Contents

01 Introduction | WELCOME
03 Introduction | SOCIAL JUSTICE FOR SOCIETAL BENEFIT
04 WORKING TOGETHER
08 SOCIAL JUSTICE THEMES:

- Poverty, welfare and social class (08)
- Health, well-being and care (14)
- Education, work and employment (18)
- Children, youth and life course (22)
- Gender, sexuality and relationships (26)
- Race, religion and migration (32)
- Environment, nature and landscape (38)
- Peace, reconciliation and human rights (42)
- Housing, neighbourhood and region (46)
WELCOME

Social justice is about working together to create a fairer and more just society.

Social justice is about addressing the unfair outcomes that result from the coming together of social inequalities and institutions. We can address social injustice by working together.

At Newcastle University, our approach to social justice is broad and inclusive. It cuts across all that we do – our research, our education, our global activities and our engagements with partners in the community and voluntary sector and in local authorities.

We are interested in all forms of social injustice. There are various types of social arrangements and diverse forms of inequality.

A crucial part of social justice is a focus on anti-discriminatory practice. Related to this, we are committed to territorial justice, as we are eager to ensure that our work on social justice is rooted in our local and regional context, while being attentive to broader national and global processes.

In here, you can find out more about some of the work being undertaken by staff and students at Newcastle that focuses on social justice.

Professor Peter Hopkins, Dean of Social Justice.
Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.

Dr Martin Luther King Jr
Introduction

SOCIAL JUSTICE FOR SOCIETAL BENEFIT

The North East of England has a long history of social justice campaigning. The University shares in this tradition, from our foundations as a civic university to the award of an honorary degree to Dr Martin Luther King Jr in 1967, to our longstanding work to promote social mobility amongst young people in the North and the appointment of a Dean of Social Justice in 2018.

We want to ensure that our core values of social justice, equality, diversity and inclusion are threaded through all that we do, from our education, to our research, to how we operate institutionally. We aim to take a lead on progressive societal change that challenges the status quo and inspires future generations. Only by working together with communities across our region can we fully understand our local challenges and apply our research, education and professional expertise to address them. Our partners in the voluntary community and social enterprise (VCSE) sector are central to this. In the North East, there are over 7,000 VCSE organisations, employing almost 5% of the workforce. Through strategic relationships with VCSE partners, we can co-design solutions to the challenges facing our communities.

In 2018, Newcastle University launched a fund to support work in the field of social justice as part of the University’s new Engagement and Place Strategy. The fund aims to develop a portfolio of successful relationships between the University and VCSE partners, and supports projects focused on key social justice challenges in our place. We want to take a long-term view of enhancing meaningful and mutually beneficial relationships between Newcastle University and the VCSE sector.

Andrea Henderson is Engagement Manager and Bob Allan is Engagement Support Coordinator.
BRIDGING OUR COMMUNITIES

Holistic staff–student partnerships with civil society institutions working to bring collective social justice to our region.

Tyne and Wear Citizens

Newcastle University is a strategic partner of Tyne & Wear Citizens, a broad-based community organising alliance founded in December 2015 in response to alarming rates of poverty and inequality across the region. Tyne & Wear Citizens operates across the breadth of civil society, bringing educational, religious, charitable and public health organisations together by engaging with difference, rather than avoiding it. Members collectively tackle social justice issues by building strong community leaders who care about the everyday injustices across their communities.

Newcastle University has student and staff representatives who work across the three action group campaigns voted for by member institutions: Poverty; Islamophobia and Hate Crime; and Mental Health. These representatives work alongside institution members from across the region to conduct listening campaigns and construct action teams to tackle shared issues by proposing actions to those with the ability to progress change.

Grassroots community outreach

Tyne & Wear Citizens has established strong connections to the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences and subsequently the School of Geography, Politics and Sociology. Through more unconventional student-led placement opportunities that provide participatory involvement with Tyne and Wear citizens, students and staff continue to build strong civic relationships that establish the University as a regional hub for social justice. This hub is led by empowered yet politically unsettled student and staff leaders who have been a part of, and constructed, their own teams. Their aims are to raise the number of real living wage employers in the region, produce a charter against hate crime for public transport and hold key public figures to account in order to facilitate co-produced improvements to mental health facilities and services in our communities.

Third-year undergraduate Geography student, Callum, told us:

‘Through engagement with Tyne & Wear Citizens, I have been told and trusted with honest and personal stories of deplorable Islamophobic hate crime, student struggles with poor mental health and experiences of child poverty. Tyne & Wear Citizens has provided me with a platform to tell my own stories, while giving me the tools to realise my own power to progress social change with the backing of the collective alliance.’

Callum Stridgeon is a third-year Geography undergraduate student, Tyne & Wear Citizens Mental Health Commission Assistant and Campaign Leader.
WATER INJUSTICE

How do people deal with not having enough water?

Water is used and valued in a multitude of ways that impact on technological uptake and on the broader environment. We can learn from and – perhaps even more importantly – with those who don’t have enough water. Meeting UN Sustainable Development Goal 6 (ensure the availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all) needs a collaborative interdisciplinary approach, and social sciences, humanities and arts must be included to build equitable water security. Newcastle University is leading on this, with two UKRI Global Challenges Research Fund Hubs to tackle intractable challenges relating to water. Over the next five years, both hubs will use interdisciplinary approaches to create research and impacts in places across the world, starting by talking to people.

People. Power. Place.

‘These are all vital for building water security, but are often forgotten in the creation of technical solutions which then often fail. Many people don’t have access to adequate safe water supplies and there are social justice implications for who gets reliable access to water. Water shortage is not synonymous with drought and can happen in times of plenty, depending on infrastructure decisions and funding,’ explains Dr Cat Button, co-investigator on both projects.

There is a big difference between creating a system where a small number of people receive a lot of water, and one in which lots of people receive some water. As states roll back responsibility for provision, this can improve infrastructure; yet where someone lives and whether they can pay can be crucial.

‘Much of my research has focused on the middle classes in India and thinking through the possible consequences of this for wider water provision and policies. It is important that solutions are relevant to the context, both the people and the place,’ says Dr Button.

Dr Cat Button is Lecturer of Global Urbanisms.
ENGAGED LEARNING

Engaged learning involves students working with external partners through internships, placements, volunteering and their degree course.

Engaged learning involves our students in working with external partners in the private, public and voluntary and community sectors. It is an integral part of the student experience at Newcastle University, and students use it to gain invaluable work-related experiences, either as a part of their studies or as extra-curricular activities.

One of the key benefits of engaged learning is reciprocity, meaning that benefits of this experience are felt by all participants. For external partners, there is the opportunity to have a student or group of students working with them, often providing an extra pair of hands or the time and expertise to investigate a problem or challenge on their behalf. For students, meanwhile, the benefits include the opportunity to put their knowledge and skills to the test and to gain experience of working practices that will help them in their future career. Curiosity, collaboration and resilience are just three elements in the University’s Graduate Framework, and engaged learning provides opportunities to develop these and a wide range of other skills that are sought by recruiters.

While many of our degree courses include engaged learning opportunities, for many students volunteering is how they gain invaluable experience. From volunteering at one-off events, such as ‘beach cleans’, to teaching English to refugees and asylum seekers or joining local volunteer groups, more than 4,000 students at the University volunteer. Volunteering is how they give back to their local community and become engaged in issues relating to social justice, such as diversity, inclusion and respect. With more than 40% of our students staying in the North East each year as graduates, volunteering is a great way in which many start new friendships and join networks in the region.

Marc Lintern is Director of Student Experience, Newcastle University Careers Service.

One of the key benefits of engaged learning is reciprocity, meaning that benefits of this experience are felt by all participants.
CAMPUS–COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

An enabling model of engagement is proposed to support mutually beneficial civic partnerships, voluntary sector placements and collaborative research.

The civic role of higher education institutions

The civic role of UK higher education institutions (HEIs) has long been contested. New fee structures and declining public funding have led to the suggestion that HEIs tend to represent corporate and commercial interests rather than actively supporting people and places confronting austerity. Newcastle University’s Vision and Strategy presents a unique opportunity to reconcile competing corporate and civic orientations, prioritising student well-being and resilience, for example, while embedding civic action and social responsibility in graduate skills pathways (volunteering, work-based and service learning).

Engagement and place

Campus–community partnerships have been criticised in the past for being too often rooted in charity rather than justice. Charity occurs when resources and surplus are given from one entity to another, whereas justice occurs when partners benefit mutually from shared resources and common goals. This resonates with calls from academics for HEIs to engage with the public rather than to conduct education and research ‘for’ or, indeed, ‘on’ the public or voluntary and community sectors as subjects.

An ethical model of campus–community engagement is proposed that fully enables frontline civic social justice work in the North East. The project will articulate and trial a sector-connector model and social infrastructure in a mutually beneficial strategy of connected engagement. The proposed relationship innovations are being co-produced with Voluntary Organisations Development Agency, a North Tyneside network of some 258 voluntary and community organisations. Collaboratively, we will demonstrate and support social justice priorities for various forms of campus–community engagement to ensure that external partnerships intrinsic to education, research and civic responsibility are equitable and sustainable.

