: £37,500 pa,

plus expenses up to £5000. The generosity was to truly free individuals to pursue a concern. The scheme did not, however, provide the funding to make the ideas reality – the Visionary had to be a fund-finder

b. It was different in the time period. It gave support for five years. The next longest period of time covered by other schemes was three years

c. It was different in the themes the Visionaries were intended to follow. The Trust in general supports causes that tend to be less popular with main-stream funders. The hoped-for outcomes were that the world would become more just, more peaceful. It was felt no other scheme set out so simple or so unfashionable a criterion - the great majority of schemes were looking at community regeneration and alternative economic structures

d. It was different in the freedom in which the scheme would operate, eg in defining

what a Visionary might be or might do, and in the structures within which the Visionaries would work

e. It was different in the recruiting process. A different and unusual application form was developed to discover what the Trust really needed to know. (pp 30-31)

Around 1600 people applied - the oldest was 88, the youngest 19. Of the 17 interviewed, 7 people (two were a jobshare) were appointed:

- Carne Ross - a voice for the powerless: independent diplomacy
- Clive Stafford Smith - bringing the rule of law back to Guantanamo Bay
- Geoff Tansey - fair play in food
- Heather Parker and Mark Hinton - local/global bridge-building
- Karen Chouhan - economic equality for black communities in Britain
- Roy Head - saving millions of lives through health messages in the mass media



Carne Ross

- a voice for the powerless: independent diplomacy

International diplomacy is dominated by the powerful. New or transitional states, poor countries and oppressed groups are often inexperienced and ill-equipped to get a fair deal.

By founding a new organisation to provide high-level diplomatic advice, expertise and assistance, Carne Ross's vision is to reduce conflict and help them communicate their needs clearly and peacefully.



*Outstanding people have one thing in
common; an absolute sense of mission.*
Zig Ziglar



'My motivation was always to help the worst off through diplomacy. I found I could no longer do this as a British diplomat. No other organisation was doing this.'

Carne Ross

There are some ideas which appear so simple, and so good, it's astonishing they haven't been tried before. At first sight, Carne Ross's idea must be one of them - to provide an independent diplomatic service for people who, in the world of high-powered international negotiations, are just not getting a fair deal.

No one could do this who hadn't been already finely schooled in the arts of how powerful nation-states and corporations tend to get their way - whether by establishing exclusionary privilege regimes, for example in some intellectual property and trade agreements, or promoting their own interests in a myriad other ways, even when clearly at the unjust expense of poor and oppressed groups.

But once schooled in these subtle, intellectual, complex, all-too-often manipulative arts, why would anyone want to give up the considerable accompanying personal benefits?

For fifteen years, Carne Ross was a fast-stream British diplomat, rising to the

senior level, dealing with many of the world's toughest issues – Israel/Palestine, Iraq, Afghanistan, the Balkans, environmental protection.

He knew Prime Ministers, Foreign Secretaries, many senior figures at the United Nations, the Arab League and beyond. He was immersed in the culture and rituals, loved the protocols on state visits, wore smart formal suits and was rewarded with a substantial salary, status and recognition.

But in the spring of 2003, the UK and the United States, supported by smaller allies, invaded Iraq. In September 2004, Carne resigned from the Diplomatic Service partly because he knew that the reasons publicly given for the invasion were not true. He was 37.

When JRCT Trustees first met him in 2005 'he was still very angry', one says.

His evidence in 2010 to the Chilcot Inquiry into the Iraq war detailed forensically the process leading up to what he described as the government's 'highly misleading

statements about the UK assessment of the Iraq threat'.

'In their totality,' he says, 'they were lies'.

Here was a man who for five years had been the UK's voice at the United Nations on the Middle East, and who had had, he says, a 'Rottweiler-like reputation' as a defender of British/American Iraq policies, including the sanctions. Not surprisingly, his testimony generated widespread media coverage.

But his resignation was triggered not only by the invasion, nor by what he saw as the 'deep politicisation of the civil service; the suppression of contrary opinion'. Nor only by his shame and regret at some things he had previously supported. When working at the UN Security Council, he had recognised that many governments and groups were undermined by their lack of experience and skills. As a result, their interests and needs were often ignored*.

Later, working in Kosovo for the UN, he realised that the government there was totally unequipped for the complex diplomatic

Vision is not enough; it must be combined with venture. It is not enough to stare up the steps. We must step up the stairs.
Vaclav Havel

challenge it was facing as it approached possible statehood. In the widespread Kosovo riots in 2003, he saw in person how some groups can turn to violence, when political aspirations are frustrated.

This was the inspiration to establish a unique non-profit venture, Independent Diplomat; to give the powerless and marginalised the skilled help to make their case peacefully and effectively and, as a result, to try and change the terms of diplomacy.

When Carne was given the JRCT Visionary award, he had been working from a basement without a salary for several months. A number of his old friends had stopped contacting him. ID was still tiny – more an idea than an organisation. There was one member of staff – him, and one client – Kosovo.

Five years on, ID has offices in five cities: New York (where Carne is based), Brussels, Juba, London and Washington. There are 12 employees, plus consultants and interns. And more work offered than they can accept.

The JRCT support 'felt like a surging blast of wind in my sails', he says. It gave him the endorsement and legitimacy to pursue his idea at the earliest and most difficult stage.

So what does ID do? As part of the service to Kosovo, it gave the Kosovan government detailed diplomatic intelligence and analysis of what was going on in the UN and EU, the positions of individual countries concerning their possible new statehood and a detailed brief on aspects of independence such as borders, citizens' rights, detailed comparative research. This smoothed the troubled path to independence.

Other clients include:

- the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (aim: a united state in Cyprus)
- Somaliland and Western Sahara (both wishing to become independent states)
- Burma's democratically elected government-in-exile (bringing together Burmese opposition and ethnic groups as a credible partner for dialogue with the military regime and the international community)
- the Marshall Islands and the broader Alliance of Small Island States (climate change negotiations).

He has also been pressing for a change in the rules of the UN Security Council. Many conflicts these days are internal conflicts, rather than conflicts between nation states. Yet only states have the right to address the Council. Other parties in conflicts can do so only by specific invitation.

Take the example of South Sudan, which is another of ID's clients. Two rounds of north-south civil war have cost the lives of 1.5 million people in Sudan. In the months leading up to the Jan 2011 referendum on whether the south should separate and form a new state, the Security Council had a formal meeting on Sudan. It invited the Khartoum (northern) government and 34 other states. But, astonishingly, not the autonomous government of the south. Only when the South Sudanese protested was their President invited and able to speak (see page 04). Carne believes he and others in similar circumstances should have the right to speak.

ID's policy is only to take on clients who are broadly committed to human rights, international law and democracy, who are not involved in armed conflicts and who are willing to commit to negotiated solutions to

their problems.

Today Carne spends a substantial amount of time raising funds, releasing his colleagues to focus on the clients. All clients, however ill-resourced, pay something, but their contributions still only cover less than half of the overall \$2m annual costs. The rest comes from charitable funds and neutral governments – like the Scandinavian countries.

There is always urgent work, organisational issues, the challenge of working across countries, the high admin requirements of charitable status, etc. He has not had a complete day off since he began. The vision he had is certainly good, but not at all simple.

But set against that, he says, is the enjoyable freedom and intellectual liberty of running his own shop:

'Hard though it is, I would never now trade these back for the safety but intellectual and moral torpor of working for government. I wear what I want to work. I take time off when I need to look after my children. I think and say what I like. These are benefits I cherish.'

'The key thing I've learned is the importance of maintaining a very single focus – to do one thing, and do it well. It's hard enough merely to start; being effective is a big challenge.

'JRCT gave me long-term encouragement and unquestioning support for the duration of the award. I shall miss it very much.'

* See his book *Independent Diplomat: Dispatches from an Unaccountable Elite*. Hurst, 2007

www.independentdiplomat.org



Clive Stafford Smith

- bringing the rule of law back to Guantanamo Bay

Clive Stafford Smith's long-term goal is to help rehabilitate the image of the west in the eyes of the world by bringing the rule of law back to lawless enclaves like Guantanamo Bay



*Our lives begin to end the day we become
silent about the things that matter.*
Martin Luther King



‘What motivates me above all else is bringing power to the most powerless, the people who are so hated that we want to ritually kill them, or to despise them and lock them up without any due process. There is no greater pleasure than being able to hand someone his or her life back.’

