

Levelling up 'left behind' neighbourhoods

Monday 27th – Tuesday 28th February 2023

Participant Biographies



Jon Alexander

Jon is author of *CITIZENS: Why the Key to Fixing Everything is All of Us*, and co-founder of the New Citizenship Project, a book and company that work to shift the dominant story of the individual in society from Consumer to Citizen. Among other plaudits, *CITIZENS* was recently listed by McKinsey as one of its Top 5 Recommended Books in its Summer Reading Guide 2022, described as "an underground hit" in the *Financial Times*, and selected by the World Economic Forum for its CEO Book Club. Jon began his career with a decade in the advertising industry, winning the prestigious Big Creative Idea of the Year, before making a dramatic change. Driven by a deep need to understand the impact on society of 3,000 commercial messages a day, he gathered three Masters degrees, exploring Consumerism and its alternatives from every angle. In 2014, he co-founded the New Citizenship Project to bring the resulting ideas into contact with reality. In *CITIZENS*, he is ready to share them with the world.



John Angell

John has worked in his property and retail business across Kent for fifty years. Based in Dover town centre he has witnessed many economic and social challenges at first hand. He is a recipient of the Freemanship of Dover and the Paul Harris Fellowship for Community Service.



Margaret Bolton

Margaret is Director of Policy and Communications at Local Trust. She has worked in a number of high profile policy, campaigning and communications roles including at NCVO and Arts Council England. She ran the campaign to get an equal share of lottery proceeds for charities and has led influential programmes of work on charity taxation – which significantly extended reliefs – and the reform of charity law. The last of these led to a Prime Minister's Strategy Unit project to which she was seconded as Voluntary Sector Advisor. Before joining Local Trust she was a consultant for a number of years working primarily on social investment, social innovation and charity effectiveness undertaking research and writing numerous reports including the report for the Calouste Gulbenkian Inquiry into the Civic Role of Arts Organisations.



Jack Brereton

Jack was first elected as the Member of Parliament for Stoke-on-Trent South in 2017 and then re-elected with an increased majority in 2019. He is a trustee of the charity the Gingerbread Centre, a local charity focused on supporting homeless families in Stoke-on-Trent. Since elected to Parliament Jack has served on a number of Select Committees including; Work and Pensions, Transport, Procedure, and the Public Accounts Commission.

He has also served in a number of Parliamentary Private Secretary roles including; to the Department for Education, the Secretary of State for Exiting the EU, the Secretary of State for Defence and the Secretary of State for International Trade.

Since taking his seat in Parliament, Jack has continued to raise issues affecting Stoke-on-Trent, and has worked hard to deliver on the levelling up of opportunities in Stoke-on-Trent, helping secure hundreds of millions of pounds of new investment for the city since elected.

He is an officer of the All-Party Parliamentary Group for 'left behind' neighbourhoods.



David Buck

David leads much of the King's Fund work on public health and health inequalities. This has included work on volunteering and social prescribing. His recent work has included research on the role of directors of public health during covid-19 and how the NHS can do more to tackle poverty and its consequences.

He is currently involved in research on community champions during covid and their legacy. Before joining the Fund, David worked at the Department of Health as deputy director for health inequalities and in many other policy areas. He has also worked at Guy's Hospital, King's College London and the Centre for Health Economics in York.



Angie Buss

Angie was born in Peterborough and worked as a manager in ladies fashion retail in Newmarket, Spalding and Brixton before retiring to Blackpool in 2001. In 2012 she set up a Residents Association for Revoe, an area of central Blackpool, and in 2014 joined the steering group for Revoelution, the town's Big Local project. She led one of the Council's Area Forums for several years and became Chair of Revoelution Partnership in September 2020. Angie facilitates Partnership meetings, liaises with public sector and voluntary organisations in the area and is the first point of contact with Local Trust. She also regularly volunteers at the Revoelution Hub, staying in touch with staff and helping out in the community garden. Angie has received several awards for her work in the community including recently one from 24Housing.



Olivia Butterworth

Olivia leads NHS England's work to ensure that the NHS works with citizens and communities to have a voice that influences the development, design and delivery of our health and care services. She is the national lead for the People and Communities workstream of the Primary Care Networks programme and led the NHS England COVID-19 response for people experiencing homelessness and inclusion health populations.

Key responsibilities include the development of approaches to drive citizen and community involvement through programmes such as; NHS Citizen, a citizen and community led approach aiming to drive a culture change in public participation; and supporting the health and care system to involve people and communities; all underpinned by the statutory guidance published in April 2017 – supporting participation in health and care. She was named in the HSJs Top 50 Innovators and the Top 50 Integrators in 2014. In 2018 she was named as one of the Top 70 NHS Stars.

Olivia was previously the strategic lead within the Department of Health on partnerships with the voluntary and community sector and more widely the 'Big Society' vision. She led the 2007 strategic review of DH voluntary sector funding and investment to the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise Sector.