Dr Helen Jarvis is Reader in Social Geography.

“With our high-profile commitment to “social justice in all that we do”, Newcastle University should lead the way in facilitating mutually beneficial partnerships with the voluntary sector.”
Poverty, welfare and social class

NORTH EAST CHILD POVERTY COMMISSION

The North East is no stranger to poverty and its effects, but the condition is affecting more and more people, and its impact is likely to last for generations.

The North East is no stranger to hardship and poverty. For generations, for many, work was tied up in heavy industry, such as the coal industry and the shipyards. The demise of much of this heavy industry and the increase in low-paid and insecure work that has spread throughout the United Kingdom has done little to bolster the life chances and opportunities of many residents, particularly in some parts of the North East.

Exposure to poverty

Being exposed to poverty in childhood is especially damaging, as poverty is a condition of limit; it inevitably works to limit choices and opportunities, preventing people from reaching their potential and, increasingly, from even meeting simple everyday needs, such as adequate food, heating and other everyday essentials. Experiencing poverty in childhood has scarring effects that, all too often, extend throughout the life course and become ever-more difficult over time to escape.

Despite the political and popular rhetoric around poverty and its causes, the evidence shows very clearly that people are committed to paid employment, despite how insecure, low-paid, hard or dissatisfying it might be. But no matter how determined, motivated and committed to hard work that young people are, the likelihood is that childhood poverty will have scaring effects that follow them through much, if not all, of their lives.

Moving to Newcastle

The North East Child Poverty Commission knows this only too well and, over recent years, has done sterling work in the region to try to address the increasingly pressing issues around child poverty and to ensure that the issues facing the North East are being heard in Westminster. The Commission has relocated from Durham Business School to the School of Geography, Politics and Sociology at Newcastle University. It is hoped that, by joining forces with a significant number of Newcastle colleagues working on issues connected to poverty and social justice, we can continue to make our collective voices heard, both regionally and nationally, at a time when the need for collective action has perhaps never been greater.

Professor Tracy Shildrick is Professor of Inequalities and Head of Sociology.
Poverty is a condition of limit; its effects deepen over time, but it is not inevitable and can be reduced, and even eradicated, where there is a political will.
UNIVERSAL CREDIT IN GATESHEAD

Universal Credit is negatively impacting those who use it in Gateshead.

Research undertaken by the University’s Dr Suzanne Moffatt and Dr Michelle Addison, and Dr Mandy Chatham from Teesside University, has highlighted the failing of Universal Credit on vulnerable groups, including those with disabilities and long-term health conditions. Published by Gateshead Council in partnership with Fuse, the Centre for Translational Research in Public Health, the research was commissioned and supported by Alice Wiseman, Director of Public Health in Gateshead.

The researchers spoke to 33 people in Gateshead and Newcastle receiving Universal Credit and 37 staff in Gateshead supporting people with their claims between April and October 2018.

The research showed that the system suffers from being overly complicated, dysfunctional, and often punitive. Users found that the Universal Credit system does not account for individual circumstances within the lives of the people who use it. Furthermore, the researchers found, from the people they spoke to, that Universal Credit was not helping them to get back into employment – a key objective of Universal Credit.

Crucially, the people who are suffering are those who are vulnerable, and are therefore further disadvantaged as a result of the problematic Universal Credit system.

The research showed that the application of Universal Credit in Gateshead has resulted in some users’ physical and mental health being negatively affected, particularly due to the stress and anxiety that comes as a result of the dysfunctional system.

The project is believed to be one of the first in-depth qualitative studies conducted on the experiences of vulnerable Universal Credit users, and the staff who work within the system. It reflects the need for a radical overhaul of the Universal Credit system, or a halt to be put on it altogether.

Dr Suzanne Moffatt is Reader in Social Gerontology and Dr Michelle Addison is Postdoctoral Researcher, both at Newcastle University. Dr Mandy Cheetham is Postdoctoral Researcher at Teesside University.

If you wanted to devise a system that discriminated against people with learning disabilities, this would be it.
For Social Justice.

**WEST END FOODBANK**

Newcastle researchers partner with local foodbank users to explore their stories.

Newcastle University’s Oral History Unit has teamed up with Northern Cultural Projects (NCP), a community cultural organisation, and the Newcastle West End Foodbank for Foodbank Histories, a project aimed at exploring the interconnected life stories behind one of the UK’s busiest foodbanks.

**Building a Partnership**

Lead researcher on the Foodbank Histories project, Dr Alison Atkinson-Phillips, has experience in working on social justice campaigns with community groups, and was eager to join this project.

‘People who are economically marginalised are often spoken about, rather than spoken to or listened to,’ says Dr Atkinson-Phillips.

‘In this project we have interviewed Foodbank users, volunteers and activists – and it’s important to know that people don’t just fit into one of those categories,’ explains Dr Atkinson-Phillips. ‘We’ve asked people about their life histories and what led them to be involved with the foodbank, but we aren’t just collecting stories – we are also asking what they would want to change. This is an important social justice principle at the heart of oral history research: our knowledge is co-produced through the act of conversation. We are not the experts coming in to either mine people for information or to fix things, but we do get to reflect people’s words back to them.’

Dr Atkinson-Phillips stated: ‘The first step of this project has been to feed these histories back to participants, to empower foodbank users, volunteers and supporters. That is already happening. In the future, we hope our research can better inform decision-makers about foodbank users’ circumstances and needs, and lead to improved food security policy and service provision.’

Dr Alison Atkinson-Phillips is Oral History Research Associate.
Poverty, welfare and social class

EXTREME POVERTY

Equality and human rights work by the University is having both local and national impact.

Visit to Newcastle by the UN Special Rapporteur on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights

In 2018, Dr Koldo Casla coordinated a submission to the UN Special Rapporteur on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights, Philip Alston. Professor Alston then visited Newcastle, meeting with a group of academics from the University, as well as the Newcastle City Council Leader and voluntary and community groups in the North East.

Professor Alston’s mission to the United Kingdom was widely covered in the international, national and local media, and led to two inquiries in Parliament (Work and Pensions Committee and All-Party Parliamentary Group on Health), one adjournment debate, several statements by the Department for Work and Pensions’ Secretary and Ministers, and countless motions in local authorities. Professor Alston’s final report was then presented at the United Nations in June.

‘Poverty and inequality go hand-in-hand. Regional disparities are unusually high by European standards and social mobility in the UK was labelled a “postcode lottery” by the very statutory body in charge of monitoring it. There is a widening gap between Newcastle’s highest and lowest earners. Since 2010, the top 20% of earners have seen their wages grow while those of the bottom 20% have seen a decline in real wages,’ Dr Casla explains.

Collaborative impact on Equality and Human Rights

Based on his own research, together with the charities Just Fair and The Equality Trust, Dr Casla launched the campaign ‘#1forEquality’ to bring socio-economic duty to life (section 1 of the Equality Act 2010). The campaign has received the support of 75 voluntary sector groups and 82 MPs, and has resulted in key law and policy changes in Scotland, in Wales and in no less than seven local authorities in England.

Dr Koldo Casla is Research Associate.

There is a widening gap between Newcastle’s highest and lowest earners. Since 2010, the top 20% of earners have seen their wages grow while those of the bottom 20% have seen a decline in real wages.
LEADING THE WAY IN SOCIAL JUSTICE – AND STARTING YOUNG!

Newcastle University wants young people to access university – not just Newcastle – regardless of their background.

Helping students to think about going to university

Many talented pupils, particularly in the North East, don’t consider university as an option. They may have no family experience of higher education, be from areas where few people go to university or have challenging personal circumstances. Using our students and graduates as role models and ambassadors, our aim is to help students from as young as age nine to make informed decisions about their future.

Last year, over 270,000 young people from across England took part in a school activity led by Newcastle University. The work begins in primary schools and runs through to sixth forms. The activity is tailored to the needs of the school and the needs of the pupils. It varies from downloadable resources to support the curriculum, for use by teachers in the classroom, to intensive, subject-specific residential events on campus. Co-designed with teachers, our interventions align with the national curriculum and the Career Development Institute Framework, and ultimately aim to support students to consider and apply to higher education. The work is underpinned by robust evaluation to ensure that what we do makes a difference to the school and the participating pupils.

The PARTNERS Programme

The University’s long-running and successful access scheme, the PARTNERS Programme, is the culmination of this sustained and progressive programme of work. It aims to consider student achievements in the context of their circumstances. It is now in its 19th year and is one of the largest in the country, and over 4,600 widening participation students have successfully entered the University as a result. In 2018, we increased both the number and proportion of young entrants to Newcastle University from under-represented groups, including students from low-income families, from areas where few progress to university, from Black and multi-ethnic backgrounds, those with a disability and those who have spent time in care.

