

RISING UP!

About *RisingUp!*

Here we explain what *RisingUp!* is about and how to get involved.
We'd love you to join us. You can do stuff without anyone's permission.
Welcome!

Together we are irresistible!

We are facing many crises resulting from the system we live under (it's a form of **extreme capitalism** called neo-liberalism). The system is based on unsustainable and increasing amounts of **debt**. It is causing gross inequality, poverty, mass misery, and species extinction. It gives a lot of money and power to a very small number of people, who use that money and power to shore up their position. This system is **destroying our planet's capacity to sustain life** by destabilising the climate. There are many issues and to change anything, we have to change *everything*. We have to change this system, in support of the most basic of universal values - the right to life.

There are loads of brilliant, detailed proposals for how things could change, how problems could be solved. But we can't make changes without taking our power back, getting more connected to each other and to the wider world. We reckon system change needs a **mass movement of people** willing to take disruptive, loving and effective direct actions, saying no to the destruction and sickness and yes to life sustaining alternatives. An **inclusive uprising** will have many ways for people to get involved. It must be effective and sustainable, it must be fun!

More on the problem

We live in a system which is profoundly diseased and will resist change.

- The economy is structured to move **more power** to fewer people.
- It is based on the spread of **excessive debt**. This needs **constant economic growth** to cover interest payments, which ravages a finite planet.
- The system is **built on corruption**, where system wide abuses are supported by offshore tax havens.
- Our **democracy has been reduced** as powerful interests control the agenda. Urgent issues are ignored or sidelined.

- Some communities **pay the heaviest price** of the deep inequality and injustice (e.g. disabled people and refugees). Future generations are being handed an uncertain future in order to sustain our current lifestyles.
- As individuals, communities and nations, the system pushes us into **competition over cooperation**. It favours **individualism over community**.
- Few of us feel truly good and well in this system. **Most of us collude** in some way to protect our immediate interests, often out of either fear or greed.
- We **forget our inter-dependence** as people and our utter **reliance on nature** for our lives.
- On a deep level, **no one is really to blame** yet corrupted power must nevertheless be stopped.

Solutions!

Power needs to be **decentralised** and more decisions need to be made at a local level. We need a **radically improved democracy**, where people have real power over decisions that affect them. We need relevant and accurate information to guide decisions, rather than a few **powerful billionaires dominating the media**. We must design our **economy to maximise well-being and minimise harm**. There are loads of examples of how things could be run differently (we've suggested some in a **draft manifesto**, see annex).

In *RisingUp!* we don't feel it is necessary to say we are anti-capitalists, anarchists, socialists or whatever (all are welcome who want to adhere to our **principles and values**). We urgently need a rapid change in the distribution of wealth and power (which is sometimes called "revolution"). System change, then, becomes an ongoing process, shaped by how well we can work together, trust each other and **enable everyone's voice**.

Our Principles and Values are that

1. WE HAVE A SHARED VISION OF CHANGE

Creating a world that is fit for the next 7 generations to live in.

2. WE SET OUR MISSION ON WHAT IS NECESSARY

Mobilising 3.5% of the population to achieve system change – such as "Momentum-driven organising" to achieve this.

3. WE NEED A REGENERATIVE CULTURE

Creating a culture which is healthy, resilient and adaptable.

4. WE OPENLY CHALLENGE OURSELVES AND THIS TOXIC SYSTEM

Leaving our comfort zones to take action for change.

5. WE VALUE REFLECTING AND LEARNING

Following a cycle of action, reflection, learning, and planning for more action. Learning from other movements and contexts as well as our own experiences.

6. WE WELCOME EVERYONE AND EVERY PART OF EVERYONE

Working actively to create safer and more accessible spaces.

7. WE ACTIVELY MITIGATE FOR POWER

Breaking down hierarchies of power for more equitable participation

8. WE AVOID BLAMING AND SHAMING

We live in a toxic system, but no one individual is to blame.

9. WE ARE A NON-VIOLENT NETWORK

Using nonviolent strategy and tactics as the most effective way to bring about change.

10. WE ARE BASED ON AUTONOMY AND DECENTRALISATION

We collectively create the structures we need to challenge power. Anyone who follows these core principles and values can take action in the name of *RisingUp!* (More details in the annex)

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What we do - Our Vision, Mission, Aim and Objectives are to:

We Want! (our Vision)

A world where we build thriving connections within our society and environment, bringing hope and enabling us to decide the direction of our lives and futures. An inclusive world, where we work consciously to ensure fair processes of collective decision-making, where creativity is prioritised, and where our diversity of gifts are recognised, celebrated and flourish.

So Our Mission is

To spark and sustain a spirit of creative rebellion, which will enable much needed changes in our political, economic and social landscape. We endeavour to mobilise and train organisers to skilfully open up space, so that communities can develop the tools they need to address Britain's deeply rooted problems. We work to transform our society into one that is compassionate, inclusive, sustainable, equitable and connected.

Our Aim

Support and encourage a citizens uprising in the UK (of about 2 million people¹) involving low level and higher risk acts of civil disobedience by some (with others willing to support those that take actions). When ready, create a participatory, democratic process that discusses and improves a draft manifesto for change and a new constitution. This will involve creating a genuine democracy, alongside an economy to maximise well being and minimise harm.

And Our Objectives:

1. Communicate who we are, in order to set a context for the actions we do and inspire others to join us. (Information support hub: website, database, etc) "WE INSPIRE DIVERSE OTHERS TO JOIN US"
2. Create campaigns that have immediate as well as wider strategic value. For example, focused on the pillars that hold the system in place (toxic media, toxic finance, fake democracy) or focussed on issues high in the public consciousness (e.g. NHS, fracking) or that may broaden our diversity (e.g. workers struggle). "WE RUN EFFECTIVE, VISIBLE, DIVERSE CAMPAIGNS"
3. Clearly share how we do things, so people can participate, within a flexible, decentralised, supportive structure, "OUR PEOPLE ARE TRAINED AND DEVELOPED WITH CARE"
4. Support the network to be both proactive and reactive (when events and crisis arise). Also support local and regional groups, including through templated actions, so that the movement cannot be stopped once it has gained momentum. "OUR INTERNAL COMMS + PROCESSES ARE WELL MANAGED"
5. Develop resources and processes that help us to move forwards and function as a group "OUR STRATEGY & POLICIES ARE CLEAR + INCLUSIVE"

These things help stuff to go well...

