



JUSTICE

ANNUAL REPORT
2020 - 2021



JUSTICE

ESTABLISHED IN 1957, JUSTICE IS
AN ALL-PARTY LAW REFORM AND
HUMAN RIGHTS ORGANISATION
WORKING TO STRENGTHEN
THE JUSTICE SYSTEM –
ADMINISTRATIVE, CIVIL AND
CRIMINAL – IN THE UK.

We strive for a fair, accessible, and equal justice system. Our work aims to propose practical, realistic, and timely changes, addressing some of the most urgent issues facing the United Kingdom's legal framework.

We use our voice to influence and improve policies and practice, while not being afraid to scrutinise and challenge developments in the justice system that threaten the nation's adherence to human rights and the rule of law.

OUR VISION AND MISSION

We work towards achieving our vision in four key ways:

We are an all-party membership organisation, drawn primarily from the legal profession with a common commitment to the rule of law and the fair administration of justice.

Through our membership, we have strong connections and working relationships with both political decision-makers and the judiciary.

OUR MEMBERS ARE CRITICAL TO JUSTICE'S SUCCESS. THEY HELP SHAPE OUR PRIORITIES; THEIR EXPERTISE AND PERSPECTIVE ARE A VALUABLE RESOURCE TO OUR STAFF; AND THEY INCREASE OUR INFLUENCE. WE ALSO NEED OUR MEMBERS' SUPPORT TO MAINTAIN A SUSTAINABLE FUNDING BASE FOR OUR WORK.

1

We convene working parties of our members and other experts to identify and address areas ripe for reform. Supported by our staff, the working parties provide evidence-based analysis and propose practical solutions by drawing on leading academic research, international and comparative material, and lived experiences of people interacting with the justice system.

We work towards implementing our working party recommendations and use our reports to inform, influence, and collaborate with decision-makers and other key actors.

2

We act as a bridge between the law and lawmakers, briefing politicians from all parties on draft legislation relevant to the justice system in the UK and devolved Parliaments. We also respond to consultations from the Government, parliamentary committees, and other significant bodies within our areas of expertise.

3

We hold informative events on our work and related issues, and on access to the legal profession for our members and other interested parties.

4

We submit third-party interventions before the UK Supreme Court and the European Court of Human Rights in cases that raise critical points of law in our areas of expertise.

FROM THE PRESIDENT



This report sets out another productive, impactful year at JUSTICE. Though the pandemic drags on, the team continues to deliver top quality and timely legal work; hold fascinating and important events; and raise funds to keep the whole show on the road. A huge thank you to the staff and to those members of JUSTICE who have supported the work, in so many ways, over the past year.

I don't need to tell you that these are dangerous times for our constitution. This year has seen the Government begin its promised revision of some of the fundamentals of good governance and the rule of law in this country, with reviews on judicial review and on the Human Rights Act. It has been heartening, though not surprising, to see JUSTICE's leadership role in response.

As a Member of the House of Lords, I have personally benefited from JUSTICE's detailed briefing in Westminster, and its support in dulling the edges of some particularly pernicious pieces of legislation. The Overseas Operations Bill, the Covert Human Intelligence Sources Bill, and now the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill all include provisions that should horrify every lawyer concerned about

human rights and the rule of law. Some victories were achieved (and are noted below) but we need to be vigilant. JUSTICE's weighty voice from the legal profession has never been more important.

It is also a time of change at JUSTICE. After eight and a half years with us, Andrea is leaving JUSTICE for the Howard League for Penal Reform. Her time at JUSTICE has been marked by a revitalisation of the charity, and a significant increase in its profile and punch. She has built a tremendous team and network of supporters to continue the work, and I have no doubt that a fantastic Director will be recruited in her place. We are also losing our wonderful Legal Director, Jodie Blackstock, who after 12 years with JUSTICE will be returning to the Bar. I know that I speak on behalf of everyone when I thank Andrea and Jodie and wish them well in their new adventures.

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Helena Kennedy". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a small dot at the end.

BARONESS KENNEDY OF THE SHAWS QC
PRESIDENT, JUSTICE COUNCIL

FROM THE DIRECTOR



It has been another bumper year at JUSTICE, despite the strangeness of the times. As these pages attest, our staff have continued to deliver great quality work across all aspects of the charity.

JUSTICE's greatest asset is our membership, and the depth and breadth of their experience was on display across the year. We have delivered two new working party reports on issues of significant public concern: the racial disparity in the youth justice system, and the way in which benefits decisions are, and should be, taken. Both reports raise serious flags about the importance of respect and dignity in how the justice system operates and how, without reform, its legitimacy may be undermined by declining public confidence. We also used advisory groups of our members to frame and give weight to our responses to the Independent Reviews of Administrative Law and on the Human Rights Act, as well as the Government's consultation on judicial review.

This year saw us come to the end of our four-year Strategy and elaborate a new one, which increases our focus on accountability for government decision-making. We have continued to find new ways to work and have managed to meet our fundraising targets and remain on a solid financial footing. My particular thanks to the amazing JUSTICE60 for their

ongoing support, and especially to their leader Karyl Nairn QC for her hard work and incredible style.

