

A to Z

Celebrating two years of



ResPublica
changing the terms of debate

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Phillip Blond has been at the cutting edge of progressive thinking about public services and the future of our society. ResPublica will now enable that thinking – and the practical policy suggestions which flow from it – to be carried forward. It is an exciting initiative which has arrived at a vital time.

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The Rt. Hon. David Cameron MP, Prime Minister

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ResPublica is an important and timely addition to the policy landscape in the UK, leading a strand of debate around mutualism, reciprocity and community that transcends traditional divisions between left and right.

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John Cruddas, Labour MP for Dagenham and Rainham

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It is a sign of the bankruptcy of the liberal left that it falls to Phillip Blond to make the principled but liberal case about what kind of capitalism we want.

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Will Hutton, author, *The State We're In and Them and Us: Changing Britain – Why We Need a Fair Society*

About ResPublica (The ResPublica Trust)

ResPublica is an independent, non-partisan UK think tank founded by Phillip Blond in November 2009.

In July 2011, the ResPublica Trust was established as a not-for-profit entity which oversees all of ResPublica's domestic work. The Trust's three core workstreams are based on ResPublica's founding objectives to provide insight into new ways to re-moralise the market, re-localise the economy and re-capitalise the poor.

- **Models and Partnerships for Social Prosperity** examines how the public, private and voluntary sectors can reform and re-structure to benefit the development and implementation of public services and community assets.
- **New Economies; Innovative Markets** explores ways to re-localise the economy and re-moralise markets to facilitate the spreading of assets and wealth and achieve trust.
- **British Civic Life** looks at the central role of civic association, from small groups to national institutions, in cultivating an engaged and connected society.

ResPublica's work combines a radical, civic philosophy with the latest insights in social and economic policy analysis to produce original, implementable solutions. We would like to foster new approaches to economic inequality, investment and group behaviour, so that the benefits of capital, trade and entrepreneurship are open to all. Our work is based on the premise that human relationships should once more be the centre and meaning of an associative society, and that we need to recover the language and practice of the common good. Consequently our ideas seek to strengthen the links between local individuals, organisations and communities that create social capital.

We have had demonstrable success with innovative research that has been seen to make an impact on the policy landscape. Our reports have received widespread acclaim from policy-makers and practitioners, the media, and politicians from both sides of the political spectrum. We regularly host events and discussion forums that facilitate debate and extend our outreach. ResPublica is also a membership organisation, offering personal membership packages as a means for interested and like-minded individuals to engage with ResPublica in a way that is tailored to their own interests. The ResPublica Business Network is a programme for our organisational stakeholders, as a platform for elevated engagement with ResPublica and fellow network members with the common goal of innovative policy debate and solutions.

A

is for Asset Ownership

See also: Debt Serfdom; Open Public Services; Wealth

In Britain, the wealthiest half of households hold 91 percent of the UK's total wealth. Although recent expressions of dissatisfaction such as the 'Occupy' movements in Wall Street and London have received wide-ranging media coverage, much of the commentary has highlighted that no constructive proposals have emerged.

Meanwhile, reduced public spending is now accepted by all main UK political parties as inevitable. Therefore a new model is required for communities to become self-sufficient and prosperous independently of, but encouraged by, the state.

From our beginnings in 2009, ResPublica has concentrated on the importance of redistributing ownership to create greater financial inclusion and to engage communities in playing a part in the wider market. In late 2010, we published *To Buy, To Bid, To Build: Community Rights for an Asset Owning Democracy*, which highlighted 10 simple strategies for enabling individuals and community groups to join together to purchase under-performing state assets, and transform these into revitalised, community-owned enterprises.

Spreading asset wealth, and new ownership models such as mutuals, is also key to improving satisfaction and productivity in the workplace.

ResPublica's first report, *The Ownership State*, published in 2009, recommended the reform and restructuring of public services along 'John Lewis-style' models of partnership between employees. This power would allow the formation of new employee and community-owned 'civil companies' that will deliver the services previously monopolised by the state. The report had a great impact on the coalition's decision to give public sector employees ownership of the services they deliver.

Through our new *Models and Partnerships for Social Prosperity* workstream – one of the three core workstreams of the ResPublica Trust for 2012 – we will extend these ideas by exploring more specific asset-purchase and ownership opportunities available for communities. *Re-energising Our Communities*, a project which began in Autumn 2011, will focus specifically on the how individuals, communities and SMEs can become providers and owners within the utility market, and how the Department of Energy and Climate Change should pursue opportunities to extend asset ownership and direct community involvement to the UK's energy sector. Other projects will look at other mutual models in the private as well as public sectors.

