

People

Public Services

Power

Place

**Prospectus for
research and action**





Fellowship Engagement events were held around the UK during the summer of 2018

Jan Portillo

Elected RSA Board
Trustee and Life Fellow



‘The RSA’s mission is to enrich society through ideas and action. We do this through the powerful combination of our 29,000 Fellows, the dedicated work of our Action and Research Centre and our burgeoning ideas and events platforms. This prospectus represents the great potential of such a unique approach to change. We hope you will see it as your invitation to collaborate with us on such an exciting programme of new work.’

An invitation

The Action and Research Centre at the RSA combines practical experimentation with rigorous research to create a unique programme of work. It seeks to bridge between ideas, citizens and experimentation with an approach to change that is 'of' the people rather than simply 'for' them.

In this spirit, the Public Services and Communities team has spent several months during 2018 travelling the UK listening to the ideas and the concerns of RSA Fellows and other interested parties and then reflecting on how these could be developed into a programme for change. With the support of the Fellowship Engagement team, we visited places as diverse as Hastings, Glasgow, Swindon, Cambridge and Manchester. We have also conducted a public opinion poll to gain further insights about our priorities for future work.

This prospectus is the first fruit of this exercise. It is a summary account of what we have heard; it sets out a bold new change aim; and it presents a programme of action and research ideas that we hope will inspire and mobilise support.

Above all, this prospectus is an invitation to you to join us in making change. We are looking for strategic partners across our work programme. People with ideas about research and policy. People with projects and innovations that need a bigger platform. People with resources who can financially support our projects or our work programme overall.

Do accept this invitation to get involved and don't hesitate to get in touch.

RSVP:

If you'd like to accept our invitation to join our work then please e-mail: psc@rsa.org.uk or sign up on the People-Public Services-Power-Places section of our website.



Ed Cox

Director of the Public Services
and Communities team

Climate Change

Disempowerment



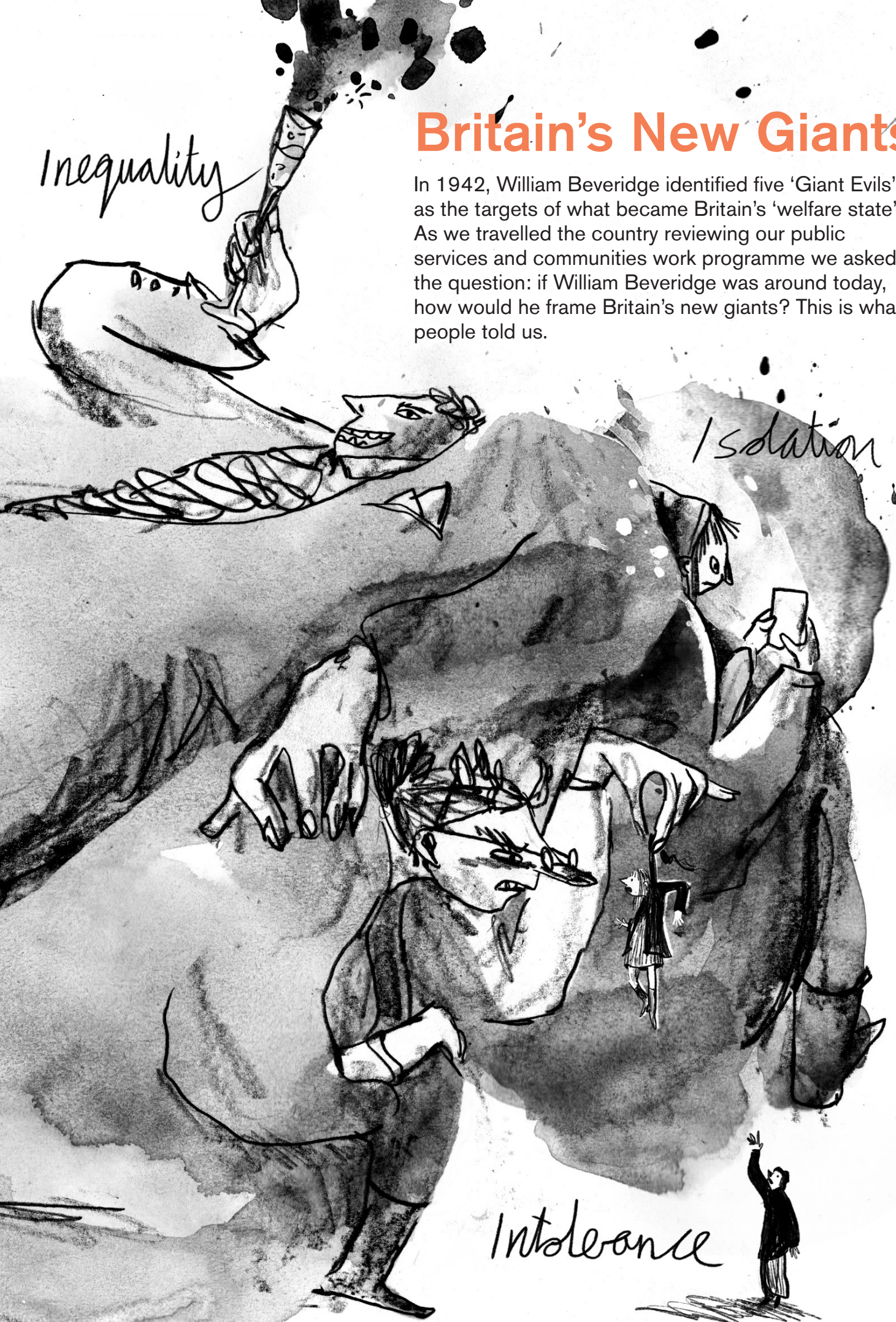
Britain's New Giants

In 1942, William Beveridge identified five 'Giant Evils' as the targets of what became Britain's 'welfare state'. As we travelled the country reviewing our public services and communities work programme we asked the question: if William Beveridge was around today, how would he frame Britain's new giants? This is what people told us.