Clive Stafford Smith

There are risks in doing this kind of work. Clive is the legal representative of some 85 of the 780 or so prisoners that have been, or still are, held in Guantanamo Bay. Unlike some of them, he has not been tortured. But if he reveals publicly an allegation of torture without the permission of the US military censors, he could end up in gaol.

In February 2009, Clive wrote a memo to President Obama about the rendition and torture of a prisoner at Guantanamo represented by his charity, Reprieve. Before he could do so, the memo had to be passed through the team which decides what is ‘classified’ and therefore secret, and what is not. They only allowed the memo out when everything had been blanked out except the date, his name and the subject of the memo – Re: Torture of British resident Binyam Mohamed by US personnel.

In effect the Commander-in-chief was being denied access to material that would provide evidence that crimes had been

committed by US personnel.

When Clive sent a copy of the blanked-out memo to the British government and the papers, the US authorities tried to prosecute him for contempt of court. In the end, after months of expensive, time-consuming and intimidating legal to-and fro-ings, they dropped the attempt. Finally, the President received a version of the memo, cut by Clive himself in such a way that the censors accepted it.

Clive Stafford Smith applied to the Visionaries scheme because he wanted to build an international coalition of civilian lawyers to bring the rule of law back to Guantanamo Bay.

Previously, he had spent more than twenty-five years as a lawyer representing people on death row. He’d saved hundreds of lives and counts his clients among his friends. In 1999 he founded the charity Reprieve to help channel volunteers from Britain to support the work in the US against capital punishment.

His focus changed after seeing the

West’s response to the Al-Qaeda attack on the New York Twin Towers in September 2001. The West, instead of practising the ideals it preached, started denying basic human rights to detainees held in lawless enclaves like Guantanamo Bay. To him, this was hypocrisy – hypocrisy that would fuel hatred and conflict.

Over the five years of the JRCT award, he has focused mainly on trying to bring the rule of law back to Guantanamo and similar enclaves. This has meant not only representing detainees legally, but bringing their stories and the truth of what is being done in our names to a global audience. His audience is not only the law courts, but the court of public opinion.

‘The JRCT Quakers were the nicest people’, he says with a cheerful smile. ‘Their idea of a vigorous interview was like a gentle rubbing with a chamois leather.’ They wanted to give him £37,500 a year as an outright non-taxable donation. He thought he should only be paid the average income of the area where he lived

*There must be amidst all the confusions of the hour
a tried and undisturbed remnant of people who will
not become purveyors of coercion and violence
who are willing to stand alone if it is necessary for
the way of peace and love among men.*
Rufus Jones

– then £30,000 (he hadn't yet moved to Dorset from London). He also thought it should be taxable. JRCT quietly persisted, leaving him to decide how to spend and use it best.

One of the aims of JRCT was to liberate people with vision from the treadmill of targets, financial reporting and organisational administration that can drain energy, creativity and innovation. But on Reprieve's website, Clive is listed as its director. By the end of 2010, Reprieve had 23 full-time staff and not only campaigns against capital punishment, but spends a substantial amount of time on Guantanamo and related enclaves. So has JRCT merely funded Clive to do what he might have done anyway – develop an organisation?

'No,' he says, 'it was such a liberation to have a guaranteed standard of living. It freed me to build up Reprieve, but also to do a book* and now another one.' Though a figurehead at Reprieve, he says he is not an employee and has no management responsibilities. Reprieve has other grants. He spends only two or three days a month at their London office, working mostly from his rural home, 'the centre of the universe', where he lives with his wife and small son, Wilf. Home is a 30 minute drive away from Dorchester.

'He shambled cheerfully into the interview,' says one of the JRCT staff. 'We've never seen the dark side of his soul. He's remarkably optimistic. What keeps him going, I think, is his belief in the human spirit, goodness, Wilf - and cricket.'

With an unblinking missionary zeal, charm, persistence, single-mindedness and energy, he works 70-hour weeks.

In the last five years, his frequent media

appearances have helped raise public awareness of Guantanamo and other similar enclaves.

His first goal was to secure legal representation for all prisoners being held in law-free zones like Guantanamo, by matching prisoners with teams of civilian lawyers. In 2005, the names of only half of the 540 prisoners then in Guantanamo were publicly known and not one prisoner in any of the US proxy prisons elsewhere, though it was thought their number could amount to several thousand.

In June 2004, the US Supreme Court ruled in a test case he brought with two other lawyers that prisoners had a right to a fair trial. Today, the names of all Guantanamo prisoners are known and also the whereabouts of most 'high-value' prisoners held elsewhere.

A coalition of some 500 lawyers now give their services free and each of the prisoners in Guantanamo has legal representation if he wants it. Clive uses test cases to establish key principles. But the Kafka-esque situation continues: he and other lawyers can take notes while in Guantanamo, but they cannot take them out. Instead, the notes are sent to a super-secret facility in Washington. If Clive wants to consult his own notes, he has to go to Washington.

Clive's medium-term target was the gradual abolition of all law-free zones – identifying other Guantanamo-like facilities around the world, bringing them into the public eye and learning who is being held there so that litigation can then commence on their behalf.

The locations ranged from Eastern Europe to Djibouti. He believes that as a result of publicity and other factors, the

majority of them - in Poland, Romania, Lithuania, Thailand and Malaysia, at least - have now been closed. But over 1000 prisoners are still held at the major Bagram site in Afghanistan.

In January 2009, President Obama issued an executive order saying Guantanamo would be shut. It raised prisoners' hopes, but at the time of writing, the prison is still open. In November 2010, over 50 of the remaining 174 prisoners had been cleared by the US through their own processes, but were still being held. A major delay is the reluctance of other governments to take them.

But Clive Stafford Smith says the worst cause of delay has been Obama's desire to seek consensus over the process of closure and the embarrassment of evidence of torture and mistreatment becoming public if prisoners are put on trial. To avoid the embarrassment of trials alleging connivance with torture and abuse, the British Government in November 2010, reached a mediated settlement with 16 men held in Guantanamo.

That same month, the Democrats lost control of the US House of Representatives. 'The issue of Guantanamo will be a total political football now,' said Clive. 'It will be a drawn-out battle to get the remaining released or on trial.'

He is not planning to give up. 'To borrow from Richard Bach, my life's work will not be over before my death.'

Bad Men: Guantanamo Bay and the Secret Prisons. Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 2007.

www.reprieve.org.uk



Geoff Tansey

- fair play in food

'Current rules increasingly serve large corporate interests in ways that undermine small farmers' livelihoods, people's food skills and food security. I will work towards having fairer rules.'



Whether in times of war or times of peace the Quaker is under peculiar obligation to assist and to forward movements and forces which make for peace in the world and which bind men together in ties of unity and fellowship.

Rufus Jones



'I believe working through food could be one way to connect, cooperate, and unite people globally – as we all need food, all the time, all our lives.'

Geoff Tansey

In 2009, more people went hungry than ever before - over 1 billion. At the same time, at least another 300 million were obese - with all the likely risks of heart disease, cancer and diabetes.

How did we get into this mess? What can we do to transform it? As a freelance writer, researcher and food consultant, Geoff Tansey has been exploring and raising these questions in agricultural policy-making, academic and other national and international circles for some 35 years.

The only Quaker among the Visionaries, he lives with his wife in a solid, spacious, old stone house overlooking the station at Hebden Bridge, the West Yorkshire market town. When I met him there, the challenges to do with food supply felt so vast that it was hard to know where to start talking.

There's the history of colonialism, eating patterns and waste of food, worker exploitation and the neglect of smallholders. Or price fluctuations, competition and increasing concentration of power in the food industry in fewer hands. Or climate

change and all the ecological consequences of the way we produce and distribute food - like soil and water degradation and exhaustion of fisheries.

'What we need', he says, 'is to work out, in a deliberative, thoughtful, cooperative and planned way, how to manage and share out fairly the resources we have on the planet.' That includes being ready to deal with all kinds of disruptions to climate and food supplies in ways that minimise suffering and avoid the wars and conflicts over resources for which there is such a dreadful potential.

In his application to the JRCT Visionaries scheme Geoff focused on the need to challenge the expanding global rules on patents, copyright, trademarks etc, relating to seeds, animals and other key resources. These rules have led to an increasing control of key resources by ever fewer bigger corporations.

Take seeds for example. In the past, he says, farmers have produced and developed their own seeds, improving

them locally to suit particular environmental conditions and exchanging them among themselves.