¹ Erica Chenoworth's research suggests 3.5% of the population can make change happen, see <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YJSehRIU34w>

- Defining the principles and values on which we want to base our work, therefore what culture we want to create. Working towards our goals with conviction and purpose, but without elitist attitudes. Being respectful towards everyone, including opponents.
- Running flagship campaigns, which can be UK wide or specifically focused, that push the boundaries of activism in the UK. Opening up new ground for principled and effective, radical action.
- Communicating honestly that the crises are bad and worsening. Here is a group focussed on reality, willing to put ourselves forwards to see change. Helping to normalise civil disobedience.
- Using “holocracy” as much as possible (small groups of people are empowered to make decision and get on with stuff without approval from others).
- Make a clear space and way in for everybody, including lower risk activities so everyone can meaningfully participate.

We will also use 3 main approaches for the campaigning aspect of our work:

- o Start our own campaign – *initiating*
- o Be a radical flank to a current campaign led by other groups – *adding value*
- o Provide a vanguard action during a crisis – *responding*

And we will use subversive art, humour and creativity in choosing targets and designing actions.

How we work together - structure and tactics

We base our work on state of the art knowledge, which says that for a mass movement to succeed it must win active support for its aims and then train people to be involved and able to act autonomously. We are therefore a largely **decentralised network** of individuals and groups, who can take actions in the name of *RisingUp!* without permission – as long as they fit to our principles and values. This form of “distributed organising” avoids the pitfalls of more centralised models, releasing the initiative and creativity of participants, whilst safeguarding the heart of the movement. Some centralisation will occur in order to make use of a website, social media and database. A “Holding Group” helps to oversee things (see its role in the annex). A training programme enables newly engaged people to understand and join us.

People or groups can:

- Join or set up a local group
- be part of a specific campaign
- and / or support the national network.

We make use of tactics such as:

- **Polarisation** is the practice of asking the public “which side are you on?”. Though it seems to be and is divisive, it can be a useful tool. Symbolic actions can be used to create polarity.
- **Dilemma Actions** create win-win scenarios for the movement. If the authorities choose to repress them this triggers further mobilisation by provoking solidarity. If no action is taken then political ground is lost and our success encourages more to join us.
- **Conditional Commitment** enables people to give a provisional commitment to act if a certain number of other people will also act with them.
- **Attrition Actions**, when undertaken by lots of people / over many iterations, gradually wear down the opponent’s resources. Medium sized organisations are especially vulnerable.
- **Swarm Actions** are where small, semi-autonomous activist groups do similar actions without needing to be coordinated by any centralising organisation.

- **Open Spaces** create a safe space where people can talk freely with each other about what is bothering them politically. These help people to get stuff off their chest and clarify their own thoughts, and the interaction with others helps to break down our isolation.
- **The Olympic principle** – 30 small improvements added to up to enough total improvement to beat the other teams, so look at elements of the micro design for improvements.
- **The Sequencing Principle**, alternating between action and organising. The idea is to do a bit of one then a bit of the other, and build up sequences of moves between them.
- **The Investment Principle**, where actions can build up the resources for future success. Consider the “return on investment” for a given action- what it cost to do versus what was achieved.

Some ways we can check on progress

We have an implementation plan, though it is very much subject to capacity and changes in the world. We strive to get a balance between:

1. Running campaigns that feed our passion, but take up energy
2. Reflecting on how we are doing
3. Communicating what we are doing, inviting others to join us and running training.
4. Building foundations that help us - practical ones like having a good website, and ways that we build a better culture, like meeting up and doing “movement care” (see annex)

We can use these measures of progress, as well as non-numerical check-ins with each other:

-Diversity in Holding Group -Number of successful campaigns -Significance of target for campaigns -Number and size of general assemblies -Number of gatherings and webinars -Number of arrestees in key campaigns -Number and size of local groups	-Number of active organisers who share our vision -Number of social media followers/interactions -Number of people in our database -Number of people who engage with shared content, e.g. click-throughs -Quality and accessibility of toolkits and other info -Number of templated actions / legal defences -Number of other groups we’re working with
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Our strategic pathway therefore is:

- A. Build the processes, materials and cultural basis for an inclusive uprising
- B. A programme of simple actions that others may wish to copy, alongside riskier actions that inspire whilst offering pathways to involvement. Supporting local, autonomous groups, who sometimes might participate in mass national actions
- C. Support or create a moment of uprising with symbolic meaning
- D. Implement a participatory process for a citizens-led democracy

How we arrived at this outline

This document was drafted and revised repeatedly between June 2016 and February 2018. It draws on the experiences of the authors, activist trainings and books / videos from around the world (listed in the annex), and has been modified based on the experiments and reflections that *RisingUp!* trialled during this period. The document integrates multiple theories of change, and yet is limited by the depth of analysis and understanding of the authors at the time.

Future changes

There is strong rationale for keeping this document fixed. Partly, this is so it cannot be altered by a group trying to co-opt the network for a different purpose, or infiltrators trying to divert and disempower the network. It also guards against the temptation to delve into rabbit holes of editing.

The Principles and Values are intended to change infrequently, and any change process would involve the whole network, so changes are not undertaken lightly. The Holding and Advisory Groups together can make changes to the P&V that tighten up language / words / clarity in a way that doesn't fundamentally change the meaning of them. Even in this case the importance of a change should be clear because changes need to be cascaded through our materials and that isn't a small undertaking.

A process to change this document will not be embarked upon lightly, will need the approval of the Holding Group for *RisingUp!* (detailed in the annex), and will involve meetings for feedback and discernment that is open to the whole network. Except as noted in the paragraph above, changes to the body of this document and *A1 Longer write up of Principles and Values* (in the annex) won't be considered for a minimum of 4 years (until 2022). After that time, the Holding Group will be responsible for laying out a process to facilitate updating it (if deemed necessary), and that process must abide by the current Principles and Values. The other sections in the annex may be changed by the Holding Group as and when the Holding Group deems necessary, in accordance with any instructions given within each annex, and in alignment with the Principles and Values of *RisingUp!*

Love and rage! Let's do this!