Lucy Backhurst is Director of Student Recruitment, Admissions and Progress.
STOP THE MARKETISATION OF THE NHS

Newcastle academics’ draft Bill proposes to fully restore the NHS as an accountable public service.

Professor Allyson Pollock and Peter Roderick from Newcastle University drafted a Bill that has been debated in Parliament. The Bill would reinstate the government’s duty to provide the key NHS services throughout England, including hospitals, medical and nursing services, primary care, mental health and community services.

The National Health Service Bill proposes that the NHS should return to being a public service by reversing the marketisation that has been occurring over recent years. This would be achieved by abolishing the purchaser–provider split, ending contracting and re-establishing public bodies and public services that are accountable to local communities.

‘I believe the Health and Social Care Act 2012 forced a commercialised model on the NHS in England, and the first thing it did was remove the duty on the Health Secretary to provide services throughout England.

In effect, this makes commercial tendering virtually compulsory,’ Professor Pollock said.

Among many other things, the Bill proposes: to introduce a system for collective bargaining across the NHS; to require the government to report annually to Parliament on the effect of treaties on the NHS; and to integrate public health services and the duty to reduce inequalities into the NHS.

Crucially, the Bill gives flexibility in how it would be implemented, as it could be led by local authorities and current bodies. This would result in a ‘bottom-up’ process, whereby local and regional contexts could be accounted for and acknowledged.

Professor Allyson Pollock is Director of the Institute of Health and Society and Peter Roderick is Principal Research Associate.
Problems with the appropriateness and availability of accessible toilets are a major barrier to disabled people’s participation in society.

Northumberland is a large, rural county with an ageing population. A partnership between Carers Northumberland and researchers at Newcastle University was created to examine the main social and material barriers to social participation for older people, other disabled people and carers.

Professor Janice McLaughlin, stated: ‘We worked with services’ users directly and the organisations that represent them, and very quickly it became clear that the lack of available and appropriate accessible toilets was creating major problems for opportunities to leave home and participate in society. It also became clear that accessibility is more complex than providers sometimes recognise.’

Working with Carers Northumberland and Northumberland County Council and supported with funding from ESRC, the project has drawn on the experiences of disabled people and their carers to identify the challenges that they face in accessing an appropriate toilet and the solutions to this problem.

‘An example of this would be a lack of clear colour contrasts between the furnishings and facilities of a public toilet. Without these, a person with a visual impairment may experience difficulties using the facility – while, for a provider, using colour contrasts is very easy and cheap to do,’ Professor McLaughlin says.

The key message is that organisations, such as leisure centres, shopping centres, cafes, and so on, can do more to make their toilets accessible to a range of different users and to make them more available to people, regardless of whether they buy anything. To help organisations to do this, those involved with the project are producing resources that can be used to make toilets better and more available, both effectively and cheaply. This work has begun in Northumberland and is now also beginning to spread outside the region, as the exact same challenges are faced across the United Kingdom.

The Nowhere to Go project began as a Politics undergraduate work placement with Carers Northumberland and has grown into an ongoing partnership between Geography, Politics and Sociology researchers and key organisations in the region, such as Carers Northumberland and Northumberland County Council. The University colleagues are: Professor Derek Bell from Politics, Mary Hull from Politics, Professor Janice McLaughlin from Sociology, and Libby Morrison from Geography.
WELL-BEING, LAW AND SOCIETY

Research is exploring the diverse aspects of the relationship between well-being, law and society, and the issue of well-being and mental health in the legal professions and in universities.

There is growing concern across legal professions internationally, including in the United Kingdom, about the issue of lawyer well-being and mental health. At the same time, UK university law schools are seeing increasing concern around the well-being of law students, set against the backdrop of substantial evidence of poor mental health of both students and staff across the university sector.

Richard Collier is a Professor of Law and has recently received funding from the Leverhulme Trust, and the mental health charity Anxiety UK, to research the interconnections between well-being, law and social well-being in the legal profession. He is currently writing a book on the subject and is a member of the UK Legal Professions Wellbeing Taskforce. He is also conducting a funded project, the first of its kind, exploring the relationship between male senior management, gender equality and the intersections of equality, diversity and inclusion and well-being in a UK university.

Digging deeper, questions of social justice are central to current debates about well-being, both in the legal professions and in UK universities. Taking well-being...
seriously is bound up with issues of equality, diversity and inclusion, and is a subject that reveals much about the changing nature of society. At issue here are complex questions about how organisations respond to evidence of a far greater awareness of the complex interactions between mental health and the workplace; of the need to work in more effective, efficient and safer ways; and, looking to generational shifts in attitudes, of the greater willingness of ‘millennials’ and younger lawyers to be open about mental health issues.

In the context of a rapidly changing profession and marketplace for legal services, the very idea of well-being has, itself, become part of what it now means to be a good employer and to provide a first-class service to clients.

Professor Richard Collier is Professor of Law.
Children North East estimates that Newcastle University research has helped their audit reach more than 10,000 children and enable them to benefit from the work of proofing, reducing stigma.
TACKLING CHILD POVERTY EFFECTS IN SCHOOLS

Newcastle academics’ research shows how children living in poverty are stigmatised in school, and what schools can do about it.

Poverty in schools
Professor Liz Todd and Dr Laura Mazzoli Smith’s work shows that pupils living in poverty may suffer stigma at school that is as much a barrier to learning as poor teaching. With four million children now living in poverty and the United Nations’ Rapporteur on Extreme Poverty demonstrating the government’s refusal to recognise the impact of austerity on the poor, it is not surprising that some schools are funding children and young people’s basic needs, such as food, clothes and sanitary products. Despite this, schools have unintended policies and practices that stigmatise or marginalise poorer children.

The duo’s research has analysed Children North East’s audit process that finds out what a school needs to do in order to remove barriers to learning as a result of child poverty. In this ‘poverty proofing’ audit, all children and staff are encouraged to talk about times when they have seen how poverty affects the school day. An action plan is drawn up and implemented. Their research suggests how schools could remove an array of barriers to learning and thereby improve conditions in school for disadvantaged pupils. Most teachers had a clear desire to improve school practices. Working in partnership with Children North East, Professor Todd and Dr Mazzoli’s work shows the importance of research on the lived experience of children.

Poverty proofing
They found that the poverty proofing audit helped to challenge the beliefs of school staff about families in poverty. Children reported always knowing which of their peers received free school meals by means of lists on classroom walls, till registers or the tell-tale brown paper bags for packed lunches on out-of-school trips. Some children always stayed away from school on non-uniform days due to the pressure on parents to provide expensive outfits. They found that schools had little sense of how much money families were being asked for across the whole school year.

Children North East estimates that Newcastle University’s research has helped their audit to reach more than 10,000 children, enabling them to benefit from the work on poverty proofing, reducing stigma.

Professor Liz Todd is Professor of Educational Inclusion at Newcastle University and Dr Laura Mazzoli Smith is Assistant Professor in the School of Education, Durham University.
LEADERSHIP IS NOT JUST FOR BUSINESS

Newcastle University Business School considers social justice to be a mainstream issue for leadership and management education.

Organisations of all types face common challenges, such as scarce resources, the impact of shifts in global economic power, rapid technological change and the inclusion of a diverse workforce. Business schools have a role to play in developing leadership capacity to navigate these grand challenges and in supporting organisations to foster environments for innovation and sustained performance. We believe that such environments place integrity, humanity and social justice at their centre so that everyone is able to contribute and to thrive.

The Leadership Development and Organisation Futures Team of Newcastle University’s Business School works alongside to harness, produce and transfer knowledge about leadership through connecting them with world-leading researchers and through creating and supporting collaborative spaces for various voices to be heard. Over the past four years, we have supported North East Leaders for Social Change, a collaborative space in which leaders come together for inspiration, knowledge exchange and mutual support. Engagement with the network enables us to contribute to the social and economic growth of the region; it connects our students to their wider potential as global citizens and it shapes our research to meet the leadership challenges in all types of organisation.

Social justice principles enable diverse, innovative and sustainable workplaces and thriving communities. Business schools cannot be neutral on these issues. As educators, we take our responsibility for preparing the leaders of the future very seriously. Engagement with today’s social leaders ensures that our thinking is rooted in real-world challenges and has the possibility to contribute to real-world change.

Dr Joanne James is Reader in Leadership Development and Organisation Futures.
To deliver the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals, there is an urgent need to improve policy coherence within the United Nations (UN) system.

In June 2008, the International Labour Organisation (ILO) adopted the Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalisation as one of its defining statements of ILO principles and values. The Declaration promotes an integrated approach to social justice in the global economy, premised on the four strategic objectives of the ILO’s Decent Work agenda: employment, social protection (social security and labour protection), social dialogue and tripartism.

