

Justice Is Now
Trustees' Annual Report
For the period 1 April 2024 to 30 March 2025

Reference and Administrative Details

Charity name: Justice Is Now
Charity registration number: 1194627
Governing document: Constitution
Principal address: 1B Law Street CHESTER CH2 3AT

Trustees during the period:

The trustees who served during the financial year and up to the date of this report were:

Lily Muyang
Dr Dominic Willmott – Chair
Ramya Nagesh
John Lennon
Elieen Doyle

Senior management:

The charity is led by the Founder and Director, supported by employed staff, consultants, and volunteers.

Bankers:

Unity Trust Bank

Accounts:

The roles are as follows.

- Continued – Projects Lead court observations/criminal sexual offences barrister programme
- Family courts pilot projects Lead
- Interim senior Projects Manager
- Outsourced: Auditor/Accountants
- Project specific: Peer mentors locally and costs of this programme.

Explanation of Apparent Surplus in Accounts (Year Ending March 2025)

The accounts for the year ending March 2025 show an apparent surplus. However, this does not represent unrestricted or excess operational funds.

During the 2024–2025 financial year, the charity intentionally held funds in reserve in preparation for planned staffing expansion and programme delivery in the 2025–2026 period. This included the recruitment of three new individuals to support the charity's strategic growth and the delivery of localised services in Chester.

These funds were **earmarked and effectively restricted** for:

- Staffing costs associated with the three new roles
- Programme delivery and operational costs linked to expanded local work in Chester
- Ensuring sustainability and continuity of services during the transition into 2025–2026

As the financial year ended in **March 2025**, prior to the commencement of these roles and associated expenditure, the accounts **do not yet reflect the deployment of these funds**. The reported surplus therefore reflects **timing differences**, rather than unallocated or surplus income.

The trustees made a **deliberate and prudent decision** to retain these funds to ensure:

- Responsible financial planning
- Compliance with good governance and charity finance principles
- The charity's ability to meet forthcoming contractual and staffing commitments

Accordingly, the surplus should be understood as **designated and forward-committed funds**, rather than available unrestricted reserves.

Structure, Governance and Management

Governing document

Justice Is Now is a charitable organization governed by its constitution and regulated by the Charity Commission for England and Wales.

Trustee appointment and induction

Trustees are appointed in accordance with the constitution. New trustees receive an induction covering the charity's aims, activities, governance responsibilities, safeguarding, financial oversight, and risk management.

Governance arrangements

The Board of Trustees meets regularly to provide strategic oversight, ensure compliance with charity law, and monitor performance against charitable objectives. Trustees delegate day-to-day operations to the Director while retaining overall responsibility.

What We Do

Justice Is Now is a survivor-led charity working to improve justice outcomes and support for people affected by sexual violence. The charity bridges critical gaps in the criminal justice system to help survivors find closure and to drive change where it is needed most. Trustees recognize sexual violence and sexual abuse as critical issues that remain significantly underfunded and under-supported, both nationally and internationally.

Supporting survivors

Justice Is Now provides free, trauma-informed emotional and practical support to individuals affected by sexual violence, with a particular focus on complainants following police reports or court proceedings.

As a survivor-led organization, the charity offers peer support grounded in lived experience and informed by an understanding of the profound impact that reporting, investigation, and court processes can have on wellbeing. Support is available regardless of case outcome, including cases resulting in conviction, acquittal, withdrawal, or ongoing proceedings.

Peer support and befriending

The charity delivers safe, informal peer support through trained volunteers with lived experience. Support offered includes: - Emotional check-ins and listening support; - Informal meetings such as walks or coffee/tea conversations; - Practical assistance with letters, forms, and appointments; - Light-touch advocacy, including support in liaising with GPs or employers where appropriate.

Complainant feedback and advocacy

Justice Is Now also provides supported opportunities for complainants to share their experiences of the justice process once court proceedings have concluded. With informed consent, anonymized feedback may be shared with relevant professionals, including police, prosecutors, and court practitioners, to promote learning, accountability, and system improvement.

