

Company Number: 04978121

Charity Number: 1101575

**Trustees' Report and  
Financial Statements  
for the year ended 31 December  
2020**

**For  
The British Institute of Human Rights**

**(A company limited by guarantee not  
having a share capital and a  
registered charity)**

Reference and Administrative Details for the year ended 31 December 2020

**The British Institute of Human Rights  
(A company limited by guarantee not  
having a share capital and a  
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Trustees' Report and Financial Statements  
for the year ended 31 December 2020

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The British Institute of Human Rights  
(A company limited by guarantee)



Reference and Administrative Details for the year ended 31 December 2020

**STATUS:** The British Institute of Human Rights is a company limited by guarantee without a share capital incorporated on 27 November 2003 and registered with the Charity Commission on 16 January 2004 as a charity. Its governing rules are its Memorandum and Articles of Association.

**REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER:** 1101575

**REGISTERED COMPANY NUMBER:** 04978121

**COUNTRY OF INCORPORATION:** England and Wales

**REGISTERED OFFICE:** The School of Law, Queen Mary University of London, Mile End Road, London E1 4NS

**DIRECTORS AND TRUSTEES**

Sir Nicolas Bratza (Chair)  
Mark Hilton (Treasurer)  
The Baroness Tanni Grey-Thompson DBE  
Imran Khan QC  
Stephen Pittam  
Edith Prak  
Joe Powell (joined May 2021)

**KEY MANAGEMENT:**

DIRECTOR/CEO: Sanchita Hosali

**INDEPENDENT EXAMINER**

Francis Corbishley FCA  
Independent Examiner  
Nicholas House, River Front  
Enfield, Middlesex, EN1 3FG

**BANKERS:**

CafBank Limited  
West Malling  
Kent, ME19 4TA

Barclays Bank PLC  
PO Box 289  
Leicestershire, LE87 2BB

**SOLICITORS:**

Bates, Wells & Braithwaite  
10 Queen Street Place  
London, EC4R 1BE

**WEBSITE ADDRESS:**

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



# **REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 DECEMBER 2020**

The trustees are pleased to present their annual directors' report together with the financial statements of the charity for the year ending 31 December 2020 which are also prepared to meet the requirements for a directors' report and accounts for Companies Act purposes.

The financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011, the Companies Act 2006, the Memorandum and Articles of Association, and Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019).

## **Covid-19 Statement**

BIHR's new Strategic Framework for 2020-2025 has served the charity well during 2020, enabling the charity to navigate the pandemic. This has been a challenging year in which BIHR has experienced unprecedented demand for human rights support from people with care and support needs, community and advocacy groups, and public body and service staff. Those we support have been concerned about the discriminatory and disproportionate impact of pandemic measures on people with care and support needs. Added to this has been significant uncertainty about funding for the charity sector as a whole during this unprecedented period. The grants BIHR has received from Trusts and Foundations during 2020 have provided invaluable support and flexibility. However, BIHR also generates income through our programmes with large voluntary sector organisations and public bodies or services, many of whom have been on the Covid-19 frontline. We have put in place contingencies, worked flexibly with our partners and clients, postponed work to 2021, adapting where possible, and developing new streams of digital support. Key measures undertaken during 2020 include:

### **Operations:**

- Mid-March, placing the staff team on a working from home policy, with additional equipment and support and health and safety advice for vulnerable staff.
- Revised risk assessment and management policy and procedure for safe return to the office. (As BIHR's office is on a university campus, a return was not possible in 2020).
- Planned, but swift, move to delivering operations digitally across all our work and staff training and fundraising to support this.
- Immediate skilling up of the staff on new emergency laws and policies across the 4 nations and ongoing knowledge development to respond to the frequent changes.



## **Trustees Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2020**

- Development of a human rights and Coronavirus hub on our website.
- Securing all pending contract and commissioned work, so far as possible, with delayed delivery dates or delivering differently rather than cancellation.
- Timely conversations with current funders about support needs and seeking additional grants to navigate the pandemic.

### **Governance**

- Regular meetings between the Director, Treasurer and Chair to review the situation, with follow up written communication with the whole board, with the Treasurer providing additional management support to the Director.
- All Board meetings and Finance Sub-Committee meetings online, as allowed by the charity's Articles.
- Covid-19 risk management made a standing item on the Board meetings Agenda.
- Postponement of the 2020 AGM, due to a delay in completing the 2019 Annual Accounts because of the emergency response to Covid-19, held as soon as possible after completion.

# **I. ABOUT US**

Founded in 1970, the British Institute of Human Rights (BIHR) has been a pioneer in promoting and upholding human rights in the UK. Early on BIHR was a powerful voice calling for the European Convention to be incorporated into U.K. law. Since those rights were embodied in the Human Rights Act (HRA), BIHR has been a strong supporter of the HRA. Our work has focused on ensuring people's human rights have meaning for them in everyday life, beyond the courts, by making best use of the legal duties to uphold these protections in law, policy and practice.

## **I.1 Strategic Review and New Framework**

In 2019, BIHR commissioned a Strategic Review, with the support of one of our funders, the **Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust**. This helped us explore the organisation's key achievements, our unique contribution to the human rights field and wider voluntary sector, and how to best secure and strengthen our role within the sector and wider policy and practice circles. Through this process the Board of Trustees, with the Director and staff team, have recalibrated BIHR's strategic direction, underpinned by two key themes:

- 1) building on our unique role in providing the support needed to secure local level social change through human rights; and
- 2) developing a bold new approach to policy work which places people at the centre of national change to better respect and protect people's human rights.

## **Trustees Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2020**

Our 2020-2025 Strategic Framework refined our mission and vision, and our strategic aims for the next five years, which we set out below. The durability and flexibility of our Framework was key in enabling BIHR to navigate the disruptions and challenges that came with the Covid-19 pandemic from March 2020 onwards.

## **1.2 Our Mission and Vision**

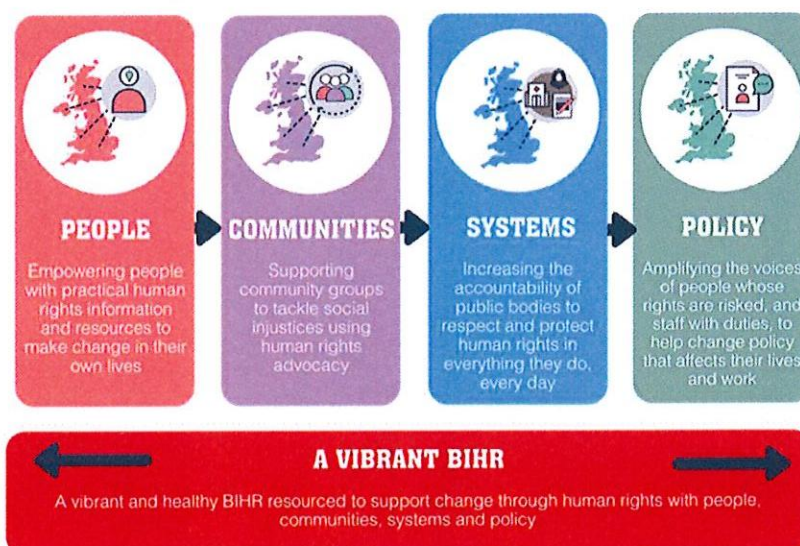
BIHR's vision is that of a strong and just society, in which all people can live well and flourish, safe in the knowledge that their human rights are being respected, protected, and fulfilled in their local communities and at the national level.

BIHR's mission is to support people and organisations to use human rights advocacy and approaches in their everyday life to achieve positive social change.

## **1.3 How we do this: Our Strategic Aims and Activities**

BIHR's Strategic Aims are underpinned by our organisational expertise in supporting the development of a culture of respect for human rights across the UK. We focus on change through human rights beyond the courts. We provide the support and tools people, and organisations need to use human rights law to resolve problematic situations. This is about preventing poor public services and policy or challenging and changing decisions when things have gone wrong.

At the heart of each of our strategic aims is a commitment to bring about collaborative change using human rights advocacy and approaches to change practice and policy.





## **Trustees Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2020**

# **2. PUBLIC BENEFIT**

BIHR's core charitable objectives, set out in our governing documents, are to promote and advance human rights throughout the UK.

The trustees have referred to the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit; guidance on campaigning and political activity; and the supplementary guidance on advancement of education in reviewing BIHR's objectives and future plans.

The trustees confirm that they have complied with the duty in section 4 of the Charities Act 2011 to have due regard to the public benefit guidance published by the Charity Commission in determining the activities undertaken by the charity.

# **3. BIHR'S PEOPLE**

## **Board of Trustees**

BIHR is governed by a Board of Trustees, each with a range of experience and expertise:

**Sir Nicolas Bratza (Chair of the Board)** is the former President of the European Court of Human Rights, where he was the Judge of the Court for over 14 years, elected in respect of the UK. Sir Nicolas' incomparable experience and expertise is an invaluable source of advice, guidance, and inspiration for BIHR.

**Mark Hilton (Treasurer)** is Director of Operations at The Elders, bringing key operational, human and resource management to BIHR's Board. He was previously with the International Planned Parenthood Federation, and prior to this Mark spent 23 years in the Royal Air Force in human resources roles.

**Baroness Tanni Grey-Thompson** is a celebrated Paralympian and broadcaster and sits as a Crossbench Peer in the House of Lords. Her passion and experience of advocating for equality within parliament and in her wider work brings important insights to BIHR.