The principal aim of the 2008 Declaration is to promote a more coherent, mutually supportive and sustainable approach to the key policy issues that challenge the functioning and growth of the global economy in the twenty-first century: jobs, labour mobility, equity, social inclusion and human security. It invites a closer and more policy coherent approach to social justice at a time when the international community works to address the challenges posed by the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The ILO has promoted Decent Work as a focused, cross-cutting agenda for greater policy coherence within the UN system as it moves to advance the 2030 Agenda. However, despite a desire by UN organisations to work more closely with the ILO for more inclusive and sustainable growth, a rigid focus on core mandates continues to favour a ‘silo mentality’ that hinders cooperation.

Policy coherence remains a significant challenge within the UN system and one that must be addressed if the 2030 Agenda is to achieve its ambitious goals. Decent Work provides a much-needed platform on which to demonstrate the central importance of social justice to sustainable development and to a global economy still struggling with the economic and social costs of financial and sovereign debt crises.

Professor Stephen Hughes is Professor of International Organisations.

“Policy coherence remains a significant challenge within the UN system, and one that must be addressed if the 2030 Agenda is to achieve its ambitious goals.”
CHILDREN’S AND YOUNG PEOPLE’S MENTAL HEALTH

*Emerging Minds* is a new network helping children, young people and families benefit from mental health research.

Professor Deborah Chambers, from Newcastle University’s School of Arts and Cultures, has been working collaboratively with colleagues from seven other universities to establish a new Mental Health Network called *Emerging Minds: Action for Child Mental Health*. The network is seeking the best ways of helping children, young people and families benefit from mental health research. It brings together academics from health research, arts, design, humanities and physical science disciplines, and calls for an innovative, cross-disciplinary approach. The overall aim is to bring researchers, charities and other organisations together to address important mental health research questions. This work is funded by a grant of £1.25 million for four years.

Social justice for children and young people

Recent findings show that as many as 10% of children and young people in the UK have some form of diagnosable mental health problem. Mental health problems in childhood and adolescence correspond with significant emotional, social, and educational disadvantage, presenting a risk for ongoing mental health problems in adulthood. Young people with mental health problems are more likely to encounter problems in future employment.

There are clear indicators predicting the emergence of these conditions in children. Yet only a minority of children receive effective support. Three quarters of those with a diagnosable mental health condition do not gain access to the help they need.

Action for Child Mental Health

Young people are increasingly using social media as emotional support. While it may be ‘a catalyst for good mental health’, the very same technology can generate problems such as online bullying. How best to use social media while maintaining trust, online safety and privacy is a major challenge and key task for the network. *Emerging Minds* works collaboratively with those young people and carers with lived experience, as well as policymakers and practitioners, to co-develop a discrete set of research challenges.

*Emerging Minds’s* goal is ambitious. The vision is to see the number of children and young people who experience mental health problems halved within 20 years.

---

Professor Deborah Chambers is Professor of Media and Cultural Studies.
There are clear indicators predicting the emergence of these conditions in children. Yet only a minority of children receive effective support.
GROWING UP IN DISADVANTAGED NEIGHBOURHOODS

Collaborations between Newcastle academics and Southwick Neighbourhood Youth Project (SNYP) to examine key social justice issues.

Southwick, in Sunderland, has the highest rate of childhood poverty in the city. A project being conducted by Dr Robin Finlay and Professor Anoop Nayak aims to work with children and young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods in the ward to identify their needs and the challenges that they face.

‘To undertake this research we collaborated with the Southwick Neighbourhood Youth Project (SNYP) in order to access and work with marginalised young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods,’ explains Dr Finlay. ‘Through collaborative planning with SNYP, we formulated a co-produced research agenda that will examine key social justice areas around young people, poverty, social exclusion and place.’

In turn, this will help to support and evidence the work of SNYP to the local area. Building on SNYP’s existing understandings with young people, we aim to examine their perceptions of belonging and future aspirations.

This will allow us to examine a range of social justice issues facing young people in Southwick, such as poverty, unemployment, anti-social behaviour, substance abuse and how these impact on their sense of belonging,’ says Dr Finlay.

To further understand young people’s perceptions of youth work and the volunteer sector, the project aims to examine how young people perceive SNYP, what they think its role in Southwick is, and how might its outreach work and services for young people be advanced. Through these aims, the project will address the challenges that children and young people face in deprived neighbourhoods and help to improve service provision for SNYP.

Dr Robin Finlay is Postdoctoral Researcher and Professor Anoop Nayak is Professor in Social and Cultural Geography.
YOUTH ACTIVISM

Researching the dynamics of activism in Latin America, with focuses on youth and education.

The search for social justice fosters many forms of collective action. In Latin America, youth collectives use innovative forms of advocacy and cultural interventions to protect their rights and make their voices heard.

Youth activism in Latin America

Dr Patricia Oliart is working on a monograph on Latin American youth activism throughout the last 20 years, analysing the role that youth collectives have played in public life. According to Dr Oliart, cultural and political collectives (rarely larger than 20 members) in Latin America represent a generational vehicle that young people use to intervene on issues that they want to transform in their societies. Remarkably plural and large assemblies, where collectives agree on their actions, have allowed young Latin Americans to bypass the mediation of conventional and severely discredited political organisations. These non-conventional forms of political organisation and cultural interventions lead to effective political actions, generating public support and better conditions to negotiate important claims to protect threatened rights or the common good.

Dr Oliart’s notes: ‘During my research, I have fostered the creation of opportunities for collaborative work with and between collectives favouring the common organisation of ideas and learning, to reflect on perceptions, experience, opinions. This leads to the development of interpretations and concepts that have fed back into the collectives.’

This project links to previous research that she has conducted, focusing on the characteristics that critical discourses acquire as they address forms of inequality, such as anti-racism, indigenous rights, feminism or anti-capitalism. Dr Oliart has published research on schoolteachers, indigenous women and fusion rock bands, examining how individuals embrace these issues through processes of education, organisation and creative work.

Dr Patricia Oliart is Senior Lecturer in Latin American Studies and Head of Spanish, Portuguese and Latin American Studies.

These non-conventional forms of political organisation and cultural interventions lead to effective political actions, generating public support and better conditions to negotiate important claims to protect threatened rights or the common good.
The exhibition aims to inspire the next generation of women to study law, to practise law, to become law-makers and judges, and to recognise the power of the law to achieve social justice.
INSPIRATIONAL WOMEN OF LAW

An exhibition and biannual event celebrating inspirational women of law and the power of law for social justice.

Inspirational Women of the Law is a collaboration between Newcastle Law School staff and students and Fine Art students. The exhibition was initiated and directed by Professor Kathryn Hollingsworth and Dr Nikki Godden-Rasul in response to the visual over-representation of men in law, in general, and lack of representation of women on campus, in particular.

High-achieving women

The launch event in 2015 saw nine high-achieving diverse women, some of whom are included in the exhibition, speaking about their experiences of working in and with the law, including Lady Hale, President of the UK Supreme Court. The exhibition celebrates the achievements of the featured women as well as the work and lives of the many other women not portrayed yet who are represented, in spirit, by the inspirational women. It also aims to inspire the next generation of women to study law, to practise law, to become law-makers and judges, and to recognise the power of the law to achieve social justice.

BME women and law

Sister events in 2017 and 2019 have celebrated Black and Minority Ethnic women in law (in conjunction with Freedom City 2017, a city-wide programme commemorating the 50th anniversary of Dr Martin Luther King being given an honorary degree by Newcastle University) and the centenary of women being admitted to practise law (since the Sex Disqualification (Removal) Act 1919). The events have been attended by law students and staff from universities in the North East of England, pupils from local sixth forms, local practitioners and women’s organisations. The exhibition is on permanent display in the Law School, so it contributes to a visual culture and educational environment that promotes women’s equality, diversity and social justice.

Dr Nikki Godden-Rasul is Lecturer in Law. She coordinated the exhibition and events with Professor Kathryn Hollingsworth who is Professor of Law.
Gender, sexuality and relationships

GENDER, SEXUALITY AND HEALTH

Social justice is deeply connected to discussions on HIV/AIDS.

Professor Simon Forrest has been researching, teaching and engaging in practice and activism on issues around sex, sexuality, gender and health for 30 years.

He explains: ‘I came to think about gender, sexuality and health like many people in the 1990s, because of the emergence of HIV/AIDS. I recall this as a period in which a very intellectually diverse group of people came together with communities most affected by HIV/AIDS. This concerted action spanned drug development, developing treatment and care, understanding risk and the complexity of personal, social, cultural and political aspects. It also spanned community mobilisation and political activism to act in the face of a new, poorly understood and, for many people, pressing crisis.’

Social justice and HIV/AIDS

Professor Forrest believes that the idea of social justice was, and remains, in the foreground with HIV/AIDS research and discussion. According to him, it was apparent that prejudice and discrimination, as well as political and social ‘othering’, increase vulnerability and suffering. Hence, we have to tackle the unfairness and inequalities embedded in social, cultural, legal and other structures and institutions. Also, ‘by thinking through social justice as a kind of lens, we could generate ideas about how to act,’ he maintains.