B

is for Big Society

See also: Giving; Neighbourhood; Open Public Services; Red Tory

The 'Big Society' was a flagship concept of the Conservative Party's 2010 election manifesto, and has been subject to much political debate and controversy ever since. The founding of ResPublica in 2009 and the publication of Phillip Blond's *Red Tory* in 2010 are seen by many observers as contributing to the climate of Big Society thinking.

Since then, ResPublica has championed the concept as an important guide to the involvement and empowerment of local communities and public service reform which encourages new and diverse providers – whilst not hesitating to act as a 'friendly critic' of the Big Society, continuing to advise, probe, and lead discussions on its application.

All of our reports seek to gain insight into ways in which people can be encouraged and incentivised to become active participants in society, and how government, business and the third sector can work to facilitate this. For example, our participative report *Civic Limits: How much more involved can people get?* has sought to define

and extend the nature of civic participation in Britain, while *Age of Opportunity: Older People, Volunteering and the Big Society* looks at the role older people play in civic life and how this can be maintained and increased.

Whether Cameron's 'Big Society' is a concept that has too many political connotations for its survival, or whether it continues to be a recognised principle for British policy ambition, ResPublica's ongoing work will continue to pursue its underlying objectives. The fundamental principles of civic association and community endeavour present the opportunity for true cultural, social and economic change in Britain, enabling citizens to take control of their localities with results that would benefit them directly. All three of our core research frameworks for 2012 underpin these principles: *Models and Partnerships for Social Renewal*; *New Economies, Innovative Markets; and British Civic Life*.

C

is for Compassionate Conservatism

See also: Labour, Blue; Red Tory; Values

ResPublica was founded on the principle that the traditional boundaries between Left and Right are increasingly blurred and that new political philosophies are necessary to address the changing political, social and economic landscapes. Compassionate conservatism is one such example: it identifies social justice, well-being and environmentalism as moral and ideological concerns of the modern Tory party as much as the liberal and social democratic movements. Proponents of the concept include Prime Minister David Cameron, Jesse Norman MP, and David Willetts MP, one of the intellectual leaders of the modern Conservative Party, who wrote in 2005:

"It is easy to have a neat dualism between head and heart, efficiency and compassion, or Conservative and Labour. That was how politics appeared in the 1980s: efficient but heartless versus useless but well-

intentioned. It is not like that anymore. The essential part of Blair's Third Way was to claim that Labour didn't just stand for fairness but also for economic efficiency. Similarly, it is essential for the renewal of Conservatism that we are not just the Party that celebrates enterprise and economic success but also understand that we have obligations to the most vulnerable members of society."

ResPublica's work seeks to explore further new and ground-breaking narratives which include the common objectives of both Left and Right. Our past and forthcoming work takes values as a prerequisite of policy which should reflect consideration of the social in addition to economic prerogatives. This principle can then be used in addressing social justice, financial inclusion, economic opportunity and environmental objectives, to name but a few policy implications.

D

is for Debt Serfdom

See also: Asset Ownership; Social Economy; Wealth

Financial exclusion in today's society can be seen to be a modern form of serfdom, incapacitating people from pursuing their goals and trapping them in a state of dependency. Rising levels of redundancy and unemployment resulting from the financial crisis has led to an average household debt of £55,795. For a stable, sustainable future for the next generation, it is evident that these trends must be reversed, and it is ResPublica's view that this can only be achieved through the creation and maintenance of a plural and participatory economy.

Since benefits do not and cannot tackle the root causes of poverty, ResPublica's work instead seeks to address the circular model which entrenches dependency and inhibits true change. Our 2010 report, *Asset Building for Children: Creating a new civic savings platform for young people* identifies ways to tackle asset inequality in the most vulnerable households through savings nudges and financial literacy

objectives shared by government and the private and voluntary sectors.

The provision of financial capital and credit to the poorest is an area where banks and third sector organisations can contribute meaningfully to their communities and empower their route out of poverty. In response to the renewed debate about how to encourage the private and third sector to meet social needs, ResPublica's future work will explore how government policy can drive financial innovation through mechanisms such as a UK version of the Community Reinvestment Act, which has brought new investment to communities in the US where the market was previously not operating effectively.

E

is for Education

See also: Jobs and Growth

Next to family background, education is the sole greatest determinant of upward social mobility. It is one of the most effective tools for breaking persistent deprivation cycles. Sadly, international comparisons infer that the education system in the UK has not always delivered on its promises to create fair opportunities for all. For example, OECD figures recently revealed that 16 countries had overtaken Britain since 2000 in standards of mathematics; standards in reading have also slipped with the UK falling behind 10 countries. Very few of the young people leaving schools without basic skills in numeracy or literacy are given a chance to remedy these problems in later life.