**Imran Khan QC** is the founding member of Imran Khan & Partners Solicitors. He is known for his representation of Stephen Lawrence's family, and legal challenges which hold state officials to account for human rights abuses. He brings important legal expertise to BIHR.

**Stephen Pittam** is former Trust Secretary of the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust, a key foundation supporting human rights work in the UK. Before this he worked in local government with an emphasis on voluntary sector and community development support.

**Edith Prak** is Director of Advancement at The University of Nottingham, with a background in international economics and politics, teaching, advisory roles, and fundraising. She was previously Director of Development at The Elders and The Open University.



## **Trustees Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2020**

**Joe Powell** is the Chief Executive of All Wales People First, with extensive personal and professional experience of defending the rights of people with learning disabilities and Autistic people. Joe joined the Trustee Board in May 2021.

### **Staff Team**

**Sanchita Hosali, Director** is an experienced human rights and equality law, policy, and practice expert, with over twenty years' experience in the UK and internationally. She has worked in academic research, consulting roles and led policy and strategy development including at Nottingham University, SOAS and Rights of Women, and worked within the United Nations system. Sanchita holds an LLM Human Rights Law and an LLB in Law.

**Carlyn Miller, Policy and Programmes Manager:** (from March 2020): is an experienced policy and educational professional, with expertise in human rights in health and care. She previously worked with the Scottish Government and Scottish Care.

**Katrin McEntee, Human Rights Officer** (maternity leave from May 2020): is an experienced advocate with a background working with both older people and disabled people. She has completed studies in Dance Movement Psychotherapy and works with women survivors of domestic abuse.

**Eilidh Turnbull, Human Rights Officer** (formerly Research & Communications Officer): Eilidh has a range of legal casework experiences (including in asylum support). She previously worked at the European Council on Refugees and Exiles and Council of Europe.

**Josephine Whitehouse, Research & Communications Assistant** (from April 2020): Jo has a range of legal research experience. She has previously worked as a Parliamentary Assistant to an MP and volunteered as a welfare rights caseworker and representative.

**Philip Moore, Operations Coordinator** (from Sept 2020): Phil is an experienced charity operations professional, joining BIHR from OCD Action. Before joining the charity sector, he worked in operations in the education and training sector and had worked as a teacher.

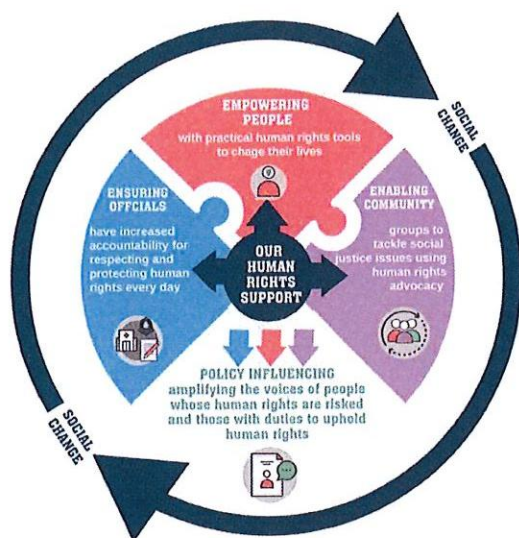
**Annie Smith, Human Rights Officer** (from March 2021): Annie is an experienced social worker, specialising in mental capacity practice, as well as community mental health. She is a best interest assessor and has delivered a range of training in the health and care sector.

**Natalie Grubb, Human Rights Officer** (from March 2021): Natalie has most recently been working in Geneva for an international human rights NGO on projects aimed at securing UN action. She has previously worked in the private sector, particularly health and care.

#### **Former staff, working during 2020:**

- Patrick Stoakes, Policy and Programmes Manager (until Jan 2020): managed a range of projects at BIHR working with public services and community groups.
- Rephael Akpan, Administration & Finance Assistant (until April 2020): provided financial and administrative support to BIHR's core operations and projects.
- Katrina Walcott, Human Rights Officer (Oct-Dec 2020): supported policy and programmes work with public services and advocacy and community groups.

## **4. 2020: ACHIEVEMENTS AND IMPACT**



Our theory of change is based on the principle that when people are supported to translate human rights law into practical tools for advocacy, reflection and challenge, this can lead to significant positive change that addresses and prevents everyday social injustices.

Our role at BIHR is to work collaboratively to provide the tools which enable this human rights advocacy and human rights approaches.

From this work we have a unique evidence base which can not only change local power structures, but also influence the national, law, policy and guidance that sets the parameters for local systems. This, in turn, has the potential to have a positive

impact on people's lives. This evidence of the important role human right can play, without litigation, is vital to demonstrating the value our Human Rights Act plays in the UK.



### **EMPOWERING PEOPLE**

**Strategic Aim 1: Enabling people to access practical and relevant tools and information to use human rights**

This year we have supported over 700 people directly (across the 4 nations) to increase their knowledge and confidence to advocate for their human rights with decision-makers involved in their lives. We firmly believe in self-advocacy and that knowledge is power. Never has this been truer than in 2020 with the need to mitigate the discriminatory and disproportionate effects of responses to Covid-19.



## **Covid-19 Response Support Sessions**

We work with people with care or support needs, including people with learning disabilities, autism, physical disabilities, and people and families who rely on public service support, including housing and additional educational provision. Research throughout 2020 has showed these groups are at significant risk of poor treatment during the pandemic.

When the Covid-19 pandemic hit the UK, we moved all our work online, and began running short free sessions for people to understand their human rights in this emergency setting. This helped us demonstrate the need for this support, and we were able to access new and additional funding to develop and sustain this much-needed direct support to people.

“ Really worth taking part. So often feels decisions are made about me without me and I had no idea what my rights were. I feel empowered now to start to know how to go about making sure mine and other disabled people in similar situations can look at our rights being upheld.”

As well as running our own open access sessions, additional funding enabled us to work with **over 25 voluntary and community groups across the UK**. This partnership approach increased the number of people we could reach and enabled our partners to meet the needs of the people they work with/for with our specialist support.

“ This was a great session. Whilst I knew I had human rights I didn't know the details, and this has given me great information to use the law when I feel my rights are being unfairly threatened.”

“ It was a very inclusive session explaining human rights in an accessible and interactive way.”

“ An accessible and comprehensive workshop on human rights and how we can use them in our day-to-day life.”

### **IMPACT STORY: Edna and Emily use the Human Rights Act in discussions to change arbitrary care home visiting restrictions**

Edna is 83 and lives in residential care; her daughter Emily visits most days after work. Following a Covid-19 outbreak, the home put a no visiting policy in place. It has now been 34 days, and Edna is isolated and lonely, missing Emily hugely. Emily had accessed some support on the Human Rights Act from BIHR's work and spoke to the care home manager about her mum's right to private, family life, home, and correspondence, which the home is legally obliged to respect (Article 8, Human Rights Act). Emily discussed how this right includes mental and physical wellbeing, family, and other relationships. She flagged that whilst this right can be restricted to protect her mum and/or others from harm, this needs to be proportionate. With no consideration of Edna's ability to keep in touch with Emily, the manager agreed that a blanket ban on visiting is not the least restrictive option.



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Knowing that they have legal duties under section 6 of the HRA, a meeting was called with staff and the family to agree what alternatives can be put in place whilst they dealt with the outbreak. After the meeting, staff put in place several measures which were less restrictive, enabling them to support Edna's mental and physical wellbeing whilst still protecting the right to life, which is a real and immediate risk during a Covid-19 outbreak. Importantly, these measures were not only for Edna and Emily, but changed practice across the home. Rather than a one size fits all, the staff put in place a range of measures to recognise each person's situation. The measures included video calls, PPE provision for visitors of people who could not use video calling, a gazebo in the garden and screening. Some restrictions are still needed but through Emily's self-advocacy using her rights, and her mum's rights in the HRA, and the care home applying their legal duty in the HRA to their practice, restrictions on visits are now looked at on an individual basis and are more proportionate. Emily now visits her mum every Sunday, wearing full PPE, until the outbreak is contained. People's use of the Human Rights Act in their everyday life, helped keep a family together at a time when they need each other the most.

**IMPACT STORY FROM OUR WORK: Muriel and Robert rely on the Human Rights Act to ensure end of life visits**

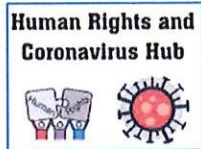
On 21 July, Robert had a serious fall at home and his wife Muriel called an ambulance. The ambulance arrived and Muriel was told she could not accompany Robert, "due to Covid rules". Robert, who is 79 and lives with dementia, was in intensive care for 12 weeks. Whilst nurses gave Muriel daily telephone updates she was not allowed to visit Robert.

At the end of October, Robert was discharged to a residential care home. The care home was locked down the following morning due to a positive Covid-19 test. Four months after Muriel watched Robert leave in an ambulance they have had no contact; Robert is too distressed to talk on the phone, and his mental and physical health has deteriorated drastically. The thought that she might not get to say goodbye kept Muriel awake at night.

Muriel reached out to a group BIHR has supported who advises her that based on the severe impact this was having on Muriel and Robert's mental and physical wellbeing, the couple's right not to be treated in an inhuman and degrading way (Article 3, HRA) might be at risk. Restricting or risking this right is not lawful because it is an absolute human right. Muriel used a template letter to raise her concerns with the care home, pointing out their legal duty under the Human Rights Act. The care home has since arranged for Muriel to be provided with full PPE so that she can visit Robert regularly and will ensure that Muriel is vaccinated together with staff so that she can spend time with Robert as he nears the end of his life.