He goes on to say: ‘I began to think about how people I saw, met, engaged with through research, and began to teach, were linked as individuals to the structural and cultural aspects around us that shape, contain and constrain us. It has never been truer that personal experience and the political, social and cultural are linked inextricably in work on gender, sexualities and health.’

It has never been truer that personal experience and the political, social and cultural are linked inextricably in work on gender, sexualities and health.

Professor Simon Forrest is Professor in Health and Society.
**WOMEN WARRIORS**

A community theatre project exploring the lived experiences of female veterans.

*Women Warriors* is a collaborative project between Workie Ticket Theatre Company (CIC), Dr Alice Cree and female veterans living in the North East. Using issue-based theatre workshops, the project sheds light on the profoundly gendered and asymmetrical experiences of war and post-military life, and seeks to empower and give a voice to a group of women who are often socially isolated and overlooked.

‘Women Warriors’ highlights the difficulty that these women face when reintegrating back into civilian life and advances key social justice issues by empowering female veterans to use their voice and providing a much-needed platform for them to tell their stories.

‘We are committed to strengthening our local communities by challenging the perceptions and prejudice that these women face, both during and after military service,’ Dr Cree explains.

The project is currently developing with female veterans short plays that will be performed in community and university settings, as well as a full-scale theatre production that will explore the challenges of living and coping with mental health difficulties through the eyes of women warriors. The project is also producing a short documentary about the process and methodology of its work.

Dr Cree went on to say: ‘We are just over halfway through our workshops, and what is already so striking is how fearless these women are. Fearless for walking into a group of strangers and embracing silliness and playfulness with nothing but candidness and compassion. For telling their stories in spite of worries that they will be judged or “look stupid”. For coming back, week after week, even as the process gets difficult. This is such an important project, and is already making a huge difference to the women involved. The stories of female veterans are powerful and need to be heard.”

---

**Dr Alice Cree** is an ESRC Research Fellow.

"Women Warriors advances key social justice issues by empowering female veterans to use their voice, and provides a much-needed platform for them to tell their stories."
The Girl-Kind Screen Takeover project and a film-making workshop will create spaces for girls to engage with cinema and film-making.

**Girl-Kind**

Working with groups of girls aged 11 to 16 from schools across the North East, the Girl-Kind project creates a space for girls to explore their own selves, relationships and contemporary representations of girlhood. The main Girl-Kind programme is held annually and involves a series of workshops, leading up to a special celebration event on 11 October, the International Day of the Girl.

Funded by the Newcastle Social Justice Fund, two additional workshops and events will focus specifically on creating spaces for girls to engage with cinema and film-making. Young women are a significant ‘known absent’ audience in independent cinema and professional film and TV productions continue to be heavily dominated by men. Working with partners Tyneside Cinema, Tyne & Wear Archives and Museums’ ‘Women of Tyneside’ project and Young Women’s Film Academy, these workshops and events represent a collective endeavour to begin to address issues of gender inequality in relation to film production and participation.

**The Screen Takeover**

In May 2019, a one-off ‘Screen Takeover’ for ‘Girl Kinders’ involved a workshop in the Tyneside pop-up space, followed by a special Tyneside Cinema screening of a girl-centric movie. The workshop and film explored questions of comfortable and uncomfortable spaces. Why do some places (perhaps including independent cinemas) feel uncomfortable and exclusionary while others feel comfortable and including? And what can we do about this?

A group of 12 girls will also take part in a ‘film-in-a-day’ workshop, developing and filming a short film that reflects an aspect of their shared lived experiences. This offers girls a chance to experience film-making and become familiar with film equipment. Interested girls can go on to develop their skills at the charity, The Young Women’s Film Academy, which offers free, continuous, bi-weekly film-making sessions in Newcastle for young women who would not normally be able to access this provision.

Girl-Kind North East was co-founded by the University’s Dr Sarah Winkler-Reid, Lecturer in Social Anthropology and Dr Sarah Ralph, Senior Lecturer in Media and Cultural Studies at Northumbria University.
TACKLING LONELINESS THROUGH PLAYING OUT

Enabling children to play out on their streets has real potential to contribute to the challenge of tackling loneliness in communities.

Loneliness
In the past few years, there has been an increasing acknowledgement that the experience of loneliness is a ‘growing social injustice which sits alongside childhood obesity and mental well-being as one of the greatest public health challenges of our time’. There is considerable evidence that particular populations are more at risk of loneliness, such as those with disabilities or poor physical or mental health (and their families), new parents, carers and those who have recently moved home. There is also growing evidence of loneliness amongst children and young people (Action for Children 2017). These are all groups for whom access to spaces to meet and find support are likely to have diminished in the context of austerity.

Tackling the problem
According to What Works Wellbeing, ‘playing out’ has considerable potential to contribute to the challenge of tackling loneliness through its focus on physical activity, community sharing and befriending, all of which are seen to be key to community and neighbourhood approaches. ‘Playing Out’ is a 10-year-old movement to promote free, resident-led, temporary road closures to enable children to play and neighbours to meet on their doorsteps, involving over 800 streets in nearly 80 UK local authorities.

Existing research demonstrates that both play and spending time outdoors are critical to the formation of a sense of belonging and for relationships to wider communities; and streets have long been identified as potential spaces of encounter. Pilot research by Professor Alison Stenning, conducted on streets that ‘play out’ in North Tyneside, highlighted particular forms of sociability that enabled emotional, social and material flows between neighbours and facilitated a positive reinvigoration of relationships on streets.

‘Through a qualitative, participatory and playful methodology, developed in collaboration with Playing Out in Bristol, this research seeks to record and assess the impact of regular playing out on building connections to alleviate loneliness, with a view to identifying key action points for innovative policy and practice interventions at a variety of scales,’ says Professor Stenning.

Professor Alison Stenning is Professor of Social and Economic Geography.
Race, religion and migration

NORTH EAST SOLIDARITY AND TEACHING (NEST)
Newcastle University students are creating sustainable solutions for refugees and asylum seekers in the region.

In August 2016, a homework club for a family of Syrian refugees was set up as a Newcastle University Students’ Union ‘Go Volunteer’ project by its volunteer coordinator, Phil Hay. Just under three years later, North East Solidarity and Teaching (NEST) is now a movement of approximately 400 students who have taken it upon themselves to create change in the lives of refugees and asylum seekers in the region.

Supporting learners
The project now supports around 250 learners, and service provision is approximately 25 hours every week, spread over the full seven days. The aims of the project are to educate and empower refugees and asylum seekers. This is achieved through an holistic programme of support, which includes: English language lessons; art and reading classes; conversation groups; community outreach support; football and basketball sessions; Science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) workshops; nursery support for children; trips into the community for integration support; collaborations with University academics to provide research-based practice; and practical support, such as food and clothes donations.

The project has gained the support of both public and private funding and has a large referral network, including most relevant organisations in the region, such as Job Centres and Newcastle City Council. NEST has gained both national and international recognition through awards, including being highly commended at the Times Higher Education Awards and presenting at the 14th Annual LESLLA (Literacy Education and Second Language Education for Adults) Symposium in Palermo, Italy.

Student volunteers
The project receives ongoing support from NUSU ‘Go Volunteer’, but would not be possible without the Newcastle University students who have decided that they will not be sedentary and turn away from the needs of their peers, brothers and sisters from other ends of the earth, whose rights have been stripped away from them through conflict and political unrest.

Students have taken on responsibility for supporting the efforts of the region in creating a warm and nurturing environment for those who have experienced forced migration, to begin to rebuild their lives.

Bridget Stratford is the co-founder and volunteer project manager of NEST and a postgraduate student at Newcastle.

Unless we make other people’s problems our own, we will never have the urgency that is needed to create change.
HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Investigating the stories of trafficked Slovaksians.

Research by Dr Matej Blazek argues that the problem of human trafficking needs to be seen as one of inequality and structural marginalisation.

**Human trafficking between Eastern Central Europe and the United Kingdom**

Human trafficking is a serious crime and a violation of human rights. It involves transportation of people in order to exploit them in forced labour, domestic servitude or sexual exploitation. According to estimates by charities such as Unseen UK, thousands of people are trafficked in the United Kingdom alone each year.

Dr Matej Blazek investigated the stories of Slovaksians who were trafficked into the United Kingdom between 2012 and 2015. Slovakia, like other areas of Eastern Central Europe, has emerged as one of the top source countries for human trafficking into the United Kingdom. As Dr Blazek explains, the reasons for this can be traced to the problem of inequality:

‘Slovakia and other Eastern Central European countries include areas with the highest rates of poverty and greatest degrees of socio-economic deprivation in the whole of the European Union. The scarcity of resources and life-long lack of prospects are the reasons why people follow traffickers’ deceptive promises of better life in a foreign country.’