Since 2010, the Coalition has laid down the foundations for a new approach to tackling educational failure. In emphasising decentralisation and transparency as two of the leading principles of the reforms, there are clear opportunities for community-based partnerships, socially driven outcomes and personalised educational leadership to emerge.

From Spring 2012, ResPublica will be exploring the possibilities for a systematic, social and local approach to alleviating educational failure, based on the need to create more pathways into education, more points of entry to formal and informal learning and more diverse opportunities for people of all ages and social backgrounds to realise their potential. Our forthcoming project, Teaching Excellence, will aim to draw some conclusions about what kinds of skills, qualities and characteristics excellent teachers need to possess in order to excel in the classroom and how these skills can best be cultivated. In the wake of the summer riots, we also intend to investigate the extent to which our educational system can teach 'citizenship', 'patriotism', 'civic responsibility' and 'values', and the additional role that local partnerships, social enterprises and community groups can play.

F

is for Faith

See also: Upper Chamber; Values

Faith groups often act as both a catalyst and cornerstone of civic life. Whether within small and diverse communities, or at a higher and institutional level, faith and religious institutions contribute both an additional social and ethical dimension.

In summer 2011, ResPublica hosted the American sociologist of religion, Professor Robert Putnam, whose seminal work *American Grace* set out to study the stock of 'social capital' that had emerged from various religious groups, and the evolving place and nature of 'faith' in America's public society. Due to its history, political practices and established institutions, Britain will inevitably present us with a substantially interesting variation of this theme. Drawing on Putnam's explorations, but also rooting our investigations in the British context, ResPublica intends to highlight the unique contribution to social and civic action offered by faith organisations, and explore how public policy (such as the Localism Act and the Cabinet Office's Open Public

Services White Paper) can enable them to extend such practices further.

We will also be undertaking work which explores the civic importance of the ecclesial hierarchy and the advisory role that religious institutions can play. In the Church of England for example, Bishops play a crucial governing and intermediary role. They serve to embody the concerns of the diocese and are often embedded in local practices, but also strive to both communicate and reform national and local policy to call to account existing governments and meet the needs of those most vulnerable. The Church is also often at all levels well-placed to inform businesses, individuals and government on the shaping of character, virtue and civic responsibility. In the wake of the so-called 'moral collapse' – the riots, hacking scandals and banks, to name but a few examples – such a contribution is needed.

G

is for Giving

See also: Social Economy; Values

Giving in the modern age extends far beyond Victorian notions of philanthropy. The Government's calls for civic participation prioritise the giving of time and expertise as well as financial resources, and frame giving in the context of group behaviour and association. Public policy and political rhetoric now recognise and value the responsibilities of individuals to their localities, and this will lead future thinking on how individuals and communities can be encouraged and incentivised to give.

This is not to devalue direct approaches to charitable giving. In September 2010 ResPublica published *Digital Giving: Modernising Gift Aid; Taking civil society into the digital age*, which urged both government and charities to embrace innovation and technology in order to get maximum value out of Gift Aid. After widespread acclaim from the charitable sector, in February 2011 Permanent Secretary for Tax Dave Hartnett announced that HMRC would pursue

recommendations to move the Gift Aid system online. The report also advocated the use of new technology to reach out to a whole new generation of donors via social media and this was a key motivation for the 'JustTextGiving' partnership between Vodafone and Just Giving launched in May 2011 which facilitates donations via text message for over 184,000 British charities.

Through social media and other tiers and networks of community support, a new model is emerging which sees philanthropists engage directly with their localities. A more 'hands-on' approach to engagement is another rising trend, as is a changing demographic of philanthropists which includes younger people and those on a low-to-median incomes. ResPublica's work in 2012 will examine 'civic philanthropy' within the framework of the localism agenda and political discourse around social and civic responsibility, underscoring the true meaning of philanthropy, philanthropos: *love of humanity*.

H

is for High Streets

See also: Neighbourhood

High streets and town centres should be multifunctional social centres, not simply competitors for stretched consumers. They must offer irresistible opportunities and experiences that do not exist elsewhere, are rooted in the interests and needs of local people, and meet the demands of a rapidly changing world.

In April 2011, ResPublica published a report, *The Right to Retail: Can localism save Britain's small retailers?* which set out a raft of policy ideas designed to encourage new models of retail, level the playing field between large and small retailers and rebalance the retail sector away from the 'Big Four' supermarkets. Further to this and alongside Mary Portas' independent review into the future of the High Street within the Department for Business Innovation & Skills, ResPublica will continue to probe into what government, local authorities and businesses can do to foster a more prosperous and diverse high street.

Framed within our *New Economies; Innovative Markets* workstream, ResPublica's work in 2012 will explore how high streets and town centres can once again become enjoyable, exciting places to live. We argue that putting the heart back into our local centres cannot be accomplished simply by making shops more competitive or adjusting the planning system in favour of town centres and independent retailers, important as these measures are. We must begin by engaging the people who use (or could use) these places and considering the unique assets each place has to offer. Town centres then can seize the opportunity to innovate that the current crisis presents, and make this innovation sustainable.