Trustees recognize that many survivors experience a sharp reduction in support once formal services, such as ISVA provision, end. The charity's services are designed to bridge this gap by offering survivor-led, non-judgmental support that complements existing statutory and NHS provision.

Support is offered to adults aged 18 and over who have reported sexual violence, whether recently or historically, and is provided free of charge and on a confidential basis.

Training the next generation of legal professionals

Justice Is Now delivers specialist education for future barristers through a CPD-accredited Moodle course entitled Preparing for a Career as a Criminal Barrister: Serious Sexual Offences. The course is designed to prepare aspiring advocates for the legal, ethical, and practical complexities of working on serious sexual offence cases.

The programme is structured into modular units, each with an expected learning time of approximately 90–120 minutes. Pre- and post-course questionnaires are used to track learning outcomes and students' career interests, particularly those considering practice in serious sexual offences.

A key feature of the programme is the Court Observations module, through which students attend live trials to observe proceedings first-hand. Students submit structured reflections on their observations, enabling the charity to gather insights into courtroom practice, professional conduct, and emerging issues, while also deepening students' understanding of the realities of this area of law.

Course modules include: - Rape Myths and Misconceptions (Parts 1 and 2) - The Law Commission Report - Court Observations - Complainant, victim, and survivor perspectives - Barrister perspectives - Cases concerning false allegations - Advocacy and change for practitioners - The Judicial Bench Book - Section 41 applications - The adversarial legal system - Understanding offending behavior

Strengthening professional practice

Justice Is Now also works with practicing barristers to strengthen professional practice through continuing professional development. Practitioners engage with anonymized feedback from survivors following trials, using this learning to refresh advocacy skills, challenge harmful myths, and reflect on how courtroom practice can reduce harm while maintaining fairness and due process.

Trustees consider this integrated approach — combining survivor support, education, and professional development — central to the charity's mission of improving justice outcomes and promoting accountability across the criminal justice system.

Review of Activities and Achievements (2024–2025)

During the year, Justice Is Now focused on consolidation, infrastructure development, and service expansion.

Survivor support and peer services

Justice Is Now continued to deliver survivor-led, trauma-informed support to complainants of sexual violence involved in court proceedings, with a particular focus on the post-court period.

Complainant Feedback: Trial Experience - Offered one-to-one conversations with complainants to document their experiences of the court process. - With consent, translated lived experiences into structured feedback and correspondence shared with barristers, judges, police, solicitors, and victim support services, with the aim of improving practice and accountability across the justice system.

Local Peer Support and Befriending (Post-Trial) - Delivered peer support to individuals experiencing isolation, distress, or uncertainty following the conclusion of court proceedings, particularly while awaiting access to counselling or therapy. - Support was provided by trained support workers with lived experience, with no requirement for complainants to discuss case details.

Peer support activities included: - Listening support and companionship; - Informal coffee/tea meetings (with costs covered) and wellbeing walks; - Assistance with appointments, correspondence, and forms; - Signposting to appropriate statutory and voluntary services; - Support with planning next steps over a six-month period; - Attending GP appointments where appropriate; - Liaising with employers and relevant organizations on behalf of service users; - Facilitating informal group sessions to help survivors build their own support networks.

Safeguarding, supervision, and volunteer support arrangements were strengthened throughout the year to ensure services were delivered safely, ethically, and in line with trauma-informed best practice.

Education and training

- Development and delivery of specialist training for legal professionals, students, and public sector audiences.
- Creation of structured educational content, including CPD-aligned materials addressing serious sexual offences, ethics, and survivor justice.
- Investment in learning infrastructure, including Moodle-based online delivery.

Partnerships and engagement

- Strengthened relationships with funders, legal professionals, universities, and community partners.
- Continued collaboration with barristers, trainers, and subject-matter experts to ensure high-quality content and delivery.

Digital and organizational development

During the year, the charity undertook detailed work to improve data quality, reporting, and targeted communications across its education and engagement programmes. Significant progress was made in analyzing student user engagement data to better understand reach, participation.

