

Philanthropy and its Relevance for Families

Sara Llewellyn (www.barrowcadbury.org.uk)

The Barrow Cadbury Trust is the largest of the several dozen Cadbury family foundations. With a history spanning a century and with strong Quaker roots, the Trust has had a focus on social justice and equality issues from its very inception. We are a values-driven organisation with an enduring interest in economic, racial, gender and criminal justice issues. The form and focus of our work changes decade by decade as the world changes around us, but the essential areas of concern remain constant.



We are an endowed foundation with relatively modest resources (£85m at the time of writing) and hence we must use all the resources at our disposal in the purposeful pursuit of our mission. We see ourselves as agents of change with access to a financial resource base, but we use more than just our income to achieve our goals. Some of our capital is used for social investment; our brand can be useful to social justice campaigns, our board members promote family philanthropy and our staff use their expertise and intellectual capital to add value to everything we fund and the partnerships in which we work. We are directly involved in many of the things we fund and actively seek out those who want to see the same changes in the world as we do. As a charitable trust, we aim to align all our resources, especially our money, so that each partnership, each grant, each piece of work we support add up to more than the sum of their parts – See our two-minute animation at <http://youtu.be/L5reEdLuaPM> or at www.barrowcadbury.org.uk.

In our world view poverty is structural not pathological. We come from collectivist traditions and work in alliance and collaborations with others who share our analysis. Whilst persistent poverty is grindingly debilitating for those who have to endure it, we do not see individual interventions as any kind of permanent solution. It makes no sense to us at all to alleviate symptoms decade after decade without addressing the root causes.

The current iteration of our anti-poverty and economic justice work is our *Resources and Resilience* programme. This is the newest of our programmes at 4 years old and hence still in the phase of building alliance and carving out focus. (Our other programmes, which have been running longer, are further into the impact phase.)

Economic inequality and injustice are huge structural issues governed by global geo-political and historical factors at the meta-level. However, how these play out in people's lives on the ground could not be more



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granular. So, as a small foundation we aim to play a small part in supporting a) thinkers and new theory, b) communities and their 'voice' and c) movements for creating a fairer, more sustainable and fit for purpose economic system.

Are we naïve enough to think that is easy or that we can have a massive impact? Of course not. In everything we do we work with others, finding the hands of change and helping to strengthen them and connect them up.

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The two themes of our programme, **resources** and **resilience** each attempt to create synergy between what is going on in people's lived experience with those who make policy or develop theory. So our work on **resources** funds think tanks and researchers to develop more equitable economic propositions while at the same time supporting campaign-based work on financial inclusion such as campaigns on pay day lending and the disproportionate effects of the welfare reform agenda on disabled people, women and carers. Everything we fund must shine a light on economic injustice and propose alternatives. We wouldn't fund the operational costs of a food bank, for example, but we could support a local initiative (usually in Birmingham) to create a community-led food co-operative.

The **resilience** strand of the programme also creates links between work at the theoretical level on models of community resilience (e.g. research by the *Young Foundation*, tools developed by the *Centre for Local Economic Strategies*) and community-led initiatives at the local level such as time banks and other forms of co-production. Again, much of this in Birmingham. Our historic link with the West Midlands leads us to work with the city on strategic planning and community cohesion issues.

As a small player, we aim to add value through brokerage and contributing to learning. Small sums of money can make a real difference if you are in the right place at the right time to spot opportunities. A good example of this was a modest amount of money (£4000) for *Birmingham City Council* to host a conference of the Fairness Commissions from around the country, an idea suggested to us informally by a member of the London commission.

For this kind of approach you need patience and

fortitude. You also have to 'earn your stripes' and 'know your onions' or you will rightly be accused of parachuting or patronising. This is not the kind of work which lends itself to metric measurement. We do think tracking impact is important, but not at the expense of doing the things which are difficult and long term. We do not choose to work on what can be counted by neglecting the things which most count.

But if you are reading this and thinking "it's ok for them with their history and resource base" you are quite right. We are in a very privileged position and our approach does not suit everyone. There are more ways to tackle poverty and inequality than pebbles on Brighton Beach. What matters is to align your giving with your motivation. If what bothers you most is children in your own neck of the woods going hungry, fund the schools to run breakfast clubs; if you are concerned about childhood obesity, fund cookery and budgeting programmes for teenagers and young parents. Straightforward giving is also essentially good.

Sara Llewellyn is the Chief Executive of the Barrow Cadbury Trust and was previous Deputy Director of the City Bridge Trust, the City of London's 800 year old charitable trust. Prior to that she was the Chief Executive of St Giles Trust, a charity working directly with homeless and vulnerable people in South London.

Sara is Vice Chair of the Association of Charitable Foundations, a member of the Governing Council of the European Foundation Centre, a Board member of Charity Bank and has served on a number of other national Boards, including the lottery distributors and social investment intermediaries. Her background is in community activism, particularly in the domestic violence movement and in local community family provision. Sara is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts and a Freeman of the City of London.