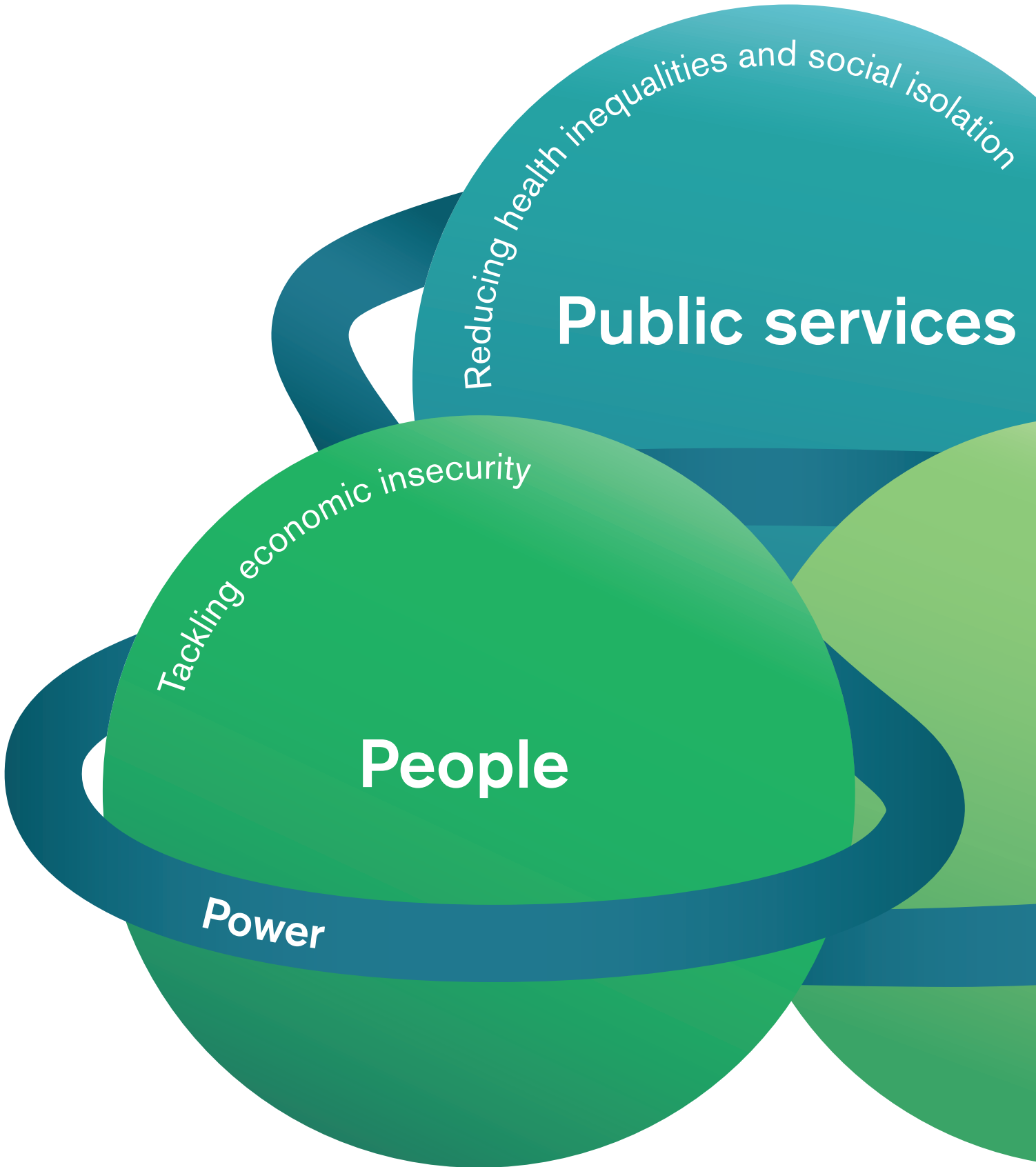
Inequality

Isolation

Intolerance



Our new change aim



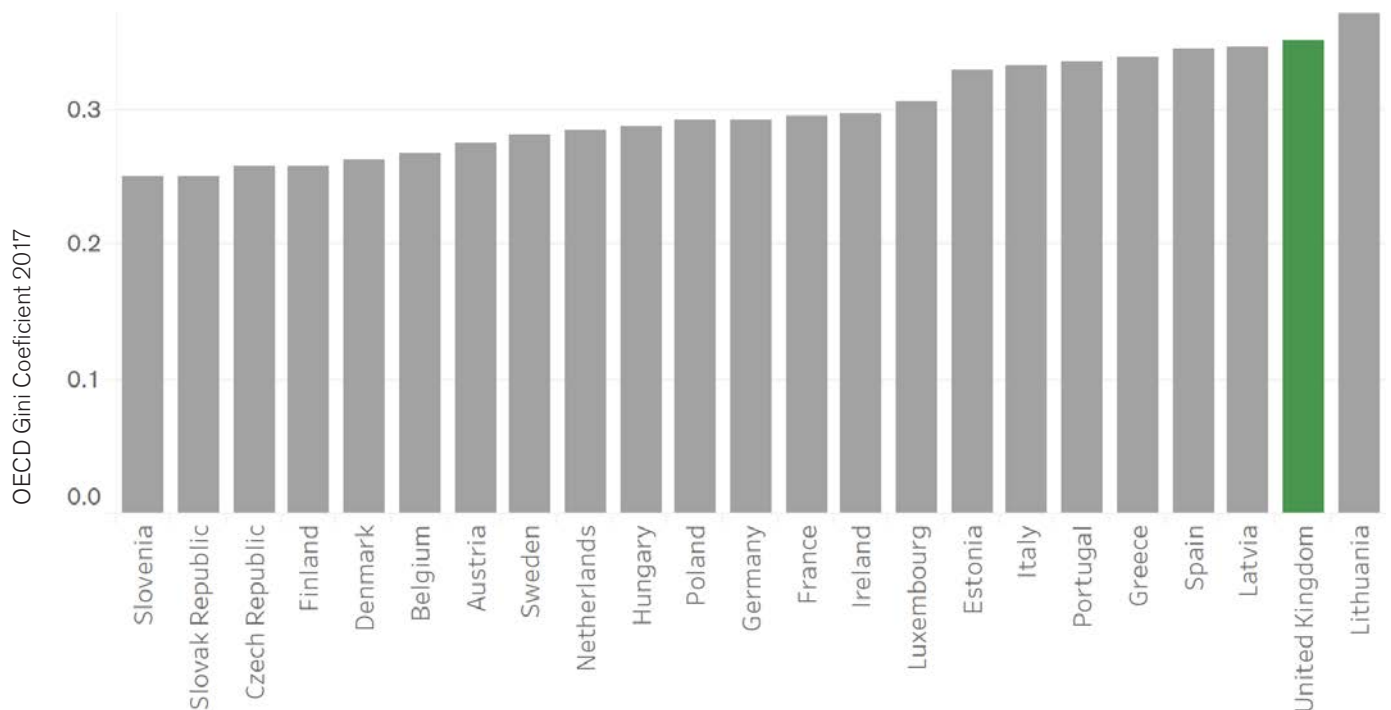
Our **vision** is of a society where citizens, businesses and governments **work together**, in policy and in practice, to **tackle inequalities** of income and wealth, of health and wellbeing and of place, power and exclusion: a new social settlement that reconciles **welfare** with opportunity and **social action**.



People

tackling economic insecurity

A new social settlement will ensure that every household has the foundations for a decent livelihood: a basic income, opportunities to learn new skills, somewhere to call home, and good physical and mental health.



There are many ways to measure inequality and economic insecurity and each is important in highlighting different aspects of the challenge facing the UK today. As a benchmark, income inequality between the top and bottom ten percent of earners

provides an important measure. Not only is this the measure that seems to be linked to so many other social issues such as physical and mental health, crime, trust and community life; but it represents a pretty fundamental aspect of human livelihood and opportunity.

Atif Shafique

'Addressing economic insecurity' report

'The RSA defines economic insecurity as harmful volatility in people's economic circumstances. This includes their exposure to objective and perceived risks to their economic wellbeing, and their capacity to prepare for, respond to and recover from shocks or adverse events.'

The average wages and salaries of those in the top 10% is more than 25 times that of the bottom 10%. (ONS 2017)

£3,000

£80,046

An invitation to join us in making change...

Universal Basic Income (UBI)