## **Covid-19 Information Support**



Through our Human Rights and Coronavirus Hub we produced over 60 Explainers on changes to law, rights, and entitlements during the pandemic. These cover a range of issues including lockdown laws, changes to mental health law, Special Educational Needs provision, hospital discharge, and face coverings. Our hub contains plain language explanations of the legal changes in all 4 nations.

## **Expanding Know Your Human Rights: working with women survivors of domestic abuse**



Throughout the year we worked with women survivors of domestic abuse, and the voluntary and community groups that support them, to create a new branch of our [Know Your Human Rights self-advocacy website](#). This was funded by Comic Relief as part of the Tech vs Abuse programme.

Our tool supports women to know their human rights and the duties of public services to respect and protect these, not only to keep them safe (which is vital) but to also help rebuild their lives. Survivors have been central to this project, mapping, and testing both the human rights content and the look, feel and journey through the tool. Whilst Covid-19 meant we could not complete the tool, as the women originally envisaged, we have still seen important impact from this work. The human rights co-production process has been valuable to the women we worked with:

“ Given my past experiences I have really struggled with standing up for myself and my rights, I haven't had any confidence. But now I know that it is the law for me to have my rights upheld, I feel like I can use human rights when I want to challenge a decision or try to get a better solution.

“ Becca had recently left an abusive relationship and was rebuilding her life. Becca's children had been removed from her care by social services. Becca was incredibly upset about not seeing her children. She had been trying for several months for the decision to be looked at again, but no progress had been made. After attending our project sessions Becca spoke to her solicitor about her situation, using the language of human rights, language she had not known of or felt confident in using before. The solicitor helped Becca challenge the decision using the Human Rights Act. As a result, the court overruled the decision to have her children removed and said Becca can work with social workers to gain skills and support to have full custody of her children again.

## **Trustees Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2020**

It has also been important for support workers:

“

Often the clients we work with have a limited understanding of their own human rights and how this intersects with their experiences of domestic abuse and the legal obligations and responsibilities of professional agencies that are supporting them. Having a group of clients work with BIHR to develop the human rights tool and participate in 'mapping' sessions, has provided a platform for survivors to both learn about their rights, and ensure that the information is accessible to others experiencing domestic abuse...Often ... human rights are not considered when fundamental decisions regarding the client's situation are being made by other professional bodies (e.g., social care and the police). The sessions have been invaluable in allowing both the survivors and support workers to develop more confidence in using Human Rights in advocacy work to achieve positive outcomes.

The tool launched online at the start of 2021, with survivors, VAWG groups, lawyers, and others attending. Following the launch session, 100% of participants felt confident to use human rights language when talking to public services after the session (rise from 50% before launch).

## **Social media reach and engagement**

### **Website**

In 2020 there were 120,431 unique users of BIHR's website [www.bihr.org.uk](http://www.bihr.org.uk), an increase of 52% from 2019, with 153,000 website sessions (up 54% from 2019).

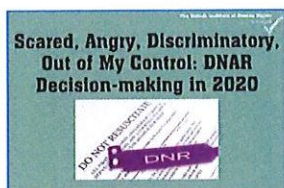
### **Twitter**



We have gained around 700 new Twitter followers, taking our audience to 19.6K, achieving a digital reach of over 1, 930,000 in 2020 (up from 820,000 in 2019).

Our most popular tweet in 2020, was on Human Rights Day (10 December), sharing our civil society open letter to the Prime Minister, with over 110 other organisations.

### **Facebook**



We have gained 318 new Facebook page likes in 2020, taking our audience to 3,756 likes and 4,137 followers, achieving a digital reach of over 524,941 during 2020. The most popular post in 2020 was on our Do Not Resuscitate experience-led research report.

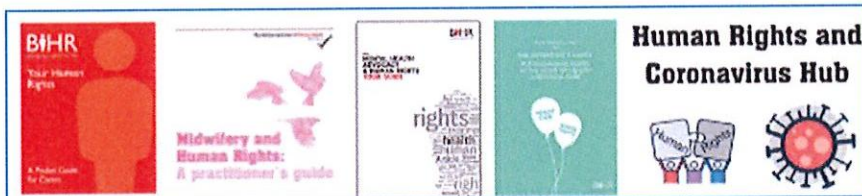


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## **BIHR's practical human rights change resources**

The pandemic halted BIHR's ability to send hardcopies of our change resources in the post; however, we have made all resources available to download as PDFs, where possible. Additionally, although we know people really value having a guide to hand, in their pocket or bag, our stocks of hardcopies are now running low, with many out of print. We will continue to look for funding to help address this issue. We had several thousand downloads of our practical human rights change resources from BIHR's website. The top 5 digital resources in 2020 were:

1. Carers Guide
2. Midwifery Guide
3. Mental Health, Advocacy and Human Rights Guide
4. The Difference it Makes: Putting Human Rights at the Heart of Health and Care
5. BIHR Coronavirus Act Care and Support Legal Changes Table



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## **SUPPORTING COMMUNITIES**

### **Strategic Aim 2: Strengthening the agency of community & voluntary groups to use human rights advocacy**

We have worked with over 25 community, advocacy and self-led groups and voluntary organisations to use human rights language to address social injustices, particularly around Covid-19.

The community groups we have partnered with include self-led learning disability groups and those supporting carers, people affected by dementia, women's domestic abuse and housing services.<sup>1</sup>



The people our community partners are working with have told us:

- ” Opened my eyes as to how effective the Human Rights Act can be.
- “ I already have recommended you to an ex-work colleague who should be in touch with you! I said "I did human rights training this morning. It was so good and completely relevant to the work we do. I learnt so much about how we can refer to human rights in advocacy".
- ” Eilidh was very informative and engaging throughout the training. The session was packed full of information specific to the service that we operate.

<sup>1</sup> Downs Syndrome Scotland; The ALLIANCE; Carers Scotland; TIDE Scotland; TIDE Northern Ireland; Skills for People; Learning Disability England; Disability Wales; All Wales People First; Reducing Restraint Network; Scottish Autism; Inclusion Gloucestershire; Scottish Care; Carers Parliament; Parents of detained children group; Croydon Voluntary Action; Bristol Independent Living; HEAR Network; Changing Pathways; Carers Wales; NDTi – Inclusive Education; Lewisham Mental Health Carer Forum; NSUN; Human Rights Consortium of Scotland.



## **Trustees Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2020**



Do it even if you don't think you have the time, you'll likely learn something you didn't know.

In addition to sessions skilling up the staff in voluntary sector groups, we have also supported the following campaigns to integrate human rights advocacy:

### **Right 2 Home campaign**



Image: Learning Disability England

With Learning Disability England (LDE) we worked with learning disability and autistic self-led groups to support the [Right 2 Home campaign](#). This was a 5-day campaign to mark a year since the horrific scenes of abuse in Whorlton Hall were broadcast by BBC's Panorama. Despite the revelations and promises of action, over 2,000 adults and children with learning disabilities and/or autistic people continue to be detained in mental health units. With the 2020 pandemic lockdowns there has also been increasing isolation and a lack of family and friends

being able to support people in units. We worked with almost 100 people and community campaigners to build their capacity to use the Human Rights Act in their calls for change and self-advocacy.

### **Right 2 Visit campaign**



Image: Bemix

Following on from Right 2 Home was the [Right 2 Visit initiative](#), recognising the arbitrary visiting restrictions put in place in care homes, hospitals, etc. This much needed online tool helps people use human rights to challenge these restrictions, including during the pandemic, in order to support their loved ones. We supported [Bemix](#), working with people with learning disabilities and Autism, their families and carers, to

develop and test the content of the tool. The Right 2 Visit team then gave evidence to parliament's Joint Committee on Human Rights, with the Chair [writing to the Government](#) strongly urging action to secure family visits and ensure wellbeing for people in residential and care homes.

### **Make it Easy Campaign**



We have also been working with a group of LDE members to support the Make It Easy campaign, which is calling for information from the government to be produced in accessible formats. There has been a lack of accessible information during Covid-19, but this is also an issue outside of the pandemic. We have been working with the group to

identify how the Human Rights Act can be incorporated into the campaign asks, and we are coproducing an Easy Read Guide on rights to accessible information, providing legal information to support advocacy and worked-through real life examples. This work is ongoing, and we expect it to be released in the Spring 2021.





## **IMPROVING SYSTEMS**

### **Strategic Aim 3: Increasing accountability of public bodies and services to uphold human rights**

We developed and delivered bespoke training to over 1,300 frontline staff in public bodies and 300 staff working in not-for-profit and voluntary organisations providing services, to better equip them to use the Human Rights Act to uphold human rights in everything they do during the pandemic and beyond.

We supported over 20 public bodies across the UK, including NHS bodies, local authorities, national bodies, care and education providers, working in areas including:

- health and social care
- social work, including adult and children
- education, including special educational needs and disability
- housing and independent living
- commissioning of services
- community-led support
- professional bodies for public sector staff

## **Covid-19 and human rights support sessions**

During 2020, it became clear just how essential it is that both leaders and frontline staff in public bodies make rights-respecting decisions. During the pandemic, emergency measures do not authorise breaches of human rights. In fact, the Coronavirus Act 2020 contained specific provisions stating that easing of care and support legal duties must not infringe people's human rights. Within one week of the Act passing, we had moved to online support for frontline staff across public bodies, and were inundated with requests:



In a time where it is easy to feel overwhelmed with policy and guidance, this session provided very informative and useful practical information regarding human rights in an accessible manner.