I is for Intellectual Tradition

See also: Compassionate Conservatism; Labour Blue; Red Tory

Whilst ResPublica's thinking aims to transcend traditional conceptualisations of left and right, our ideas can be seen as a synthesis of a rich tapestry of political and intellectual inspiration. A society with more egalitarian market access and a genuine redistribution of wealth may seem to be the inherent territory of the left, but Benjamin Disraeli, the Tory Prime Minister for twelve years and the ResPublica blog's namesake, proves otherwise. An advocate of 'One Nation Conservatism', he passed the second Reform Act of 1867 which extended the franchise by 88 percent. Disraeli himself drew on the philosopher Edmund Burke, in envisaging a society of 'little platoons; an associative society of our own'. ResPublica's ideas have also been attributed to communitarian thought as espoused by Alasdair MacIntyre, whereby local communities are fundamental in sustaining moral life and a virtue-based understanding of society.

However, ResPublica is not a party-political think-tank, any more than an associative society is the preserve of conservatives. Karl Polanyi, the early twentieth-century Hungarian philosopher and political economist, also centralises the importance of real human relationships as the basis to economic theory and practice. Polanyi challenged the modern capitalist assumption, adopted by both liberalism and state socialism, that land and social relations are

commodities that can be priced by markets. Beyond the inherited Marxist critique, his vision accounted for civic culture and the freedom of civil society, where the 'economic' assumes as a primary premise the political and social arena in which it operates. It is in this regard that his thoughts chime most with the arguments that have come to define Catholic Social Teaching, first proposed by Pope Leo XIII in his encyclical *Rerum Novarum*; that is, challenging unrestricted capitalism, and promoting a social justice that delivers prosperity for the poor.

A self-organising citizenry is a recognisable foundation of the modern liberal party. Free association was the governing philosophy of Jo Grimond, the Liberal Democrats' most important post-war intellectual who led the party from 1956-67. For Grimond, 'Society is as essential to the individual as water to a fish'. As such, the greatest danger to individuals was individualism, for when the world did not meet their aspirations utilitarian individuals always turned to the state, demanding that government do more and more. By arguing that 'liberals have far too often ignored the group', Grimond recognised that the key unit of social change was not the choices of isolated individuals or the bureaucratic monstrosity of the state, but civic groups, organising in society for their own self-expression.

J is for Jobs and Growth

See also: Monopolies; Social Economy

In autumn 2011, unemployment hit a 17 year high. There are a number of factors accounting for this, and ResPublica's approach to tackling these problems is accordingly multifaceted - improving the situation requires a concentrated effort to stimulate job creation on the one hand, and a sustained approach to improve the supply of skills on the other.

A personalised and localised approach to harnessing and developing skills for people to enter the job market is crucial, and there is most potential for job creation alongside a more propitious climate for SMEs, social enterprises and VCOs to flourish. ResPublica's work in this area challenges the status quo and champions models which allow for market entry from small and diverse enterprises. Social enterprises, and alternative models such as mutuals and co-operatives, should be enabled to compete with established monopolies. Future activity will develop these ideas under our *Models and Partnerships for Social Prosperity* workstream, whilst our *New Economies, Innovative Markets* workstream will focus on micro and macroeconomic mechanisms which could help SMEs in stimulating growth.

Skills, and the provision of skills, also need to be responsive to changing socio-economic circumstances. In autumn 2011 ResPublica hosted an event with John Hayes MP, the Minister for Further Education, Skills and Lifelong Learning, which commenced discussions on the skills young people require for their social enhancement as well as employment.

Under-education and over-education are identifiable problems, given estimates that up to a fifth of the productivity gap in the UK can be explained by lack of skills. Education and training therefore need to match the needs of business and the demand created by the labour market. Our future work will address how to achieve a workforce which matches the job market, through the integration of university education with workplace training, and expansion of good quality vocational training. Whilst much recent policy has focused on expanding the supply of apprenticeships, sandwich courses, work placements, and voluntary opportunities also have a key role to play.

K

is for Kinship

See also: Patriotism; Values

Relationships and associations are the natural basis of political life. The family, for example, is an ever-evolving institution which remains central to society regardless of the specific forms it takes. Family breakdown has taken place hand-in-hand with the loss of social morality due to what Phillip Blond describes as a "cultural and social assault from the left... [and] a similar libertarian assault from the economic right".