Unlike Universal Credit and other mean-tested benefits, UBI tackles economic insecurity by a basic platform on which people can build their lives – whether they want to earn, learn, care or set up a business – and, crucially, it can be embedded in systems of wider community support. Experiments are taking place in Finland, Kenya and the RSA wants to champion further experiments in the UK. We are already working with local authorities in Scotland to test the feasibility of this radical new approach but we are looking for partners to broaden and deepen this work.

Housing and Economic Security

One of the critical factors concerning our economic insecurity and quality of life is whether or not we have a secure home. The RSA wants to work in partnership with a wide range of stakeholders in the housing sector to explore new ways of addressing housing affordability, how we develop higher quality housing and more secure tenancies, and how to unlock housing investment through devolution and more radical approaches to housing finance and taxation.

RSA Polling Data Oct 2018

When asked to choose their top 3 biggest challenges facing Britain, respondents said that we as a nation should focus on inequality (49 percent), ageing society (49 percent), isolation and mental illness (35 percent), climate change (35 percent), international relations/ Brexit (33 percent), tech (21 percent), intolerance (19 percent), empowerment (16 percent), and the democratic deficit (7 percent). Populus poll of 2096 people.

Other RSA work

Of course, the RSA is working to tackle inequality and economic insecurity in other parts of its Action and Research Centre. Do look at the RSA website for more details of the Future Work Centre, Cities of Learning and our Creative Learning and Development change aim.