A well delivered, informative training session, supporting workers to be confident in providing service users with the best service.

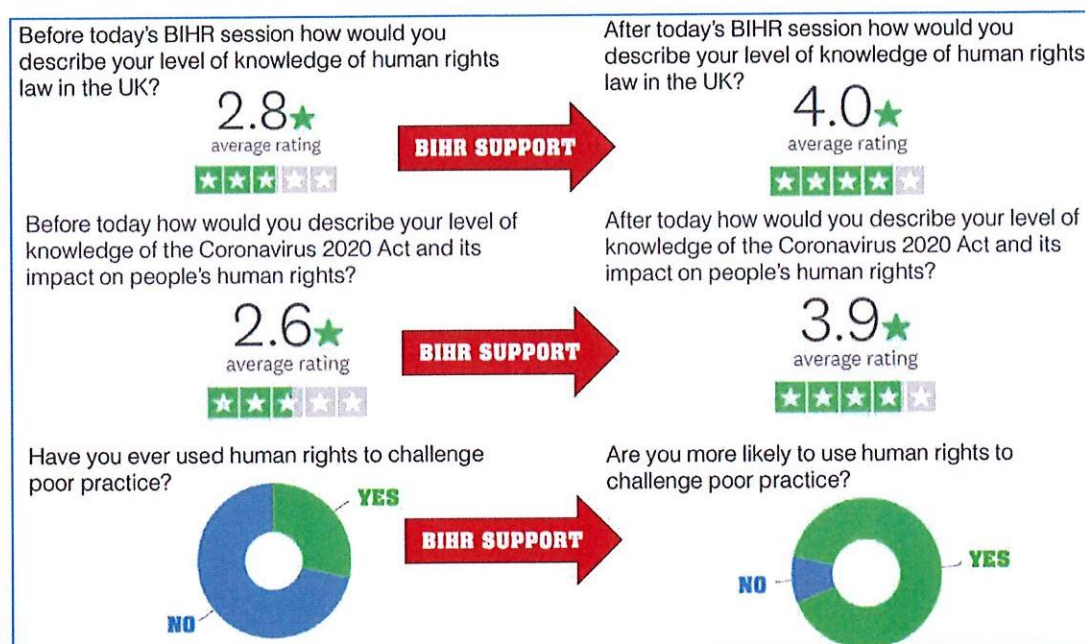
This is essential training for any social care staff working to protect people's rights during the current pandemic and moving forward.



Carlyn gave a very informative presentation in a friendly manner providing good day to day examples of our use of the Human Rights Act in our roles as social workers and Occupational Therapists in a time of great uncertainty when ensuring these rights are not ignored is essential to our practice.

## Trustees Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2020

Example data from a local authority we supported during 2020:



## Change projects

In addition, we continued several ongoing change projects with public bodies, including working with a large NHS Trust to support a human rights approach in mental health services, and local area commissioners. Some work has been postponed until 2021, due to staff deployment in tackling Covid-19 in health and care settings, but through adaptations we have been able to continue, complete and start some programmes:

### Tees, Esk and Wear Valley NHS Trust: A human rights approach to Mental Health Recovery

We completed our programme with TEWV NHS Trust exploring the development of a holistic human rights approach to mental health recovery. Funded by the Health Foundation, we were able to work directly with staff in a number of mental health teams/services, with people receiving services, with families and carers, and with leadership. This programme focused on building the knowledge and skills to use human rights within services. A key part of this included coproducing human rights resources to be integrated across mental recovery services. Examples of changes to staff practice include:



I used the Human Rights Act to challenge a decision to detain someone for inappropriate verbal comments.



## **Trustees Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2020**



I now feel confident in ensuring a person's human rights are met even if this is not what the person's family want.

After human rights training, I now always consider least restrictive practice and I encourage clients to challenge decisions.

In discussion with local services I have used Article 8 of the Human Rights Act to ensure a person can maintain contact with family.

In January 2021, a young person working on this project at the NHS Trust, who has experienced child and adult mental health services as a patient, blogged about her powerful experiences of the difference the programme had made:



...had I known at 16 years of age, what my human rights were, how they should be respected, what the 'rules' were that had to be followed to restrict some of my rights and also how I can claim them, I would have probably felt more empowered and in control. If the staff members knew what my rights were, the law around human rights in the UK and their duty to respect and protect my rights, I imagine a lot of the restrictions, traumatic experiences and decisions that were made in my care would not have happened, or certainly there would have been different approaches taken and different outcomes. My experiences of services would probably have felt better too ...As a service user, I would want to know what my rights are so I can try to challenge decisions made about my care. I would also want staff to know what they are, so they aren't breaching my rights without knowing. As a member of staff, I want to know more about human rights so I can be sure that I and my colleagues are respecting and protecting people's human rights in line with the law. And importantly, so that we are all working towards the same framework.

During 2020 further work has been developed with Tees, with a 2-part programme, delivered online, for front-line staff working in adult and older people's in-patient mental health settings. Through this programme we have trained over 400 staff. We will be rolling this work out for staff working in forensic settings in 2021.

### **Norfolk and Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust: Children's mental health services and human rights**

Towards the end of 2020 we started work with NSFT and will work with young people, parents, and carers to build human rights knowledge, and map commonly faced concerns to develop human rights practice sessions for staff.

### **Manchester Health and Care Commissioning**

During 2020 our work with MHCC was postponed, to take place at the start of 2021. This work focuses on supporting the capacity of the commissioning group to use human rights in the commissioning of health and care, with a focus on pandemic recovery.



## **EXPERIENCE-LED POLICY CHANGE**

### **Strategic Aim 4: Amplifying the voices of the people we support to positively influence policy impacting their rights**

During the pandemic we significantly increased our reach which led us to accelerate our plans to shift our policy work to:

- A. amplify the voices of those we support to secure better rights-respecting law and policy in the range of care and support issues that affect their life or work ("mainstreaming human rights"); and
- B. bring these voices into debates about why the Human Rights Act matters for us all.

We have undertaken significant policy work this year. This links up our practical experience of supporting people to have human rights upheld in everyday life with the opportunity to review and analyse pandemic responses, and call for positive, practical change.

## **A. Mainstreaming human rights**

### **Communities of Practice**

We launched 3 online communities of practice (COPs), one each for: people, community groups and public body staff. This is a way for people to keep in touch with BIHR during and after projects and programmes, with ongoing support from BIHR. Importantly, our COPs provide an important means for bringing people into our policy analysis. During 2020 we hosted 9 lunch and learns across the 3 platforms, providing support on issues such as DNARs, mental health detention, cuts to care, and challenging visiting policies.

### **Experience-led research on the impact of Covid-19 responses**

During the summer, 230 people, advocates, community groups and frontline staff shared their experiences in our participative research to understand the impact of the government's Covid-19 response on people's human rights. The findings across all three groups showed how government responses to the pandemic have themselves presented very real risks to people's human rights especially those who already have care and support needs. For example:

- Over 15% of people experienced a lack of protection for the right to life because of reduced services or prioritisation of other services. Almost 1 in 10 people experienced the use of Do Not Resuscitate Orders where the person concerned was either not involved or was pressured into agreeing.
- More than 1 in 4 people experienced care being taken away with an impact on their right to not be subjected to inhuman or degrading treatment.

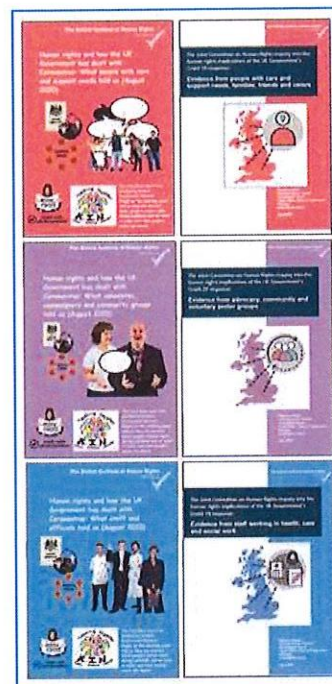


## **Trustees Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2020**

- More than 50% of advocates and community groups said that there was no clarity about what laws were being used to enable these drastic cuts to people's care.
- Over 50% of staff working in health and care experienced restrictions being put in place with a negative impact on the person's physical and mental wellbeing.
- 50% of staff told us that they had experienced decisions that had an impact on people's right to non-discrimination.

Working with Cloverleaf Advocacy and the Kirklees Involvement Network, we have produced Easy Read and full versions, of this research. This ensures our findings and recommendations are accessible to those who shaped them. This research has informed:

- **Parliament's Joint Committee on Human Rights inquiry on the impact of the Government's Covid-19 response.** Several of our findings were directly cited by the JCHR report. Our work generated several pieces in Community Care (trade press for social work and care), including stories on the lack of human rights training for staff during Covid, the risks of self-isolation laws for disabled people, and the worrying use of Do Not Resuscitate Orders.
- **Reality vs Rhetoric - 6 months of Covid laws:** Findings were shared in our response to the 6-month review of the Coronavirus Act, informing debate in the House of Lords and Commons. Through our work across the 4 nations, we were able to flag with parliamentarians and the EHRC that despite the Welsh Government reporting that there had been no activation of suspensions to care and support duties, social workers we supported shared experiences of this happening in practice.