ANNEX

A1 Longer write up of Principles and Values

1. WE HAVE A SHARED VISION OF CHANGE

Our duty is to create a world fit for the next seven generations to live in.

Our hearts tell us a different world is possible. Our vision of change is sufficiently broad that it can contain a variety of opinions on how best to work towards that change:

“A healthy, beautiful world, where individuality and creativity are supported, and where people work together, solving problems and finding meaning, with courage, power and love. This will be underpinned by cultures rooted in respect for nature, genuine freedoms and justice.”

2. WE SET OUR MISSION ON WHAT IS NECESSARY

The change needed is huge and yet achievable. No regime in the 20th century managed to stand against an uprising which had the active participation of up to 3.5% of the population². In the UK, this would mean mobilising around 2 million people in order to oversee a rapid change in wealth distribution and power structures, preventing a rich elite from perpetuating a self-serving ideology.

We acknowledge that we are in the midst of a massive crisis, one which can be hard to comprehend and cope with. We are experiencing the 6th mass species extinction and we are not taking adequate steps to avert our civilisation from the most horrendous trajectory of climate change. The world is deeply unequal, with wealth and power levers concentrated in a small minority. We have crises in our mental and physical health, including our children, based in different forms of malnutrition and an increasingly toxic environment. We live with the threat of pandemics alongside antibiotic failure. Our financial system is destined for another crisis bigger than the last. There is a global culture of conquering “others”, of competition, of revenge and of terrorism.

We recognise that our job may be less about “saving the world” and more about trying to develop our resilience as multiple collapses take places. We are based in the UK and we love this part of the world deeply. We are focussed on significant change here towards:

- A functioning democracy, where people have real agency in decision making. This would include devolution of power to the level closest to people and communities, with structures to facilitate decision making locally, regionally, nationally and internationally, where appropriate.
- An economy designed to maximise well-being for all people and minimise harm to each other, our fellow creatures and our home planet. We need policies and laws that achieve greater equality, localised production, reduced consumption, zero carbon emissions and zero waste.
- Creating a regenerative culture. We can begin doing that right now! (See 3. Below and interspersed throughout).

² Erica Chenoworth’s research, see <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YJSehRIU34w>

We can focus on symptoms of this toxic system, yet we also we take opportunities to point out that full system change is needed. We also focus on the pillars that keep the current neo-liberal system in place:

- A debt- and interest-based, deregulated finance sector
- A fake and decaying democracy
- A media captured to the interests of exploitative rich people and corporations

3. WE NEED A REGENERATIVE CULTURE

A regenerative human culture is healthy, resilient and adaptable; it cares for the planet and it cares for life in the awareness that this is the most effective way to create a thriving future for all of humanity. Regenerative culture means improvements year on year, taking small steps to heal and improve, and on all levels, including individuals, communities, our soil, water and air. More than being a network of “activists”, we seek to find ways of being and doing that support positive change. This can include ceremony and prayer (in ways that are neither dogmatic nor expected) as formats to find inspiration from things bigger than ourselves. We need to reconnect with our love for ourselves, our country and our people alongside wider neighbours; people and the natural world.

Regenerative culture includes a healthy focus on mutually supporting categories of:

- self care - how we take care of our own needs and personal recovery from this toxic system
- action care - how we take care of each other whilst we undertake direct actions and civil disobedience together
- interpersonal care - how we take care of the relationships we have, being mindful of how we affect each other, taking charge of our side of relationships
- community care - how we take care of our development as a network and community, strengthening our connections and adherence to these principles and values
- People and Planet care - how we look after our wider communities and the earth that sustains us all

It's about relationships. Our relationships with ourselves and personal histories, our relationships with what we struggle against, our relationships with other individuals day to day, and our relationships as a group - these are completely interdependent. Self care is also about taking care of the animal parts of the self that respond instinctively to stressful situations with fight or flight or faint.

4. WE OPENLY CHALLENGE OURSELVES AND THIS TOXIC SYSTEM

We have a duty to disobey this system which destroys life on earth and is deeply unjust. Some of us will undertake open (“**above ground***”) actions that risk arrest and charges. Evidence suggests that such open civil disobedience and direct action are crucial to change³. It isn't necessary or required that everyone do this, as for some there are good reasons not to (we ask everyone to take time to be clear on their own circumstances, fears and motivations here). Importantly, our *RisingUp* culture should support those of us willing to put ourselves on the line in this way - there are also many support roles that are useful and we need to enable at least 3% of the population to actively participate. We will practice a security culture to the extent that it enables actions to be planned without being intercepted before they are completed. However our civil disobedience and direct actions are in full public light, organisers accept the risks they are taking, and we have issued a “necessity statement” online as to why we believe our actions are justified⁴.

³ See for example evidence in *CounterPower* by Tim Gee and *This is an Uprising* by Engler & Engler

⁴ *We appreciate and admire those willing to take “below ground” or “covert” actions to fight for environment and social justice, within other settings. For clarity, and for the safety of those organising in *RisingUp!* it is important we are March 2018

However we are not just about being out there and taking action, we must also resource all aspects of a regenerative culture and also take time to reflect on whether what we are doing is effective. We might find it challenging to keep a focus on some aspects of this work, including self-care and looking after each other. There can be a pull to do the next thing, to be “active”, but this can lead to burn-out.

There is a value in us making changes in our own lives to reflect the changes needed, such as changing our diets, where we go on holiday and so on (however personal responsibility can be overstated and is based, to some extent, in privilege). For all of these challenges we ask for room, patience and willingness to try new things to see if they support our goals.

5. WE VALUE REFLECTING AND LEARNING

We don't know how things will change so we are willing to experiment and learn from what we do. Through ongoing questioning, reflection and learning about what has worked elsewhere we will improve what we do and not get stuck in repetitive behaviour. This is an active and ongoing process, requiring time and input for individuals and groups to think about what has gone well and why, what would be better to be done differently.