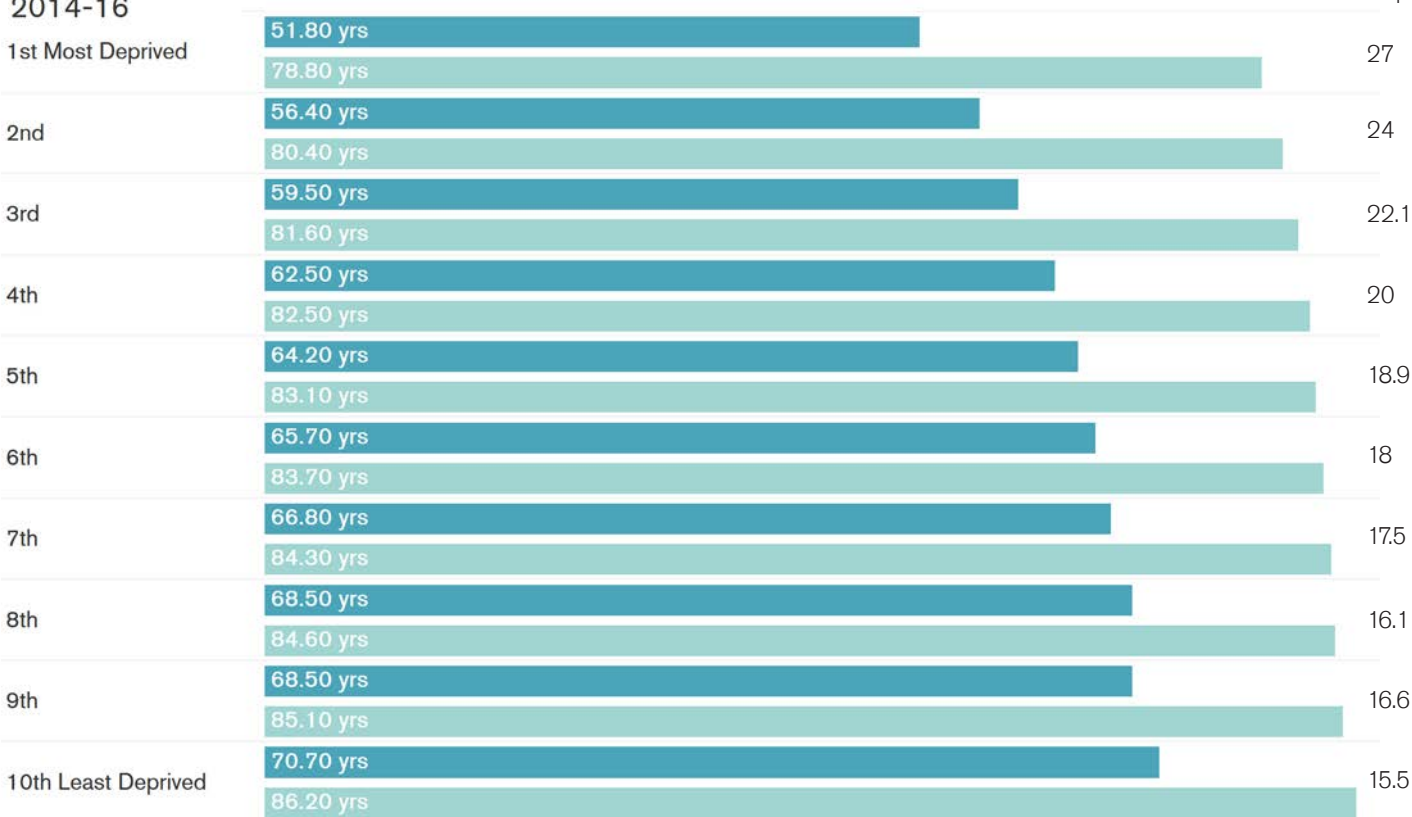


Public Services

tackling health inequality and reducing social isolation

A new social settlement will broaden access, deepen value and raise the quality of all our public services.

Total life expectancy and healthy life expectancy by decile of index of multiple deprivation, females, 2014-16



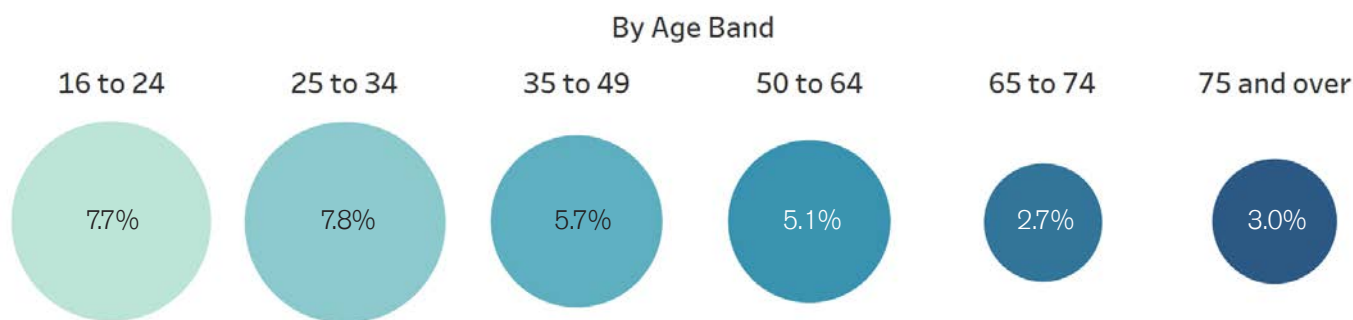
Recent data from Public Health England shows that improvements in life expectancy are slowing up and gaps in life expectancy between the most and least deprived people are widening. People living in the most deprived neighbourhoods spend nearly a third of their

lives in poor health and on average 19 years more than their least deprived counterparts. While the NHS and health treatment has an important role to play, the wider determinants of ill health and our health behaviours must be central to narrowing the gap.