As Helena has noted, this will be my final report to you as Director of JUSTICE. The last eight years have been incredibly rewarding professionally and enjoyable personally, and I leave with more friends in the law than is in any way normal. I am grateful to the terrific staff who have worked alongside me and have no doubt that they will continue to deliver outstanding work to help improve the justice system. Finally, since my departure was announced, I have learned that I have a reputation for arm twisting! My huge thanks to everyone who I have cajoled into speaking/donating/chairing/serving or otherwise doing something for JUSTICE over the years. Thank you.

Though I am leaving as Director, in moving to the Howard League, I am really not going far. I look forward to seeing you in my new life as a supportive member and Friend of JUSTICE.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Andrea Coomber".

ANDREA COOMBER
DIRECTOR

RESEARCH: REFORMING THE SYSTEM

WORKING PARTIES

JUSTICE has continued to work closely with our members on our working parties, making recommendations that challenge unfairness across the justice system. 2020-21 has been another busy year, with the publication of two working party reports and two new groups starting work.

TACKLING RACIAL INJUSTICE: CHILDREN AND THE YOUTH JUSTICE SYSTEM

In February 2021, JUSTICE published the Working Party report **Tackling Racial Injustice: Children and the Youth Justice System**, chaired by **Sandra Paul** of Kingsley Napley. The report examined the causes of disproportionate representation of ethnic minority children in the justice system in England and Wales. It made 45 recommendations which seek to increase decision-makers' understanding of the child appearing before them. In doing so, the aim is to eradicate or at least minimise the bias, suspicion, and misperception that pervades the exercise of power, so as to meet ethnic minority communities' expectations of fair and impartial treatment at each stage of and interaction with the criminal justice system.

It is commendable that, in recent years, the total number of

children arrested has reduced, and there are fewer first-time entrants to the youth justice system. However, the positive developments have not been shared equally. Today, the number of ethnic minority children in custody remains at 52%, despite making up only 18% of the child population.



Illustration by @bootzmama

The report addressed the issues faced by ethnic minority children through each stage of the criminal justice system, starting with the causes for greater suspicion, such as stop and search, the gangs violence matrix, the inappropriate use of drill music as bad character evidence, and the operation of the PREVENT programme. It found that ethnic minority children are not always treated as children, with criminal justice agencies adopting approaches more suited to adults than to those who are still developing in terms of maturity.

While the problems are complex, the solutions we proposed are straightforward. This is because we took best practice examples as they exist now, arguing that they should be

RESEARCH: REFORMING THE SYSTEM

applied widely to all children, not just White children. For example, key recommendations include abolishing the gangs violence matrix, suspending the blanket use of ‘section 60’ stop and search powers, creating a national framework for diversion, and ensuring there is high-standard cultural competency training for all criminal justice agencies.

These changes would help to build a child-first approach into the justice system, with sources of bias and discrimination addressed through changes to policy, institutional culture, and practices. In sum, it is the responsibility of the system, and not the children, to change.

Our thanks to the Barrow Cadbury Trust, The Blgrave Trust, and Travers Smith LLP for generously supporting this work. We are also grateful to Clare Parkinson and bootzmama for their work on the child-friendly version of the report.

‘Each recommendation, if implemented, would have a positive effect in reducing the number of BAME children in our youth justice system and the disproportionate outcomes which are currently so evident.’

Sandra Paul, Kingsley Napley

REFORMING BENEFITS DECISION-MAKING

This joint JUSTICE and Administrative Justice Council Working Party, chaired by **Lord Low of Dalston CBE**, published its report in July 2021. The aim was to improve administrative and procedural elements of the benefits system, from initial decision-making through to appeals, focusing on central government administered working age benefits.

The benefits decision-making system forms a huge part of the administrative justice landscape in the United Kingdom; however, the Working Party found that it is performing poorly, particularly for those with health conditions, disabilities, and other vulnerabilities. Many claimants are incorrectly denied the benefits that they are entitled to, demonstrated by the high success rates of appeals. This is due to a lack of knowledge regarding entitlements; decision-making processes that are confusing, inaccessible, and time-consuming; and barriers and inefficiencies caused by inflexible digital systems.

The report made 44 recommendations to build a system that prioritises dignity and respect that places the user at its heart, including:

- Improving health and disability assessments, for example, by opt-in audio recording, greater clarity over responsibility

RESEARCH: REFORMING THE SYSTEM

for obtaining medical evidence, and ending outsourcing of assessments.

- Better data collection and evaluation, including on protected characteristics of claimants, the setting of claimant commitments, and the use of easements and sanctions.
- Clear structures and rules to prevent the inconsistent and unfair application of discretion.
- Greater transparency on the use of automation.
- Establishing clear, public performance standards and an independent reviewer or regulator for welfare benefits.
- The removal of the mandatory reconsideration stage so that claimants are able to appeal directly to the Social Security Tribunal, but with an automatic internal review required by the Department for Work and Pensions once an appeal has been lodged.
- Greater use of technology to streamline the appeals process and greater use of tribunal caseworkers to reduce adjournments.
- The adoption of a ‘no wrong door’ approach to applying for Universal Credit and managing a claim, including meaningful alternative channels of engagement.
- An advice portal which provides information on organisations providing welfare benefits advice and which should be clearly signposted to on all webpages, forms, and decision letters.

Our thanks to the Standard Life Foundation, BlackRock, and Weil, Gotshal & Manges (London) LLP for funding this important work.

