

# The garden village of New Earswick



**JOSEPH ROWNTREE**  
HOUSING TRUST

# About New Earswick

**Joseph Rowntree began building the garden village of New Earswick in 1904, aiming to provide an alternative to the overcrowded and insanitary housing then available to workers in York. He planned the model village as a self-governing community, with its own Folk Hall, Village Council and school.**

Joseph Rowntree was a successful businessman in the cocoa and confectionery industry. His conviction that it must be possible to provide better housing for people on low incomes led him to acquire land near the village of Earswick, north of York. The building of New Earswick was an attempt to create a balanced village community that was open to any working people, not

just Rowntree employees. At his insistence, houses had gardens with fruit trees and enough ground to grow vegetables. The Trust Deed of the Joseph Rowntree Village Trust (set up in 1904 to build and manage New Earswick) safeguarded generous open green space. All the grass verges were planted with trees – and almost all the roads are named after trees.



*York slums c. 1900 – the appalling conditions Joseph Rowntree witnessed were a driving force behind his decision to build New Earswick.*

# Living in New Earswick

## Community facilities

Situated on the outskirts of York, New Earswick today is a thriving community with plenty of open space. The village has primary and secondary schools, shops and a range of community facilities. Maintained by the Joseph Rowntree Housing Trust (JRHT), there is a permanent commitment to providing a mixed-income community with a range of tenure options, including full ownership, shared ownership and rented accommodation.

The local community centre – the Folk Hall – provides a focus for community activities in the village. It is a busy centre hosting activities such as keep-fit, yoga, snooker, a junior youth club, a summer activity scheme and advice and information services. There is also a cafe which is open at lunchtimes from Tuesday to Friday.

New Earswick has excellent recreational facilities. These include a swimming pool, tennis courts and football, rugby and cricket pitches at the New Earswick Sports and Social Club. The village has a library based in the Integrated Children's Centre at the local primary school, a doctor's surgery and a range of shops, including two general stores, a pet shop and Post Office. A frequent bus service connects the village with York city centre and it is within easy reach of the shopping and leisure facilities at Clifton Moor and Monks Cross.



*An aerial view of the village*

There are several churches within New Earswick, including Methodist and Christadelphian churches and a (Quaker) Friends' Meeting House, with Church of England and Catholic churches nearby.

## Parks and play areas

One third of New Earswick village remains green open space, with large grassed areas that can be used for community events and activities. The River Foss runs alongside the village and provides a green and picturesque walk or cycle into York city centre. Young children are catered for, with two open-access play areas close to the Folk Hall, and older children can make use of the hard surface play area alongside.

## A sense of a community



*There are 36 allotments in New Earswick – fun for all the family*

New Earswick provides many opportunities for community involvement and volunteering.

When Joseph Rowntree founded New Earswick in the early twentieth century, he wanted the village residents to take a large part in the decision-making for their community. This kind of democratic thinking

was unusual at the time – the first general election in which people could vote on equal terms was still years away.

The Village Council, formed in 1907 to manage the Folk Hall and develop a “civic spirit” in the village, was the first attempt at this. Today, residents’ interests are represented by an elected Residents’ Forum and a Community Association which manages the Folk Hall.

### **Environmentally-friendly New Earswick**

In line with Joseph Rowntree’s wishes for local people to be able to grow their own vegetables, the village continues to support 36 allotments in two areas – Willow Bank and Sleeper Path. The allotments are actively used by residents to grow their own fruit and vegetables. A recycling area next to the Sleeper Path allotments can be used for the disposal of garden waste and residents can buy locally produced compost made by the New Earswick Composting Project, which collects kitchen waste from many homes. JRHT is also enhancing the energy efficiency of its oldest properties.

### **Nature reserve**

New Earswick was built using bricks from the brickworks on the outskirts of the village. From 1950 the brickyard was developed into a nature reserve. The reserve is the home of New Earswick Angling Club, which was formed in 1948 and actively involves people of all ages. Managed by local volunteer enthusiasts, it always welcomes new members.



*New Earswick nature reserve – a haven of tranquility*

### **Practice and research**

As well as providing good quality affordable housing, JRHT is committed to testing out new ideas and approaches to housing, care and sustainable communities – demonstrating new forms of tenure, meeting special needs, creating strong self-governing communities and exploring new features of design. The JRHT works together with the Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF) and this allows research to inform practice and practice to inform research.

Many of JRHT's innovative projects and programmes linked to maintaining and

developing sustainable communities are funded directly by the JRF. These include schemes to maintain a good range of shops in the village, a community arts project, and the Lifetime Homes initiative (see page 8).

One of these projects, Community Philosophy aims to promote thinking and action about issues of interest and concern to the whole community. One of the core aims of the philosophy project is to create opportunities for all ages to mix and talk. The HOTEY scheme rewards young people for their contribution to the local community.