**Structural factors of human trafficking**

Recognising the structural issues behind human trafficking shows us that people who experience human trafficking are not simply random victims of crime. They are often targeted because traffickers know that they are in need of money or because they have family members to provide for.

On this, Dr Blazek said: ‘One participant in our study told us how strangers approached him at a train station in Slovakia with an offer to work in England, and their first question was how many children he had.’

A social justice perspective shifts our understanding of human trafficking from individual harm and criminal acts towards the structural conditions that facilitate exploitation. Whereas the acts of actual human trafficking, perhaps understandably, receive most attention from media, criminal agencies and support organisations, human trafficking stories do not begin with a criminal but with poverty and exclusion.

*Dr Matej Blazek is Lecturer in Human Geography.*
ROMA EDUCATION

A history of racism against Roma is present today in social and educational exclusion.

ROMtels

ROMtels is a European project, co-led by academics at Newcastle University and Middlesex University, which works against the normalised discourses and monoglossic language policies that exacerbate educational inequities. Collaborating with teachers and Roma parents, the project demonstrates how to co-produce prestigious multilingual school resources that enable what is known as a translanguaging pedagogy. This, in turn, enables pupils to draw on all of their languaging resources in the pursuit of learning. The project shows how relations with schools improve dramatically when Roma parents are situated as languaging experts, and how liberating and powerful translanguaging is to the learning process.

Marginalisation of Roma people in education

Roma people have faced systematic persecution in Europe since the 15th century. Discourses of racial inferiority, which arose in the 19th century, led to the death of between 250,000 and 300,000 Roma during the Porrajmos Romani (Roma Holocaust). Remnants of this history remain in current and persistent forms of subordination across Europe. Tenacious racist stereotyping of Roma as child-stealers, for example, can be found in both traditional songs and popular children’s literature.

The perpetuation of such representations has serious consequences for systems such as our policing and education. In UK education systems, deficit discourses abound, such as Roma families being ‘hard to reach’, an assumed cultural deficit born of earlier assumptions of racial inferiority.

‘The result? In England, Roma pupils (collapsed into the ethnicity category Roma/Gypsy) are consistently and by a very large margin achieving far less well than other Black and minority ethnic pupils,’ Dr Heather Smith, principal investigator on the project, informed us.

‘According to the government’s own calculations, and now represented in their race disparity audit, only 30% of Gypsy/Roma pupils achieve the government’s expected target level in reading by age 11. In comparison to a national average of 80%. By the time they are 16, only 10% of Gypsy/Roma pupils achieve grades A* to C. They are also, by far, the most excluded from school in official statistics (and many more may be excluded by unofficial forms of exclusion): in 2015/16, 31% of Gypsy/Roma boys were excluded, in comparison to a figure of 14.54% of Black Caribbean boys, the next most excluded group, and 7.47% of White boys,’ Dr Smith told us.

Dr Heather Smith is Senior Lecturer in Education.

ROMtels works against normalised racist discourses of Roma and monoglossic language policies, which exacerbate persistent educational inequities in promoting a translanguaging pedagogy.
FORCED DISPLACEMENT

Individuals’ rights must be acknowledged in situations of forced displacement.


This research is placed within the University’s strategic vision to promote social justice at a global level. Addressing the persisting legal gaps and pushing international law into new directions that are individual-focused rather than state-centric, it tackles a contemporary legal challenge that has significant ramifications – economic, societal, environmental – not just for those affected by forcible displacement directly, but also for the international community as a whole.

Abandoning home?

What happens, however, if an individual is forced to abandon their home? Current figures by the United Nations puts the number of those forcibly displaced by armed conflict, human rights violations, natural disasters and development at 70 million, including refugees and the internally displaced. While every case entails severance of an individual’s ties with their home, forcible displacement because of armed conflict and serious human rights violations has particularly detrimental effects as it exposes its victims to additional risks, including violence. This is aggravated by the fact that such displacement is either caused or cannot be prevented by the state, depriving the individual of support mechanisms that would otherwise exist.

A social injustice

According to the Colombian Constitutional Court, forcible displacement in such circumstances causes ‘enormous injustice’ and constitutes a ‘problem of humanity’. Such displacement is not only a violation of a fundamental human right itself but of several other rights, such as the right to life or the right not to be subjected to inhumane or degrading treatment. It exposes its victims to adverse conditions of life by depriving them of access to basic commodities such as employment, education and healthcare, and it causes social injustice by deepening inequality, marginalisation and discrimination. Forcible displacement also interferes with an individual’s ties to cultural identity, cultural heritage and community.

Dr Katselli Proukaki is Senior Lecturer in Law.
TRIBALISM IS KILLING US

Why do humans choose insider/outside groups, and what can we do about it?

Dr Tina Gharavi has been working on a film that examines and challenges social divisions, particularly in the context of race and racism. Her earlier work (the feature film I am Nasrine) was nominated for a BAFTA, and she is now continuing her poignant social critique with a new project entitled TRIBALISM IS KILLING US.

Challenging division through film

TRIBALISM IS KILLING US (TIKU) is an essay film about our shared past – an attempt to understand the science and social politics of division: why we divide; along what lines we choose to form our division; and how these divisions are damaging to us. When we divide, we seek safety in numbers, comfort in the crowd. This mob mentality removes the need for personal responsibility, insulating us in ignorance and fear.

TIKU is an examination of the intransigent prejudice of racism and its insidious effect on human life. Not only is discrimination experienced on a personal level but the bias is entrenched in public institutions and public thought, from Black doll projects that show how race was engineered to empathy studies demonstrating humanity’s tremendous capacity for co-operation. Interviewees share their thoughts on where we have come to in this timely debate: what are the origins of tribalism and how can we ultimately move beyond it? And, in a time when humanity is facing imminent global challenges, do we have what it takes to finally transcend our traditional notions of identity and unite together?

‘Through archive footage, news, documentaries, film, television, music, art, science and psychology experiments, TIKU is a reminder that this does not have to be the way – it is a reminder of our shared humanity and the power of unity,’ says Dr Gharavi.

Scientists are telling us that we are 99.9% the same: TIKU unpicks the logic of discrimination – demonstrating how and why the system works, before presenting solutions that can help us to move forward together in these divided times, by reminding us of our commonalities and of our tremendous capacity for to love one another. The only thing that divides us is our own choices: TIKU calls on you to choose to live with empathy, to choose to act with compassion, to challenge and be challenged – not to take the path of least resistance but to struggle against the tide of tribalism that threatens to overwhelm us.

Dr Tina Gharavi is Senior Lecturer in Digital Media/Film.
RACISM AND ISLAMOPHOBIA

Social researchers at Newcastle have been exploring the complexity of racism and Islamophobia for over 15 years now.

This work is anti-racist in focus. It is about working towards social justice by exposing inequalities in society based on race, ethnicity and religion, and offering routes to social justice by eradicating racism.

Research led by Professor Peter Hopkins has informed policy and practice about Islamophobia. The Westminster All-Party Parliamentary Group on British Muslims published a report in 2018, based on its inquiry into a working definition of Islamophobia. This inquiry involved widespread consultation with policymakers, legal experts, academics, public sector organisations and community groups. Newcastle University research informed its definition that ‘Islamophobia is rooted in racism and is a type of racism that targets expressions of Muslimness or perceived Muslimness’.

Professor Hopkins and Dr Finlay explored the political participation of young Scottish Muslims. This work found that Islamophobia tended to politicise young people or worked to silence and marginalise them. For those who were politicised, experiences of Islamophobia led them to engage with political debates and stand up for their rights in a positive way. Some engaged in volunteering and activism projects, and others joined political movements and engaged in formal politics.

However, for some young Muslims, Islamophobia made them anxious about appearing overly politicised. For this group, Islamophobia essentially silences them and discourages them from playing an active role in society. Many of the young Muslim women who participated in this research also talked about gendered Islamophobia and the ways in which their marginalisation is shaped by a combination of problematic gendered stereotypes, as well as everyday experiences of racism and Islamophobia.

The report from this study contributed to the formation of a Cross-Party Group in the Scottish Parliament on Tackling Islamophobia.

Professor Peter Hopkins is Professor of Social Geography and Dr Robin Finlay is Postdoctoral Researcher.

An important component of social justice is anti-racism and the action we can take to challenge everyday racism and other forms of intolerance that intersect with this.
We tend to think that there is no longer occupational closure to women. The time of guilds and men-only professions has passed. Yet farming exercises occupational closure to women. It is a question of social justice.
SOCIAL JUSTICE AND AGRICULTURE

Marginalisation of women in farming is still a serious issue.

Women in farming

Professor Sally Shortall has been researching women in agriculture since 1987. Her research shows that, despite playing a major role in Scottish agriculture (and participating in the full range of farming activities), women are significantly disadvantaged and underrepresented in the sector. This issue can also be seen throughout much of Western Europe. The problem, Professor Shortall argues, is deeply cultural and often emerges through the process of land transfer in families. There are no legal reasons why women in most of Western Europe cannot inherit land, yet they do not inherit it.