Forming, strengthening and extending 'social capital' is a central antithesis to the 'Broken Britain' analysis. *Children and the Big Society: Backing communities to keep the next generation safe and happy*, a

ResPublica report released in June 2011, highlights the importance of such connections for the well-being of children. Much like the old adage, 'It takes a village to raise a child', the report argues that we must turn once again to grassroots initiatives and successful, community-based services in order to offer social and economic support for those who are most vulnerable.

Under the *British Civic Life* workstream, ResPublica in 2012 will extend our research to the wider value of kinship and small groups in society—and the climate in which such relationships thrive.

L

is for Labour, Blue

See also: Red Tory; Compassionate Conservatism; Values

The founder of Blue Labour thinking, Maurice (now Lord) Glasman, has given generous credit to the stimulus of Red Tory and has been a much appreciated contributor to ResPublica events and thinking.

While Blue Labour carves out a special role for the state, it agrees with Red Toryism that Government has become too bureaucratic. Maurice Glasman has urged that the Labour party must look back to before 1945, to a 'conservative socialism that places family, faith and work at the heart of a new politics of reciprocity, mutuality and solidarity', beyond the state-sponsored capitalism that has rendered Labour's modern history 'paradoxical'.

Blue Labour's influence on the party leadership can be demonstrated by Ed Milband's emphasis on 'family, faith and flag'. Ways in which the new Labour leadership seems open to ResPublica's ideas include

the impact of ResPublica's report, *The Right to Retail: Can localism save Britain's small retailers?* on party policy. Labour is now campaigning to save Britain's high streets.

As a 'politics of paradox', a term coined by Professor John Milbank, the Chair of the ResPublica Trust, Blue Labour is just as interesting to ResPublica as is Red Tory. Similarly, what the new Labour leadership now calls the Good Society deserves as much analysis as does the Big Society. Moreover, it is in opposition that parties are often more open to radical re-examination of their past and of new ways forward.

M

is for Monopolies

See also: Asset Ownership; Jobs and Growth; Open Public Services; Social Economy

Small and medium sized businesses face many challenges in today's economy. One of these challenges is the current competition regime which can be seen to restrict market entry and hinder innovation and entrepreneurship.

The levels of market concentration and the uncompetitive behaviour across industries exhibiting oligopolistic tendencies limit the ability of new businesses and SMEs to enter the market and prosper. ResPublica's forthcoming paper on competition reform will propose a number of changes to the current competition regime which would

go beyond its narrow focus on short-term efficiency, and account for more 'dynamic' policy objectives that contribute to the development of innovation and entrepreneurship.

The current framework also fails to support collaboration between businesses, and ResPublica aims to identify structures which would mitigate risk to small businesses and thus promote a diversified market, such as regional banking, micro-lending, employee ownership and business clusters. Just as association between individuals is fundamental to social progress, so is mutually supportive enterprise.

N

is for Neighbourhood

See also: Big Society; High Streets

Neighbourhoods are multifaceted centres for domestic activity, commerce, and an array of hubs, clubs, councils and committees, which discern what is right for each community. The Government's localism agenda recognises the principle of subsidiarity – that local matters should be handled, wherever possible, by the simplest and smallest form of governance available.

There is an unprecedented opportunity for localism to create the climate in which such governance can be accomplished and successful, by transferring power from central government to local authorities and empowering communities to have a bigger say on the issues that matter to them. Neighbourhood planning represents a key tenet of the Government's ambition to decentralise power from Whitehall and give more responsibility to councils and communities over decisions that directly affect their area. The recommendations in ResPublica's report, *To Buy, to Bid to Build: Community rights for an asset-owning democracy*, were timely recommendations for the first

edition of the Localism Bill published weeks later. Our report *At the Crossroads*, published in May 2011, also forwarded recommendations to allow housing associations to play a crucial local empowering and governing role.

In 2012, ResPublica work will focus on how communities can actively partake in urban regeneration projects that prioritise the social as well as the economic. A 'regeneration social contract' between local residents, the state and the private sector could provide a long term model for revitalising disadvantaged areas and connect residents with opportunities, whilst 'aesthetic localism' could recapitalise the most deprived communities.

O

is for Open Public Services

See also: Asset Ownership; Social Economy

Public services are undergoing unprecedented change. These changes go far beyond the issue of spending cuts, demonstrated by the fact that public services in the UK over the last ten years have experienced a real-terms funding increase of 55 percent, financed by an increase of 5 percent of GDP in public expenditure since 2000. Yet public sector productivity during this time has continued to fall: by 3.4 percent over the last ten years, compared to the private sector's 27.9 percent productivity gain over the same period.

Real improvement can be achieved by harnessing two powerful forces: the insight and dedication of frontline workers, and the engagement and involvement of citizens and communities. This would provide a crucial safeguard for the interests of the vulnerable against the challenge of producer interest groups, whilst nurturing a spirit of ethos and local responsibility.

