

editorial

Remembering Terry Patterson

By Gill Main, G.Main@leeds.ac.uk
University of Leeds, UK

Rod Hick, hickr@cardiff.ac.uk
Cardiff University, UK

Caroline Paskell, Caroline.Paskell@researchinpractice.org.uk
Research in Practice, UK

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Our fellow Board member Terry Patterson died late last year. Terry was a hugely valued member of the JPSJ Board – valued both for the deep insight he brought to the journal’s intersection of policy, practice and research and for the warmth and humour that he brought to our meetings. Terry was one of our longest-serving members, having joined in 2002 when the journal was known as *Benefits*. His loss is felt keenly by current and former members and this tribute combines reflections from many who knew him over the years of his work on the journal.

Before joining, Terry was already known to Board members as a leading welfare rights adviser, very expert in the field, and always aware of strategic issues as well as the importance of supporting individuals to obtain their rights. Terry had worked in welfare rights for over 30 years, and he helped others understand the obscure aspects of government plans in this area, especially the move towards digitalisation. He had a tremendous amount of knowledge of the intricacies of the benefit system, but he always almost downplayed his intellect and understanding, and was able to explain complex legislation in an accessible, intelligible and frequently humorous way. Terry brought unequalled practical experience and understanding of issues of welfare rights and of social justice. His major contribution to the journal was to maintain and strengthen the link between the theoretical and academic, and the harder worlds of politics and practice. Terry always had his finger on the pulse of pressing and emerging issues, and he often prompted the Editorial Board to commission articles or whole sections on aspects of welfare policy that were not getting the attention they deserved – such as the appeals system or lack of access to legal aid.

Terry contributed across the journal, including guest-editing, but he had a lead role for many years as section co-editor of In Practice/Policy and Practice. This section is one way in which JPSJ has been different, as it tries to bridge the divide between academia and practitioners, especially in welfare rights. Terry kept our feet on the ground and was always aware of current debates and what would be of interest to

readers. Editing was a task he performed very assiduously and he was a constant source of ideas and inspiration. This section and JPSJ overall benefited from Terry's grounded understanding of the lived experiences of poverty and his detailed knowledge of the policy context and practices relating to poverty and welfare. Terry had a number of papers published in JPSJ (in 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2008 (twice), 2009 and 2014) and in 2015 he co-edited a special issue on social justice in Scotland. His clear commitment to social justice came through in all his contributions to the journal, as it drove his work in his many other professional roles and his early work supporting people with mental health needs and working to address their housing needs.

Over many years, the journal benefited from the grounded insights Terry brought from his welfare advice work in the North West of England including with Manchester Advice and Manchester City Council and in his representative roles informing regional and national strategy, policy and funding in this area, including with Access to Advice, Greater Manchester Welfare Rights Advisers Group (GMWRAG), the National Association of Welfare Rights Advisers (NAWRA) and the LGA's Advisers Group. Terry championed the JPSJ's role in bridging academia, policy and practice. With his instinctive concern for social justice and informed perspective on the reality of living in poverty, Terry helped the journal to broaden its scope and steer towards greater internationalisation while keeping our attention on its relevance for frontline work. Terry personified one of the founding aims of the journal: to connect frontline welfare rights practice with policy debates and academic research. He straddled all three.

Terry was very committed to the journal over many years. He always seemed to be there, hardly missing a meeting across almost two decades. He worked hard and without fanfare – truly an unsung hero. Having his company at our meetings was a particular delight. We greatly appreciated his knowledge and his gentle but robust ways of discussing editorial and wider issues. He was a man of strong convictions and was always up for a serious discussion about issues that were relevant to ensuring claimants got their rights. He was exceptionally self-effacing, but his observations were always worth listening to, and often very pithy.

Having Terry on the Board also meant that our meetings were greatly enhanced by his wry sense of humour and the particular warmth of his personality. He brought to the meetings a delightful and mischievous sense of humour, which could be waspish but never unkind. A wry comment would be preceded by the ghost of a smile: blink and you will have missed it; spot it and prepare yourself for a treat. We remember his quiet smile, with his bright eyes creasing, and his chuckles when something had caught his sense of humour. It has rightly been said that Terry had one of the best smiles in the business. His quiet manner also concealed a mischievous sense of humour. One member reflected that "I can hear his distinctive voice now as I write this."

Terry's absence will be felt in his intellectual input, his depth of expertise and his personal presence. In addition to the shared memories which have been combined throughout this tribute, individual members said of Terry: "He was a person of calm integrity who I greatly admired and respected." "He wore his responsibilities lightly and was a real pleasure to work with." "We appreciated his incisive observations in relation to social security developments in the UK and his wit in conversation in-and-around Editorial Board meetings." "For me, the journal is closely bound up with memories of Terry; I was so glad to have him on the Board when I started as he was so welcoming and over the years I greatly appreciated his depth of insight and the positive challenge that he brought to our discussions – and his smile." "I pay

tribute to his skills and his depth of knowledge – but also to his dedication, and his warmth and friendship. We will all miss him.” “I never lost my admiration for him – as a person, as an adviser and as a friend. But most of all I remember his smile, his manner, his love of sport, his persona and his joy of life. I’ll miss him and the world is a worse place without him.”

Expressing Terry’s significance for so many of us on the journal, one contributor reflected that:

‘I was a willing Board member of a journal whose ethos of connecting the worlds of academic social policy and front-line services was central to its being and Terry was the perfect colleague for such an enterprise – he knew his stuff inside out, was supportive and collaborative and was a joy to work with. One of the good guys. RIP’

Conflict of interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.