6. WE WELCOME EVERYONE AND EVERY PART OF EVERYONE

As a movement we are committed to campaigning for the right to life, and for the future life of our children and the planet. We recognise that in order to change the world, we must change the way we think about and form relationships with those we work and ally ourselves with. The world is currently defined by multiple hierarchies of race, class, gender, sexuality, etc. For those lower down these hierarchies, much of the world isn't a safe space. To create safer spaces we need to work actively to continuously build understandings of how these hierarchies operate, so that we can challenge them and build inclusion through making our spaces more accessible. Therefore, for our movement to be safe for everyone, it needs to be safe for the most marginalised.

This principle includes a commitment to making safer spaces to support inclusivity. It is our goal that every individual is welcomed regardless of ethnicity, race, class, gender, gender identity, gender presentation, sexuality, age, income, ability, education, appearance, immigration status, belief or non-belief and activist experience. Every individual in the movement is responsible for creating and maintaining safer, compassionate and welcoming spaces. New people to the movement need to be explicitly welcomed. A simple starting point is adherence to these core principles.

Physical violence or the incitement of violence towards others is not accepted. Discriminatory behaviour, language or behaviour that exhibits racial domination, sexism, anti-semitism, islamophobia, homophobia, ableism, class discrimination, prejudice around age and all other forms of oppression including abusive language towards others, either during an action or elsewhere, is not accepted whether physically or online.

We also recognise that we are complex beings and exhibit many different parts of ourselves at different times and in different circumstances. For example, sometimes we might be caring, at other times judgemental, and at other times carelessly reactive. Some of those parts are parts of us that we're happy to bring, and some of those parts are parts that we're struggling with, or perhaps not even aware they existed until they revealed

clear that all actions taken in the name of *RisingUp!* are “above ground,” i.e. that they are taken in the open and no below ground actions are taken as *RisingUp!*

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themselves. With this knowledge, we approach each other from a place of compassion, and encourage each other to increase our own self-awareness

7. WE ACTIVELY MITIGATE FOR POWER

The ground on which this network stands is on the relationships between its participants. We will work every day to build trust, respect and reciprocity among all of us. We assume all members to have good intentions and will react against disrespect. We use conflict resolution techniques to deal with conflict in a healthy way that will bring growth to our movement. We ground our work in dialogue, healing, collective transformation and justice. We won't tolerate shaming of each other or bullying in any form. This requires us to be honest and clear with ourselves and each other; we all hold prejudices and biases, and these must be acknowledged rather than dwelled upon negatively. It is everyone's responsibility to change destructive habits and behaviours.

We recognise that our world as it stands is currently structured by various intersecting hierarchies based on class, race, gender, sexuality, (dis)ability and so on. As such each person's experience is shaped by their position within these various social hierarchies. For instance, being a black woman one encounters different forms of oppression to a white woman, because of how race and gender combine and compound to shape experiences.

Whilst we aim to live in a world where these hierarchies no longer exist, we cannot simply pretend that they don't within our own network. For this reason we aim to centre voices that are normally the most marginalised, by allowing space for them to speak and encouraging those who normally wouldn't to take leadership / coordination positions. This isn't about deciding 'who is the most oppressed', it's about consciously making space for the people who have to fight the most to be heard, recognised and respected.

In practical terms this means:

- we weight coordinating roles towards marginalised groups
- our media messaging includes issues and voices that are normally ignored (e.g. the link between climate change and immigration detention centres). However we are mindful of not trying to speak on someone else's behalf.
- accessibility is important (in terms of child care, wheelchair access, not speaking in technical jargon), both for meetings and actions
- we recognise that oppressive behaviours are socially embedded within us, and privileged people are asked to commit to questioning their privilege and to be open to being challenged
- We refresh those who hold positions of responsibility so that power doesn't get entrenched
- We embed anti-oppressive practice into our training materials
- Our strategy is focussed on doing the work it takes to forge genuine alliances with the grass roots movements of the people who are most marginalised.
- We also recognise that sometimes people make mistakes, misjudgements and missteps, and we seek to avoid humiliating exposure when it is clear that an issue needs to be raised and dealt with.

Having a database, social media and a website; fundraising for meetings, etc, means that there is inevitably a centralisation of some power. To mitigate any power issues that can arise we have a Holding Group (see A1 below), whose role is transparent and into which there is a process for people to rotate in and out.

Thinking about these questions is encouraged: If you always do a role, is it possible to train someone else to do it? If someone else is taking leadership on a role, can you learn from them so that you can step in? Can you challenge yourself to take on a more upfront role if this is something you don't usually do? Do you take time to learn about power and privilege? Do you have an understanding of how the power and privilege you hold has an effect on other people and the movement you are part of?

8. WE AVOID BLAMING AND SHAMING

Blaming and shaming will not serve us in the long run. Whilst a specific campaign may seek to highlight the damaging role played by an institution, including individuals serving that institution, our starting point is that we live in toxic system that has damaged everybody. We can point out behaviour that is unhelpful, exploitative or abusive, and we won't tolerate such behaviour, yet we don't hand away our love or power by blaming and shaming. This is also true in our interpersonal and group dynamics as well as our relationship to ourselves.

We embrace change that creates unity in diversity; we need to set right the relationships between us, avoiding the interpersonal traps that come from games we may inadvertently play and bringing awareness to the structures that would divide us. We accept that emotion sometimes needs to be expressed, that a period of venting can be necessary. We ask each other for good grace in how we share emotion and to return to a baseline of love, respect and conviviality. We need to be compassionate when mistakes are made. Mistakes are opportunities to learn. We look for ways to connect and understand. Listening deeply to each other is a powerful tool. We especially need to listen to those of us that come from groups whose voices tend to be silenced.

9. WE ARE A NON-VIOLENT NETWORK

Non-violence keeps our movement alive. We use non-violence to reveal the true perpetrators of systemic violence that people suffer from daily all over this world. It is our strategy to bring light to the injustice that too many suffer each day. We feel pain from the abuses of the police and others, and we will keep exposing their violence through our discipline. Non-violence has unequivocally been demonstrated to be an effective tool in mass mobilisations⁵ and so we base a cornerstone of our movement on this.