ResPublica's first report, *The Ownership State*, published in 2009, recommended the reform and restructuring of public services along 'John Lewis-style' models of partnership between employees, in order to free them from centralised bureaucracy and ineffective micro management. Engaged and empowered workers and citizens are better at cutting costs and correcting failure than those managed by command-and-control methods, whilst delivering services tailored to local need.

It is also vital to realise the strength and expertise of local groups, voluntary organisations, small businesses, and other forms such as mutuals or 'co-production' models, which are better placed to serve public interests and are able to deliver the social value needed in communities across the UK - for both users and employees. A recent study by the TNS revealed that 67 per-cent agree that local people getting involved in public services will improve them.

Chris White MP's Public Services White Paper is indicative of a forthcoming shift in policy in this area. By putting choice and control in the hands of individuals and neighbourhoods, public services will become more responsive to peoples' needs. However, whilst a positive step, there are problems which remain. The Work Programme, a key policy in the Coalition Government's welfare reform agenda, has been criticised for not delivering on its pledge for greater inclusion of SMEs, the voluntary sector and local organisations, who lost out to bigger players. Commencing in Spring 2012, ResPublica's work in this area will seek to identify best practice and the most effective ways to lift barriers to more diverse and effective public services.

P

is for Patriotism

See also: Kinship; Upper Chamber; Values

An underlying principle behind all of ResPublica's work is that reciprocity, mutuality and solidarity form the foundations of a successful and happy society – one in which relationships thrive and a sense of belonging permeates from the smallest to the largest of our institutions.

The widespread celebrations of the wedding of the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge in 2011 demonstrated the enduring civic spirit of the nation. The Queen herself has seen an 'annus mirabilis', in contrast to politicians, the media, business, bankers, clergy and others who have plummeted in the public's estimation, losing the people's trust and confidence. ResPublica's Disraeli Room blog on the royal wedding by our Trustee Professor Simon Lee, *Something is seriously right with Britain*, drew attention to this phenomenon.

This is not to regress to the past, as Red Tory, Blue Labour and virtually all parts of the political spectrum united in supporting a modernising of the monarchy in the recent agreement on changing aspects of the royal succession. There is much for politicians, civil servants, journalists, think tanks, bankers, clerics and others to learn from the blend of progressive reform and the upholding of tradition pioneered by the Queen. In the same vein, other core values and institutions are continually interpreted by each generation, whilst their cultural inspiration and unique contribution to Britain remains constant and timeless.

Q

is for Quality of Life

See also: Asset Ownership; Compassionate conservatism; Values

Public policy has a key role to play in facilitating a framework conducive to improving the life of individuals and communities. For some time now, the question of happiness has figured in the policy framework due to breakthrough research of economists such as Richard Layard, Joseph Stiglitz and Amartya Sen, who argued that measures of gross domestic product should be supplemented with considerations pertaining to wellbeing and sustainability.

Over the last two years the concept has figured highly in ResPublica's work, including our ideas on how assets and savings can better the life chances of disabled children in *Asset Building for Children with Disabilities*, through exploring how older people could make a greater

contribution to society in *Age of Opportunity: Older people, volunteering and the Big Society*.

Answering the question of what constitutes a life well lived is not a solitary, subjective, introspective exercise. Rather, to ask about the quality of life is to ask about what contributes to the flourishing of individuals within communities. The answer is surprisingly simple: mutual care, trusting relationships and reciprocal respect. These are the aspects of the good life that should inform government policy.

R

is for Red Tory

See also: Labour, Blue; Compassionate Conservatism

'Red Toryism' is a radical thesis espoused by ResPublica's founder Phillip Blond. It seeks to carve a new political agenda that shifts the political model towards a 'civic state' based on mutual association, and advocates a politic which would re-localise markets and deliver social returns. It follows that to do so, certain presumptions about the state and the market must be challenged and probed.

According to this thesis, contemporary capitalists have hampered market competition; either through monopoly capture for the few, or collectivist welfare-based agendas. By reaching beyond the traditional consensus of the left and right, 'Red Toryism' questions the liberalism that undergirds such practices, and advocates instead a

social conservatism and economic distributism, which places human interaction and real ethical practices at its heart.

When launching ResPublica in 2009, Phillip Blond described this thesis as "nothing less than the restoration and creation of human association, and the elevation of society and the people who form it to their proper central and sovereign station". It continues to saturate political thinking and has created appeal across the party divides, with advocates in all three main parties in the UK, as well as international acclaim.