“I am heartened by the report’s analysis of the administrative and procedural problems. The tone of the report is very sensitive and diplomatic, and I hope that the DWP listens. It will make a massive difference to people struggling and pushed into poverty.”

Debbie Abrahams MP



Reforming Benefits Decision-Making report launch, 8 July 2021

RESEARCH: REFORMING THE SYSTEM

WORKING PARTIES IN PROGRESS

- **Improving Access to Justice for Separating Families**, chaired by **Professor Gillian Douglas** and with generous support from Mishcon de Reya LLP and the Eleanor Rathbone Charitable Trust, aims to make safe, fair, and sustainable outcomes more accessible to families in the Family Court, focusing on vulnerable court users, unrepresented litigants, and the child(ren) at the centre of each dispute. The Working Party plans to report in early 2022.
- **A Parole System Fit For Purpose**, chaired by **Professor Nicola Padfield** and supported by Hogan Lovells, aims to examine the role, powers, and procedures of the Parole Board and the broader parole system of England and Wales. It is considering whether the Parole Board's decision-making processes are fair and fit for purpose. The review places particular focus on groups overrepresented throughout the criminal justice system and those who face particular challenges in participating. Its work is taking place alongside the Government's own 'Root and Branch Review' of the Parole System, announced in October 2020.

"A lack of equality, fairness, and equity means our justice system is broken. It may profess to bring fairness for some but there is a lot of unfairness to others. JUSTICE is committed to pushing for systematic change and putting users' interests at the heart of the system. All lawyers should be proud to be a member of it."

Professor Leslie Thomas QC

'The work that JUSTICE does is critical to the proper functioning of our justice system.'

Sam Cottman, Director of Pro Bono, Travers Smith LLP

To read our published reports and learn more about the members of our current working parties, visit [justice.org.uk](https://www.justice.org.uk).

RESPONDING TO POLICY CHANGE

CONSULTATIONS

In October 2020, we responded to the **Independent Review of Administrative Law (IRAL)** which was considering reforms to the substance of and procedures for, judicial review. Our response was shaped by an advisory group chaired initially by **The Rt. Hon. Lord Dyson PC** and latterly by **Professor Alison Young**. In the response we opposed reforms that would restrict the availability of judicial review and undermine the key constitutional role of the courts in ensuring that government acts lawfully, including codification of judicial review grounds, making certain categories of executive power non-justiciable, and restrictions on the test for standing, time limits and the duty of candour.

In May 2021, the Government released its response to the IRAL in the form of a consultation on proposals put forward by the IRAL panel, as well as a range of other measures which would limit courts' remedial discretion, strengthen ouster clauses, and reintroduce a distinction between jurisdictional and non-jurisdictional errors. With input from the advisory group, we responded to the consultation opposing these measures as well as the removal of Cart judicial reviews put forward by the IRAL panel. We are grateful to The Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust for supporting this work.

In March 2021, we submitted a response to the **Independent Human Rights Act Review (IHRAR)**. The IHRAR is looking at the functioning of the Human Rights Act 1998 (HRA). We convened an advisory group of experts, chaired by **Sir Michael Tugendhat**, to inform our response. Despite the diverse range of experience of our advisory group there was strong consensus that the HRA is functioning well. We highlighted the risks involved in making changes to the HRA including to the peace process in Northern Ireland, leaving individuals without domestic remedies for rights breaches and increased cases before the European Court of Human Rights. We also included research on the use of the interpretive provision (section 3) of the HRA which demonstrated that it is rarely used in a progressive manner.

“Among other things, JUSTICE has a vital role in ensuring that the courts can properly hold government to account, which is fundamental for good governance and the rule of law. JUSTICE is independent, expert, and authoritative. The legal landscape of the country is richer for it.”

The Rt. Hon. Lord Dyson PC

RESPONDING TO POLICY CHANGE

BRIEFINGS

The last year has been exceptionally busy for JUSTICE's parliamentary work, as a result of the Government's heavy legislative programme. Unfortunately, many of the Bills proposed have presented significant human rights and rule of law concerns, and we have sought to highlight such issues to help inform the debate in Parliament in each case.

JUSTICE began briefing on the **Covert Human Intelligence Sources (Criminal Conduct) Bill** in September 2020, which ultimately passed into law in March 2021. Our fundamental concern was that the Bill would create an unprecedented power for public bodies to authorise covert operatives (known as 'CHIS', often ordinary, untrained members of the public, or even criminals) to commit criminal offences with impunity. Over the life of the Bill, we engaged with the Home Office, leading NGOs, experts, and Parliamentarians (including our Council members in the Lords). Our briefings were referenced by many Peers in their debates and we were successful in securing a number of key amendments which introduced greater safeguards for the use of the new powers.

At the same time, we also briefed Parliament on the **Overseas Operations (Service Personnel and Veterans) Bill**, which presented equally serious concerns. The Bill, which passed into

law in April 2021, introduced a prosecution threshold which would be near impossible to meet where claims for torture and other serious crimes are made after five years in the context of overseas military operations. It would also restrict the ability of service people to bring claims for personal injury and death during overseas actions. Both proposals create considerable barriers to access to justice. Even more concerning was the proposal to afford the Minister to enter a blanket derogation to the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) ahead of military operations. We were pleased to see the Government accept a number of key amendments which we supported, including the deletion of the duty to consider derogation from the ECHR, as well as the inclusion of a number of additional serious offences (such as slavery and genocide) within the category of 'excluded offences'.