Clearly, there are historical reasons for this pattern, but its persistence is remarkable.

'I have been saying this for 30 years, and little has changed. When we did the research in Scotland, men as well as women recognised the problem but offered various justifications to explain away this injustice: it is a difficult life; women wouldn’t want to do it; and what if your daughter married unwisely and the farm had to be sold (it would be exactly the same situation if your son married unwisely). I interviewed women who had wanted to farm but went into farm-related employment as their means of staying close to agriculture,' Professor Shortall stated.

Challenging the status quo

Some of these women were now ‘new entrant’ farmers. In other words, they were renting land and farming. These farmers were dynamic and cutting edge, often because they were able to bring their farm-related employment knowledge to the farm.

As a result of these issues, farming organisations are very male dominated. Women feel conspicuous and unwelcome. Male-only dinners and events have recently come to media attention, and the women interviewed by Professor Shortall over the years talked about this exclusion.

‘At a point in meetings, women are simply asked to leave. Even the young, dynamic women farmers I interviewed said that they would be reluctant to attend farming organisation events,’ she told us.

‘We tend to think that there is no longer occupational closure to women. The time of guilds and men-only professions has passed. Yet farming exercises occupational closure to women. It is a question of social justice,’ she said.

Professor Sally Shortall is the Duke of Northumberland Chair of Rural Economy.
MIGRANT INCORPORATION INTO RURAL SOCIETY

Migrants face challenges to integration in rural areas.

The arrival of significant numbers of migrants into rural areas in the recent past has been notable across much of Europe, including parts of the United Kingdom. Their reception is not always straightforward, but relies on a range of sources, including civil society and employers, according to Dr Ruth McAreavey.

For the past 25 years, migrants have been arriving in rural areas that have had little previous experience of immigration. Their arrival at non-metropolitan migrant gateways represents a distinct feature of contemporary migration.

‘My research has shown how the incorporation of migrants into these places is particularly challenging, for a number of reasons. Social institutions in non-metropolitan and newly receiving migration areas are generally not familiar with providing support for such a diverse population. Other difficulties include the lack of critical mass, which reduces migrant networks, and the diversity of migrants, who have many different needs. In a non-urban setting, migrants can also be relatively invisible, so it can be difficult to identify all of their needs,’ Dr McAreavey said.

The incorporation of migrants in some rural areas is further challenged due to socially conservative attitudes about their entitlement to equal treatment to the local population.

‘I have shown how the process of achieving social justice for migrants is evident in their everyday lives, and encompasses a range of issues including their access to education, the legitimacy of their rights to live in social housing and their right to assert employment rights. My research has also shown how support from social services, churches, charity groups and friends and family is a critical part of this complex process,’ she told us.

These different networks have been a lifeline for many migrants, as one Polish woman explained to Dr McAreavey: ‘I have a neighbour who welcomed us as soon as we moved in. She came over with cookies; she kept coming over to make sure that we were fine and offer help if needed.’

Dr Ruth McAreavey is Senior Lecturer in Sociology.

Support from social services, churches, charity groups and friends and family is critical in achieving social justice for migrants.
ENERGY JUSTICE

Securing affordable and sustainable energy requires long-term, collaborative relationships spanning research and governance.

Health, well-being and quality of life depend on reliable and affordable access to energy services. Energy injustice takes many forms; without access to heating at home, vulnerable members of the community face the deterioration of many serious health conditions, while others are reluctant to go home at all. In some cases, daily trade-offs must be made between food and heating or people may risk falling further into debt in order to maintain a basic level of warmth in the home.

Combatting this long-standing problem is made more difficult, and the injustices are made yet more pronounced, when low-carbon energy costs more than fossil fuel-based energy services – meaning that, at times, direct tensions emerge between climate change and social justice issues in energy governance.

Dr Gareth Powells has been working at this intersection between climate change, energy justice and infrastructure transitions since the United Kingdom’s fuel poverty charity National Energy Action (NEA) co-funded his PhD. Since then, a portfolio of collaborations have sustained conversations between academic research and policy challenges.

This has included working together on the agenda-setting Customer-Led Network Revolution, a collaboration between academia and the energy industry, the academic side being led by Professor Phil Taylor. Additionally, Dr Powells has also worked on a detailed socio-technical analysis of community sustainability in three high-rise, low-income communities in Newcastle upon Tyne in partnership with Newcastle City Council, Your Homes Newcastle, Northern Gas Networks and Northern Powergrid. This project explores the opportunities resulting from the challenges of lower-carbon smart grids in the city.

In another example of the enduring relationship between the University and NEA, Dr Powells became part of the Health and Innovation Programme in which energy companies’ unpaid climate change levies were collected and distributed to innovative low-carbon energy measures in fuel-poor communities.

While the particular challenges of each project are always unique, the trust, experience of collaboration and the distinct skills, resources and networks that can be brought together in collaborative projects are among the most valuable assets in the ongoing fight against energy injustice.

Dr Gareth Powells is Lecturer in Human Geography and Professor Phil Taylor is Siemens Professor of Energy Systems and Head of the School of Engineering.
Peace, reconciliation and human rights

AFRICAN–AMERICAN HISTORY IN VOICE AND IMAGE

An international exhibit, blending historic photographs and oral histories to convey the history of African Americans in Pittsburgh.

Newcastle University’s relationship with the African–American freedom struggle, as personified by our honorary doctorate for Dr Martin Luther King Jr in 1967 and the subsequent city-wide commemoration of that moment in Freedom City 2017, compels us to continually embed social justice as part of the University’s work. In his speech at Newcastle, Dr King asked listeners to understand the intertwined dimensions of the three great challenges confronting the world: the problems of war, poverty and racism. His words ring ever truer today.

Freedom City, an exhibition featuring the legacy and memory of civil rights in one American city, Pittsburgh, drew on a powerful combination of voices and images. The exhibition comprised the pairing of historic photographs from a long-time Black Pittsburgher, Charles ‘Teenie’ Harris, with excerpts of oral histories drawn from an ongoing project headed by Newcastle historian, Dr Benjamin Houston.

‘By using this combination of voices and images, we hoped to foreground Pittsburgh’s black experience as complicating our understanding of how race is lived in segregated contexts. In this way, we hope to testify to African–American resiliency but also the undeniably powerful impact that race and poverty have in shaping their world,’ Dr Houston said.

Above all else, by using direct testimony from Black Pittsburghers and photographs that document their world, the exhibit embodies the central message of Dr King’s Newcastle speech: that racism looms over our world and yet ‘aspirations for freedom and human dignity’ remain as unquenchable as ever. It is wholly consistent with Dr King’s vision that everyday people have knowledge and can speak their own truths to power and understanding.

Dr Benjamin Houston is Senior Lecturer in History.

“**In his speech at Newcastle, Dr King asked listeners to understand the intertwined dimensions of the three great challenges confronting the world: the problems of war, poverty and racism. His words ring ever truer today.**"
Researchers at Newcastle University are helping to draft a Bill that aims to strengthen human rights.

Researchers Peter Roderick and Dr Koldo Casla are working with legal practitioners and academics around the country to draft a Bill on economic and social rights that would bring home internationally recognised economic and social rights into UK law. The team is exploring ways to enhance the status of these rights, based on relevant legislation and best practice from other countries. Article 22 intends to identify the law and policy changes needed to secure economic and social rights in Britain, namely the right to adequate housing, education, health, food, social security, an adequate standard of living and workers’ rights.

### Economic and social rights

Economic and social rights are proclaimed in Article 22 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and in a number of international treaties that the United Kingdom has voluntarily subscribed to. However, successive governments have failed to bring these rights home. This is despite the fact that most people care deeply about economic and social rights. Year after year, the Social Attitudes Survey shows a general concern for public services that are essential for the fulfilment of these rights. A majority of the public believes that employers should pay wages that cover the cost of living; they also support a national minimum wage increase and wage top-ups for low-earning single parents and working couples without children.

A growing majority believe in fairer taxation and greater redistribution of income, also favouring public spending on disability benefits.

On the significance of the project, Dr Koldo Casla said: ‘Britain is the land of the Charter of the Forest, the Peasants’ Revolt and the Putney Debates, the birthplace of Thomas Paine and John Stuart Mill, the country of the NHS, the home of the council house. Social rights have been part of Britain’s tradition for centuries and Brexit should not change that. We must incorporate into our legal system all social rights standards that the UK has voluntarily signed up to at the international level. With Brexit around the corner, it is now more urgent than ever to do so.’

Taking economic and social rights seriously would require significant changes in social security and housing, as well as radically different taxation to ensure equal opportunities for everyone and to build a fair society.

**We must incorporate into our legal system all social rights standards that the UK has voluntarily signed up to at the international level. With Brexit around the corner it is now more urgent than ever to do so.**

Dr Koldo Casla is Research Associate and Peter Roderick is Principal Research Associate.
HUMAN RIGHTS IN CAMBODIA

Professor Rhona Smith, the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Cambodia, travelled to Cambodia at the invitation of the Royal Government.