S

is for Social Economy

See also: Asset Ownership; Giving; Monopolies

Creating and sustaining a social economy has consistently been central to ResPublica's agenda. From business models to investment tools, the term refers to an economy which promotes 'the social' as primary and fundamental to localised market functions. ResPublica's report *The Venture Society*, published in May 2010, specifically addressed social entrepreneurship, illustrating numerous barriers to the development of new social enterprises and making recommendations as to how government can reform its own structures to secure more support and investment for social entrepreneurs at the grassroots.

At the Crossroads, released in May 2011, urged the Coalition Government to grant further freedoms from regulation in order to allow housing associations the flexibility to utilise their assets for the benefit of their tenants and wider community.

A social economy requires innovative financing mechanisms. The launch of the Government's Big Society Bank (Big Society Capital)

provides a welcome opportunity to explore innovative financial models that enable social enterprise to play a key role in society, and potential for Government to reach out beyond philanthropic investors to leverage serious private finance for blended models of social investment.

The shift toward 'social economic' thinking continues to develop, not just in theory, but also in practice. The Charity Commission, for instance, has recently released new guidance which allows charities across Britain to make ethical investment over and above simply financial return. This, along with Community Development Finance Institutions, peer-to-peer lending, and community shares, makes fundamental contributions toward the diverse market of social finance. There is numerous potential here and ResPublica's work in 2012 will investigate further finance pathways and partnerships which will catalyse community-led investment.

T

is for Trust, The ResPublica

See also: Xchange of ideas

People's trust in the quality, integrity and relevance of ResPublica's work is important, and therefore in July 2011, the ResPublica Trust was established as a not-for-profit entity to oversee all of ResPublica's domestic work.

Four new trustees oversee the management of the ResPublica Trust: Steve Wyler OBE, Chief Executive of Locality, a nationwide movement of community organisations ambitious for change; Professor Simon Lee, Emeritus Professor of Jurisprudence, Queen's University Belfast; David Hawkins, who has spent 15 years in government relations, corporate affairs and the arts, and Professor John Milbank, Research Professor of Religion, Politics and Ethics and Director of the Centre of Theology and Philosophy at the University of Nottingham.

Autumn 2011 saw the announcement of the Trust's three core workstreams: *Models and Partnership for Social Prosperity*; *New Economies, Innovative Markets and British Civic Life*. These frameworks will shape and underscore all of our work in 2012 and encompass ResPublica's founding objectives to provide insight into new ways to re-moralise the market, re-localise the economy and re-capitalise the poor.

U

is for Upper Chamber

See also: Patriotism

Whether large or small, old or new, the diversity of Britain's institutions is of inherent value to communities and the individuals within them. Cultural institutions, activity hubs, faith groups and sport, as well as businesses, trade groups, universities and the Armed Forces: all play different, but vital, civic and social roles. ResPublica's *British Civic Life* workstream has set out to explore the specific value of such institutions, whilst also drawing together fresh perspectives with regards to their role for and amidst civil society.

A core project to emerge from ResPublica's work on *British Civic Life*, will identify and demonstrate the 'representative' and civic value of the House of Lords – a British constitutional institution very much embedded in our history and society. Whilst the Coalition

Government's recent Reform Draft Bill sets out a commitment to substantial reforms, it does not specifically explore the peers' and institutions' important purpose and role. ResPublica's upcoming project, to be released early 2012, will appeal to this neglected 'civic' angle: Should the House of Lords better reflect the diversity of British society? Can civic groups and institutions find amongst the peers a representative to uphold their views? And, what constitutional arrangement will ensure that all are given a 'voice'? In order to answer such questions, ResPublica will draw on the experiences of community leaders from local to national institutions, in order to reflect on the meaning and importance of 'representation' within Britain's Upper House.

V

is for Values

See also: Giving; Quality of Life

Cultivating values and instilling civic responsibility emerge as a central thesis across ResPublica's *British Civic Life* workstream. Drawing on ideas from thought leaders such as the Archbishop of Canterbury, ResPublica is keen to engage in the intellectual movement to put values at the heart of public and political discourse. The Archbishop's essay on 'Character, Virtue, and the Big Society', published in ResPublica's July 2011 collection, *Changing the Debate: The new ideas re-defining Britain*, represents a wider call for governments and communities to advocate virtue as a basis for politics.

Civic values also encompass civic engagement and responsibility. Britain's volunteer workforce has become worryingly concentrated amongst just a few – only 31 percent of people in Britain currently provide nearly 90 percent of all volunteer hours. *Civic Limits: How much*

more involved can people get?, published in summer 2011, addresses the various barriers to participation and highlights innovative solutions that could promote further engagement. *Age of Opportunity*, published in September 2011, recommends how the Government and local bodies could tap in to the dormant skills of older people and communities in order to achieve a reciprocal and mutual society that can begin to counter the 'Broken Britain' thesis that people are isolated and lack morals and a social conscience.