We are currently briefing on the **Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill**, which is an extensive piece of legislation that raises particular concerns for fundamental human rights and freedoms. For example, the Bill would lead to the further criminalisation of Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller communities through greater restrictions on 'unauthorised encampments'; expand stop and search powers through 'Serious Violence Reduction Orders', which would treat those associated with knife crime who have served their sentence as perpetual criminals by allowing the police to search them at any time

RESPONDING TO POLICY CHANGE

without the need for suspicion; increase restrictions on rights to freedom of expression and assembly by allowing the police to place conditions on gatherings, such as protests, assemblies, or processions, on the basis of ‘noise’ or ‘obstruction’; and unduly lengthen many prisoners’ sentences, which would damage their chance at rehabilitation and place further strain on our already creaking criminal justice system.

JUSTICE strongly opposes these measures and continues to call on Parliament to remove them.

We have submitted 26 briefings and consultations over the past year – you can read them on [our website](#).

‘JUSTICE is completely unrivalled as the foremost law reform think-tank in the UK. Its research and engagement with the profession, judiciary and Government are vital as is its parliamentary briefing on a range of complex and often controversial draft legislation touching upon the Rule of Law. No one provides better independent explanation and analysis whether in writing or person to hundreds of legislators in both houses without fear or favour - an enormous public service.’

Baroness Shami Chakrabarti CBE

ASSISTING THE COURTS

This year we intervened in two cases in the superior courts:

R (Begum) v Secretary of State for the Home Department concerned the deprivation of citizenship of a young woman who left the UK to align with ISIS. Having suffered the loss of her three infant children and detained in a Syrian camp, Ms Begum wishes to return to the UK to appeal the decision to remove her citizenship. However, the UK Supreme Court held that the national security concerns raised by the Secretary of State outweigh her right to a fair and effective hearing; the right does not trump all other considerations. In our intervention we argued a novel point that decisions about deprivation of the right of abode and entry are grounded in ancient common law principles that reciprocally bind subject and State and may only be severed by way of judicial action.

The Court did not reject the existence of such principles and stated that it carefully considered our submissions. There may therefore be a further route of appeal for the many UK women and children who remain stranded and stateless in Syrian camps.

Hallam and Nealon v UK is now before the European Court of Human Rights. We previously intervened in the UK Supreme Court, which found against the appellants in 2019. The case concerns whether the compensation scheme for

England, Wales and Northern Ireland is incompatible with the presumption of innocence, protected by article 6(2) ECHR. The scheme requires applicants to demonstrate that they did not commit the offence. As such, the Government is casting doubt on whether the conviction should have been quashed, which clearly interferes with the right to be presumed innocent until proven guilty.

Our intervention draws attention to the way international instruments and other jurisdictions interpret the right to compensation and that almost all Contracting Parties to the ECHR (including Scotland and Ireland) have schemes that do not offend the presumption of innocence.

We await a hearing in the case.

Join our other **20,000+** followers on Twitter @JUSTICEhq, follow us on LinkedIn, and like our Facebook page to keep up to date with our work.

JUSTICE SCOTLAND / ADMINISTRATIVE JUSTICE COUNCIL

JUSTICE SCOTLAND

This year we continued to work with key partners in Scotland, through the Human Rights Consortium and our place on the Civil Society Reference Group to the Scottish Government's National Taskforce for Human Rights Leadership.

We worked with the Law Society of Scotland to implement training and professional engagement recommendations in our Legal Assistance in the Police Station report, as well as expanding our Understanding Courts project in Scotland.

Developments in the Scottish benefits system played a significant part in framing our recommendations for Reforming Benefits Decision-Making to promote human dignity and respect and we were pleased to include both Scottish and Northern Irish expertise in that work.

We are delighted to currently have two Scots qualified members of staff to assist in the development of our work in Scotland.

ADMINISTRATIVE JUSTICE COUNCIL (AJC)

The AJC seeks to bring together disparate parts of the administrative justice system. JUSTICE provides the AJC with an independent, non-partisan, and dedicated secretariat function. It also acts as a liaison between ministers, civil servants, and the AJC.

Consultation/Call for Evidence Responses

The Secretariat worked on two submissions from the AJC – the Independent Review of Administrative Law and the Justice Committee's Future of Legal Aid Inquiry. The full submissions can be found [here](#).

During the year, the AJC Secretariat has worked on the following projects:

Access to social welfare and health advice provision: towards a holistic model for vulnerable groups through partnership hubs in England

The project looked at NHS and social welfare advice hubs. The role of the NHS has never been as important, and the extent to which health and wellbeing is a vital component of the economy has been thrust under the microscope. The provision

ADMINISTRATIVE JUSTICE COUNCIL

of early multifaceted advice and guidance for those who are most vulnerable in society has proven to be an effective approach to a longer-term solution for problems they face in their everyday lives. Such advice and guidance in a healthcare setting can be transformational.