But the opportunities now offered by modern bio-technology to re-engineer them have led to an increasingly commercial and globalised production in which large companies patent or control their developments, so that farmers cannot simply reuse or exchange them. They have to buy them.

He thinks a more appropriate name for these 'intellectual property rights' is 'monopoly privileges regime' – because they give exclusionary rights.

Around the world, many seed businesses now, he says, are being bought up by a few large firms. And their approach may make adaptation to climate change and mitigation of its effects more difficult.

The problem, he argues, is that the ways the international rules relating to these rights were developed came very much from interested big players in richer countries and larger corporations.

First man: Sometimes I'd like to ask God why he allows poverty, famine and injustice to continue when he could do something about it.

Second man: What's stopping you ?

First man: I'm afraid he might ask me the same question.

Anon

So his first focus when given the JRCT Visionary award, apart from completing prior commitments, was to finish the book he was part-writing and co-editing on the future control of food*.

It was aimed at farmers' organisations, non-governmental organisations and negotiators who make these global rules. Geoff hoped that access to the information in the book would ensure a better hearing in national and international policy-making circles for the voices, knowledge and experience of small farmers, fisherfolk and poor consumers.

One of the things he is most proud of is winning the Derek Cooper 2008 BBC Food and Farming Award for best food campaigner/educator. Another is the positive reaction he has received from many colleagues to the book, which also won a Derek Cooper award. It is now in Spanish too, and is being translated into Arabic and Chinese.

But in his application he had also identified the goal of seeing processes changed. One possible approach was to identify and focus on certain key changeable processes, the key messages and the key people and groups needed to be persuaded to help effect those changes.

But, as an individual with no power or position of authority, Geoff felt that a more effective method was to range more widely, raising ideas and questions whenever he had suitable opportunities to do so.

Some groups he already knew, such as the Food Ethics Council. Other contacts he met on the way, such as the UN Rapporteur on the Right to Food. He has also lectured, discussed these issues and helped build networks and connect different groups together, in at least a dozen countries on four continents

'From work I've done with Quakers at the United Nations in the past,' he says, 'I know that if you put the right people in the right room and right space, even sometimes without a very clear agenda, and say to them "What have you to say about this?

Who else do you need to interact with to understand this more?", this does have an effect.'

In April 2008, Geoff discovered he had early-diagnosed prostate cancer. The rest of that year was 'the hardest of my life'. It helped lead to a change of focus.

Not only did the cancer diagnosis absorb him intently for a while on the links between diet and cancer. It also made him more determined afterwards to focus on thinking about the bigger picture of food.

Around the world, numerous groups are working on aspects of food: improvements for farmers, nutrition, control and so on: 'But people tend to be working on one little bit. What was needed was someone like me, without a specific academic discipline or institution to protect or defend, to help people join the dots and see how they come together... Unless we're asking the right questions, we won't get the right solutions.'

For Geoff, the right questions are: How do we transform the food system to be equitable, sustainable and healthy? What are the principles we need to work around and what are the practices that need to change?

'At a principle level, for example, I think that food commodity price speculation simply to make money should be considered a crime against humanity. Like slavery, it's wrong. And we need to structure the investment and regulatory framework to make that principle a norm.'

'Second, the right to food should be supported not just by voluntary guidelines, but embedded in enforceable hard laws. One mechanism is to have sensible grain reserves ready and in place in the event of future droughts and floods.'

He also thinks it wrong to influence children's food habits by massive advertising and other marketing drives: 'If a child is not legally competent till the age of 10 or 12, why should a child be pestered to shape what it eats by commercial interests?'

He is now working on this with others

around the world. He and his group of advisers want to say to business people, NGOs, farmers, policy-makers: 'OK, we know from our and others' research and experience that 'business as usual' is not an option. From where you are, what do you know that we need to know? And how can we change things from your perspective? What examples have you got and how can you work to change?'

Although he finds it hard at the present time to point to a specific change resulting from this approach that has improved the lives of small food producers and poor consumers, feedback from a survey of people he has networked or worked with over the past five years was positive. It confirmed that his wide, free sharing of ideas is influencing more people in policy-making circles to take on board issues.

Other feedback indicated that translating visions into applications on the ground and wider public communication will be important in the future.

'I personally don't have the power to change things. What happens as a result of what I do, happens as a result of what other people do.'

He feels the last five years and the 'amazing' support' he has received from JRCT have developed his knowledge and confidence.

It will take years, and many, many people, to identify and make the radical changes in business, political and ethical cultures required for fairer food systems. But his individual passion for the vision remains: that everyone, everywhere has always enough good food to eat in a way that sustains the planet.

*The Future Control of Food: A Guide to International Negotiations and Rules on Intellectual Property, Biodiversity and Food Security. Edited by Geoff Tansey and Tasmin Rajotte. Earthscan 2008.



Heather Parker & Mark Hinton

- bridge-building between local communities around the world

“Think global, act local” is good, but no longer enough. We want to act both local and global – to link people in an area of Coventry with people in the developing world in creative, meaningful ways.’



Be the change you want to see in the world
Gandhi



‘One of the things we’ve learned is the great importance of listening to viewpoints that you fundamentally disagree with, yet still being able to feel delighted and pleased with the person for being open about what they think.’

Heather Parker & Mark Hinton

Mark Hinton is unlocking the door to a community room, kitchen and a couple of offices in the ground floor of a high-rise block. Behind us are two other recently refurbished blocks, grassy spaces and a clearly loved and unvandalised small garden.

We’re on the border of Hillfields and Foleshill, a short walk away from Coventry’s bus station and town centre. For years, this area of the city has been an arrival patch for new immigrants. In the 50s and 60s, people came over from the Caribbean in search of work in the then-booming car industry. South Asians came too and more recently a new sweep of migrants - people from the Balkans, Kurds, Afghans, Poles, Africans and beyond. There are lots of students too.

Today Foleshill is about 48% Asian or Asian British, 40% white British, and a mix of other ethnic groups. It and neighbouring Hillfields are two of the poorest areas in the UK.

Five years ago, Mark Hinton and Heather

Parker’s vision was to help weave an international web of ordinary peacemakers and strengthen their home community and many others, by building links with other communities around the world. Coventry already had an international profile as a city of international peace and reconciliation and 26 twinned cities.

A former city councillor for the ward, Heather had 20 years’ experience of community activism. Mark had worked in community arts and development since 1989, including a stint doing circus teaching and street performances.

Inside the FolesHillfields Vision Project’s light and pleasant community room, ‘Welcome’ is spelt out in several languages.

Welcome is the first thing that goes on here - including people when they arrive, taking care with greetings and language, giving proper time and attention.

Decorating the room are gifts and objects from around the world and pictures of lively local events and people.

On the right is a world map with pins scattered all over it. Above is the invitation ‘Where do you have friends and family?’ Here, it’s a great way to begin getting to know someone.

‘And to help people getting to know each other,’ says Mark, ‘we do a lot of taking it in turns to listen.’

The team of a few paid staff and many volunteers facilitate this in many ways, often both informal and well structured:

People have been trained differently about speaking and being listened to, Mark and Heather say: ‘and there will almost always be some people who take up more space and airtime than others. So we often get people to take equal time to listen and speak without interruption. We do this in pairs, in small mixed groups, in the middle of noisy parties and in dialogue events.’

They’ve found that all this works best in a relaxed and friendly atmosphere, when people are having fun, and when things are flexible and fluid. And once relationships

*Nothing that I can do will change the structure of the universe.
But maybe, by raising my voice I can help the greatest of all causes
- goodwill among men and peace on earth.*

Albert Einstein

are established, it's easier then to name difficult issues.

And there are difficult issues. They talk directly about racism, sexism, Islamophobia, homophobia, anti-Jewish feelings, migration, colonialism, religion, violence, capitalism and much more: 'It's not about winning arguments, but learning from others' perspectives.'

To some extent, they say, all the different communities are disengaged from each other. Faith, social class or educational background can divide as much as ethnicity or geographical background. Longer-established immigrants sometimes feel resentful about newer ones.

Holding out the bigger picture remains important. Both thinking and acting, locally and globally, was at the heart of their application to JRCT.

Heather and Mark wrote their joint job-share application when staying with friends in rural Kenya, during a year out travelling with their family. Inspired by their encounters in other countries too, they had a vision of linking people in their area with people in the developing world in creative, meaningful ways – school links, interactive websites, arts projects, fair trade, exchange visits, projects.