ResPublica's report on environmental and humanitarian values, which will be published in December 2011, looks at the impact of public policy in shaping dominant public values and corresponding public support in respect to these concerns.

W

is for Wealth

See also: Asset ownership; Monopolies; Social Economy

A moralised market – or wealth spreading economy – is a concept that is deep-rooted in ResPublica’s policy objectives and agenda for thought leadership. The concept of moralised markets is grounded in a simple premise that fair capitalism requires accounting for factors such as trust and reciprocity.

Underpinning ResPublica’s *New Economies, Innovative Markets* workstream is the aim to promote models of economic collaboration that are not anchored in the notions of individualistic self-interest, external regulations, and confined competition. The model for new economies we propose aims to reduce market barriers and create a

freer economy that goes beyond the free market ideology – a genuine participative economy where assets are distributed to the many and not hoarded by the few.

ResPublica will be releasing work in 2012 on macro-economic policy, identifying solutions which would impact directly on communities. These include mutualised banking arrangements, re-localisation of capital, democratic accountability of financial systems and diversified forms of investment for SMEs and community enterprises.

X

is for Xchange of ideas

See also: Trust, The ResPublica

ResPublica has consistently aimed to bring together cutting-edge debate and analysis from a wide variety of sectors, stakeholders, and interest groups. All of our research combines a radical, civic philosophy with the latest insights in social and economic policy analysis to produce original, implementable recommendations for government and civil society alike.

The past two years have seen huge successes in terms of our output and policy impact, with a number of widely-acclaimed reports and discussion platforms. Drawing on these achievements, we are working to foster more inclusive partnerships with leading experts from the private and public sectors and civil society organisations. *Changing the Debate: The new ideas redefining Britain*, ResPublica’s flagship collection of essays published in July 2011, brought together 20 leading thinkers including government ministers Greg Clark MP, Lord Freud and John Hayes MP, academics Professor Lord Richard

Layard and Professor Roger Scruton, journalists Maggie Pagano and Zoe Williams, and leading industry representatives such as Ali Parsa of Circle Partnership, David Green of the UK Business Council for Sustainable Energy and Cliff Prior of UnLtd.

Following on from the launch of the ResPublica Trust in July 2011, we are establishing workstream advisory councils to advise and steer the intellectual direction of each of our three core workstreams. Each advisory council will be populated by MPs and Peers, renowned academics, commentators and journalists, civil society leaders, and leading business representatives. The ResPublica Business Network is being developed to engage with members more consistently and promote active knowledge-sharing and engagement between members and our wider network. Alongside these forums ResPublica will continue to generate ideas at the very highest level, in order to lead the policy agendas in the UK.

Y

is for Youth

See also: Education; Kinship; Values

The young people of this country are as passionate and idealistic as any generation, yet too many teenagers currently appear lost and feel their lives lack shape and direction. ResPublica past work has focused on how all sections of society support young people, especially in times of economic chaos, and to what extent communities contribute to this, by involving young people into their civic life. *Children and the Big Society: Backing communities to keep the next generation safe and happy*, published in June 2011, looked at ways in which communities can use local assets to keep children safe and develop social capital, such as parks, playgrounds and children's centres.

Representatives of all political colours have called for active participation of young people by emphasising their civic roles and responsibilities. ResPublica's event in October 2011, *Equipping the Next Generation of Citizens*, addressed the public debate on soft skills in order to question young people's opportunities to become socially responsible citizens.

Following the issues uncovered by the summer 2011 riots, forthcoming work will focus on identifying best practice in communities to engage young people, solutions that can drive cross-sector collaboration and the opportunities emerging from key policies on localism and public services.

Z

is for Zeitgeist

See also: Intellectual Tradition; Xchange of ideas

Back in the late 1980s, an influential academic proclaimed the 'end of history', alleging that the advent of Western liberal democracy sealed the emergence of the ideal form of government and marked the end of humanity's sociocultural evolution. The reality could not be more different.

The last two decades witnessed continued economic exploitation and social turmoil. The erosion of certain 'axioms' underpinning Western societies was made apparent most recently by the financial crisis, which uncovered the bankruptcy of a model of capitalist economy premised on profit-maximising and individual interest. This was coupled with the complacency of Western governments embracing free-market, libertarian policies - as much with respect to economics as cultural and societal norms.

In 'Changing the Terms of Debate', ResPublica aspires to look beyond the prevailing ideological status-quo and detect the need to shift conceptual paradigm. Our founding principles that the dominant economic and social policy narrative should change in order to achieve a more inclusive and reciprocal form of public life, is reflected in the name 'ResPublica', meaning common wealth, or 'the Public Thing'.

All our research, publications, events and other discussion platforms seek to build on these ideas and extend our outreach in doing so. For further information, please see www.respublica.org.uk.



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