At the same we also recognise that many people and movements in the world face death, displacement and abuse in defending what is theirs. We will not condemn those who justly defend their families and communities through the use of force, especially as we must also recognise that it is often our privilege which keeps us safe. We stand in solidarity with those whom have no such privilege to protect them and therefore must protect themselves through violent means; this does not mean we condone all violence, just that we understand in some cases it may be justified. Also we do not condemn other social and environmental movements that choose to damage property in order to protect themselves and nature, for example disabling a fracking rig or putting a detention centre out of action. Our network, however, will not undertake significant property damage because of risks to other participants by association.

10. WE ARE BASED ON AUTONOMY AND DECENTRALISATION

We recognise that we can't look to government to solve the world's problems. It tends to concentrate power and wealth in the hands of a very privileged few, and often does not have the interests of the majority of people and the natural world at heart. We understand that we must self-organise to meet our own needs,

⁵ See the works of Gene sharp and Erica Chenoworth
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which in the context of *RisingUp!* means that we are working to equalise power by disrupting the usual pillars of power that govern our lives. In so doing, our intention is to create access to the resources we need, such as democratic structures that ensure everyone has a voice and an influence, information that comes without the bias of the rich and powerful, decent healthcare, education, social care and housing, clean energy production, and protections in law to prevent ecocide.

Any person or group can organise autonomously around the issues that feel most pressing for them, and take action in the name and spirit of *RisingUp!* - so long as the action fits within *RisingUp!*'s principles and values. In this way, power is decentralised, meaning that there is no need to ask for permission from a central group or authority. We also promote the ideas of "holocracy" over consensus:

- That it may be agreed in a group for one or two people to do a specific task for the group. Those people are then fully empowered to do the task.
- They are best to seek advice and feedback but they don't need anyone's permission to complete the task.
- They are fully responsible for outcomes and should reflect on them and how to improve in future. If anything goes wrong they should help to "clean up".

At the same time, as a network, *RisingUp!* self-organises to provide for the needs of the people participating within it, working to provide training in strategic action for change, educating ourselves and each other around issues of power, privilege and how to decolonise, creating better accessibility, caring for our emotional needs in relation to working together, and making time for connection and fun.

A2 About the Holding Group and Advisory Group

Overall purpose of the Holding Group

The Holding Group (HG) are the final guardians of the Principles and Values (P&V) of *RisingUp!* They also try to support the movement in developing in a healthy way, according to what is felt to be needed at any particular time.

Ideally, as much work as possible within *RisingUp!* (*RU*) (e.g. writing training materials, focusing on internal or external comms) should be taken up by others outside of the HG, within working groups (WG) can be part of working groups where capacity issues make that necessary or desirable. The principles of holocracy apply (people don't need permission to make decisions and the HG only have a checking role to ensure any materials produced / processes proposed don't violate our principles and values and are, where relevant, aligned to the current strategy).

The HG has tended to focus on aspects such as these below, (in the absence of active working groups) and the aim is to find other people to take charge of them:

- Ensuring regular physical gatherings for *RU* (at least 3 a year) that spread our training and movement care, helping to support a "regenerative culture".
- Overseeing a monthly call for anyone wishing to join or participate in *RU*, in which a small training is given in some specific aspect and information is shared.
- Supporting debrief and reflection on progress, for example regarding diversity and inclusion, movement care, growth and training quality. Works to figure out blockages.

- Making decisions on use of database and other tech infrastructure to ensure *RU* spreads and can join up where useful, without being “spammy” by mailing too many people about meetings or things one step removed from *RU*.

In the short term we also need to have a clear pathway for people to join the HG (and Advisory Group (AG) - see below). We need something fit for purpose now. This may change in future (for example the use of “sortition”) but we don't want the process to be easily subverted, since it leaves us vulnerable to co-option. Thus a method is proposed below for feedback (Mar 2018) with the idea we will try something for 18 months, review and then finalise.

The Holding Group would always have a role in

- Helping to propose, form, train and support action working groups, though it's fine if others just spontaneously go ahead and do them.
- Sharing recommendations, thinking and insight on potential future actions with those considering organising.
- Debriefing, reflecting and improving on the implementation of group projects, strategy and processes (ideally with feed-in from a debrief and reflection group)
- *RU* communication and dynamics – whether the online and offline tools and methods are working to support people, or whether they are hindering connection and growth (ideally with the input of an internal comms group).
- Deciding whether a Principle and Value is being seriously violated (see the Conflict Resolution Process below).
- Deciding when it is time to update the Principles & Values.
- Deciding on the process for changing the Principles & Values (with guidance from the Advisory Group and hopefully a Debrief and Reflection Group).

However the HG cannot be responsible for:

- Every action taken in the name of *RU* (it can call out those that don't stick to the Principles & Values),
- Every time there is a dispute (see the Conflict Resolution Process below).

Advisory Group

In 2017, a realisation was reached that a number of people involved in Rising Up were consistently putting energy into working on *RU*'s direction. A decision was made that it would be useful to formalise this into an “Advisory Group” (AG). The AG exists to provide a wider range of experience to the HG and is a pathway (though not the only pathway) into being part of the HG itself. Advice and reflection can be provided to the HG at any stage, to be considered by the HG in the HG meetings. The AG group plays an active role in drafting strategy, campaign planning, rewriting principles and values and deciding when that needs to happen. The HG has the final say in cases where consensus is not reached.

Up to 15 people can be in the AG. This is a group of activists within *RU* who have been around for at least a year and have taken on active roles. They are a trusted group whose opinions are valued. Members of the AG can come to HG meetings in an advisory capacity. They don't need to come to the meetings.

(Later it may be the case that AG members come in “silent witness”. This would be to allow for HG transparency, as well as retaining the HG's efficiency in meetings (it can take a lot of extra time to fill in

new-comers to meetings on the way that things are being done, or to have discussions across 25 people!)) This mode has been used successfully elsewhere e.g. Embercombe.