### **Transparency in the use of Scottish powers**

Through our work with groups in Scotland it became clear there was serious confusion about the use of Emergency Powers to suspend care and support. This carried the potential to cause real harm to people who rely on services, including disabled people and older people. We worked with a range of Scottish groups, canvassing the situation, and investigating the responses of Scottish Government and public bodies. The Scottish Government responded via a regular review, integrating recommendations we put forward, to increase accountability and human rights protection. [Read about this work here](#)

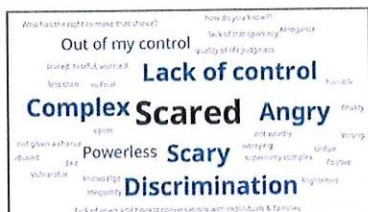
### **Do Not Resuscitate Decisions in Covid-19**

The Care Quality Commission used our research to support the launch of an England-wide review of resuscitation decisions in the pandemic. We were invited on to the CQC's Expert Reference Group, providing our evidence and expertise. We also conducted our own independent research with Learning Disability England and Turning Point UK to ensure that views were gathered from both people, families, supporters, and frontline staff. We used our new give/get online research workshop model in which we provide participants with human rights knowledge-building and ask data gathering questions throughout. This



## **Trustees Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2020**

enables us to gather experiences and show how these relate to whether people's human rights are being upheld or not.



We published our findings with people and families in December: "Scared, Angry, Discriminatory, and Out of My Control: People's experiences of DNAR decision-making". We published both a full and Easy Read version of the report. The follow up research with staff took place in January 2021 (leading to "Frustrated, Angry and Unfair: Staff Experiences of

DNAR Decision-making in 2020"). Through this research we worked directly with over 120 people with a range of experiences related to DNARs. [All reports can be read here.](#)

Our findings were shared with the CQC, and we know from our discussions that it was influential in their report, with references to our research in both the CQC's Interim Report and final Rapid Review Report (in 2021). Our reports generated media coverage including pieces in the [Financial Times](#) (and The Times), and a [BBC News feature](#) in early 2021.



## **B. Speaking up for our Human Rights Act**

### **Government Review of Administrative Law**

On 31 July 2020, the UK Government established the Independent Review of Administrative Law to seek evidence and report back on future reform of judicial review. [Drawing on specific research from the people we support, we submitted evidence about judicial review](#) being a crucial mechanism for upholding the human rights of people in the UK. Judicial review protects not only the people directly affected by a decision that is made by public bodies but all of us, by helping to ensure that there is a human rights culture in the UK.

### **Human Rights Day, 10 December**

Global Human Rights Day, 10 December, is an important point in BIHR's calendar each year, providing a positive and proactive point to bring together civil society to speak up for the Human Rights Act in the UK. We continued our important role of [coordinating over 110 organisations in publishing an open letter to the Prime Minister and political leaders](#): urging them to respond proportionately to Covid-19, to protect people's rights and the rule of law, and to stand by the Human Rights Act. We also focused on the positive theme of Making Change Through Human Rights, in line with our new strategic framework:



- [Making Change Through Human Rights Online Session](#): Almost 200 people joined us to learn more about the Human Rights Act, and how they can use the law in their



## **Trustees Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2020**

life and work to make positive changes, particularly in the pandemic. Almost 40% were people working in public bodies or services, 25% were people working in advocacy or campaigning, and 20% of people joined us as they or their loved ones were accessing or trying to access care and support. The session was well received, with positive feedback on the impact that can be made even from a short open access webinar. Participants were clear about the need for more practical education on the Human Rights Act:

“I would highly recommend the session. It is eye-opening, empowering and affects your every day life. You need to know about your human rights and what is actually means for you.  
It will change your life and those of those around you.”

“The session opened my eyes more to how much human rights apply in our day to day work, and life in general, and that we can empower ourselves and others by standing up for what we all deserve.”

“I gained some practical tips for how to support my service users in applying human rights to their own lives...”

Keep making change and challenging  
Real genuine person centred approach  
Funding advocacy Kindness  
Informed Empowerment Empathy Support at the top  
Personalisation awareness clarity  
Politics education love Advocate  
Respect consistency Honesty Understanding Truth  
Acceptance Co-production Leadership Clarity Genuine equality  
shared knowledge Self-respect #HRD2020  
Independent advocacy KNOWLEDGE  
Person centred

- **Making Change Through Human Rights Videos:** As part of our ongoing work highlighting the importance of human rights, we launched a video project for people to share their stories of how the law is helping them. We launched the project with videos from Ian, a family carer, Leo, a campaigner, and Sarah, an NHS worker.
- **Human Rights Day Online Reception:** Through our online event we connected people with lived experience, policy makers and sector leaders in human rights, health, care, advocacy, media, academia, and law. The event was chaired by Baroness Tanni Grey-Thompson, with presentations from Sir Nicolas Bratza: former President of the European Court of Human Rights, Imran Khan QC: lawyer for Stephen Lawrence's family, Alexis Quinn: human rights campaigner, Saba Salman: social affairs journalist, Brian Gormally: Director of the Centre of Administrative Justice in Northern Ireland, Professor Alan Miller: Independent Co-chair of the Scottish Government's National Taskforce for Human Rights, Joe Powell: Chief Executive of All Wales People First and Merris Amos: Professor of Human Rights law at Queen Mary University. (More about the event, including videos [here](#)).

## **Government review of the Human Rights Act**

In December 2020, the UK Government announced an Independent Review of the Human Rights Act. The Government noted that as the HRA “has been in force for 20 years, it is timely to undertake a review into its operation.” BIHR worked with over 400 people between January and March 2021 to prepare a detailed response to the Review, examining the impact of the HRA over the last 20 years. Our aim was to engage with the Review to provide important insights into the HRA's operation beyond the courtrooms and technical legal detail, to show the importance of the law for people in their everyday lives.





## **A VIBRANT BIHR**

### **Strategic Aim 5: Sustaining & developing BIHR as an ambitious & healthy charity enabling change through human rights**

One of our greatest strengths is our ability to deliver work that draws on the talents of our staff team, working collaboratively with a range of people with different roles in securing human rights across the UK.

BIHR's dedicated and highly skilled expert team are greatly valued. Their commitment and determination have enabled the organisation not merely to survive the pandemic, but to emerge having achieved major successes in the most difficult of circumstances. In this, the team have been supported by a fully engaged and responsive Board of Trustees. The commitment, flexibility and backing of both established and new funders in 2020 has made our work possible at a time when it was not only most needed but risked being overlooked.

## **A. Our staff team**

BIHR has a multidisciplinary team combining decades of experience of working on human rights and social change nationally and internationally. A full list of the staff team during 2020 is available on page five. The staff bring a variety of experience and expertise including project management; teaching and training; research, policy, and legal practice; health and care expertise; and voluntary sector support.

We recognise the toll the pandemic has taken on our team in many ways, from witnessing the trauma of those we support, to personal brushes with the virus, to the loss of loved ones and daily isolation. The team deserve the highest commendations for having achieved what we note in this report. During the pandemic, and with a reduced team, we invested in a new Operations Coordinator role to provide the organisational support needed, which has enabled BIHR to work remotely with success. At the end of 2020, the decision was also made to invest in additional Human Rights Officers capacity, given the increased demand for our support and income-generating programmes.

**Volunteers:** We did not engage office volunteers during the year under review.

## **B. Our Board of Trustees**

Our Board brings a range of expertise to BIHR, including operations, finance, human resources, human rights and legal knowledge, social change, and fundraising expertise. A full list of the trustee team during 2020 is available on page four. In addition to our usual support, BIHR's Board put in place additional monitoring and support during 2020 as the organisation navigated the impact of Covid-19. This has included a regular liaison between the Treasurer and the Director as a risk management measure, in addition to quarterly sub-Committee and full Board meetings. There were no interruptions to the Board meetings and business, particularly as our Articles permit online meetings and decision-making.



**Trustees Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2020**

## **C. Our funding**

BIHR receives several grants from a range of Trusts and philanthropic Foundations, as well as grants from the public sector. We are exceptionally grateful for the foresight and flexibility shown by our funders in 2020 to enable us to repurpose, prioritise and reduce expected activities, as well as for their additional support, which has allowed us to respond to the needs arising from the pandemic.

In 2020 our funders included:

- The Joseph Rowntree Charitable Foundation
- The Tudor Trust
- The Bromley Trust
- Comic Relief
- The Three Guinea's Trust
- The RAFT from The Fore

## **BIHR AT QMUL LAW SCHOOL**

The British Institute of Human Rights has partnered with the School of Law at Queen Mary, University of London since 2011. BIHR's offices are within the School, where we provide unique opportunities for students wishing to specialise in human rights law and practice.

**Academic teaching:** BIHR convened our innovative clinical module "Securing Human Rights Compliance: A Case Study on the UK". Our unique module provides students with key knowledge and skills to advocate for human rights outside of the courtroom. The module has one semester of teaching based on a variety of non-court-based mechanisms for human rights advocacy, and a semester of placements within BIHR learning key skills around research, policy, communications, fundraising and events management.

**Student internship programme:** Each summer BIHR runs an [internship open to QMUL law students](#), appointed through a competitive application process. Our internships are paid at the London Living Wage. Due to Covid-19 we were unable to host our internship in 2020.

**Wider engagement:** Whilst Covid-19 has made wider engagement difficult, we have taken part in online activities where possible. This has included a school liaison event with over 100 children aged between 14-17, engaging them in current human rights debates and legal protections.