They thought that actively pursuing links with the developing world would help everyone develop a wider perspective on their own situation.

They began energetically. Local young people went to Romania and Kenya as community ambassadors. They continued to develop and deliver (with the help of up to 150 volunteers a year) a global citizenship programme for the local primary school, first started in 2001. A phone link was set up between the school and 110 children

in Kenya.

Local people at both ends helped overcome language barriers and some questions provoked interesting exchanges - for example 'How many cows do you have?' or 'what's your favourite TV programme?' – both reasonable to the enquirer and puzzling to the answerer.

Two years later, local schools raised funds to bring over three Kenyans - two teachers and a community organiser. Part of the celebration was a great Africa Day attended by a wide variety of Kenyans.

There have been a number of other international visitors. But in practice a lot of the international things they had imagined doing turned out to be harder than expected.

They realised that to make the link with Kenya neither patronising nor colonial would take a huge amount of time, effort, money. Moreover interactive websites are complex to set up and sustain.

They learned that a global perspective was a crucial part of the work, but long-haul jet flights were not. The world was already in Coventry. The things they tried worked well enough to recruit a strong and committed team that represents that world well, a team that now forms the FolesHillfields Vision Project.

The population is a shifting, transient one, but several hundred local people are linked to the centre at any one time. The centre has hosted youth groups, a gardening club, a varied volunteering programme for adults and young people, a PeaceJam youth group, family linking lunches, women's groups, men's health work, intercultural music events. Then there's been a three-week Festival of Friendship involving 21 events, Father's Day picnics, Women's

Peace Events – and numerous other creative, interesting times for people to share their experiences or just to hang out together.

They say the JRCT money has freed them to experiment and try to do a whole bunch of things that they couldn't possibly have done had they been tied to specific outputs and targets. In fact they say that without it they could hardly have started the work at all.

Naturally, in practice (as with many so-called job-shares) both of them worked many more hours than half-time. Managing diverse and changing volunteers and staff is never easy.

They remain very conscious of their delicate position as two white people leading a community project in such a diverse area. 'We had some good challenge from close friends who've taken us up on it. As white people, we're bound to be dumb sometimes, not understanding things.'

To make the project truly diverse, there needs to be a constant, conscious sustained effort: 'We have to notice who is coming and who isn't coming, think about why certain groups of people aren't coming and do something to change that.'* It has not always been easy to engage white people, for example, or Kurds, or Roma.

In November 2008, FolesHillfields Vision Project won the £10,000 National Award for Bridging Cultures from the Baring Foundation. The category was for voluntary organisations with under £1m turnover - their turnover was around £30,000. They deserve more awards.

* See more on pp 28 – 29

www.foleshillfields.org



Karen Chouhan

- economic equality for black communities in Britain

'Black communities in Britain will be first across the world to lead in deciding race equality policy and discourse; working as top level partners with government, public and private sectors and setting the terms of the debate. I see a time when race policy will only be actioned with the sanction of communities... The UK model will be one that is copied and impacts worldwide.'



We have flown the air like birds and swum the sea like fishes but we have yet to learn the simple act of walking the earth like brothers.
Martin Luther King



‘Once the terms of the debate change, once the framework is changed, like the puzzles which ask you to change one matchstick and make a different picture, everything will be refracted through a different lens, a positive and affirming image.’

Karen Chouhan

It was a visionary vision. ‘And I really believed it was achievable,’ says Karen Chouhan, ‘I’d been working in race equality for 25 or more years, there was still a pretty good swing going on race equality and I had a whole range of contacts over the UK. So I knew the atmosphere was right, that people would come behind a new approach to race equality that was based on tackling some of the stark facts of economic disadvantage.’

The work of all the other JRCT Visionaries had a strong international dimension. ‘I found it a bit ironic,’ she says cheerfully, ‘that the only black JRCT visionary and perhaps the only one not born in the UK was doing something very focused on the UK.’ The issues were also deeply personal to her.

She came over with her parents from Lahore in Pakistan, aged six months, and grew up in London experiencing and witnessing racism. In an attempt to understand the roots of inequality, she studied Philosophy at Leicester University

and Race and Community Studies at Bradford. This led to her life’s aim to work for race equality. Her wide experience includes youth and trades union work, lecturing, researching and leadership roles in a host of race equality organisations.

Today she lives with her university lecturer husband and family in a mostly middle-class Asian area of Leicester, a city where the mix includes Indian, Pakistani, Somali, Bengali, Polish and far beyond. Leicester, set to be the first city with black and minority ethnic groups becoming the majority of the population, ‘is generally very good and peaceful,’ she says.

However inequalities exist and nationally, she says, evidence* indicates that:

- black people are approximately 15% less likely to obtain jobs than the general population and this has remained the case for the last twenty years
- on average some are paid up to 21% less for the same job and qualifications
- black women are likely to be paid up to a third less than a white British Christian

man for the same job and qualifications

- 72% of Bangladeshi children in the UK live in poverty
- around two-fifths of people from BME communities live in low-income households, twice the rate for white people.

Her first and foremost thought after she got the Visionary award was how quickly the tide had changed:

‘In that year, 2005, the 7/7 bombings occurred in London and it was as if the hurt and anger of those terrible events caused a further political regression on tackling race equality via institutional and structural discrimination.’

That same year, Trevor Phillips, the head of the Commission for Racial Equality, made a speech warning that the nation was sleepwalking into segregation. This was picked up as way of deriding multiculturalism and set the platform for some to blame troublesome ethnic minorities who don’t integrate for being the seedbeds

I am only one; but still I am one. I cannot do everything, but still I can do something. I will not refuse to do the something I can do.
Helen Keller

of terrorism. Many local authorities set up cohesion units:

'Some of these have done very good work on building community relations,' Karen says. 'The point being missed was the need to challenge structural inequalities, which lead to disaffection'. Karen's vision was to develop a UK-wide Race Equality Solutions Consortium. This would be a local, regional and national grouping of key individuals and organisations, rooted in the experience of local communities, that would challenge the analysis, build awareness of the injustice and focus the blame for terror on terrorists, not British citizens.

To begin with, the steering group called it PUSH UK to reflect an alliance with the Rainbow PUSH Coalition led by Reverend Jesse Jackson in the US. This itself was following in the footsteps of Martin Luther King and Gandhi.

Though Karen found lots of support and was building good contacts and a database, there was no infrastructure, or money for a director, website, mail outs, etc.

The solution she favoured was to locate the work in the 1990 Trust, a human rights and race equality campaign group that she had previously directed, and link PUSH UK with it. A Home Office grant was raised. A key focus was to develop an economic analysis of race equality in the UK, in both private and public sectors.

But Karen found herself caught in practical management issues within the Trust, which she had hoped to avoid. At the same time, she was still involved in the Peepul Centre - a newly developed £14 million community centre in Leicester whose board she had previously chaired.

In 2007, she relaunched PUSH UK as Equanomics. This was during the successful tour she had initiated with Jesse Jackson. Timed to coincide with the bicentenary of the Abolition of the Slave Trade Act, it

encompassed 35 events in nine English cities over 6 days.

A shorter, second UK Jackson tour at the end of 2008 was linked with Barack Obama's election as President. Three follow-up events were also arranged.

'We knew then', she says, 'that we had a movement with a vision with people who would come behind us.'

The idea was to work through volunteer hubs in cities, to encourage them to get the facts about their areas and to keep on the agenda questions like: 'Why are black people here poorer and more likely to be out of a job than others?'

There was a little group in Leicester, but being volunteers, time was an issue. Liverpool, Manchester, Birmingham, Bradford, Bristol and London picked it up in a bigger way.

Karen knew that politicians liked it if she and colleagues worked with them as partners, in a non-adversarial way - and had something the government really wanted.

'And some MPs did help with it. The concept of economic justice hit the mark and did start to make waves. I was doing up to 50 presentations and debates a year'.

'What perhaps was a bit naïve', she says, 'was to think we could have such an influence on government that they would come to us. You only get that if you become a really strong movement that they feel frightened of, that there is some fear - or some votes - in it.'

There were glimpses of how this could work. During the run-up to the general election for example, Equanomics played a leading role in editing, authorising and distributing the 2010 Black Manifesto*. Many MPs attended meetings of the BME communities held in six English (not UK) cities.

Another of Karen's achievements is founding the Roots Research Centre. It helps make archive material accessible

and provides occasional research support for various campaigns.