Key decisions need to be clearly shared within the network on internal communications channels in reasonable time, so that feedback can be given. Everyone is welcome to comment, no one should feel “voiceless”. Any key decisions will include discussions at national gatherings, and ideally decisions will be made at national gatherings. However, this should be subject to the nature of the decision and its importance. Sometimes decisions need longer and may even span two gatherings.

The role of the AG is to provide “advice and feedback” to the HG and to ask for issues to be considered. Wherever possible, details on issues / ideas will be worked up by those interested in them and the HG will simply provide its ongoing role of checking actions against the Principles and Values. For example, if someone wishes to see a presence for *RisingUp!* at summer festivals, they are welcome to propose how to make that happen and help to take it forwards. It isn't the job of the HG to get in the way of good ideas. Nor is it the role of the HG to implement everyone's ideas or to find someone else to do it.

Joining the Holding and Advisory Groups

Initially (Feb 2018) people can put themselves forwards for the AG or HG or be proposed by others, and the HG will decide whether they can join. If we end up with the maximum number of people in each group then we (the HG and AG together) will make a group decision on how to proceed.

The AG and HG will in future (18 months from March 2018) jointly vote on which new people are welcome to join either group (voting method TBD). It will take up to four months from someone being proposed for either group to be given confirmation (or otherwise) of membership. The minimum and maximum term of membership in the advisory group are the same as the HG.

As *RisingUp!* gets bigger, we will aim to ensure diversity of both the AG and the HG. As people step forwards to join either group we may use any element of sortition, after filtering for diversity to pick new members.

A secretary appointed within the AG group will keep track of the current membership of the AG and HG, including the terms of the members. It is the responsibility of the entire group to see that mentoring is being conducted.

Membership of the Holding Group

- The initial members of the HG were decided by the former strategy group (Roger Hallam, Simon Bramwell and Gail Bradbrook) at the *RU* gathering in Stroud, March 2017, as Stu Basden, Gail Bradbrook, Simon Bramwell and Jay.
- This group has been meeting monthly, and preferably face to face (Simon Bramwell stepped down in January 2018 and Lizia Wolf joined).
- People that join the group commit to do one year and a maximum of 2.5 years with a year's break before rejoining. A person may do a term on both the AG and the HG (in either order) and then must take at least a years break. The final 6 months are spent mentoring someone to join the group.
- The HG will be between 4 and 10 people with a preference for around 7 people. Quorum for HG meetings will be 3.

- The Advisory group may include those being mentored to potentially take up a position in the HG Group. It is the responsibility of all HG members to ensure the HG continues.
- We want people joining the HG to be aware of the strengths and weaknesses they bring, group dynamics and their impact upon them, to have practices to deal with emotions, that bring in empathy and compassion and an openness to new formats for supporting better group working.
- It will aim to be 50% women and no lower than 33% women (and only if by adding in further men, the diversity of the group is also added to).
- The HG will always have a space for at least one:
 - disabled person
 - person of colour
 - older woman
 - person under 25
 - LGB person
 - trans / gender non-identified person
 - neuro-atypical person
 - person representing the diversity of working class culture (who has not been “upwardly mobile”)
 - person from any other groups, for example from a religious or cultural background that tends to be under represented.

The current members of the Holding Group are

- **Gail Bradbrook**, mid 40s, raised working class white cis, straight woman, since educated to PhD. level. She’s a mother and lives in Gloucestershire. She’s helped run a small charity for 15 years and has a variety of skills as a result, for example fundraising and strategy. She’s been involved in tax and economic justice work, and was a Director of Transition Stroud.
- **Jay**, mid-thirties, white and middle class, educated to degree level (but the real education definitely started after leaving), queer, gender non-identifying but assigned female at birth. A mix of interests and involvement, including permaculture, teaching and facilitation, community work, migrant solidarity, queer organising, art, bodywork and nature connection, all of which will hopefully be put to good use in the hugely inspiring *RisingUp!*
- **Stu Basden**, thirties, non-binary, white person with a middle class background who studied an MA in Philosophy, Theology and Psychoanalysis in Toronto, Turtle Island (aka North America). They have organised with Toronto350.org around climate issues for over three years, and towards the end of that time increasingly became focused on issues around indigenous sovereignty. Having participated in various struggles, activist camps and resistance communities in Europe for over a year, they decided to get involved with *RisingUp!*, and so moved to the UK, settling on Bristol as a place from which to organise and put down roots.
- **Lizia Woolf**, early 20s. Second generation Malaysian British vegan Londoner. Dropped out of private sixth form in pursuit of empowerment, connection and ‘real life’. She’s dedicated to learning and preserving various arts and skills that can be incorporated into a sustainable, zero-waste lifestyle. She believes very strongly in the power of the individual and that change begins from within. She’s had years of experience in performing and teaching. Within *RisingUp!* she’s eager to hold the welfare of people as people are at the centre of everything we do.

Past members:

- **Simon Bramwell**, 45, straight, white male, no formal education but a lifetime of practical experience, he's herded cats from here to Timbuktu, worked with the UN and such organisations as Earth First!, RTP, Embercombe and The Lightning Tree Collective amongst others. Eager to see regenerative and healthy emergence cultures implemented within social justice movements.
- Roger Hallam was a member of the original strategy group. He is an organic grower in his 50's who lives in Wales. He helped set up Radical Routes, the housing coop network, and has helped to organise several successful campaigns including rent strikes in London and a fossil fuel divestment at Kings College. He does PhD research at Kings on effective radical activism.

A3 Details on Regenerative culture within our network

As a start, we encourage everyone to ask themselves:

- what are you already doing to take care in each of these categories?
- how well is it working for you?
- are there any downsides?
- what are you really in need of?
- are there better practices we can find with similar aims?

Self care

Also known as:

What we sometimes call the inner work

It's important because:

We are not machines. We need to look after ourselves in order to better look after each other and achieve what we want to achieve. Also, keeping the population subdued through stress, loneliness, sickness and anxiety is a feature of late-stage capitalism.

Read more here:

<http://www.weareplanc.org/blog/we-are-all-very-anxious/>

We need to pay particular attention to this when:

When we feel ourselves getting run down, emotionally volatile, or our mental health begins to suffer.