## **5. FINANCIAL REVIEW**

The Statement of Financial Activities shows total net incoming resources in the year of £76,148 (2019: incoming resources of £5,002) and total funds being carried forward at year-end of £158,578 (2019: £82,430). The balance in the unrestricted funds increased by £89,925 (2019: increased by £13,212) from £53,562 at 1 January 2020 to £143,487 at 31 December 2020. The balance in the restricted funds decreased by £13,777 (2019: decreased by £8,210) from £28,868 at 1 January 2020 to £15,091 at 31 December 2020.

### **A. Risk**

Trustees have identified the main risks facing the organisation and these are contained in a risk register which is maintained by the Director. The risk register is reviewed regularly by Trustees at their formal meetings. In 2020, the Trustees considered the most significant risk to be the need to navigate the impact of Covid-19, enabling the charity to respond to the demand for its support in a financially viable manner, thereby which keeps the organisation and staff safe and well, to be the most significant risk.

### **B. Reserves**

BIHR's reserves policy aims to hold the equivalent of three months spend in reserves, which amounts to an average of £75,000 (with increased staffing commitments during 2020 and into 2021). The year under review saw an increase in our overall reserves, with the year-end figure being £158,578 (£143,487 unrestricted). We continue to budget cautiously and to ring-fence a substantial proportion of BIHR's training and consultancy income as a contribution to reserves. Whilst our 2020 year end reserves figure amounts to higher than that stated in our policy, it is important that we are cautious on this, to cover funding gaps and particularly delays in consultancy income during 2021 with the uncertainty surrounding the pandemic. In addition, a proportion of the unrestricted reserves relates to consultancy income for delivery originally due in 2020 but delayed until 2021, and thus has been ring fenced to cover our consultancy commitments.

## **6. PLANS FOR FUTURE PERIODS**

This Annual Report focuses on our activities in 2020, the first year of our new five-year strategy, focusing on BIHR's unique role in enabling people and organisations to make positive social change through human rights. Our framework has not only stood the test of working in an emergency such as the pandemic, but has also enabled us to respond effectively, focused on our mission. The pandemic has forced BIHR to adapt to entirely new ways of online delivery. Despite an immensely challenging year new opportunities have also opened for the charity which we will learn from and develop in 2021 and beyond:

- ✓ **The significant need for basic human rights knowledge support:** This work can often be difficult to fund, with the focus on "bigger impact" projects; however, it is clear



## **Trustees Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2020**

that the foundations must continue to be laid. We must prioritise access to practical human rights information support to enable people to advocate for themselves and challenge serious risks to their rights in everyday life and work.

- ✓ **Integrating human rights support into existing campaigns and advocacy and partnership working:** We have partnered with over 50 groups, organisations, and bodies during 2020. The model of self-led and community groups bringing in BIHR to help shape existing work has been highly effective and has had a more immediate impact than if a "new" project were to be created. We must secure funding that will enable us to provide this support for free, rather than as a chargeable service; otherwise, those most in need of human rights advocacy support will be the ones least able to access it
- ✓ **Online and working directly with people:** Working online has enabled us to reach so many more people than we usually would. We have become more skilled up and developed digital confidence as an organisation. The staff team have developed innovative ways to deliver online sessions which incorporate different technical options and have enabled us to create a far more interactive and mutually beneficial experience than might otherwise be the case using digital technology. We have shared our good practice with CAST (Centre for Acceleration of Social Technology) on "keeping the human touch" whilst delivering support online ([available here](#)). Digital delivery has also made it much easier to work with frontline staff, who are often working in emergency or high pressure situations, and where releasing staff to access our support can be challenging as the services still need to run. There has also been a marked decrease in travel and its associated impact on BIHR's team, as well as an increase in our work in devolved nations. We will continue to develop our digital delivery model.
- ✓ **Prioritising our digital development:** Through developing the domestic abuse survivor pathway for Know Your Human Rights, we have learned much about digital confidence and delivery. Our websites - both the KYHR self-advocacy sites and BIHR's main site - must be fit for purpose as we prioritise our digital delivery model.
- ✓ **Easy Read and accessible materials:** Through our increased direct work we also know the importance of producing as much of our work as possible in Easy Read, so that it is accessible to the people we are supporting, and whose experiences we are sharing at the policy level. We have approached this by 1) building our internal capacity to develop Easy Read; and 2) paying an established self-led group of people with learning disabilities to provide Easy Read proofing and editing. This is a model we are very keen to continue and will prioritise in our funding applications.
- ✓ **Growing our experience-led research and policy model:** Whilst our communities of practice are still in their infancy, we believe there is significant potential to develop these in 2021. We have found our model for research workshops, developed through our DNAR work, to be very successful. At the start of 2021 we have already used this model to involve over 400 people directly in our work on the Review of the Human Rights Act and are developing similar work with NSUN (National Survivor User Network) to respond to proposals to change the Mental Health Act.

## **7. STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT**

The British Institute of Human Rights is a company limited by guarantee without a share capital incorporated on 27 November 2003 and registered with the Charity Commission on 16 January 2004 as a charity. Its governing rules are its Memorandum and Articles of Association.

### **A. Trustee selection methods**

New trustees are appointed by existing trustees, who use a variety of methods, including open advertising and search and selection, depending on the needs of the organisation. Trustees serve for a term of three years and are eligible for re-appointment. There were no changes to the Trustee Board in 2020. The full list of Trustees and Staff at BIHR during 2020 is available on pages four and five.

### **B. Trustee responsibilities**

The trustees meet quarterly, with additional meetings as required. Trustees determine pay and remuneration for key management personnel on the advice of the Chair and Honorary Treasurer, who act as the remuneration sub-committee of the Trustee Board. In doing so, Trustees have regard to both performance and the pay scales established by the charity, which seek to be consistent with remuneration levels in organisations of comparable size, reach and status.

The ongoing management of the charity is delegated to the Director. In 2020 activities were delivered mainly through the work of on average six staff members, supported by trustees.



## **8. TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES IN RELATION TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

The charity trustees (who are also the directors of the charity or the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing a trustees' annual report and financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the charity trustees to prepare financial statements for each year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charity for that period. In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in business.

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the charitable company's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

### **Statement as to disclosure to our Independent Examiner**

In so far as the trustees are aware at the time of approving our trustees' annual report:

**Trustees Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2020**

- there is no relevant information, being information needed by the Independent Examiner in connection with preparing their report, of which the Independent Examiner is unaware, and
- the trustees, having made enquiries of fellow directors and the Independent Examiner that they ought to have individually taken, have each taken all steps that they are obliged to take as directors in order to make themselves aware of any relevant information and to establish that the Independent Examiner is aware of that information.

**Approval**

This report was approved by the Trustees on 26 July 2021 and signed on their behalf.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Nicolas Bratza".

Sir Nicolas Bratza  
Chair and Trustee

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Mark Hilton".

Mark Hilton  
Honorary Treasurer and Trustee



The British Institute of Human Rights  
(A company limited by guarantee)



Independent Examiner's Report  
To the Trustees Of The British Institute Of Human Rights

I report to the trustees on my examination of the financial statements of The British Institute of Human Rights (the charity) for the year ended 31 December 2020.

**Responsibilities and basis of report**

As the trustees of the charity (and also its directors for the purposes of company law) you are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 (the 2006 Act).

Having satisfied myself that the financial statements of the charity are not required to be audited under Part 16 of the 2006 Act and are eligible for independent examination, I report in respect of my examination of the charity's financial statements carried out under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act). In carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act.

**Independent examiner's statement**

Since the charity's gross income exceeded £250,000, your examiner must be a member of a body listed in section 145 of the 2011 Act. I confirm that I am qualified to undertake the examination because I am a member of The Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales, which is one of the listed bodies.

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

- 1 accounting records were not kept in respect of the charity as required by section 386 of the 2006 Act; or
- 2 the financial statements do not accord with those records; or
- 3 the financial statements do not comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the 2006 Act other than any requirement that the accounts give a true and fair view which is not a matter considered as part of an
- 4 the financial statements have not been prepared in accordance with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice for accounting and reporting by charities applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the financial statements to be reached.

Francis Corbishley FCA  
Independent Examiner  
Nicholas House  
River Front  
Enfield  
Middlesex  
EN1 3FG

Dated: 26 July 2021

Statement of Financial Activities  
(including income and expenditure account)  
31 December 2020

	Notes	Unrestricted Fund 2020 £	Restricted Fund 2020 £	Total Funds 2020 £	Total Funds 2019 £
INCOME:					
Donations	3	162,160	26,025	<b>188,185</b>	59,965
Charitable activities	4	104,415	19,036	<b>123,451</b>	220,514
Investment income		-	-	-	1
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>		<b>266,575</b>	<b>45,061</b>	<b>311,636</b>	<b>280,480</b>
EXPENDITURE:					
Raising funds		55	-	<b>55</b>	154
Charitable activities		176,595	58,838	<b>235,433</b>	275,324
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	5	<b>176,650</b>	<b>58,838</b>	<b>235,488</b>	<b>275,478</b>
<b>NET INCOME/(DEFICIT)</b>		<b>89,925</b>	<b>(13,777)</b>	<b>76,148</b>	<b>5,002</b>
<b>RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS</b>					
Funds brought forward at 1 January 2020		53,562	28,868	<b>82,430</b>	77,428
<b>Total funds balance carried forward at 31 December 2020</b>		<b>143,487</b>	<b>15,091</b>	<b>158,578</b>	<b>82,430</b>

There were no recognised gains or losses for 2020 or 2019 other than those included in the Statement of Financial Activities. All income and expenditure is derived from continuing activities.