Equanomics has also tried to influence government policy via specific campaigns and written submissions:

- on bank reform and for a 1% tax on bank profits and 10% of the dormant account funds for reinvestment in poor and black and ethnic minority communities
- on disproportionate Stop and Search
- on the Equality Bill
- on the need to address Institutional Racism.

'Overall I thought I could achieve my vision in five years or at least be a lot further along than I am now, but a series of difficulties, which could not be predicted, have taken their toll. These included the passing on of my father and sister in law within a year of each other; and, at the same time, a media campaign by the London Evening Standard against BME leaders and organisations to smear Ken Livingstone's Mayoral campaign, in which I was collateral.' Also the failing financial positions of both the 1990 Trust and the Peepul Centre in Leicester diverted Karen's energy as she tried to keep them afloat.

Overall, one of the harder things about the Visionary award, she says, was that it brought out some hostilities and jealousies.

A final thought? 'What I've learned is that all this work takes far longer than you think. In my brain, I know how all the pieces fit together, but the challenge is to translate that to people in a way that takes them with you. It's been life-changing.'

* The Price of Race Inequality: The Black Manifesto 2010.



Roy Head

- saving millions of lives through health messages in the mass media

Throughout the developing world, people are dying because of inequality of information. Nowhere is this area more extreme than in the area of health.

Roy Head's vision is to empower governments and media in all developing countries with the skills to communicate with their citizens, and in turn empower people with the knowledge to protect their lives.



*At first people refuse to believe that a strange new thing can be done
Then they begin to hope it can be done
Then they see it can be done
Then it is done and all the world wonders why it was not done centuries ago.
Frances Hodgson Burnett*



'I guess this is what I want to do: to find smart people in some of the most troubled areas of the world, to empower them, and then to leave them to make a better future for their people.'

Roy Head

Roy Head is crackling with energy. But he's also just a shade nervous. He's currently launching a new £7 million multi-message health information campaign which he hopes will provide a model for saving 2.2 million lives in 10 countries over the next decade.

In its scale, depth and level of scientific testing, this campaign in Burkina Faso in West Africa is unlike anything ever attempted before in this field.

Roy is no stranger to demanding health information campaigns. Between 1997 and 2005, he set up the Health Division of the BBC World Service Trust, personally raised £15 million and ran many of the world's largest and most successful media campaigns. The BBC's leprosy campaign alone led to 12,000 people being treated in Nepal and 200,000 being treated in India. Yet major health successes received virtually no media coverage.

By 2005, he felt time was running out. Roy reckoned that the desperate need for quality information could no longer be

met by projects that focused on single diseases or on the one month a year when UNICEF was having a big blitz. Instead of international staff flying in on expensive contracts in short bursts, he wanted to set up a consultancy, Development Media International, that would train local people to run the campaigns. He left the BBC, and shortly afterwards, heard that JRCT was looking for 'Visionaries' to fund. The timing was perfect.

He was soon planning and running, with local people, campaigns on TB in Brazil, and mother and child health care in Orissa, India.

What he hadn't quite reckoned on was how vulnerable local projects were to political, logistical and financial problems. Asked by the UK's Department for International Development to examine Mozambique's HIV/AIDS campaigns, for example, he found serious flaws. Far too much stress was being put on TV, even though only 20% of the population had access to it and it broadcast only in

Portuguese. By contrast, very little advertising was being done on radio, which reached 75% of the population in 19 languages. But despite his advice, 'Did anything change? Not much. You don't achieve change just by writing a piece of paper.'

But new evidence was coming in which gave an exciting glimpse of what could be done. In 2003, DFID had given the BBC a £3.3 million grant to conduct an AIDS campaign in Cambodia. Roy had persuaded DFID to add maternal and child health messages to the campaign, like the importance of attending ante-natal check-ups, using iron supplements, using midwives, breastfeeding alone for six months. In 2006, the published results proved beyond doubt that progress could be made against multiple health indicators for no more than the cost of the single AIDS campaign.

At this point, Roy's vision went through a significant change. He decided that the way ahead was multi-message, not single

If you have built castles in the air, your work need not be lost, that is where they should be. Now put foundations under them.

Henry David Thoreau

issue, campaigns. His long-term goal is the creation of departments within Ministries of Health in developing countries, run by 10 or 15 local people trained to really know how to commission a programme, monitor it, evaluate it and keep on rolling it from year to year for next 20, 30, maybe 40 years.

In July 2007, he approached the Wellcome Trust for funding. Wellcome doesn't fund health promotion. But it does want scientific evidence of what saves lives more cheaply. They liked his presentation, but didn't think it was really science.

Every year about 8 million children die worldwide. 'How many lives is your project going to save?' they asked him. He didn't know.

The child survival series published in 2003 by the medical research journal *The Lancet* showed that one third of those 8 million could be saved by simple actions in the home – like keeping babies warm after birth, giving food and water to children with diarrhoea, breast feeding, bed nets as a protection against malaria-carrying mosquitoes. Another third could be saved by basic medical interventions, like treatment for malaria and TB, antibiotics for pneumonia.

Roy spent the next 9 months bolting this research together with everything he knew about the results of healthcare media campaigns.

'That kick from Wellcome' he says, 'changed my life. We became an organisation that's pulling media and science together, forcing these two almost incompatible fields together. And that's almost become an identity now, so I'm very grateful for that push.'

He worked closely with Professor Simon Cousens, Professor of Epidemiology and Medical Statistics at the London

School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, and with Professor Anne Mills, one of the world's leading health economists.

'It was such a privilege to work with top-grade academics,' he says. 'They don't tell you how complicated everything is. They just think about it and then propose a way forward'.

This, he says, was some of the most exciting, thrilling and stimulating work of his life. 'It involved getting everything together that I'd learned over 15 years. There were times when I thought: 'This is what I was born to do.''

The Wellcome Trust had told him that anything less than a 5% reduction in the deaths of under-fives couldn't be funded. Roy's results showed somewhere between 14% and 20% reduction.

The Trust was also looking for an economic cost 'per life year saved'. The cheapest intervention previously found was immunisation at around \$8 per life-year saved in Africa, or \$16 in Asia. Roy's interventions came in between \$1 and \$9.

He developed a proposal for a major 12-message campaign to test the scientific evidence. The location chosen, the French-speaking Burkina Faso, has one of the highest rates of child mortality in the world.

After nearly two further years of gruelling examinations of this funding application, Wellcome finally agreed to fund the project. But only half of it.

That was tough good news: 'I'd hoped this was the end of this Mickey-Mouse approach of Roy working out of his back bedroom.'

In the summer of 2009, he and his Asian fiancée, a management consultant, married. Now he faced the possibility of years more exhausting fund-raising from their home in Tufnell Park, London.

Roy estimated that the true cost of the application had been already so far about £300,000. Without the JRCT money, he says he would have gone bankrupt: 'It was not remotely sustainable without their money.'

'There have been low points, when I thought "Maybe I'm not going to get there, maybe I should get a proper job". But it would be a real b.... if I walked away after not only having the JRCT money, but also their very loving nature and strong emotional support.'