Tom Harrison
'Listening to young people online'

'75 percent of mental illnesses are diagnosed before the age of 25 and there has been wide public discussion surrounding the effect social media is having amongst young people with reports linking overexposure to social media with emotional distress and mental illness. The need to tackle a lack of timely, credible and impartial advice on offer to young people, especially those who might be presenting and talking about their mental health for the very first time online, is urgent and necessary.'

Adults aged 16 and over across England feeling lonely often/always. (ONS 2018)



An invitation to join us in making change...

Reducing social isolation

Social isolation is more than loneliness. It can affect people of all ages and can be closely related to wider issues of inequality, economic insecurity and physical and mental health. Government and a range of voluntary groups have developed important plans to tackle loneliness and encourage wider civic empowerment but the RSA wants to work with partners to apply its unique Lab methodology – think like a system, act like an entrepreneur – to develop fresh approaches to tackling one of the most profound challenges currently facing Britain.

Tackling health inequality

The RSA, in partnership with the Health Foundation, is already developing work to address the social determinants of health and to explore ways in which health can be seen as an ‘asset’ for promoting a more inclusive economy. We want to build on these initial projects to develop a wider programme of work which takes a more holistic approach to narrowing the social and regional gaps in healthy life expectancy.

How to be a public entrepreneur

Recent research at the RSA has shown that the state need not be a slow, lumbering, bureaucratic machine but instead has an increasing number of people, processes and practices that are ‘moving fast, and fixing things’ and demonstrating a new kind of public entrepreneurship. We now want to extend this work by developing a toolkit and curriculum to spread the practice of public enterprise. We are looking for public entrepreneurs and other partners to work with us on this.

Policy debate

According to the IFS, government spending on public services as a proportion of GDP has fallen to 38 percent. This puts the UK in what Danny Dorling calls the ‘third division’ of European nations alongside Ireland and Estonia. With the Prime Minister promising the end of austerity, the RSA wants to lead a debate about the appropriate level of public spending in a post-Brexit Britain.

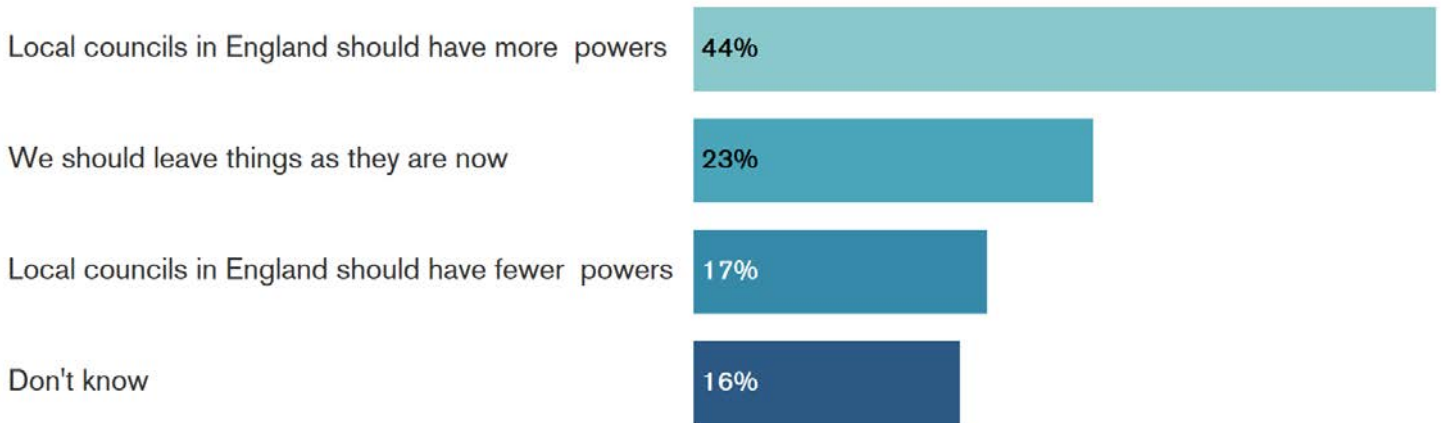


Power

reducing regional inequalities
and inspiring democratic reform

A new social settlement will ensure people have a greater say about the big challenges we all face.

Which of these statements comes closest to your view?



Recent RSA-Populus polling shows that less than a quarter of people think that the state of democracy in Britain is healthy and in Northern Ireland this figure falls to just over 10 percent. It would seem that much of our concern is about Westminster and people would like to

see a revival in our local democratic processes. When asked about local councils, 44 percent of people said they should have more powers and only 17 per cent said they should have fewer. (Populus polling of 1750 people, October 2018).