The British Institute of Human Rights  
(A company limited by guarantee)



Company number:04978121

Balance Sheet

31 December 2020

	Notes	2020			2019
		£	£	£	£
<b>FIXED ASSETS</b>					
Tangible assets	10		-		-
<b>CURRENT ASSETS:</b>					
Debtors	11	12,828			11,024
Cash at bank	12	163,096			95,894
		<u>175,924</u>			<u>106,918</u>
<b>CURRENT LIABILITIES:</b>					
Creditors:					
Amounts falling due within one year	13	17,346			24,488
<b>NET CURRENT ASSETS:</b>			<u>158,578</u>		<u>82,430</u>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES:</b>			<u>158,578</u>		<u>82,430</u>
<b>FUNDS:</b>					
Unrestricted income fund	14	143,487			53,562
Restricted income funds	15	15,091			28,868
		<u>158,578</u>			<u>82,430</u>

For the year ending 31 December 2020, the company was entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

The members have not required the company to obtain an audit of its accounts for the year in question in accordance with section 476.

The directors acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and the preparation of accounts.

These accounts have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions applicable to small companies subject to the small companies regime and in accordance with FRS 102 SORP

Approved by the Trustees on 26 July 2021 and signed on their behalf by

Sir Nicolas Bratza  
Chair and Trustee

Mark Hilton  
Honorary Treasurer and Trustee

The notes on pages 31 to 43 form part of these financial statements

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2020

## **1 ACCOUNTING POLICIES**

The British Institute of Human Rights is a charitable company limited by guarantee in the United Kingdom. In the event of the charity being wound up, the liability in respect of the guarantee is limited to £1 per member of the charity. The address of the registered office is given in the charity information on page 1 of these financial statements. The nature of the charity's operations and principal activities are given on page 2.

The principal accounting policies adopted, judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty in the preparation of the financial statements are as follows:

### **a) Basis of preparation**

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019) - (Charities SORP (FRS 102)), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006.

The British Institute of Human Rights meets the definition of a public interest entity under FRS102.

The financial statements are prepared in sterling which is the functional currency of the charity.

Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy note(s).

The presentation currency is £ sterling. Amounts are rounded to the nearest £.

### **b) Preparation of the accounts on a going concern basis**

The trustees consider that there are no material uncertainties about the charity's ability to continue as a going concern. The Covid-19 pandemic initially had an impact on the charity's fundraising income through training and consultancy. However, this has been largely offset by developing new digital delivery solutions, responding to the need for new consultancy specifically focused on human rights law and pandemic responses, and by established grant funders providing additional emergency support and/or permitting reallocation of restricted funds to core funding. In addition, several significant new grants from Trusts and Foundations, supporting Covid response work, were secured. There are no material uncertainties affecting the current year's accounts. In future years, the key risks to the charity are likely to be less certainty around grant funding as Trusts and Foundations move away from pandemic response to recovery and normalisation; BIHR's fundraising approach is accounting for this and consolidating consultancy income with new digital support.

### **c) Income**

Income is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the item(s) of income have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably.



Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2020

Income from government and other grants, whether 'capital' grants or 'revenue' grants, is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the grants have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably and is not deferred.

For legacies, entitlement is taken as the earlier of the date on which either: the charity is aware that probate has been granted, the estate has been finalised and notification has been made by the executor(s) to the Trust that a distribution will be made, or when a distribution is received from the estate. Receipt of a legacy, in whole or in part, is only considered probable when the amount can be measured reliably and the charity has been notified of the executor's intention to make a distribution. Where legacies have been notified to the charity, or the charity is aware of the granting of probate, and the criteria for income recognition have not been met, then the legacy is treated as a contingent asset and disclosed if material.

Income received in advance is deferred until the criteria for income recognition are met.

**d) Donated services and facilities**

Donated professional services and donated facilities are recognised as income when the charity has control over the item, any conditions associated with the donated item have been met, the receipt of economic benefit from the use by the charity of the item is probable and that economic benefit can be measured reliably.

On receipt, donated professional services and donated facilities are recognised on the basis of the value of the gift to the charity which is the amount the charity would have been willing to pay to obtain services or facilities of equivalent economic benefit on the open market; a corresponding amount is then recognised in expenditure in the period of receipt.

**e) Interest receivable**

Interest on funds held on deposit is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the charity; this is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the Bank.

**f) Fund accounting**

Unrestricted funds are available to spend on activities that further any of the purposes of charity. Designated funds are unrestricted funds of the charity which the trustees have decided at their discretion to set aside to use for a specific purpose. Restricted funds are grants and donations which the donor has specified are to be solely used for particular areas of the charity's work or for specific projects being undertaken by the charity.

**g) Expenditure and irrecoverable VAT**

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to make a payment to a third party, it is probable that settlement will be required and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is classified under the following activity headings:

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2020

- Costs of raising funds comprise the time proportion of staff salary costs and costs directly related to fund raising.
- Expenditure on charitable activities includes the costs of activities undertaken to further the purposes of the charity and their associated support costs.
- Other expenditure represents those items not falling into any other heading.

Irrecoverable VAT is charged as a cost against the activity for which the expenditure was incurred.

**h) Allocation of support costs**

Support costs are those functions that assist the work of the charity but do not directly undertake charitable activities. Support costs include back office costs, finance, personnel, payroll and governance costs which support the charity's activities.

These costs have been allocated between cost of raising funds and expenditure on charitable activities.

**i) Operating leases**

The charity had no operating leases in the year.

Rental charges are charged on a straight line basis over the term of the lease.

**j) Tangible fixed assets**

Individual fixed assets costing more than £500 are capitalised at cost and are depreciated over their estimated useful economic lives on a straight line basis as follows:

**Asset Category**

Office equipment	– straight line over 4 years
Office furniture	– straight line over 5 years

**k) Debtors**

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount due after any trade discount offered. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any trade discounts due.

**l) Cash at bank and in hand**

Cash at bank and cash in hand includes cash and short term highly liquid investments with a short maturity of three months or less from the date of acquisition or opening of the deposit or similar account.



Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2020

**m) Creditors and provisions**

Creditors and provisions are recognised where the charity has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probably result in the transfer of funds to a third party and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably. Creditors and provisions are normally recognised at their settlement amount after allowing for any trade discounts due.

**n) Financial instruments**

The trust only has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value with the exception of bank loans which are subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

**o) Judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty**

Accounting estimates and judgements are continually evaluated and are based on historical experience and other factors, including expectations of future events that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances.

The following judgements (apart from those involving estimates) have been made in the process of applying the above accounting policies that have had the most significant effect on amounts recognised in the financial statements:

*Useful economic lives of tangible assets*

The annual depreciation charge for tangible assets is sensitive to changes in the estimated useful economic lives and residual values of the assets. The useful economic lives and residual values are re-assessed annually. They are amended when necessary to reflect current estimates, based on technological advancement, future investments, economic utilisation and the physical condition of the assets. See note 10 for the carrying amount of the plant and equipment, and note 1.J for the useful economic lives for each class of assets.

*Contributions in kind*

The value of the contributions in kind are recognised on the basis of the value of the gift to the charity which is the amount the charity would have been willing to pay to obtain services or facilities of equivalent economic benefit on the open market.

There are no key assumptions concerning the future and other key sources of estimation uncertainty at the reporting date that have a significant risk of causing a material adjustment to the carrying amounts of assets and liabilities within the next financial year.

**p) Employee benefits**

- **Short term benefits**  
Short term benefits including holiday pay are recognised as an expense in the period in which the service is received.
- **Employee termination benefits**  
Termination benefits are accounted for on an accrual basis and in line with FRS 102.

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2020

• **Pension scheme**

The charity does not operate its own pension fund but did contribute to the personal pension plans of eligible employees. The pensions costs charged in the financial statements represent the contributions payable during the year.

**2 LEGAL STATUS OF THE TRUST**

The Trust is a company limited by guarantee and has no share capital.

**3 INCOME FROM DONATIONS**

	2020 £	2020 £	2020 £	2019 £
	General Fund	Restricted Fund	Total	Total
<b>Donations</b>				
Bromley Trust	10,000	-	<b>10,000</b>	10,000
Comic Relief Recovering Funding	-	26,025	<b>26,025</b>	-
Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust	70,236	-	<b>70,236</b>	44,950
The Fore	4,667	-	<b>4,667</b>	-
Three Guineas Trust	38,300	-	<b>38,300</b>	-
Tudor Trust	34,000	-	<b>34,000</b>	-
Other	4,957	-	<b>4,957</b>	5,015
	<u>162,160</u>	<u>26,025</u>	<u><b>188,185</b></u>	<u>59,965</u>

In 2019, all of the income from donations was attributable to the general fund.

