



JUSTICE

Join JUSTICE

Make a difference



'Dear Mum' © Patrick Maguire

Artist and child victim of miscarriage of justice

About JUSTICE

JUSTICE is an independent law reform and human rights charity working to improve the justice system – criminal, civil and administrative - in the United Kingdom. Our vision is of fair, accessible and efficient legal processes, in which people’s rights are protected, and which reflect the country’s international reputation for upholding and promoting the rule of law.

For most people, the UK legal system is unaffordable and difficult to understand. This is creating a two-tier justice system that excludes or misrepresents people of moderate means as well as the most vulnerable in our society.

JUSTICE acts as a bridge between the public and the legal system, conducting research, briefing Parliamentarians and intervening in key cases in the public interest.

JUSTICE works to ensure that every person receives access to justice.



Our research is achieved primarily through working parties. We rely on our members and other experts to help us identify where the system is faltering and arrive at practical, evidence-based solutions that will ensure fairer processes for all. These recommendations are published in our working party reports which are sent to all relevant legal bodies and personnel and made available online.

Our work doesn’t stop when a report is published. Implementation is a key part of each project and continues as long as there is work to be done. Our convening power gives us influence with senior decision-makers to change the discourse around the quality of our justice system and ensure fairer processes for all.

Our working parties

Criminal Justice

We have an excellent track record on criminal justice reform. Features of the legal infrastructure that are taken for granted – the Crown Prosecution Service, the Criminal Cases Review Commission and more – were proposed by JUSTICE. Our recent work has focussed on addressing the delays and complexities during investigation and trial, while recognising the needs of vulnerable victims and defendants. We are now exploring the reasons for racial disparity in the youth justice system.

Civil Justice

Our civil justice work has been instrumental in shaping the structural changes to Her Majesty's Courts and Tribunals (HMCTS) Reform Programme. Our recommendation for a registrar (or case officer) to ease the administrative burden on judges has been realised. We continue to work with HMCTS to ensure digitisation improves the experience of justice. We are currently looking at how our system could more effectively and fairly deal with housing disputes.

Administrative Justice

Our administrative justice work helps to ensure that individuals can effectively enforce their rights against the State. This is showcased historically through our work on the Human Rights Act, the Freedom of Information Act, Judicial Review and our proposal for the Ombudsman system in the 1960s. Recent work has focused on ensuring a fair and effective immigration and asylum appeals system and re-designing review of school exclusions. Since 2018 JUSTICE has also provided the Secretariat for the Administrative Justice Council, which is chaired by the Senior President of Tribunals and advises government and the judiciary.

System Wide

Some issues affect the entire justice system and we work where systemic change is needed. Recently we have highlighted the racial and gender disparity in our judiciary and continue to call for inclusive recruitment processes. We have also demonstrated that hearings can be unnecessarily intimidating, confusing and upsetting for lay people and recommended accessible language and procedure to ensure their effective participation. Currently we are investigating how the justice system can better respond to major incidents through inquests and inquiries. We are also publishing an update on *Increasing Judicial Diversity*.

Our recent Working Party Reports

Complex and Lengthy Criminal Trials (2016)
Mental Health and Fair Trial (2017)
Prosecuting Sexual Offences (2019)

Our Working Party Chairs

Sir David Calvert-Smith
Sir David Latham
HH Peter Rook QC

Our recent Working Party Reports

Delivering Justice in an Age of Austerity (2015)
Preventing Digital Exclusion from Online Justice (2018)

Our Working Party Chairs

The Rt. Hon Sir Stanley Burnton
Amanda Finlay CBE

Our recent Working Party Reports

Immigration and Asylum Appeals – a Fresh Look (2018)
Challenging School Exclusions (2019)

Our Working Party Chairs

Professor Sir Ross Cranston
Professor Richard de Friend

Our recent Working Party Reports

What is a Court? (2015)
Increasing Judicial Diversity (2017)
Understanding Courts (2019)

Our Working Party Chairs

Alexandra Marks CBE
Nathalie Lieven QC
Sir Nicholas Blake

Who we work with

JUSTICE is in a unique position to harness legal experience and expertise to ensure our recommendations actually reform justice processes. Essential to the credibility of our voice is the support we receive from our members and supporters who include the senior judiciary, key policymakers, top law firms and barristers' chambers, as well as leading political figures. We are independent, impartial and non-political.

'For more than 60 years JUSTICE has been at the forefront of reimagining the justice system. We have much to thank it for and it deserves our support.'