Resources might include:

Meditation, yoga, a nourishing diet, exercise, hanging out with friends... reading, accomplishing personal projects, hobbies, time spent in/with nature.

Action care

Also known as:

That which we do to prepare for, train for and recover from direct action, including trauma and resilience work.

It's important because:

Our bodies, minds and hearts are in a hostile situation, with institutions that want to target, manipulate and control us. Being able to care for our own needs helps us take care of each other and be more resilient.

Read more here:

We need to pay particular attention to this when:

We're planning an action.

Resources might include:

Snacks, rain gear and warm clothing, physical first aid, somatic first aid, welfare teams...

Get more help from:

We are developing training around somatic first aid. Physical first aid training can be organised. Resources for trauma care can be adapted.

Interpersonal care**Also known as:**

This is the "intersectional work", the decolonisation of the self, how we communicate, etc.

It's important because:

We are all the product of our environment. We all internalise the violence inherent in our cultures. We have a duty to do the work that can undo those internalised prejudices and behaviours, so we can learn to interact in a healthier way.

Read more here:**We need to pay particular attention to this when:**

Working intersectionally - whenever our life situations involve a clash of different kinds of oppressed difference, such as race, sexuality, age, gender and so on. This is likely to be any time we interact with others.

Resources might include:

Non-violent communication, compassion, decolonisation training, deep listening spaces, resources for dealing with grief.

A4 Conflict Resolution in *RisingUp!*

Conflicts arise - let's embrace the opportunity for learning and change! Here's how to work through the process:

1. Reflect on things. Are you aware of your own triggers? What fires off for you under certain circumstances? How are you contributing to the situation? Maybe write things down, and/or chat things through with a friend who isn't directly involved (although be aware of your friend's biases)
2. Is a Principle or Value of *RisingUp!* being broken? Find someone who is active in *RisingUp!* who you trust to discuss it with alongside any triggers for yourself, seek a way to listen to the other person / people.
3. Meet face to face with those you are in conflict with - don't try to do this online and the phone isn't great either.
 - a. If the conflict involves misconduct or abuse of power, then this step could be described as "Calling in". Calling in means attempting to find ways to communicate to the perpetrator in a compassionate way, in order to increase the chance of learning and transformative justice – the transformation of the circumstances so that the offence *cannot* happen again.
 - b. When people are being confronted, it is important that they feel safe – otherwise people tend to become defensive-aggressive. Try to ensure the numbers on both 'sides' are roughly even, so that people don't feel ganged up on.
 - c. It may help to have a neutral mediator present. If so, then you can try to find one that everyone agrees to.
 - d. It might be necessary for multiple meetings to occur before there is resolution. This is a process, so give the Conflict Resolution Process (CRP) the time it needs.
 - e. If you don't feel safe enough to meet with them, then don't.

4. There is limited capacity in *RisingUp!* to deal with conflict “centrally”. If none of the above is working, please write your issues down for people in the Movement Care Working Group to review. If that group doesn’t exist or isn’t active, then the fall back is the Holding Group (HG). The Movement Care Working Group (or HG) will endeavor to respond within a month, 1 week for very serious allegations. They may:
 - a. Write back to you with a view point
 - b. Try to find one or two mediators to help
 - c. Propose a solution / make a requirement for behaviour change for someone
5. Once there is resolution, there is always the possibility that the parties re-offend. If that is the case, or if the other person/people refuse to engage with the CRP in the first place, then “calling out” could be used in order to warn others about the damage that could be caused. Calling out should only happen after they have already been called in (or refused to engage). Calling out involves letting the wider network know about the risks involved when engaging with the person/people who caused offence.
6. In extreme cases people may be asked to leave and stop associating with *RisingUp!* - we wouldn't do that lightly as we need each other and we all bring “stuff”.
7. The HG will have the final say. When necessary, the HG will decide whether a Principle and Value is being seriously violated, and if so, will be involved in the process around that violation. The HG has limited capacity and won't always get things right. It isn't seeking a “god like” role and would much prefer conflict to be resolved by those involved. Change will come from love and compassion – let's be the change we want to see!

A5 Panels: A format for active deep listening

Active deep listening may be used to help resolve conflicts. The following details a structured approach:

The purpose of the session of active deep listening is:

- Creating connections through understanding and empathy
- Challenging the separation and stereotypes that we have absorbed from our toxic culture
- The healing that can come from being respectfully listened to

The session:

- Is focussed around a panel of up to 5 people of a specific demographic (acknowledging we all have a variety of identities)
- Makes use of active listening and gives information about that at the start (attention on the panel, friendly faces, keep reactions and comments to yourself, no interruptions, etc)
- Is about those on the panel sharing what they want to, not about those listening getting questions answered.
- Specific questions form the focus for the session, there isn't a Q&A element. If individuals welcome questions they can be taken after the session has finished in private. We ask people to be mindful of questioning. This isn't an intellectual exercise and it certainly isn't a debate, it's an exercise of the heart.
- Is potentially recorded so that the session can be shared, though privacy may deepen the experience
- 5 questions are asked, each person takes their time to respond and is given a second chance to respond.

The Questions

1. What is good about being X?
2. What is hard about being X?

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3. What do you want people to know about being X?
4. What do you never want to happen / hear again?
5. Is there anything you see in the groups not of demographic X which you feel is useful to share, compassionate insights etc?
6. Anything else you want to say?