*New Earswick Primary School*

### **Parish Council**

New Earswick lies within the larger boundary of New Earswick parish. A Parish Council was created in 1934 to serve the needs of residents. It is made up of ten elected councillors and a clerk. Meetings are held at 7pm on the third Monday of each month at the Folk Hall. All residents are welcome to attend.

### **Schools**

The primary and secondary schools in New Earswick pioneered innovative building design and introduced modern teaching methods. Through the New Earswick community and the primary school, Joseph Rowntree anticipated and influenced national policy and practice. From the start, both schools fostered relationships with the wider community – and they still do so.

Today, the Joseph Rowntree Housing Trust offers ongoing support to both schools, and funds a wide range of practical projects which seek to strengthen links between the school and the wider community. Such projects encompass early years, parenting, youth activity, inter-generational links, school mentoring, community arts and drama, community philosophy, and youth

reward schemes. JRHT nominates 50 per cent of the school governors.

### ***New Earswick Primary School***

New Earswick Primary School was built to a pioneering design in 1912, creating an “open air” school with large, South-facing windows to let in light and air. The school was extremely innovative for the time. Boys and girls were taught the same subjects and the design of the school became a model for others to follow. The school also provided more space per child than that required by the Board of Education. The primary school today is one of eight Integrated Children’s Centres in York, which incorporates the village library and JRHT’s Early Years Little Rowans provision, making it a hub of learning and support for local families.

[www.newearswickprimary.co.uk](http://www.newearswickprimary.co.uk)

### ***Joseph Rowntree School***

The secondary school was built in 1941. The 2007 Ofsted report shows the school is “a good school with some outstanding features”. It also noted that “the quality of care, guidance and support provided by the school is outstanding”.

In 2006, the Joseph Rowntree School successfully secured £27million for a complete rebuild – a unique opportunity to build an outstanding place of learning for young people and the community which will be completed in late 2009.

The JRHT has commissioned a design champion for the school and is supporting consultation with the local community. It is helping the school to deliver the Government’s ‘Transforming Education’ agenda.

Already a Technology Specialist School, the school has recently been awarded 'Project Faraday status' to inspire students and encourage the take-up of science subjects. It is also aiming for 'access and inclusion' status, to reflect both the plans for a new autism unit and its relationships with the wider community.

[www.josephrowntreeschool.co.uk](http://www.josephrowntreeschool.co.uk)

### **Little Rowans**

The Little Rowans playgroup, run by JRHT, meets on Monday and Wednesday afternoons, from 1pm to 3pm, providing places for two-year-olds. The playgroup is an ideal way to help children gain confidence and be more independent before they move on to the pre-school group. It has an active parents' group that always welcomes new members.

*Little Rowans*



*The design for the new secondary school in New Earswick has been approved.*

The Little Rowans pre-school group, also run by the JRHT, meets every morning from 9am to 12 noon during term-time, at the Integrated Children's Centre. Places are available for three- to five-year-olds, although children often move up to the Primary School nursery at four years old. This Ofsted-registered provision is supported by qualified and experienced staff, who deliver activities to meet the National Curriculum for the age group.



# New Earswick homes

New Earswick offers a wide range of housing tenure options, including full ownership, shared ownership and rented accommodation. New Earswick also offers a range of accommodation for older people and adults with physical and learning difficulties.

Shared ownership enables residents to buy a share of their home whilst renting the remaining part. Accommodation includes flats, bungalows and two-, three- or four-bedroom houses. Many are maintained by JRHT's own Direct Labour Organisation, based just outside the village. A community improvement suggestion scheme allows households in the village to vote on what work is carried out each year.

## Mixed tenure housing

The JRHT pioneered the first 'mixed tenure' scheme in the UK, at Juniper Close. It later

refined this to create fully flexible tenure for all properties built in Alder Way. Residents have the choice of full rental or shared ownership, with 25, 50 or 75 per cent ownership. They can 'staircase up' through the options towards complete ownership if circumstances allow.

If people get into financial difficulty and their mortgage repayments are at risk, JRHT can choose to allow 'reverse staircasing'. This means that JRHT buys back shares in the property, enabling the occupier to become a tenant. Importantly, this allows people to remain in the same neighbourhood and avoids repossession or eviction. JRHT pioneered reverse staircasing in 1989.

## Lifetime Homes

In the late 1980s, the JRF became particularly concerned about the quality of



*New Earswick homes*





*A development of six eco-homes at Elm Tree Mews*

British housing and how inaccessible and unsuitable many houses were for people, from those with young children to frail older people or those with disabilities. Lifetime Homes have 16 design features that ensure a new house or flat will meet the needs of most households. This does not mean that every family is surrounded by things that they do not need. The emphasis is on accessibility and design features that make the home flexible enough to meet whatever comes along in life: a teenager with a broken leg, a family member with serious illness, or parents carrying in heavy shopping and dealing with a pushchair. All JRHT properties built since the late 1980s have incorporated lifetime features, which also enables adaptations to be made easily in response to changing needs.