In 2015, Professor Rhona Smith was appointed the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Cambodia. She undertook her seventh mission to the country from 29 April to 9 May 2019, at the invitation of the Royal Government. UN Special Rapporteurs serve in their individual capacity, are not remunerated, and report annually to the United Nations Human Rights Council. The role of Rapporteurs is to monitor, report and advise. During her missions, Professor Smith meets with the highest level of government ministers, members of the diplomatic community, representatives of civil society organisations and other stakeholders.

Cambodia is in the second year of an extensive anti-drug campaign. Professor Smith has observed the impact the thousands of arrests and prevalence of pre-trial detention is having on the already overcrowded prisons during earlier visits. She has discussed this with prison governors, the Minister of Interior (Deputy Prime Minister) and the Minister of Justice. In May 2019, Professor Smith visited a district hospital, social affairs centre and drug rehabilitation centre investigating community-based treatment programmes for drug users with dependency issues.

A field trip to Kampong Chhnang followed up her previous mission (November 2018) visiting some of the Khmer and ethnic Vietnamese floating communities in Tonle Sap. Thousands of households are being relocated to dry land. These include many poor families reliant on fishing for their livelihood. For ethnic Vietnamese, the problems of relocation are compounded as they are currently not recognised in Cambodia (despite living there for generations) and cannot own land. This fieldwork contrasts with the many land rights, contested land concessions and forced relocations she has worked on over the years. A six-month delay in the forced relocation was secured in November. In May, once again, the complex situation was discussed with the Provincial Governor and a range of senior officials. Follow-up meetings with the Minister of Land Management and Urban Planning and the Minister of Interior were also held.

Human rights are interdependent, indivisible and interrelated so unsurprisingly most issues investigated by the Special Rapporteur involve a range of rights and freedoms. Professor Smith has regularly expressed concern at the restrictions on civil society and political space. Indeed, she spoke at two workers rallies for International Labour Day on 1 May and commented on freedom of expression and media restrictions on World Press Freedom Day (3 May) whilst in Cambodia.

Professor Smith’s report to the UN will be presented in September 2019.
Peace without justice is unsustainable; development without freedom leaves people behind.
The state of housing reflects core patterns of social injustice and inequality in the UK.

**HOUSING INJUSTICE**

Disposal of social housing is contributing to a serious crisis.

Britain’s social housing is in crisis. Over one million people are on a housing waiting list and homelessness is rising sharply, at the same time as the stock of social housing in England is shrinking. According to Professor Rachel Pain, a geographer at Newcastle University, recent government housing policies have accelerated this paradoxical situation.

‘The state of housing – whether we consider it geographically, socially or economically – reflects core patterns of social injustice and inequality in the UK, and is also one of the major ways in which those patterns are reproduced,’ Professor Pain explained.

**Social housing in County Durham**

A research project in County Durham has uncovered the disposal of social housing on the open market in a number of boroughs on a scale more often associated with the so-called ‘London clearances’.

Researchers worked with local residents and community groups for three years to explore the past, present and future of social housing. The project also involved a photography exhibition by Carl Joyce and song-writing by the folk band Ribbon Road.

In one village, 159 terraced houses were put up for auction by a major housing association. They sold for an average of £16,811 over a few weeks in 2015–16. The analysis shows that the majority of buyers were speculative investors based in other parts of the United Kingdom, especially the South East. A year later, three-quarters of the houses sold at auction lay empty. The impacts of the sales are said to include a rise in poor-quality and unregulated private renting, negative equity for local owner-occupiers and harmful effects on the community.

The disposal of social housing took place after decades of under-investment and promises to improve the properties. There was no consultation with residents, and the sell-off was against the stated wishes of the residents association, the county council and the local MP.

‘The decision was taken for purely financial reasons, rather than the needs or best interests of the community. The housing association has now pulled out of the wider area. The auctions and their outcome reflect a North-to-South divide as well as a more familiar poor-to-rich drift in housing capital,’ said Professor Pain.

Professor Rachel Pain is Professor of Human Geography.
WHO CAN WE TRUST?

Five-year research project on inequalities in access to social capital across different neighbourhoods of Newcastle.

Professor Daniel Nettle and his colleagues spent five years using multiple methods to explore how social life differs from one part of Newcastle to the next. Residents of various neighbourhoods of Newcastle have very unequal access to economic capital – pounds and pence – and there is more to quality of life than how much money you have. There are also subtle, distributed resources known as social capital – things like having helpful neighbours, being able to trust strangers and not feeling threatened when moving about the environment. The inequalities in social capital are less well documented than the more readily counted ones.

The Tyneside Neighbourhoods Project attempted to examine whether neighbourhood economic disadvantage was accompanied by a lack of social capital across Newcastle.

Studying the city

In poor neighbourhoods, residents interacted more, spent more time on the street and were more likely to be with people from other households compared to more affluent ones; yet they trusted their neighbours, and people in general, much less, were at greater risk of violence and were much less satisfied with neighbourhood life.

The research showed that, to make people feel more trusting, it was sufficient to move them to a physical environment that was less degraded (less litter, more orderly). This suggests that social capital is not set in stone: simple interventions that make the environment more pleasant to be in might immediately improve trust and social interaction, with all kinds of knock-on benefits.

Professor Nettle explained: ‘It is short-sighted that in a time of rising inequality in physical and mental health, funding to local government for neighbourhood services is being cut sharply. Arguably, more can be done to reduce inequalities in the whole population’s health through investment in the local urban environment than by spending more on hospitals, which affect only a few people and those already sick.’

A matter of social justice

On the issue of social justice, Professor Nettle said: ‘Access to the ingredients necessary for a strong social life is a matter of social justice. The costs and benefits of economic change have been borne and enjoyed unequally and, because people with similar means and problems cluster together spatially in cities, this has led to great divergences in social experience, even over the scale of a mile or two. Solving these kinds of inequalities requires holistic thinking that cuts across planning, economic development, social policy and public health.’

Professor Daniel Nettle is Professor of Behavioural Science.

It is short-sighted that in a time of rising inequality in physical and mental health, funding to local government for neighbourhood services is being cut sharply.
A SHIELING FOR SHIELDFIELD

Shieling is a (propositional) community research hub in the neighbourhood of Shieldfield, Newcastle. It explores alternative community-led development and activism and the potential for locally rooted and ecological forms of architecture in inner-city areas.

Shieling is the name for a proposed co-designed and co-built community research hub on the inner-city estate of Shieldfield, Newcastle. It is a collaborative venture between community research group, Dwellbeing, and local arts organisation, Shieldfield Art Works, SAW (formerly The Holy Biscuit). The aim of the project is to explore alternative and artistic innovative forms of community-led development and activism and the potential for locally rooted and ecological forms of architecture in inner-city areas. It will critically examine the politics of land and community activism in an area that has experienced the negative effects of large-scale urban development and tokenistic consultation.

Shieldfield was once a ‘shieling’ ground, where people would graze their livestock in the summer months. A ‘shieling’ is a hut or bothy, where they would stay during this period. Shieling therefore evokes a sense of connection between people and common land.

During the scoping and design period (February to summer 2019), researchers on the project will examine the potentials for ecological and reclaimed materials and building processes conducive to participation that challenges consumption-production norms. Consequently, the project will examine how architecture can still be reflective of place, acting as a vehicle to collectively reclaim contentious urban space through participatory design-making processes.

The scoping phase started with a community study day at Shieldfield Art Works, which brought together community members, academics, activists, councillors and council officers, architects and planners. The day featured presentations from community organisers and activists with experience of building and sustaining community spaces, as well as discussions, walks, a shared meal, poetry and testimony from Shieldfield residents. This study day and the workshops that followed have been a rich starting point for how we move forward with the design and programming of a community space as a site for political organising. As local resident Sheryl expressed, ‘it’s getting the community back together and getting that fighting spirit back up, to try to make things happen.’ For Khaltouma, a local resident from Sudan, the project symbolises the finding of meaning, not in what can be bought and sold but in deep connections with fellow community members.

Alison Merritt Smith is an art producer and researcher, as well as director of The Holy Biscuit, an arts organisation in Shieldfield, Newcastle. Dr Julia Heslop is an artist and Postdoctoral Fellow in Architecture. Hannah Marsden is an artist and PhD student in Media, Culture and Heritage.
Sheryl, local resident

“It’s getting the community back together and getting that fighting spirit back up, to try to make things happen.”
For further information:

Professor Peter Hopkins: peter.hopkins@ncl.ac.uk

www.ncl.ac.uk/who-we-are/social-justice

Details included are correct at the time of going to press in May 2019.

Designed by GDA, Northumberland.

Printed by Statex Colour Print, Newcastle upon Tyne.

© Newcastle University, 2019. The University of Newcastle upon Tyne trading as Newcastle University.