Julia Buzan – Fellow from Cumberland Lodge

Julia is a PhD student in Psychology and Behavioural Science at the London School of Economics, an Analysing and Challenging Inequalities Scholar at LSE's International Inequalities Institute, and a Cumberland Lodge Fellow. Her research explores how contexts of poverty and inequality shape decision-making. Specifically, her PhD investigates how seemingly 'irrational' behaviour may be adaptive within contexts of poverty, using longitudinal data and experimental methods to better understand the relationships between previous experiences of adversity, current decision-making, and life trajectories.

Prior to joining the LSE, she worked as a Senior Research Associate with Innovations for Poverty Action and the World Bank's Gender Innovation Lab in Côte D'Ivoire. She also previously served as a Consulting Director at Vera Solutions where her team supported the design and implementation of data systems for social impact organizations in India and across Southern Africa. Julia holds an MSc in Psychology of Economic Life from LSE, and a BA in Political Science from Yale University.



Trish Cartner

Trish is Campaigns Programme Manager at RECLAIM.

RECLAIM is a youth leadership and social change organisation. They are a small but bold charity, using their experience and platform to support and amplify the voices of working class young people.

They exist to create a society in which being from a working-class background no longer presents barriers to achievement, success, or influence.

Their long term goal is to create a Britain where those from working-class backgrounds are proud of – and not held back by – their roots. RECLAIM want working-class people to be represented in places where decisions are made about their lives and to be recognised for their talent, strength, and diversity.



Daniel Crowe

Daniel is Local Trust's Policy and Parliamentary Manager, acting as secretariat for the All-Party Parliamentary Group for 'left behind' neighbourhoods. He is currently managing the APPG's work and research programme and its inquiry into levelling up.

With a background in the UK co-operative movement, policy and communications for local and city regional government, and research for think tanks working on public services and community empowerment, his work at Local Trust leading on policy around 'left behind' neighbourhoods draws on his professional experience, personal interests and history of community activism and neighbourhood governance.



Polly Curtis

Polly is the Chief Executive of Demos. She spent much of her career at the Guardian where she reported on health, social affairs and education, before joining the lobby team as Whitehall Editor, writing about government and policy. She went on to be digital editor of the Guardian, then led newsrooms as Editor-in-Chief at HuffPost UK, a Partner at Tortoise Media and Managing Director at PA Media. Polly also serves as a trustee of the Public Interest News Foundation, as well as a Non-Executive Director of the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman.



Naomi Eisenstadt

Naomi is chair of the NHS Northamptonshire Integrated Care Board. After a long career in the NGO sector, in 1999 Naomi became Director of Sure Start. The Unit was responsible for delivering the Government's commitment to free nursery education places, the national childcare strategy, and Sure Start, a programme aiming to reduce the gap in outcomes between children living in disadvantaged areas and the wider child population. Naomi then spent 3 years heading the Social Exclusion Task Force. Since leaving the Civil Service, Naomi chaired the Camden Equalities Commission, served as Adviser on poverty for the First Minister of Scotland, and published 2 books. She is a trustee of the Financial Fairness Trust and the Education Endowment Foundation. She was awarded an honorary doctorate from the Open University in 2002 and in 2005 became a Companion of the Bath.



Jo Gideon

Jo was elected as the MP for Stoke-on-Trent Central in 2019. In Parliament, she has served as Parliamentary Private Secretary for the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy and later as Vice-Chair of the 1922 Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy Backbench Committee.

Jo serves as Chair of the APPGs on Ceramics, Youth Affairs and Social Enterprise, and formerly the APPG for the National Food Strategy. Jo also holds a position on the APPGs for the BBC, Business Resilience, Charities and Volunteering, and Left-Behind neighbourhoods.

Jo has spent her time in Parliament championing the ceramics industry, community placemaking, promoting apprenticeships & skills for young people, and speaking out about local health inequalities and a rising obesity crisis.



Stephen Hill

Stephen is an independent public interest practitioner working in commercial, governmental and community housing sectors. His background is sustainable development, co-production and citizen participation in planning and regeneration, strategic urban planning, project design and action learning. He has led practical innovations in participative democracy and more sustainable forms of housing delivery, placemaking and community land ownership, including as a Neighbourhood Renewal Adviser to communities and councils in the New Deal for Communities programme (1999-2005), member of the Ministerial Local Government Sounding Board trying to implement 'double devolution' (2003-6) and Churchill Fellow critically examining (2014-date) community organising and the co-production of housing and neighbourhood-scale regeneration by citizens and the state.



Paul Howell

Paul was elected as the Member of Parliament for Sedgefield in December 2019 and sits on the Transport Select Committee as well as co-chairing the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Left Behind Neighbourhoods. As the MP for Sedgefield he has a number of communities that could be described as left behind and these have been a focus since he entered Parliament. Prior to becoming an MP, he spent 40 years working in manufacturing industry as both financial director and supply chain director. Born and bred in Co Durham, he is passionate about the northeast.



Alison Jones

Alison is the Development Manager for CommUNITY Little Hulton which is the legacy organisation of Little Hulton Big Local. Little Hulton has been identified as a left behind community.