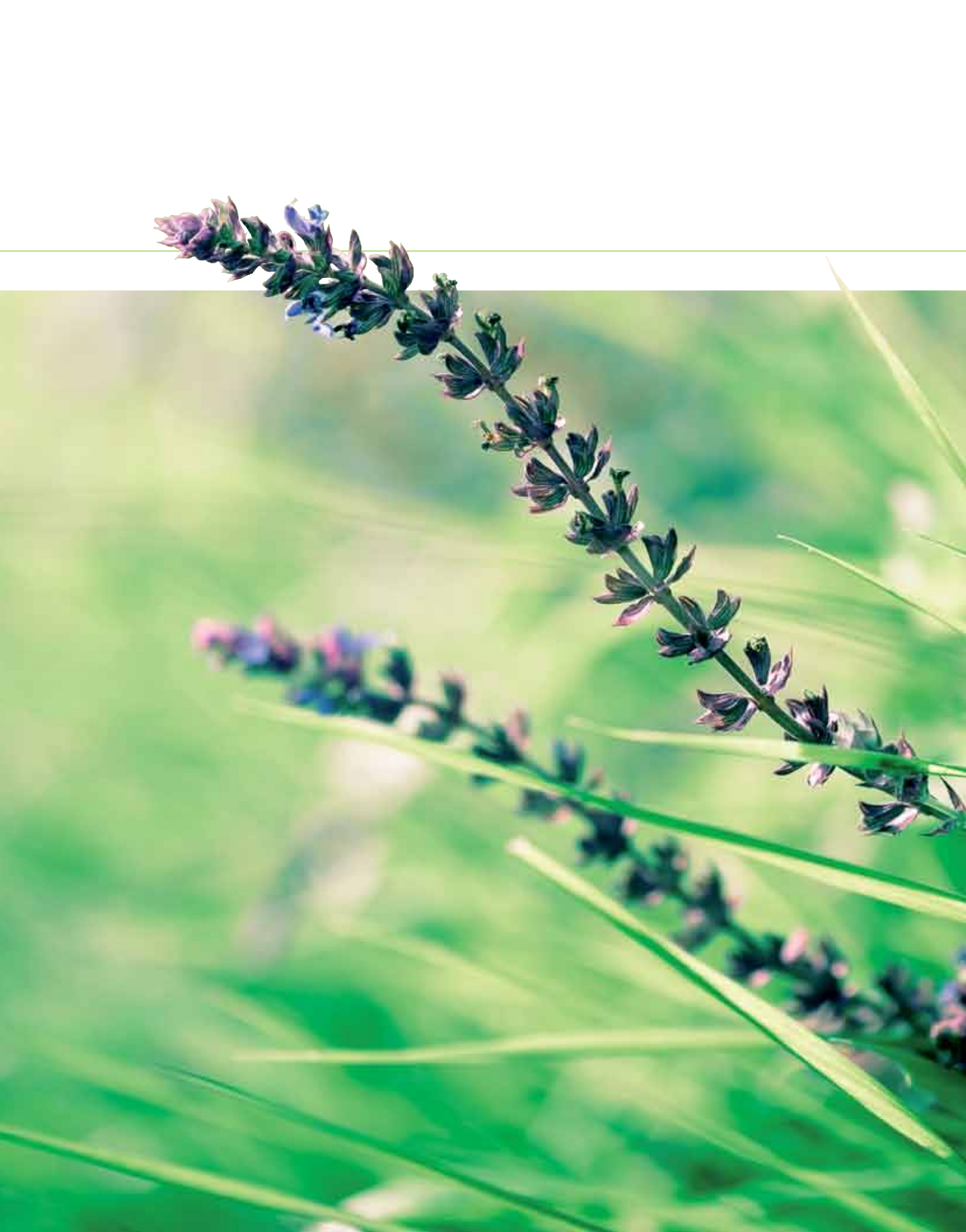
He buckled down yet again and submitted about another hundred applications to trusts. The Steinway piano in the modern uncluttered living room, Mozart, Beethoven, meditation and yoga helped him relax.

The applications yielded rejection after rejection. Finally, Planet Wheeler Foundation, the trust fund of the founders of the Lonely Planet guides, came up with a further £3.5 million. It was only 48 hours before Roy's time as a JRCT Visionary came to an end...

There was great celebration at JRCT that day. This was part of an e-mail Roy sent JRCT the following week:

'When I got the news (last Thursday) about the grant, I was quite emotional, and at first it was about finally making it across the finish line after so many years... But as the day went on, I became aware of something else. That in the next few years, we will know as an absolute certainty, that there are people alive who otherwise wouldn't be. Ordinary people, people having their first day at school, their first job ... I hadn't quite hoped we'd dare to get this far.'

www.developmentmedia.net



Learning from Coventry

In their final reports to the JRCT, all the Visionaries were asked what they had learned from the experience. Most chose to comment personally and some of their thoughts are scattered through this report. However, Mark Hinton and Heather Parker's reflections on what strengthens diverse community relationships are now given special space. This is because they relate to so many organisations: churches, Quaker meetings, community centres, social clubs.

We have learned that it is important and effective to:

Welcome people well

Dominant English culture can be unwelcoming – it seems normal to those of us who have grown up in it, but it is actually off putting – even to us!

The important thing about being welcoming is genuinely offering yourself, thinking about the other person and

wanting to build relationships yourself.

Little things are important – paying attention to welcoming people when they arrive, how you welcome them, and including them in what is going on when they arrive and throughout their time there, offering nice (appropriate) refreshment, giving your time and

attention. Paying attention to greetings and language.

Making an effort is important, it doesn't have to be perfect.

Hang out thoughtfully, playfully and intelligently

Welcoming people, and ensuring they



get to listen and be listened to, both work best in a relaxed and friendly atmosphere.

People learn about each other, learn to trust each other much faster when they are having fun, and when things are flexible and fluid.

Cultural differences, misunderstandings, distrust and mutual shyness show up when you try this, though. This can be good – that which is hidden becomes visible, and can be better understood.

Necessary to have a team of people thinking about what is happening and intervening – good youth workers, community workers, hosts know something about how to do this.

Between us we know a lot of games and songs that can relax people or get them involved, questions to ask everyone, and ways to engage with individuals.

We are attentive to what is happening and the dynamics of who is talking and who is on the edge.

Always ready to follow the leads and initiatives that come from the participants – this works much better when we can – and help make them inclusive of all.

We are good at having a diverse team work together well to do this, with clear leadership available when informal co-operation is not quite enough.

Listen, and get others listening

An important part of what we do is listening and getting others to listen to each other, with respect, even when you don't agree.

We do this in many ways, often both informal and well structured.

People have been trained differently in regard to speaking and being listened to, and there will almost always be some people who take up more space and airtime than others - so we often get people to take equal time to listen and

speak without interruption.

This works well to allow people to be heard and to get to know each other.

We do this in pairs, in small mixed groups, in the middle of noisy parties and in dialogue events.

In all kinds of ways and all kinds of events we always make sure that everyone has had the opportunity to be heard.

Hold out a bigger picture

"Think global, act local" is important – you can't avoid it now.

But you can't really offer hope to neighbourhoods like ours without a picture of how the world can change – without offering hope that human beings can build societies based on people, not on greed.

We talk about "Thinking local and acting global" – playing our part through all the very many global relationships we and our neighbours have.

We talk about economics and power, and the way societies and cultures hurt people – and what we can do to overcome that together.

Talk directly about "difficult" issues, often starting with racism

Because we set up an environment where people listen and are listened to, that is relaxed, friendly, welcoming and safe and where we have a bigger picture of the world and humans - we are able to talk about "difficult" issues with all.

As a team we are relaxed and confident about talking about these kind of issues with each other and that makes it possible to enable that to happen with other people too.

We talk directly about racism, sexism, Islamophobia, homophobia, anti-Jewish feelings, migration, colonialism, religion, violence,

capitalism and much more.

Sometimes we separate into the groups that we have been divided into, to make use of the safety that comes from being with people who have been seen or treated similarly to oneself – this makes us stronger and better able to understand each other when we then come together again.

We avoid blaming individuals for their views but consistently hold out the bigger picture and the expectation that people can create a fair and decent society given the right conditions.

Deliberate Diversity

Diversity doesn't just happen, there needs to be a constant, conscious effort sustained in order to attract a diverse group of volunteers and participants. We have to notice who is coming and who isn't coming, think about why certain groups of people aren't coming and do something to change that. When one particular group dominates, numerically or by behaviour (in terms of race, class, gender, age etc) it is limiting and off-putting for other groups.

We tackle this, as and when it begins to happen (not infrequently), by inviting and encouraging individuals from non-dominating groups (from the many individuals that team members seek out and start conversations with at larger events and in the local community whenever the opportunity arises) – and also by setting up events or elements of events which undermine the cultural or behavioural dominance, without blaming those who are caught in doing it – in a range of ways from single gender programmes, to prioritising non-English speakers, and from deliberate organising of "allies to ..." (to Jews, to Muslims, to East Asians, for example) to asking those targeted by a particular oppression to speak first.

Where to Now?

What will everybody be doing in the near and further future?
The Visionaries' words come from their final reports.



Clive: The same. And the same.



Roy: Hopefully we will be able to save many lives in the Burkina Faso project. I will build up Development Media International, and hopefully go on to implement major projects in a number of countries. I'll carry on with research projects too, to refine and improve what we're offering...I still have half an eye on politics, and perhaps mixing what I do now with being a part-time political advisor of some sort. But that's a long way off. For now I have a huge opportunity and I'm going to take advantage of it.



Karen: If I secure funding, I hope to continue working with Equanomics UK. If not, I will remain fully committed to it on a volunteer basis and implementing the original vision in these difficult and challenging economic and political times. I will also seek employment in the equalities arena and have started a course in teaching English as a second language. I would like to teach asylum seekers, refugees and new migrants.