**4. INCOME FROM CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES**

		2020 £	2020 £	2020 £	2019 £
	Notes	General Fund	Restricted Fund	Total	Total
Grants for the provision of goods & services	4a	-	19,036	<b>19,036</b>	45,560
Training, consultancy & contracts	4b	100,847	-	<b>100,847</b>	169,044
Other	4c	3,568	-	<b>3,568</b>	5,910
		<u>104,415</u>	<u>19,036</u>	<u><b>123,451</b></u>	<u>220,514</u>



Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2020

	2020 £ General Fund	2020 £ Restricted Fund	2020 £ Total	2019 £ Total
<b>4a Grants for the provision of goods &amp; services</b>				
Comic Relief Tech vs Abuse	-	19,036	<b>19,036</b>	23,795
Legal Education Foundation	-	-	-	19,765
London Catalyst	-	-	-	2,000
	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
	<u>-</u>	<u>19,036</u>	<u><b>19,036</b></u>	<u>45,560</u>
<b>4b Training, consultancy &amp; contracts</b>				
School of Law, Queen Mary University of London	30,000	-	<b>30,000</b>	30,000
Tees, Esk & Wear Valley NHS Foundation Trust	11,057	-	<b>11,057</b>	63,000
Open training courses	3,154	-	<b>3,154</b>	1,080
Public sector training and consultancy	44,787	-	<b>44,787</b>	25,410
Voluntary sector training and consultancy	10,704	-	<b>10,704</b>	12,586
Other training and consultancy	-	-	-	31,025
Reimbursed expenses	<u>1,145</u>	<u>-</u>	<u><b>1,145</b></u>	<u>5,943</u>
	<u>100,847</u>	<u>-</u>	<u><b>100,847</b></u>	<u>169,044</u>
<b>4c Other</b>				
Royalties, publishing & speaking fees	3,085	-	<b>3,085</b>	3,316
Sale of resources	483	-	<b>483</b>	2,579
Other	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>15</u>
	<u>3,568</u>	<u>-</u>	<u><b>3,568</b></u>	<u>5,910</u>

In 2019 £45,560 of the income from charitable activities was attributable to the restricted fund and the remaining £174,954 was attributable to the general fund.

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2020

**5. ANALYSIS OF TOTAL RESOURCES EXPENDED**

Resources expended were as follows:

	Cost of fund raising £	Expenditure on charities activities £	<b>2020 Total £</b>	2019 Total £
Staff costs	-	157,804	<b>157,804</b>	168,467
Programme Costs	-	15,690	<b>15,690</b>	24,217
Office expenses	-	19,777	<b>19,777</b>	30,393
Direct fundraising costs	55	-	<b>55</b>	154
Premises costs	-	30,000	<b>30,000</b>	30,000
Support costs	-	7,860	<b>7,860</b>	10,020
Direct governance costs	-	4,302	<b>4,302</b>	12,227
	<u>55</u>	<u>235,433</u>	<u><b>235,488</b></u>	<u>275,478</u>

**6. ANALYSIS OF SUPPORT AND GOVERNANCE COSTS**

	Support Costs £	Governance costs £	<b>2020 Total £</b>	2019 Total £
Independent Examination	-	2,142	<b>2,142</b>	2,184
Management committee expenses	-	-	-	205
Payroll and accounting services	7,860	2,160	<b>10,020</b>	10,020
Independent Strategic Review	-	-	-	9,550
Other governance costs	-	-	-	288
	<u>7,860</u>	<u>4,302</u>	<u><b>12,162</b></u>	<u>22,247</u>



Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2020

**7. ANALYSIS OF STAFF COSTS, TRUSTEE REMUNERATION AND EXPENSES, AND THE COST OF KEY MANAGEMENT PERSONNEL**

Staff costs included the following:

	2020	2019
	£	£
Gross salary	145,404	155,266
Employer's national insurance	10,263	11,520
Employer's pension contributions	2,137	1,681
	<u>157,804</u>	<u>168,467</u>

The average number of employees during the year was six (2019: six)

There were no employees with emoluments above £60,000.

The charity does not operate its own pension fund but did contribute to the personal pension plans of six (2019: seven) employees.

The key management personnel comprise the trustees and the director. The total employee benefits of the key management personnel of the charity were £56,010 (2019: £55,715).

The charity trustees were not paid or received any other benefits from employment with the charity in the year (2019: £nil). No expenses were paid to the trustee in the year (2019: £205 to one trustee).

**8. GOVERNMENT GRANTS**

Income from government grants comprises income to further the charities objectives. See note 4 for further details of these grants.

**9. CORPORATION TAXATION**

The charity is exempt from corporation tax as all its income is charitable and is applied for charitable purposes.

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2020

**10. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS**

Fixtures & Fittings and Computer Equipment

	£
<b>COST:</b>	
At 1 January 2020	30,734
Additions in the year	-
At 31 December 2020	<u>30,734</u>
<b>DEPRECIATION:</b>	
At 1 January 2020	30,734
Charge for the period	-
At 31 December 2020	<u>30,734</u>
<b>NET BOOK VALUE:</b>	
At 31 December 2020	<u>-</u>
At 31 December 2019	<u>-</u>

**11. DEBTORS**

	2020 £	2019 £
Debtors	10,411	8,475
Other debtors	<u>2,417</u>	<u>2,549</u>
	<u>12,828</u>	<u>11,024</u>

**12. CASH AT BANK**

	2020 £	2019 £
CAF account	161,616	94,717
Barclays bank	1,480	1,080
Petty cash	-	73
Stripe	<u>-</u>	<u>24</u>
	<u>163,096</u>	<u>95,894</u>



Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2020

**13. CREDITORS**

	2020 £	2019 £
Trade creditors	1,370	498
Accruals	11,327	9,935
Social security	3,842	13,085
Other creditors	807	970
	<u>17,346</u>	<u>24,488</u>

**14. ANALYSIS OF NET ASSETS BETWEEN FUNDS**

2020	Fixed Assets £	Net Current Assets £	2020 Total £	2019 Total £
Unrestricted Funds	-	143,487	143,487	53,562
Restricted Funds	-	15,091	15,091	28,868
<b>Net assets</b>	-	<u>158,578</u>	<u>158,578</u>	<u>82,430</u>

2019	Fixed Assets £	Net Current Assets £	2019 Total £	2018 Total £
Unrestricted Funds	-	53,562	53,562	40,350
Restricted Funds	-	28,868	28,868	37,078
<b>Net assets</b>	-	<u>82,430</u>	<u>82,430</u>	<u>77,428</u>

**15. FUNDS**

The funds of the charity include restricted funds comprising the unexpended balances of donations and grants held on trust to be applied to specific purposes. Unrestricted funds are available to spend on activities that further any of the purposes of charity.

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2020

2020	Balance at 1 Jan 2020	Income 2020	Expenditure 2020	Balance at 31 Dec 2020
	£	£	£	£
<b>Restricted Funds</b>				
Comic Relief Recovering Funding	-	26,025	26,025	-
Comic Relief Tech vs Abuse	19,828	19,036	30,579	8,285
Co-op Local Community Fund	4,702	-	-	4,702
The Law Society Charity	363	-	-	363
Legal Education Foundation	1,975	-	234	1,741
London Catalyst	2,000	-	2,000	-
<b>Total Restricted Funds</b>	<b>28,868</b>	<b>45,061</b>	<b>58,838</b>	<b>15,091</b>
<b>Unrestricted Funds</b>	<b>53,562</b>	<b>266,575</b>	<b>176,650</b>	<b>143,487</b>
<b>Total Funds</b>	<b>82,430</b>	<b>311,636</b>	<b>235,488</b>	<b>158,578</b>

2019	Balance at 1 Jan 2019	Income 2019	Expenditure 2019	Balance at 31 Dec 2019
	£	£	£	£
<b>Restricted Funds</b>				
Comic Relief Tech vs Abuse	-	23,795	3,967	19,828
Co-op Local Community Fund	4,702	-	-	4,702
The Law Society Charity	7,500	-	7,137	363
Legal Education Foundation	22,676	19,765	40,466	1,975
London Catalyst	-	2,000	-	2,000
Matrix Chambers	2,200	-	2,200	-
<b>Total Restricted Funds</b>	<b>37,078</b>	<b>45,560</b>	<b>53,770</b>	<b>28,868</b>
<b>Unrestricted Funds</b>	<b>40,350</b>	<b>234,920</b>	<b>221,708</b>	<b>53,562</b>
<b>Total Funds</b>	<b>77,428</b>	<b>280,48</b>	<b>275,478</b>	<b>82,430</b>



Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2020

<b>Name of restricted fund</b>	<b>Description, nature and purposes of the fund</b>
Comic Relief Recovering Funding	Provided flexible funding to support us to adapt and respond to the challenges Covid-19 between July and December 2020
Comic Relief: Tech vs Abuse	The Comic Relief (with Esmée Fairbairn Foundation and The Clothworkers Foundation) Tech vs Abuse funding is enabling BIHR to work with domestic abuse groups and survivors to develop our Know Your Human Rights digital tool with a pathway to assist women to rebuild their lives by advocating for their human rights in their interactions with public services.
Co-op Local Community Fund	This funding is supporting BIHR to hold free learning events on mental health and human rights in Tower Hamlets, ensuring the local people's human rights are respected and protected when they need mental health support.
The Law Society Charity	Law Society Charity: This charitable fund, set up by the Law Society (but independent of it) makes grants to a range of organisations to further law and justice. This grant is supporting BIHR to reprint and distribute several of our practical resources on human rights law for self-advocacy and everyday decision-making in health and social care services. It is also enabling us to hold a number of sessions in communities in England to enable local community groups to increase their knowledge and understanding of the law and how to use this to secure justice in everyday discussions with public services.
Legal Education Foundation	This charity is dedicated to the advancement and support of legal education in the UK, and provides a range of grants. The grant to BIHR focuses on developing a new online human rights tool which will support advocacy with and for people with mental health and/or capacity issues to use human rights legal language to secure dignified and fair care and treatment.
London Catalyst	This funding is contributing to BIHR's activities to support Londoners with lived experience of learning disabilities, Autism and/or mental health to benefit from their human rights.

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2020

**16. RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS**

There were no related party transactions for the year ended 31 December 2020 or the year ended 31 December 2019.