This pilot project explored how existing advice hubs that provide advice at the health and justice nexus operate (during the pandemic). [The report was published in June.](#)

Windrush project

The AJC set up a Windrush working group in March 2021. The working group's aim is to ensure that people claiming compensation have their claims adjudicated fairly, accurately, and in a timely manner; and that the complaints process is efficient, accessible, and fair. Chaired by **Professor Robert Thomas**, Co-Chair of the AJC Academic Panel, members include claimants with lived experience of the scheme, complaint's handlers, pro bono lawyers, academics, and a Home Office observer. Dechert LLP is providing pro bono research assistance and will draft the final report.

The group have been further separated into sub-groups to examine the following three areas:

1. Home Office Decision-Making and Evidence-Gathering.

2. Communication (with claimants and communities).
3. Appeals/Complaints (challenging delays, decisions, etc).

A report will be published in September making recommendations to the Home Office on how they can improve the operation of the scheme and redress mechanisms available to claimants.

DWP Lesson Learning Project

The Advice Sector Panel have been working with the Pro Bono Economics Unit to illustrate the consequences to claimants of poor decision-making by the DWP in relation to disability benefits.

This work was initiated by the Panel to run alongside the joint JUSTICE/AJC Reforming Benefits Decision-Making Working Party which was published in June. The Advice Sector Panel was keen to shine a light on the far-reaching effects on individuals who are denied benefits that a tribunal later finds they are entitled to. Economists provided by the Pro Bono Economics Unit have been extracting information from the Panel's case studies to show:

1. Direct administrative costs of the appeals system to government

ADMINISTRATIVE JUSTICE COUNCIL

2. Indirect costs to government from delayed decisions
3. Costs to the claimants

The case studies received by the panel and external stakeholders demonstrate that while waiting for tribunal hearings, claimants are falling into debt, accruing rent arrears, attending food banks, and experiencing deterioration in their mental and physical health. The report is due to be published in September.

Social Welfare Advice Provision during the pandemic report

Building on the earlier AJC report on Accessing Justice in the Community in October 2020, a survey was commissioned on how advice providers have worked during the pandemic, and the impact of the shift to remote advice delivery on their services and their clients.

A [report](#) on the findings was published in March 2021 which demonstrated not only the impact of COVID-19 on the advice sector, but also provided evidence to the Ministry of Justice of the importance of investment in the technical capability of the sector to ensure access to justice.

The Secretariat has organised the following webinars:

- Windrush: Falling Through the Gaps
- A Manifesto for Ombudsman Reform
- Welfare Benefit Advice Provision During the Pandemic: Conversations between Academia and Practice

Recordings for all webinars can be found on the [AJC website](#).

Further information on the AJC's work during the year can be found in their [Annual Report 2020-21](#).

We are grateful to The Legal Education Foundation, Trust for London, and the Ministry of Justice for supporting the AJC.

'The Administrative Justice Council is invaluable, having oversight of the whole administrative justice system. It brings together a range of experts who work together to identify areas where the system can be more coherent and to ensure it is accessible, fair, and efficient for all its users.'

Sir Keith Lindblom,
Chair of Administrative Justice Council

IMPACT AND STRATEGY

We have achieved a huge amount over the last four-year Strategy, on the legal and policy side, but also in terms of organisational health. We reached our stated objectives but have equally been nimble and able to quickly respond to opportunities that have arisen.

With the generous input of our members and other experts, we have produced outstanding working party reports on issues that have resonated with policy makers and made practical recommendations for change. I am proud that we have tackled politically difficult issues, such as judicial diversity, and the prosecution of sexual offences, as well as launching work on inquests and inquiries, school exclusions, and racial disparity in justice before they were in the headlines. Over this time, we have constituted 13 Working Parties, with 11 having published their final report.

JUSTICE doesn't just publish reports; we work with civil servants, politicians, judges, and others to see the implementation of their findings, and many of our recommendations of this period have been picked up. For example, as a result of our Mental Health and Fair Trial report, the Crown Prosecution Service has updated its guidance to prosecutors, introduced specialist point of contact lawyers to advise on mental health issues, created community liaison groups, and is enhancing

training for prosecutors.

Most of the recommendations of our Immigration and Asylum Appeals Working Party report have either been adopted or are in train. The Bar Standards Board, for example, has tightened regulatory requirements around supervision; and the Solicitor's Regulation Authority has made a commitment to continue working with us in their review of the quality of legal advice provision over the next year, as has the new Commissioner of the Office of the Immigration Services. We were integral in the design of the new online appeal filing pilots and our recommendations for tribunal efficiency have been adopted: our recommended mandatory reconsideration step is seeing the Home Office concede almost 30% of cases before any hearing.

A pivotal report of this Strategy was Understanding Courts, chaired by **Sir Nicholas Blake**. The Working Party sought to put lay people at the heart of court and tribunal processes, noting that if users of the system cannot understand or feel connected to legal process, access to justice is undermined. The report was significant of itself, but also in the way it has resonated in subsequent work. For example, our work on school exclusions, housing, inquests and inquiries, the benefits system, and now family justice and the Parole Board, all build on its principles of user-centred justice.

IMPACT AND STRATEGY

Beyond working parties, JUSTICE has briefed on legislation and responded to consultations, intervened as a third party in the UK Supreme Court and in the Strasbourg Court, and has held fantastic fundraising conferences, including an annual Human Rights Conference and two amazing Inspiring Women conferences.