Geoff: Continue the networking and connecting. The focus should be on what needs to be done where, by whom and how. Another focus will be on communicating, both to narrowly targeted groups and broader publics... [I] may find a base or bases to work out of (possibly in more than one country) as well as younger people to work with... I will also need to get some income.



Heather and Mark: We need to figure out making a living and we hope that we can continue to do this through this organisation, or if not, similar work in the future. This IS our life's work, one way or another and as far as how we do it, ten or twenty years from now, we have no idea yet, but hopefully even better and with more energy, intelligence and joy than we have so far managed.



Carne: We judge that a bigger organisation for Independent Diplomat of perhaps 25 staff globally is necessary to provide the best possible services to our clients. I roughly anticipate remaining as the Executive Director for perhaps another five years, but my association with ID thereafter would not end.



The Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust: Will carry in with its usual main funding work. Through that, individuals will continue to be supported as they have been in the past, and this may (or may not) increase in the future. The scheme itself was always intended as a one-off to mark the centenary.

Finally...other trusts and charitable foundations

JRCT very much hopes they will be encouraged by this scheme (and by presentations to them about it) to consider financing individuals as a way of achieving social change. To assist this, Part Two of this booklet gives factual information about how the scheme was set up and monitored. The booklet ends with some open questions, which might also benefit consideration.



Application form questions

Section 1

- 1 Please describe your vision to shape a better world in no more than 100 words
- 2 Please tell us more about the idea. Where did this idea originate? How did it develop?
- 3 Why do you believe the idea is crucial? Please give your reasons.
- 4 How will you set about achieving your vision?
- 5 What help will you need? (for example, people, resources, funding) How will you set about finding that? How will you find any necessary funding?
- 6 Where will the work be carried out? What part of the world will benefit? Will there be a geographical limit to your work?

Section 2 – About the Impact

- 7 During the five years, how will you know – and how will we know – that you are making progress?
- 8 How will the world – or a part of it – be more just and/or more peaceful after 5 years of your work and passionate commitment?

- 9 Why are you best placed to take this idea forward?
- 10 What risks are you taking? What might stop the work being effective? How would you try to overcome challenges?
- 11 After five years, will your work be complete? Or will it require further development by you or by others?

Section 3 – About You

- 12 What have you done in the past that prepares you for this challenge? How does this application build on – or divert you from – your current skills, experience and interests?
- 13 If you are in current paid employment, what is this? And if you are not, what do you do?
- 14 In relation to your vision, what do you consider to be your greatest achievement?
- 15 How do you see the transition to becoming a Visionary?
- 16 What will you do at the end of the five year period?
- 17 Why are you pursuing this idea on your own rather than as part of an organisation?
- 18 Have you worked on your own before? How do you think you will cope with working independently? Do you expect to work from home? How will that be?
- 19 What kind of support would you look for if you were appointed as a Visionary?
- 20 What inspires and nourishes you? Tell us something more to give us a sense of you, your values and your view of the world.



Response and selection

9260 requested forms resulted in 1598 total applications on broadly 26 key subject areas. Information about ethnic background was requested, but optional, and the total figures were not collated. 40% were from women, 60% from men. From the long list of 123 applications, it appears 9 were from a black or ethnic minority, 4 of mixed race. 17 people were called to interview. The scheme was launched with accompanying publicity in June 2005 at an event chaired by the broadcaster and comedian, Sandi Toksvig, at the Royal Geographical Society.

Website Message boards were set up so that the many unsuccessful, but still enthusiastic, applicants could exchange online ideas and conversations should they wish. About 1000 messages were exchanged over the 15 months the boards were open.

Payment Originally JRCT planned to employ the Visionaries at £20-40,000 a year, depending on their previous salary (which varied from about £18,000 pa to over £100,000), plus pension and NI contributions. This was changed to £37,500 for all plus annual cost of living increases and 10% pension contribution – a fairer scheme. N.I. was sorted individually.

But JRCT intended to liberate people to do their own work, not direct the work, so were not strictly employers. The salary was changed to a grant. Any tax complications around issues of ‘trading’ or the development

of intellectual property with an ‘end value’ were resolved on an individual basis. The donation system also protected the Trust from legal liability for the Visionaries.

JRCT support/contact with Visionaries

Where possible, Visionaries met Di Stubbs individually every three months and were also in phone and e-mail contact. JRCT offered and provided:

- information about anything that affected their work or role
- practical suggestions wherever possible; moral support and listening ears
- solidarity in tough times (as long as to do so would not compromise the Trust’s values and ethics)
- regular and prompt grant and expenses payments

Practical support included business cards; assistance with finding cheap travel using JRCT charitable status; handling funds raised (in early stages of projects); web assistance; legal advice; public liability insurance; premises for meetings; personnel advice.

In return, the Trust asked the Visionaries:

- to strive to respect and protect the Trust’s reputation and ethos
- to show JRCT in advance (whenever possible) any material that would use the Visionaries logo or name
- to inform them if they left the country and when they returned
- to inform them, if possible, if any trouble were brewing so that JRCT could prepare to offer support.



Once for all, you must not worry about your success or failure. It does not concern you. Your duty is to work each day, quietly, to accept the failures which are inevitable and to leave to others the care of measuring the applause.
Ralph W. Emerson



Monitoring and Evaluation

Without exception, all the Visionaries spoke warmly about the scheme, its searching and thought-provoking application process, its organisation and the caring and loving support they received from the Trust.

But, surprisingly, the scheme had no plans for a formal evaluation of outcomes. Trustees were keen to avoid the well-worn funding path of 'I don't want to burden you', followed by a bewildering array of differing reporting forms and structures. They also wanted to avoid the paraphernalia of self-serving evaluations not really done for objective learning.

Instead a simple system was developed of bi-annual reports from the project co-ordinator, who kept in regular friendly touch with the Visionaries and an annual review with each individual - for which the Visionary provided in advance a written report in an agreed format.

What is success?

Quakers tend to be notoriously unwilling to see simplistic 'success' and 'failure' as appropriate concepts. This is not only because these ideas can be so exposing

and so wounding to people who have done their best, but because nuance matters.

Because the Visionaries work on different size canvases, Trustees feel it may be misleading to compare achievements too closely. Some of the Visionaries work in a domestic, others in an international, arena. Achievements may happen quickly, or after years.

In her book *Just Change**, Diana Leat explores other reasons why assessing success is not simple:

- intervening near the end of a process when an issue is already firmly on the public agenda is quite different from getting an issue onto the agenda in the first place
- some causes evoke unpopularity, the sense of being neglected or attracting hostility. But in some respects it is easier to work with contentious issues, because some people will feel passionately. Working in the corridors of indifference can be disheartening
- success also depends on who or what needs to change. Some industries are notoriously resistant to change, others less so

- success is relative in terms of its scale. How can one compare work which has high impact on grantees, but lesser impact way beyond immediate grantees?
- what has been the price of success? Has there been collateral damage?

In most cases of change, even with the notional funding of 'individuals', there are often many actors, factors, and possibly other foundations, involved.

For these and other reasons, JRCT understands Clive Stafford Smith's instinctive and cheerful response to an enquiry as to whether he had, by any chance, a factual summary of recent achievements? 'It's in the past. I can't be bothered.' He had got people out of Guantanamo. He - and JRCT - feel that the people whose cases he is energetically and passionately working on now are a better use of his time.

* *Just Change: strategies for increasing philanthropic impact.* Diana Leat. Association of Charitable Foundations, 2007

Questions for Further Reflection

Was the £1.6 million value for money? With the help of the JRCT award, Roy Head alone raised £7 million to save many lives. 'And how would value for money apply to the men Clive helped release from Guantanamo? If they had been 6 fewer, would that have made their freedom poor value for money? And how to calculate the financial value of, say, an absence of suicide, or an unburned-out tower block - things which generate no value-for-money data?' JRCT Trustee

Did the recruiting attract and choose the right range of applicants?

'I asked one person - who works with refugee groups - why they hadn't applied. The answer was: "I thought it would be immodest."' JRCT trustee

'I guess, if you are going to ever do this again, the challenge is always to find people to whom your funding makes a critical difference.' Roy

Was the group mostly too white, too middle-aged, too middle-class, too male? Is there something about class and diversity that JRCT (despite the Trust's significant racial justice programme) sometimes just doesn't see?