Matthew Taylor

Chief Executive's
lecture on 'Deliberative
democracy' 2018

'In the face of populism, public disenchantment with politics, and policy failure, democratic deliberation is a modest answer. Taking deliberation seriously in the UK isn't a leap into the unknown, it's finally catching up with what other countries and cities have already shown to work. Whatever ideals we might ultimately aspire to for our democracy, it is not hope that leads to action so much as action that leads to hope.'

An invitation to join us in making change...

Campaign for deliberative democracy

Following Matthew Taylor's Chief Executive's Lecture in 2018, the RSA has formed a partnership with the leading public participation charity, Involve, to launch a nationwide campaign for deliberative democracy. The campaign will be launched in Spring 2019 and aims to put pressure on government to introduce deliberative assemblies as a vital democratic tool for addressing some of Britain's most complex political challenges.

Reinventing England's regions and promoting action on inclusive growth

Following the RSA's City Growth Commission and Inclusive Growth Commission, the RSA is continuing to champion work designed to tackle local and regional inequalities and ensure that social and economic development in the UK generates prosperity and wellbeing for all. The RSA will continue to seek and work with strategic partners to promote local interventions that support a more inclusive economy and a more coherent approach to regional economic development.

'Inclusive Growth
Commission' report

'We propose new social contracts between city regions and central government that commit to specific social and economic outcomes, in return for control over local resources. This is not so much about fiscal devolution but more about the immediate potential for new partnerships that can maximise the impact of total public sector spend in places.'

Policy debate

Devolution in the UK has been piecemeal and partial. In England it seems to have ground to a halt. The RSA wants to make a long-term devolution settlement for England a key plank of the agenda for political and democratic reform.