When the pandemic threatened jury trial, we quickly conceived of and independently evaluated the world's first virtual jury trials, which has formed the basis of the model being used now in Scotland, and in train in legislation in England and Wales. This is the sort of ground-breaking, innovative work that has typified JUSTICE for over 60 years. The period also saw JUSTICE reaffirm its commitment to administrative justice, by hosting the Secretariat of the Administrative Justice Council, which has quickly become a stalwart of the sector.

None of this work would have been possible without a sound financial footing, and our funding base has strengthened significantly over this period. We have nearly doubled our income over the four years holding £1 million in funds in 2020. In large part thanks to the JUSTICE60, we successfully achieved our £2 million Securing JUSTICE at 60 Appeal target, which has led to a major donor programme.

Our membership has grown from 1200 in late 2016 to just over 2,000 at the beginning of this year. Beyond the figures, our approach to fundraising and financial management has improved enormously, putting us in a position to invest in staff to deliver the work. Our staff has nearly doubled over this period. I could not be more delighted with the dedicated, clever, and collegiate staff whom we have recruited in the past four years, and the organisational culture that has developed around them.

The Strategy for 2021-2025 anticipates that we continue to work closely with our members, through working parties and advisory groups. Given the stated ambition of Government in respect of constitutional reform and the role of the judiciary, we will have an increased focus on constitutional matters, and will look at ways that legal processes can better hold Government to account. We will continue to put users of the system at the heart of our work and will work to ensure that the system works for everyone, including the most vulnerable in society.

You can read the [2021-2025 Strategy here](#).

Andrea Coomber

OUR JUSTICE60

Like many in the charity sector, JUSTICE suffered financially from a change in donor focus over the past year of the pandemic. However, we ended the financial year with only a small deficit, and that is in large part due to the commitment of our members, Friends, and our JUSTICE60 members. To all of you we say - thank you.

We would like to pay particular tribute to our JUSTICE60 members due to their significant financial contributions. The unrestricted funding provided by the JUSTICE60 allowed us to respond swiftly to unanticipated developments brought on by the pandemic, allowing us to work on the operation and impact of virtual hearings in the courts and to respond to a particularly heavy legislative agenda from the Government. It is because of their dedication to a fairer, more accessible, and more efficient legal system that we are able to pursue work that is vital to the health of the justice system but which others are not willing to fund, especially at short notice.

We are, as ever, grateful to our JUSTICE60 for this and to our devoted JUSTICE60 Chair, **Karyl Nairn QC**. With her dedication we hosted a legal star-studded suite of virtual events to keep our JUSTICE60 members inspired and intellectually engaged. We are extremely grateful to all of this year's speakers including; **Lord Thomas of Cwmjedd**, Sterling Professor of International Law at Yale University **Harold Hongju Koh**,

historian and commentator **Niall Ferguson**, Channel 4 broadcaster **Jon Snow**, British diplomat and former Downing Street Chief of Staff **Jonathan Powell**, former Chancellor of the Exchequer **Lord Alistair Darling PC**, and former MI5 Director General **Baroness Manningham-Buller**.

We are also grateful to the many new individuals and corporations that in this past year of uncertainty stepped up and joined the JUSTICE60, strengthening our resolve and helping us to continue our work. Our JUSTICE60 continues to be a shining example of the vision of JUSTICE.

For more information on *The JUSTICE60*, or on supporting JUSTICE in other ways, visit [our website](https://www.justice.org.uk) or contact our Interim Director of Development, Jane Collier on jcollier@justice.org.uk or on 020 7762 6426.



The JUSTICE60 Christmas party 2021

BRINGING PEOPLE TOGETHER FOR JUSTICE

As restrictions on gatherings persisted, JUSTICE has continued to host virtual events, bringing people together from across the country, the continent and sometimes internationally, in support of a stronger, fairer, and more inclusive justice system (with the added bonus of increasing accessibility for our members).

Our Tom Sargent Memorial Annual Lecture took place in October and was delivered by **Dame Vera Baird DBE QC**, the Victims' Commissioner for England and Wales. In the words of one attendee, Dame Baird's lecture (titled '*From Bystander to Participant? Victims and Witnesses in the Criminal Justice System*') was 'a stunning Zoom lecture of the highest order'.

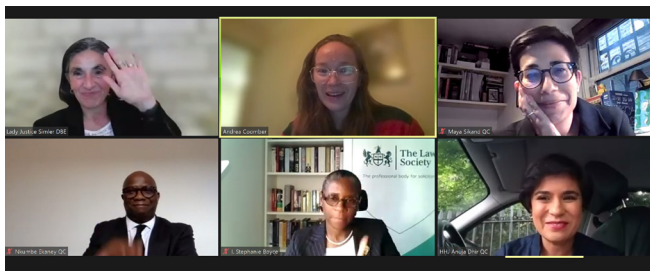
Our members enjoyed a topical event titled *Race to the Bench*. Led by an expert panel, this discussion explored the obstacles

faced by candidates from racial minorities in the judicial appointments process, including the additional challenges encountered by female judges, and ways in which minority judges can be better supported. We are very grateful to **Dame Ingrid Simler DBE, Nkumbe Ekaney QC, Maya Sikand QC, HHJ Anuja Dhir QC and I. Stephanie Boyce** for sharing their experiences and insights with us.