Lord Thomas of Cwmgiedd, Lord Chief Justice of England and Wales

'A law firm's purpose is to engage with the legal community to support access to and equality before the law. There is no better organisation to partner with and support, with those aims, than JUSTICE. That is why Allen & Overy has been proud to have supported them financially, through pro bono work and expertise and as an advocate for their work for many years.'

Karen Seward, Partner Allen & Overy

'It is rare for legal reformers to be both radical and influential – but JUSTICE has been pulling it off for more than 60 years.'

Lord Anderson of Ipswich KBE QC

'JUSTICE's 'Preventing Digital Exclusion from Online Justice' report is the first to look at 'Assisted Digital' in detail – and, typically of JUSTICE, produced in good time to inform all future stages of the reforms.'

The Rt. Hon. Lord Briggs of Westbourne, JUSTICE of the UK Supreme Court

'I am delighted to receive the 'Understanding Courts' report on behalf of the judiciary - and embrace its far-reaching, incisive recommendations.'

The Rt. Hon. Sir Ernest Ryder, Senior President of Tribunals

'At Freshfields we are proud to have been longstanding supporters of the important work of JUSTICE. They have been at the forefront of key reforms on access to and the administration of justice for more than 60 years, making our legal system more open and fairer for us all. As a leading law firm we understand that it is vital that this work is safeguarded for the benefit of this and future generations.'

Deba Das, Partner Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer

In focus



'Self Portrait', Patrick Maguire

For much of our history, JUSTICE investigated claims of wrongful conviction. Once the Criminal Cases Review Commission was established, we focused our attention on research and policy. Nevertheless, minimising the risk and consequences of unfair trial remains a priority for our criminal justice work.

When a person is released from prison after serving years for a crime they did not commit, there is a confusing rush of emotions. Freedom is hard earned but the life previously known no longer exists. Many people lose their family, friends and occupation. Picking up the pieces becomes a life-long struggle.

'My art is a constant battle between the pain of my past and efforts to bring colour and joy into my life.' - Patrick Maguire, artist and wrongly convicted in connection with the Guildford pub bombings in 1974.

In 2018 we published *Supporting Exonerees: Ensuring Accessible, Consistent and Continuing Support*. Drawing upon research and the experiences of former JUSTICE clients and other exonerees, the report demonstrates how wrongly convicted people are abandoned by the State. This includes the practical assistance needed upon release, the negative impact of incarceration on mental health and the difficulties readjusting to everyday life. Support is inconsistent, must be sought out and an apology is rarely forthcoming.

To make matters worse, a change in law now requires applicants for compensation to demonstrate their innocence. This is an almost impossible task, which excludes those deserving of compensation from the one main method of rebuilding their lives.

In 2018 the Supreme Court heard the wrongful conviction cases of Sam Hallam and Victor Nealon, who served 7 and 17 years respectively in prison. They were both denied compensation despite having alibi and DNA evidence. They argued that their right to the presumption of innocence was violated by the new law. We intervened to highlight the devastating impact of the test and its flawed premise in Parliament. The Supreme Court, by a majority, held that the right was not violated because the case law of the European Court of Human Rights was unclear. The case will now be considered by the European Court, and we will intervene again.

Join JUSTICE

Make a difference

'JUSTICE provides an enormously important contribution to the development of law. I can't conceive of any arguments why young lawyers shouldn't want to be supportive of JUSTICE; if not active members of it.'

Lord Kerr of Tonaghmore, Justice of the Supreme Court of the United Kingdom

Join our Membership – from £40/year

Our members are the foundation of everything we do. Membership is available for everyone involved in the legal profession from law students to Supreme Court Justices, small companies to large international firms. A discounted rate of £15/year is available for students. As a Member of JUSTICE you will receive our monthly newsletter, discounts to our conferences, free attendance at our members' events, the right to vote at our AGM and the chance to get involved in working parties. Become a member now and give your voice to JUSTICE.

Become a Friend – from £20/month

Friends are supporters who go the extra mile by donating £20 or more every month. This helps fund our core work and ensure that we continue to make the UK legal system more efficient, effective and fair. Friends receive our monthly newsletter, an invitation to our annual Friends event and a thank you in our annual report.

Make a donation

Whether a one-time donation of £100 or by joining our JUSTICE60 giving circle, your donation will help us grow our work and increase our impact. Donors will receive a personal thank you letter, updates on our work and the satisfaction of knowing you are helping a small charity punch above its weight. Together we can ensure access to justice for everyone and ensure the UK legal system continues to be a world leader.

To become a member or make a donation please contact us at:

www.justice.org.uk/support-justice | membership@justice.org.uk | 020 7329 5100

Want to hear more?

 @JUSTICEhq |  @JUSTICEhq |  www.justice.org.uk