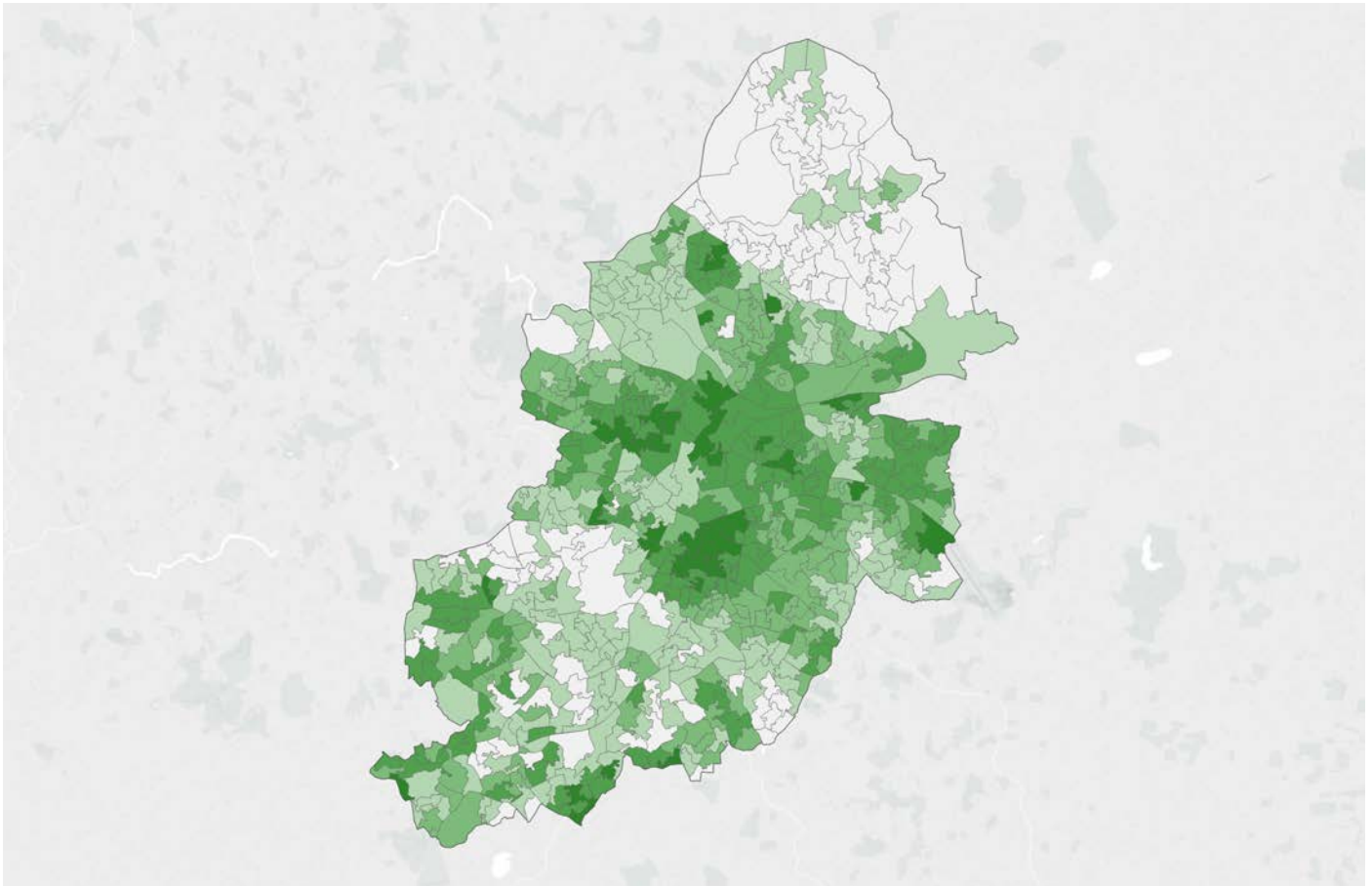


Place

reducing local inequalities and
building sustainable neighbourhoods

**A new social settlement will ensure we
can all live in prosperous, inclusive and
sustainable places.**

Birmingham - Index of Multiple Deprivation Score 2015



This map of the Index of Multiple Deprivation Scores for the city of Birmingham is illustrative of the high levels of local inequality that we see in our towns, cities and rural areas. In many parts of the country, rich and poor neighbourhoods sit side-by-side.

Local inequalities are a very visible way in which our society is divided and needs urgent action to ensure prosperity is more equally shared.

'Networked heritage'
report

'Heritage shapes how people identify with the places they live, work and play. Yet a role for heritage is frequently missing in conversations and plans for how we want places to develop into the future.'

An invitation to join us in making change...

Neighbourhoods Design Awards

The RSA has a rich tradition for giving out design awards. Our Student Design Awards have mobilised thousands of students to tackle pressing social, environmental and economic issues through design thinking since 1924. Now we want to launch a new awards programme to generate the best ideas to create more vibrant and sustainable neighbourhoods and to celebrate the people and places putting tackling real world problems from the bottom-up. We will be seeking funders and partners for this new awards programme in 2019.

Heritage and inclusive growth

In recent years, the RSA has worked closely with the Heritage Lottery Fund to produce a national 'Heritage index' which provides a rich picture of heritage assets and heritage activity in every local authority in the UK. We now want to build on this work to explore the relationships between heritage, culture and inclusive growth. If you work in an organisation that curates, supports or promotes opportunities for communities to engage with their local heritage then you might be interested in joining our Heritage Network.



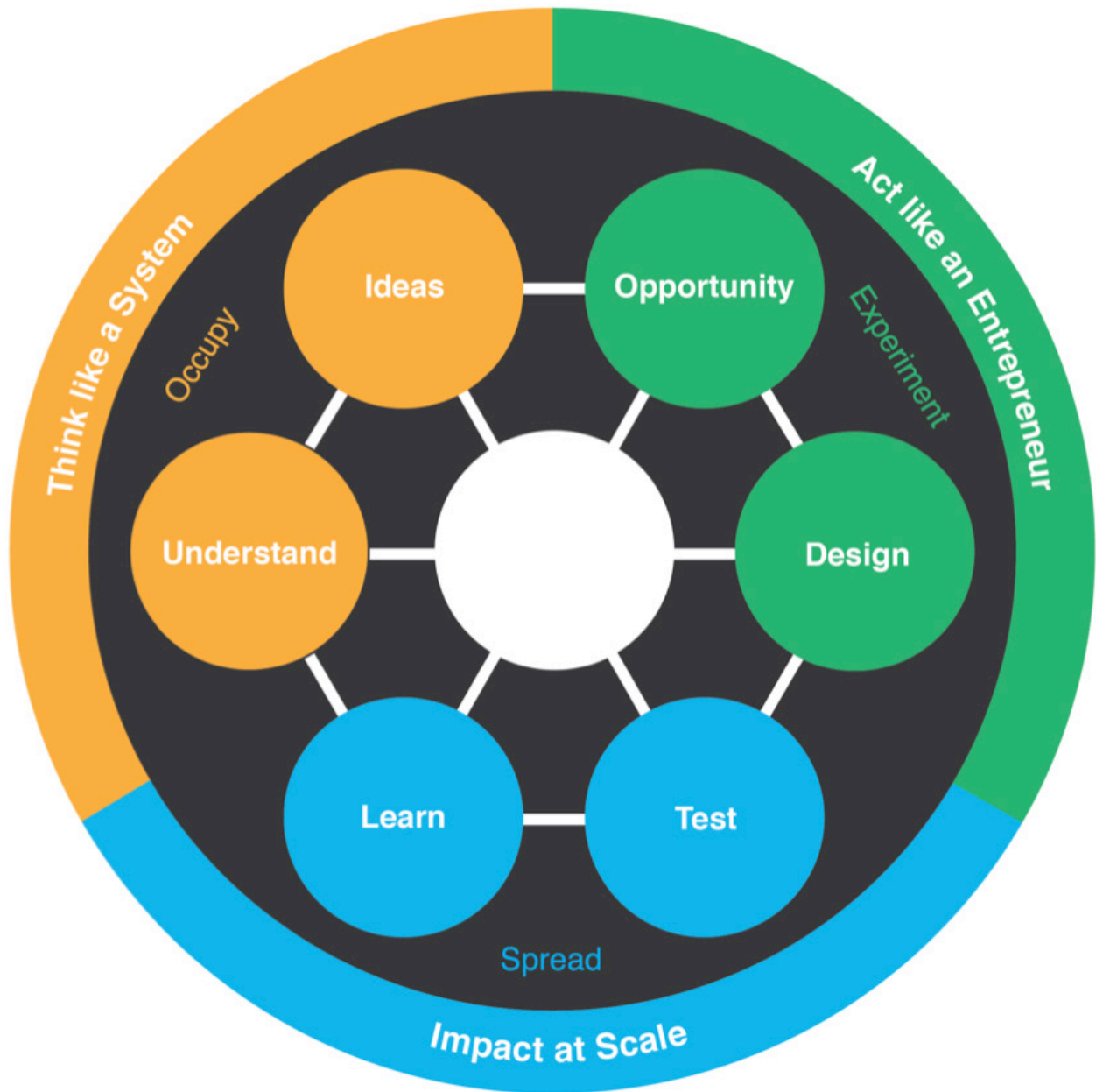
Food, Farming and Countryside Commission