A6 How things change: Key Texts and Resources

- “This is an Uprising” Paul Engler & Mark Engler
 - ◆ the traditions of mobilisation (mass protest and structure based organising)
 - ◆ the power of hybrid models – e.g. Martin Luther King, Gandhi
 - ◆ the need to polarise public opinion and use momentum escalation
- “Blueprint for a Revolution” Srdja Popovic
 - ◆ How the Serbian revolution succeeded
 - ◆ Use of “dilemma actions”
 - ◆ Use of humour and appealing to younger people
- “How to win. Successful procedures and mechanisms for radical campaign groups” – Roger Hallam, <https://radicalthinktank.wordpress.com/2015/12/08/how-to-win-successful-procedures-and-mechanisms-for-radical-campaign-groups/> Radical Think Tank text
 - ◆ Use of conditional commitment (“I will if you will”)
 - ◆ Attrition and swarm actions
 - ◆ Investment and Olympic principles
- “The End of Protest: A new blueprint for Revolution” Micah White
 - ◆ A complete theory of revolution
 - ◆ Voluntarism, Structuralism, Subjectivism and Theurgism
 - ◆ The need for multiple tactics
- “Don’t think of an Elephant” George Lakoff
 - ◆ Use “nurturing parent” frame rather than the “strict father” frame
 - ◆ Use framing rather than arguing your point and “being right”- trigger emotion
 - ◆ Recognise there are 6 different types of progressives and appeal to them all
- “From Dictatorship to Democracy” Gene Sharp
 - ◆ Need for a grand strategy and sub strategies, also a grand narrative
 - ◆ Focus on the key pillars holding a system in place
 - ◆ Be “above ground” and say what you want (as well as what you don’t want)
- “Counterpower” Tim Gee
 - ◆ There are four stages to change- the four C’s
 - ◆ Consciousness raising then Coordination
 - ◆ There is always a Confrontational stage (then you need to Consolidate the win)
- “The More Beautiful World our Hearts Know is Possible” & “The Ascent of Humanity” Charles Eisenstein
 - ◆ Grounding struggles in compassion – moving away from blame
 - ◆ Separation from ourselves, each other and nature as root causes of issues
 - ◆ Rooting our new story in “inter-being”, “miracles” can flow from this
- Webinars on escalation/momentum organising: Ayni Institute (Carlos Saavedra et al)
 - ◆ Making culture specific- train people in your movement DNA: Story, Strategy and Structure https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4VMyg_TnMXEWatch

- The success of Non-violent resistance – Erica Chenoweth
(Ted Talk <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YJSehRIU34w>)
 - ◆ A revolution needs up to 3.4% of the population to rise up
 - ◆ Non-violent struggles are more successful and more stable
- Emergent Strategy – adrienne maree brown
 - ◆ Organising with a regenerative culture
 - ◆ Building critical relationships as a key to organising

A7 DRAFT Manifesto

1. An Economy for the people and planet

Develop (and measure the progress of) an economy that seeks to maximise well-being and minimise harm. Support the development of a mixed, bio-regionally-focused economy: small private enterprises, [larger cooperatives](#) and public ownership of things best run as monopolies. (Models from [economic democracy](#), [PROUT](#), circular economies and [Green economics](#), with useful lessons from [peer progressives](#) help). Think in 'systems' terms:

- Create the offense of [Ecocide as the 5th International Crime Against Peace](#)
- Ensure that strategies identify (what economists call) 'resource needs'. In promoting renewable energy sources, for example, ensure that the skills base to install and maintain the technology is available ... or can be developed.
- Ensure that spatial planning is not just about 'land use' – it has to be about (among other things) public transport, energy, water, amenities, participation. Seek and treat causes, not symptoms.
- See that 'waste' (including 'waste heat') from one process is an input to another. Use [biomimicry](#).
- See the [precautionary principle](#) as some safeguard to the future
- See that actions lead to multiple beneficial outcomes – promoting cycling as a means of personal transport, for example, reduces carbon dependency, promotes good health and reduces noise pollution – but also requires design to ensure road safety.

2. Reduce the potential for corruption and strengthen democracy

- [Tackle tax havens](#) and tax dodging (manifesto for Tax Justice through the book [Over Here and Undertaxed](#).)
- Tackle inequality which allows the wealthy to have a larger voice (more below)
- Limit the scale of political donations and lobbying ([IDEA's review](#) and ideas for change)
- Support transparency in lobbying (see [Who's Lobbying](#) for more details)
- Localise decision making as far as possible, introduce [liquid democracy](#)
- Prosecute the board members of businesses who break the rules and [tame corporations](#)

3. Tackle the Debt Crisis and prevent another from happening

- Re-introduce capital controls (see [commentaries by NEF](#))
- Re-regulate the financial sector to give complete separation ordinary banking and investments (See the [Charter for a new Financial System](#)). Use a [Financial Transaction Tax](#) to reduce speculation to a minimum. Loans should only be made as sound investments.
- Support diversity and [smaller scale players](#) in the finance sector (like the German model)
- Make it illegal for any enterprise other than the State and local cooperatives to create the nation's money (and create money as a [credit not debt](#))
- Run a citizens debt audit and cancel toxic debts owed by Governments ([CADTM outline debt audits](#))
- Give everyone money to pay off debts (Steve Keens' proposes a [modern debt jubilee](#))
- Spend money into the Economy through a [Green New Deal](#)
- Put credit into the economy by giving everyone a [Citizens income](#)
- Reduce [financialisation](#) of the economy, Cancel [PFI deals](#)
- Media discussions must include someone [who does not support the financial interests](#) (e.g. the City of London)

4. Transform from an economy based on fossil fuels to renewables with reduced consumption

- Undertake a "[Great Transition](#)" of the economy as outlined by NEF
- Localise food production through cooperative, permaculture farms ([Colin Tudge](#) is good to follow on these issues)
- Plan change into a zero carbon country (for example [Zero Carbon Britain](#))
- Use [Green taxes](#), regulations and tariffs to reduce carbon footprints and pollution ([more here](#))
- Invest in energy efficiency, renewable energy and support community ownership (ideas from the [Post carbon institute](#))
- [Reverse desertification](#) across the globe, work with nature (e.g. [regenerative agriculture](#)) and [reforest](#) to capture carbon

5. Tackle inequality and level the playing field

- Promote [cooperatives](#) and [employee owned businesses](#).
- Limit the pay differentials in any business, for example to 15:1
- Introduce a [land value charge](#) (and charges for the use of other [commons](#)) to free land back to ordinary people.
- Remove the charging of interest for loans (other charges for a service remain). Challenge [usury](#) (e.g. [Christian perspective](#)).
- Build publicly, cooperatively owned infrastructure, housing and health services (an overview from [Common Wealth](#) and a debunking of the myth of [public sector inefficiency](#))
- Re-instate the NHS, develop a flexible, child centred education system and support lifelong learning