Our amazing *Inspiring Women Fundraising Conference* returned this year. Over three nights, nine brilliant leading women in law spoke candidly about their challenges and successes, and shared advice and incredible stories of resolve and fortitude. Our huge thanks to our speakers who spoke so honestly about their experiences, and created a supportive, empowering, and frequently quite entertaining conference.

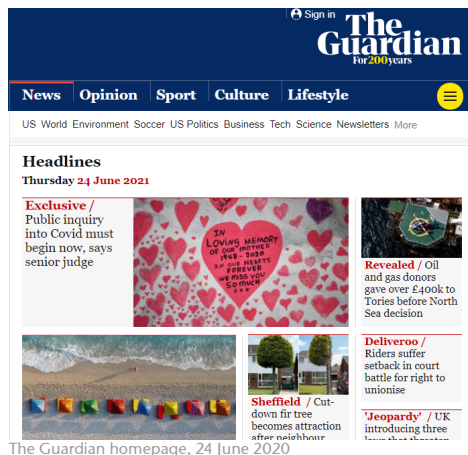
We are also excited to have launched our newest series of public events, *Working Parties at Work*. These events explore the impact of various JUSTICE reports and take a closer look at how our recommendations have been received and what further work is needed to be done. We hope these events will inspire prospective members to join JUSTICE, but also give our current members better insight into the impact of their annual donation.

Our first event was *The COVID-19 Inquiry: Ensuring justice for*



Race to the Bench, 26 May 2021

BRINGING PEOPLE TOGETHER FOR JUSTICE



The Guardian homepage, 24 June 2020

We are currently planning the next webinar in the series, which will be looking at recommendations put forward in our 2018 report *Immigration and Asylum Appeals – a Fresh Look*.

We were delighted to welcome a record-breaking 300 attendees to our JUSTICE Scotland Human Rights Day Lecture in January 2021. The event was chaired by **The Rt. Hon. Lord Hodge PC**, Justice of the UK Supreme Court, and attendees heard from **Professor Jim Murdoch**, **The Rt. Hon. Lord Hope of Craighead KT QC PC FRSE**, **Shelagh McCall QC**,

bereaved people and survivors. Chaired by **Sir Robert Owen**, with panellists including **Pete Weatherby QC**, **Professor Leslie Thomas QC**, **Marcus Shephard**, and **Hannah Brady**, this discussion was hugely successful, generating a headline story on [The Guardian website](https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2021/jun/24/justice-scotland-human-rights-day-lecture).

and **Professor Nicole Busby**, on the topic of *Twenty Years of the Human Rights Act: a Scottish Perspective*. Thanks also to **Catherine Smith**, Vice Chair of JUSTICE Scotland for guiding us through the evening, and to Pinsent Masons LLP for their ongoing support.

JUSTICE STUDENT MEMBERSHIP

Our JUSTICE student membership seeks to engage students on key issues around access to justice and the rule of law and currently stands at 907. Our internship programme continues to be an excellent benefit for student members, providing the opportunity to develop skills and engage with litigation and law-making processes, whilst earning the London Living Wage. Due to the flexibility of home working, our internships have been made more accessible this year, with interns joining us from across the country (and beyond!).

“Both workshops I participated in were eye-opening, and the opening and closing sessions were really inspiring.”
Student Conference attendee

The highlight of the year was our Annual JUSTICE Student Conference, which took place in March, to which JUSTICE members received free tickets. This year, our sessions included insight into how JUSTICE works in Parliament, featuring

ORGANISATION

MEMBERSHIP

JUSTICE is extremely grateful to everyone – our members, Friends, donors, volunteers, interns, conference speakers, pro bono lawyers and consultants, working party members and our Board, Council, and committee members – who have helped us over the past year. We are very lucky to have such committed supporters.

For over sixty years, members have been key to JUSTICE's work and are the foundation of the organisation. Over the past year, our membership has steadily remained at its highest level with 2,013 members. From law students to senior and retired judges, our members span the legal profession. Their continuing support – whether serving on working parties, submitting evidence to us, contributing at events, or simply spreading the word about our work – allows us to accomplish so much and continue to push for reform.

Over our new strategy period, we shall continue to place our members at the heart of our work.

AGM

2020 saw us host our first ever virtual Annual General Meeting. On 10 November, 85 members joined us on Zoom to hear an update on our fundraising efforts and work, including from **Sir Robert Owen**, Chair of the JUSTICE When Things Go Wrong: the response of the justice system Working Party.

Members voted via poll to appoint new representatives to its Council, to re-elect Board members to serve for another term, and to appoint **Peter Binning** as the new Chair of the JUSTICE Board.

The following Board members were re-elected for further terms of office: **Alexandra Carr** and **Kate Saunders**. **Walter Merricks CBE** retired as Chair of the JUSTICE Board. The following commenced terms of office as Council members: **Millicent Grant QC (Hon)**, **Jessica Simor QC** and **Mark Trafford QC**. **Karamjit Singh CBE** retired from Council on the expiry of his term of office.

JUSTICE thanks them all for their contribution to the governance and stewardship of the organisation. Our particular thanks to Walter, who had served as Chair of the Board since 2016.