The RSA's Food, Farming and Countryside Commission has recently published its progress report, *Our common ground*, which argued that we cannot carry on treating our food, farming and countryside as we do currently. Its ongoing work includes work on a sustainable farming system that helps us meet global challenges, securing the value of land; work, food and health; and revitalising rural democracy.

RSA places

Through its research, action and extensive Fellowship networks, the RSA has a rich relationship with villages, towns, cities and regions across the UK and beyond. Where these links are strongest – or where we can identify particular opportunities for innovation and action – we want to identify a small cohort of RSA places where we can build long-term relationships to nurture more inclusive economies and more vibrant civil societies.

The RSA approach



The RSA Lab

The RSA Lab is designing and testing a model of change that we call 'think like a system and act like an entrepreneur'. This model, represented by the visualisation above, is based on the understanding that we are more likely to make a positive impact in society if we see challenges as part of a complex and dynamic system and if we actively seek opportunities to act within this evolving context. Our ambition is to work with partners to develop projects that involve research and action but also spread learning and insights that support impact at scale.

Meet the team



Ed Cox
Director of the
Public Services and
Communities team

Ed Cox is director of Public Services and Communities where he is leading an ambitious programme of work on people, power, place and inclusive growth. Ed previously led IPPR North for nine years where he was a champion for devolution and much of the thinking behind the 'Northern Powerhouse'. Ed was an adviser to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government where he played a key role in developing the Sub-National Review (2007) and the Empowerment White Paper (2008). Ed has a background in community engagement: he set up the national Participatory Budgeting Unit and he is the founder and chair of the Levenshulme Inspire community hub in inner city Manchester.

Ian's role is to develop programmes of research and analysis focused on policy and practice across the public services and communities sector. Ian has a background in public policy and partnership working and joins the RSA from local government. His work focuses on engaging communities in place-shaping and problem-solving with the statutory sector. Ian is particularly interested in how to cultivate innovation within public services and bring new approaches to old problems.

Ian Burbidge
Associate director,
Public Services
and Communities



Hannah Webster
Senior researcher,
Public Services and
Communities

Hannah has experience in quantitative research, previously working for the research agency Kantar Public and in housing and homelessness policy research at the charity Centrepoin. Hannah is interested in exploring how policy across welfare, housing and health can address economic inequality and insecurity.

Atif Shafique is a senior researcher for the public services and communities team. His particular interests include inclusive growth, economic insecurity, lifelong learning and the role of citizens and localities in delivering place-based change.

Atif Shafique
Senior researcher,
Public Services
and Communities



Charlie Young
Researcher, Public
Services and
Communities

Charlie Young is a researcher with a background in economics, anthropology and climate change. He recently received his Masters in economics, focusing on new economics, and analyses the socioeconomic impacts of policy interventions with a particular focus on basic income in a national and international context.



Becca Antink
Assistant researcher,
Public Services and
Communities



Becca's background is in local government and she previously worked at the Institute for Public Policy Research. She has an MSc in Social Policy from LSE and a strong interest in housing and communities, heritage, inclusive growth and public service reform.



Tom Harrison
Assistant researcher,
Public Services and
Communities

Tom Harrison is an assistant researcher in the Public Services and Communities team. Formerly the RSA's first Emma Lindley intern for mental health and wellbeing his research focuses on topics such as mental health, health and social care devolution and the future of health in the digital age.

Kenny McCarthy
Project management and
production lead, Action
and Research Centre



Kenny is an experienced coordinator who worked on the RSA's Inclusive Growth Commission and now leads on delivering our inquiry into the Future of Food, Farming and the Countryside. Kenny is passionate about creating a world which is positive, purposeful, and thriving and is interested in exploring how we connect to ourselves, each other and our place. Prior to joining the RSA he had policy and research roles for Drugscope and Action Hampshire, where he wrote a report on the rise of food banks in the UK.

Jack works with partners and RSA colleagues to design impactful action and research projects across the Public Services and Communities theme. Prior to this, Jack was a researcher in the RSA's Action and Research Centre.

Jack Robson
Senior Business
Development and
Partnerships Manager



We'd like to thank some of our current partners including:



Climate Change

The RSA (Royal Society for the encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce) believes that everyone should have the freedom and power to turn their ideas into reality.

Through our ideas, research and engagement with our 29,000-strong Fellowship, we seek to realise a society where creative power is shared and creative values are nurtured.

Disempowerment

RSVP:

If you'd like to accept our invitation to join our work then please e-mail: psc@rsa.org.uk or sign up on the People-Public Services-Power-Places section of our website.

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