Her professional background is in Play, Childcare and Community Development.

Simon Kaye



Simon is Director of Policy at the think tank Reform. He has worked for various policy research organisations since 2018. Before this he worked as an academic and lecturer at King's College London, which is also where he was awarded his PhD. Simon has conducted formal research into democracy, community power, devolution, and localism in the context of both think tanks and academia. He has two children, aged three years and three months respectively.

Matt Leach



Matt is Chief Executive of Local Trust, which funds long term place-based, community-led change across England. Prior to that, Matt led social housing innovation agency HACT, was an associate director at Red Tory think tank ResPublica and held a range of senior leadership roles in the public sector, including civil society funder Capacitybuilders, the Housing Corporation, the London Thames Gateway Development Corporation and a range of Whitehall departments.

Andy Lock



Andy has worked for the CRT for over twenty years specialising in grant making and developing projects that address many of the challenges experienced by the UK's former coalmining communities. CRT's target communities are amongst some of the most deprived nationally and, since their establishment in 1999, we have been delivering activities designed to regenerate and 'level up' these areas before it became a new term within government. Andy has been actively involved with some of the Levelling Up funding programmes and CRT are a key contributor to the APPG for Coalfield Communities.

Caroline Macfarland



Caroline is an entrepreneur, educator, and strategic communications expert with over 15 years of experience working in policy and strategy roles in think tanks, charitable foundations and agencies. She is the founder and director of Common Vision, an independent think tank specialising in deliberative dialogue and community listening across a range of social and economic issues.

Prior to establishing Common Vision, Caroline was a special adviser at the Big Lottery Fund (now The National Lottery Community Fund), one of the founding team members of the foundation Power to Change and managing director of think tank ResPublica. Caroline is a trustee of Local Trust and the UK Cohousing Trust, and a British Council Hammamet Fellow. In 2015, she was named one of Management Today's 35 women under 35 and in 2018 she made the WISE100 list of leading women in social enterprise.



Meaghan Malloy – Fellow from Cumberland Lodge

Meaghan is a PhD candidate in Education, Practice and Society at the Institute of Education, University College London. Her research focuses on influencing policy and practice at the intersection of education, gender and international development, with a focus on education measurement. She brings a decade of passion and commitment to advancing quality and inclusive education, particularly for marginalised girls and communities. She has consulted for various international organisations, foundations and nonprofits, including Education Development Trust, Glasswing International, UNDP, and UNICEF.



Frances Northrop

Frances is an Associate Fellow at NEF, a Trustee of Annetta's Trust and a Director at Totnes Community Development Society. She has long and widespread experience working with gentrification campaigns and community led approaches to economic development including the use of community plans as alternatives to gentrifying and extractivist developments.



Jennie Popay

Jennie is Distinguished Professor of Sociology and Public Health at Lancaster University. She has worked as a teacher, policy maker and researcher in the UK, East Africa and New Zealand. Her research focuses on designing and evaluating action to address the structural determinants of health inequalities and involves people bearing the brunt of social injustice as partners. She works with the World Health Organisation and has held a number of public appointments including serving on the Welsh Bevan Commission advising the Minister for Health and was inaugural chair of the national charity The People's health Trust. She currently convenes the Other Front Line Global Alliance.



Barbara Slasor

Barbara has been Gaunless Gateway Big Local Community Development Lead since January 2017, born in Newcastle upon Tyne, currently living in County Durham, close to Bishop Auckland. Barbara works to support a resident-led pro-active partnership to identify, prioritise, make decisions and act in response to local community needs utilising £1.15m of Big Local funding. She has recently been invited to give evidence as a witness at an APPG inquiry into Levelling Up. In her spare time, Barbara has been involved in local governance as a member of small unincorporated groups, as a charity trustee and company director.



Sarah Stearne

Sarah provides policy and research support to Local Trust's work around the Levelling Up White Paper, All-Party Parliamentary Group for 'left behind' neighbourhoods and Community Wealth Fund campaign. Prior to joining Local Trust, Sarah completed an undergraduate degree in Politics and International Relations at LSE and the Graduate Diploma in Law at City, University of London, during which Sarah volunteered for Citizens Advice, advising clients on issues ranging from domestic abuse to debt. Sarah has previously volunteered helping to coordinate the logistics of a social supermarket and formerly served as a Member of Youth Parliament.



Tilly Steward

Tilly supports Local Trust's work on the APPG for 'left behind' neighbourhoods and engagement with its network of parliamentary and external members. Prior to joining Local Trust, Tilly held a number of policy and research positions within the academic sector, including at the London School of Economics and the University of Sydney. She holds a MSc in International Social and Public Policy from the LSE.



Jessica Studdert

Jessica is deputy chief executive at New Local, where oversees organisation's policy, research and advocacy work. She has published numerous reports and articles focussed on the role of communities, devolution and public service reform. She has held a range of public policy roles across think tank, third sector, public sector representative and political organisations.