FINANCE

2020-21 was a difficult year for JUSTICE with the pandemic impacting our funding sources whilst increasing JUSTICE's workload. Though we were able to weather the storm, we did lose some funders along the way, so were grateful to have the financial reserves to see us through this period of uncertainty, and for the many funders who continued to provide us with restricted and unrestricted income.

Our income decreased by just over 5% and we ended the year with a small deficit (£15,159). Given the uncertainty and challenges of the year, this was less of a deficit than we had expected. In line with our policy, we managed to maintain our reserves level to the equivalent of six months' running costs.

We knew that trusts and foundations would play an important role in our income in 2020-21 due to the decline in corporate support over the pandemic. To this end, we focussed our efforts on increasing the number of applications submitted, applying to 59 trusts and foundations over the year, with asks totalling over £1.5 million to help bridge any funding gaps.

The Development team also maintained our relationships with corporates, increasing the support we receive either in the form of monetary donations or pro bono support. This resulted in us being awarded new grants totalling £224,072, as well as £18,565 in new corporate income. Given the

competitiveness of the charitable market in 2020 and the focus on many trusts and foundations shifting to welfare and advice, this is an impressive achievement, and it has also boosted our trust and foundation pipeline greatly for the coming year.

Over the past financial year the JUSTICE60 has provided us with unrestricted funding totalling £286,000 and we have increased our numbers of Friends and members, with the number of members (at 31 March 2021) increasing by just under 24% to 2,066 members, our highest ever membership figure.

In addition to the trusts and foundations supporting specific areas of our work, we have benefited from unrestricted donations from The Alexander Mosley Charitable Trust, the Allen and Overy Foundation, The Evan Cornish Foundation, the Laura Kinsella Foundation, The Stewarts Foundation, and the Treebeard Trust, as well as The Jolanta and Max Neufeld Charitable Trust, The Simmons and Simmons Charitable Foundation, and The Revilo Trust, which are all new funders to JUSTICE.

Our work to build a sustainable and nimble organisation combined with our ability to diversify our funding sources and continue to attract funders has meant that we are now able to start growing our staff team, and have recruited a new civil

FINANCE

justice lawyer, who started with us in May 2021.

We will continue to focus on the diversification of our income, our membership, our donors, and our supporters to ensure our continued growth as we enter yet another year of uncertainty. We have already seen some of our work on building relationships come to fruition with a number of corporates expressing an interest in supporting our work with donations and five new members joining the JUSTICE60.

For full details on our finances please refer to our [Report and financial statements](#) for the year ending 31 March 2021.

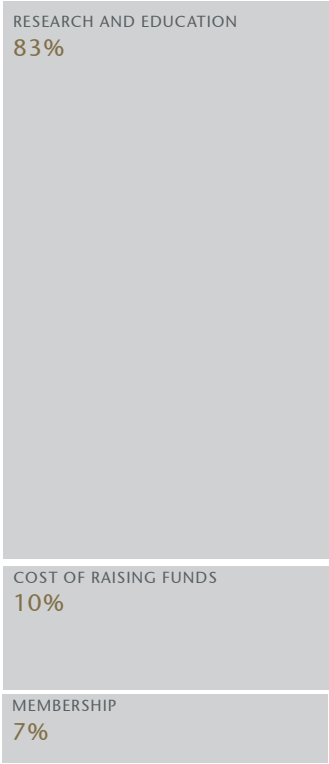
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- Rachel Sexton (Chair)
- Nick Benson
- Peter Binning
- Liz Campbell
- Manu Duggal
- Christina Liciaga
- Walter Merricks CBE (to November 2020)

JUSTICE’S INCOMING
RESOURCES IN 2020/21
TOTAL £911,346



JUSTICE’S RESOURCES
EXPENDED IN 2020/21
TOTAL £957,973



JUSTICE is the conscience of the legal profession – be a part of it.

AS A MEMBERSHIP
ORGANISATION, OUR MEMBERS
ARE AMONG OUR GREATEST
ASSETS. HERE ARE JUST FIVE OF
THE REASONS WHY YOU SHOULD
JOIN JUSTICE.

WE ARE INDEPENDENT

Because it is not party political, JUSTICE commands respect across the political spectrum. We have representatives from each of the main political parties on our Council.

WE ARE EXPERT

JUSTICE draws on international research and case law, and the specialist input of experts to provide the template for public policy.

WE ARE INFLUENTIAL

JUSTICE has a membership of prominent judges, lawyers, distinguished academics, leading firms and chambers, and many individuals and organisations concerned about law reform.

WE ARE EFFECTIVE

Through influential reports and informed dialogue, we continue to play a key role in amending and developing the law, government policy, and the practice of public authorities.

WE ARE INTERNATIONAL

JUSTICE is the UK section of the International Commission of Jurists (ICJ) – a global body dedicated to the primacy, coherence, and implementation of international law and principles that advance human rights. We work with colleagues from across the world on areas of common interest and concern.

Find out more about joining JUSTICE on our website – or go the extra mile and give £20 a month to become a Friend of JUSTICE with even more benefits – visit www.justice.org.uk.

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Thanks also to the working
parties and the people
who have given evidence
to them, too numerous to
mention here, but led by their
dedicated and inspirational
chairs; Professor Gillian
Douglas, Lord Low of Dalston
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and Sandra Paul.

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