'Individual leadership is incredibly important, but collective action is vital to changing the world. If you were doing this again, you might want to get a more diverse group of people devising the application and short-listing and interviewing the Visionaries. That way, I think that you may have come out with a more diverse group of Visionaries.' Heather and Mark

'You'd get more working class or black applicants if they could apply as part of an organisation. To do any important work sustainably, you can't do it on your own. We couldn't do what we did without others, and being challenged and pulled back into line.' Mark

What were the major risks?

'One of the risks is an individual going down a cul-de-sac. Anyone doing this again has to accept that that risk is part of the package. If you go off the beaten track, there has to be some kind of market test. At some point a project has to become self-sustaining, it has to last. And for that, money has to be generated in some way. My own idea came as near as dammit to not passing that threshold. It came so close to being 'Nice idea, Roy, well tried. But that's another one for the dustbin.' Roy

What could have improved the recruiting process (generally appreciated)?

'We should have taken longer with shortlisting - we did it in one short day.' Ruth McCarthy, Trustee. An internal report also suggested that three days for the final 17 interviews rather than two might have enriched the process.

'We were expecting the question: 'You're two white people planning to do this thing. This is all about racism. Why will people follow you or trust you as you try to do things? It was a shock that an organisation that funds in the field of racial justice, just didn't ask that. It felt like a piece of colour blindness.' Heather and Mark

Other questions possibly worth considering:

Did all Visionaries have a clear model of how, in practice, they would work for specific and sustainable social change?

Were all Visionaries sufficiently questioned about their continuing other organisational commitments, and the potential impact of these on their work?

Given that visions need in the long run sustainable finance to achieve their goals, did all Visionaries have some idea of how this money could be generated, other than by a succession of further charitable grants?

If a Visionary was clearly failing, would the Trust have sacked them?

'I can't imagine JRCT having sacked us, however rubbish we'd been in a certain way, other than perhaps turning up drunk at a meeting with them after having been in the papers doing bad things. It was an amazing act of faith, but lacked a certain rigour and accountability.' Anon Visionary

'It would have been a mutual decision. If, for example, they had got themselves appointed to another job, we would have asked them to resign.' Trustee steering group

What, if anything, could have improved the level of emotional support?

There was unanimous appreciation of the love and caring from staff and Trustees.

How could other support have been improved? (JRCT encouraged Visionaries

to develop support or advisory groups or similar)

'I would have done well or better to seek out small business people for practical advice about setting up an organisation. For example: at what point should I invest and go into debt? (at one point I did do that, when I hired some staff to help with the research). What sort of people do I need around me to help me grow? Roy

'Perhaps more dedicated support with JRCT as an organisation throwing its weight behind the scheme more to help with more leverage of funds and organisational or project guidance.' Karen

How, if at all, could the annual reviews have been improved?

'While the freedom and positivity were fantastic, some intelligent and friendly challenging and direct help at times would have been useful.' Heather and Mark

'I think it would have been good to have imposed on us some external mentors. We needed at least one white mentor who's tried this work, and at least one mentor targeted by racism who could challenge us about being white people doing it.' Mark

'Sometimes I think there could have been a bit more interaction and that the Trust could have encouraged greater synergy between us Visionaries and the many other projects the Trust have been involved in – perhaps by having mixer events every now and again for grantees, past and present.

Cross-fertilisation of ideas and groups is useful and creating the conditions for serendipity to happen important.' Geoff

Other questions possibly worth considering:

Did the reports and annual reviews always examine closely enough what specific change or outcome activities were intended to produce?

If a Visionary had consistently refused to commit themselves to a particular plan of action, or set a specific goal, what should Trustees have done?

Would not the presence and experience of the (already overworked!) Trust Secretary at individual annual reviews have been valuable?

Did the steering group sufficiently inform the full board of Trustees about any significant difficulties that emerged during reviews?

Could the shared 'team' experience of the Visionaries have been improved?

The Visionaries decided to meet as a group twice a year: one meeting in the winter, in the form of a 'lunch with friends'; the second in the spring to meet Trustees and staff too. Some felt personal pressure, but mostly Visionaries were happy with this and informal contact and spoke warmly of the comradeship and advice of others.

Karen would also have liked 'to have perhaps workshops open for all Visionaries on fundraising, media, project or

organisational development - and just workshops which helped us understand and focus on the political and social environment.'

Has enough been done to propagate the process for the future?

'I don't think so. Partly that has to do with the admirable modesty of the Trust, but that modesty is unfortunate, when there are those of us who would like to advertise it heavily. Someone (many people) should be doing the scheme again.' Clive Stafford Smith

Finally, some questions that exercised the Visionaries

- How to manage the challenge of being a one-man band and working alone?
- How to spot the right moment to bring in your first full-time colleague and how to manage them?
- How to consolidate networks and manage so many competing demands for one's time and attention?
- How to raise £1 million pounds – quickly?
- How to raise money for travelling expenses and bursaries?
- How to stop running all the time and allow space for inspiration and serendipity?
- How to use other people; how to attract useful offers of help and turn down the less helpful ones?
- Whether to 'trademark' names for initiatives – should one be upset if others use it without attribution? or be pleased the concept is being discussed more widely?
- Whether or not to become a charity?

AFTERWORD



Following the first meeting of the Visionaries in 2005, one of them observed: 'It seems that five years from now, due to the work we're all doing, we might reasonably expect that:

- 1 many, many lives will have been saved from preventable disease in developing countries
- 2 a significant number of 'small wars' and other symptoms of bullying of weaker by stronger nations will have been avoided
- 3 a historically key colonising/imperial/slave-trading nation will have a race relations agenda led by the black community
- 4 a model of grassroots solidarity between the disempowered in the developed and developing worlds will be spreading
- 5 the fundamental changes needed to global economics and law to ensure food security will have moved noticeably closer
- 6 the world will be able to celebrate the shutdown of symbols of legitimised hatred and the denial of humanity to Muslims (and others)
- 7 and charitable funders will have a great model of a new way of supporting social change.'

So, what has been the impact of the Visionary programme on the world?

This is how the current chair of the Visionaries steering group, Peter Coltman, responded, in a speech at the European Foundations Centre Conference in June 2010:

That is for world and time to judge because the work is continuing and the full impact is not presently known. There is so much to celebrate. You may count the number of people who have been freed from Guantanamo or the lives saved through mass-education in healthcare. You can look at progress in rights of representation for small nations at the UN or the shifts in thinking about sustainable food. You can see how a local community can be transformed through the richness of its culture or think about the impact of economic inequalities on black and ethnic minorities.

Celebrating this work is easy; rating its impact is much more difficult.

I abandoned the temptation to compare the work of our different Visionaries a long time ago. Some regularly make the headlines and feature in the news; books have been published; prizes won. One, beyond expectation, has found himself doing a piece of academic work whose practical implications for healthcare are enormous. One, because she is a black activist working on equality issues, lives her vision as none of the others have to. Comparison is neither possible nor fruitful.

We are a Quaker Trust and, famously, one Quaker philosopher who was active in world affairs wrote that he pinned his hopes to 'quiet processes and small circles'. That has also been part of our vision. You can get so much more done if you don't take the credit yourself. And this has been a deliberate policy for some of our Visionaries. Ripples from this work will continue to spread outwards – but it won't always be possible to trace their source.

So let us leave final judgement of impact to the future.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Steering Group from JRCT Trustees were:

Ruth McCarthy and Peter Coltman (successive chairs); David Shutt, Andrew Gunn, Christine Davis

Other Trustees:

Andrew Gunn and Marion McNaughton (successive chairs of JRCT); Margaret Bryan, Helen Carmichael, Paul Henderson, Beverley Meeson, Emily Miles, Susan Seymour, Imran Tyabji

All Trust staff:

Especially Stephen Pittam, Trust Secretary; Di Stubbs, Project Co-ordinator

Picture credits:

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The Trust has two sister, but separate, organisations: the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, one of the largest social policy research and development charities in the UK, and the smaller Joseph Rowntree Reform Trust (which is not a charity) that runs political campaigns in the UK to promote democratic reform, civil liberties and social justice.

Some believe there is nothing one man or one woman can do against the enormous army of the world's ills - against misery, against ignorance, or injustice and violence. Yet many of the world's great movements, of thought and action, have flowed from the work of a single person.
Robert Kennedy

Never doubt a small group of thoughtful citizens can change the world.
Margaret Mead



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