### **Elm Tree Mews**

Elm Tree Mews is an exciting contemporary scheme bringing the Joseph Rowntree Housing Trust's vision for high-quality, affordable and sustainable housing to the garden village. Situated in the heart of New Earswick, next to the Folk Hall, Elm Tree Mews offers six homes on a mixed tenure basis: four three-bedroom houses, one two-bedroom first-floor apartment and one one-bedroom ground floor apartment.

The properties are built to Lifetime Homes standards. The scheme also meets the standards of security and crime prevention set out in 'secured by design' accreditation. Elm Tree Mews houses achieve very high standards of energy efficiency.

## **JRHT residents' satisfaction survey 2007**

The 2007 JRHT residents' survey revealed excellent levels of satisfaction from New Earswick residents. All residents who rent were surveyed and 430 responded – 57 per cent of the total. Over 90 per cent of respondents were either “fairly satisfied” or “very satisfied” with the overall service provided by JRHT, up from 84 per cent in 2004. 91 per cent were content with their accommodation (compared with 84 per cent in 2004). Some 90 per cent of residents were satisfied with New Earswick as a place to live and 91 per cent were happy with the repairs and maintenance service from JRHT.

The performance of the JRHT has improved across all areas surveyed since the previous survey in 2004.

### **Red Lodge**

Red Lodge is an integrated care facility for older people. Accommodation consists of 63 self-contained apartments and seven bed-sitting rooms. It is suitable for a range of needs: from those people who have no care needs but want to live in a supportive environment, through to people who require the full services of a residential care home. At Red Lodge, independence, privacy and dignity are given the highest priority (called Extra Care), which creates a supportive, relaxed atmosphere in which to live, at the very heart of the community.

### **Hartrigg Oaks**

Hartrigg Oaks was the first continuing care retirement community in the UK. It opened in 1998 and has 152 bungalows and a 42-bed care home, together with a range of communal facilities.

Hartrigg Oaks offers an ideal retirement option for people aged over 60. The availability of care and support when needed allows residents to remain independent and live life to the full in a socially active environment. For the majority of people who join this vibrant community, Hartrigg Oaks provides a home for life, with individual housing surrounding a central care home. This means that many of the worries that people have about ageing are addressed, allowing them to get on with enjoying retirement. In order to maintain a vibrant, mixed community, a wide range of ages is encouraged. Although no upper age limit is set, priority is given to the youngest applicants. Applications are subject to a health assessment and submission of a financial statement.

# Safety

## Policing

New Earswick is a stable community with a crime rate lower than the York average, making it a safer place to live, work and raise a family. Positive measures adopted by JRHT include working closely with the police. JRHT:

- receives regular updates from the police on recent incidents;
- takes joint action on any residents who create disturbances;
- contributes to local partnerships; and
- funds local projects, such as the Community Philosophy project, to understand and address issues around crime and community safety.

The neighbourhood police team for New Earswick and Huntington includes one Police Sergeant, one Police Constable and three Police Community Support Officers, working in shifts. They can be contacted at the police station on Fulford Road.

## Neighbourhood Watch

There are a number of active Neighbourhood Watch groups in the village, who work closely with the police and JRHT to keep residents informed of any relevant issue which may impact on the community.



*The play park offers activities for children of all ages*

# For more information, or to register an interest in housing, contact:

Joseph Rowntree  
Housing Trust

[www.jrht.org.uk](http://www.jrht.org.uk)

Tel: Leasehold and lettings team  
01904 735000

e-mail: [information@jrht.org.uk](mailto:information@jrht.org.uk)

For more information about the  
Folk Hall, Tel: 01904 769621

Picture credits: All photos © Kippa Matthews,  
except p.2: Joseph Rowntree Archive,  
p.3: Peter Smith, p.4: Paul Box, p.11:  
Chris Steele-Perkins/Magnum

© Joseph Rowntree Housing Trust, 2008

*This leaflet is printed on paper made of 80% recycled fibre. This paper has been certified by the Forest Stewardship Council.*

*A cricket match in the village*

This information can be provided in your own language.

我們也用您們的語言提供這個信息 (Cantonese)

এই তথ্য আপনার নিজের ভাষায় দেয়া যেতে পারে। (Bengali)

Ta informacja może być dostarczona w twoim (Polish)  
własnym języku.

Bu bilgiyi kendi dilinizde almanız mümkündür. (Turkish)

یہ معلومات آپ کی اپنی زبان (بولی) میں بھی مہیا کی جاسکتی ہیں۔ (Urdu)

 01904 735000



**Available in  
other formats**