This work has supported a phased communications strategy, beginning with universities where engagement is already strongest, and informing a roadmap for expansion into additional institutions during 2026.

Court observation and experiential learning engagement

The charity continued to develop its court observation programme for students, with a focus on ensuring that opportunities are offered to students who have completed the required training.

Work was undertaken to: - Improve systems for tracking training completion; - Explore automated workflows linking training delivery, reporting, and follow-up communications; - Strengthen relationships with universities in specific locations, including targeted outreach to institutions connected with Newcastle, Ipswich, and Blackpool.

The trustees recognize the importance of streamlining these processes to ensure safeguarding, consistency, and equitable access to experiential learning opportunities.

Criminal justice sector engagement

Initial research was undertaken to map criminal justice law courses, postgraduate Bar training providers, and chambers by region. This work is intended to support the development of regional networks linking universities, chambers, and courts, enabling more effective coordination of court observation opportunities and professional engagement.

Trustees consider this work an important foundation for future growth, allowing the charity to focus resources initially on regions with the highest levels of engagement, while building sustainable partnerships for wider national expansion.

Financial Review

Funding and investment in capacity building

During the period, trustees focused on securing and deploying funding not only for direct service delivery, but also for capacity building to enable sustainable growth, systemic impact, and organisational resilience.

Investment during the year supported Justice Is Now's core strategic aims:

- **Advocating for systemic change and addressing long-term health inequalities**
The charity continued to highlight and challenge inter-system failures across the criminal justice, legal, and health systems that contribute to long-term health and wellbeing inequalities experienced by survivors of sexual violence and their families.
- **Building a survivor-led peer support network**
Funding enabled the development and delivery of peer support services that bridge the gap between the end of criminal proceedings and access to formal counselling or therapy, addressing a critical period of unmet need.
- **Educating future barristers and collaborating with Crown Courts**
Resources supported specialist education for future barristers on trauma-informed practice in sexual violence cases, alongside delivery of the Feedback Loop Project in collaboration with Crown Courts to improve survivor experience and justice outcomes.

Trustees consider this investment in organisational capacity essential to ensuring that the charity can deliver high-quality services, scale responsibly, and sustain its impact over the long term.

Executive Summary

Justice Is Now is a survivor-led, independent charity working to improve justice outcomes and reduce harm for complainants of sexual violence.

Over the past three years, more than 1,200 complainants across England have engaged with the charity's work. Justice Is Now has carried out court observations in 43 Crown Courts and established the UK's first structured Feedback Loop Project, enabling survivors whose cases end in acquittal to share their experiences directly with the barristers involved.

Evidence gathered through this work reveals widespread distress, inconsistency, and a lack of formal mechanisms for complainants to be heard within the criminal justice system. Trustees believe these failures contribute directly to long-term trauma and health inequalities.

The charity's strategic priorities are to: 1. Advocate for the establishment of a mandatory feedback mechanism for complainants of sexual violence; 2. Address the monitoring gap in RASSO practice, ensuring appropriate accreditation and accountability for all barristers undertaking this specialist work; 3. Embed trauma-informed education across legal training and professional practice.

Background and evidence base

Justice Is Now was founded and is directed by Leonie Hodge, who brings over a decade of experience in developing education and justice-sector programmes.

Since inception, the charity has: - Established court observation programmes in 43 courts, supported by trained university law students; - Developed the Feedback Loop Project, allowing complainants in acquittal cases to highlight harmful practices such as excessive reliance on rape myths and insensitive questioning; - Created accredited training modules for future barristers who may practise in Rape and Serious Sexual Offences (RASSO), representing the only charity-led initiative of its kind.

Key findings from court observations and complainant feedback (2022–2025)

Data gathered from 43 courts and 1,200 complainants shows that: - 93% of trials involved questioning relating to compensation; - 90% involved direct accusations that the complainant was lying; - All participants in the Feedback Loop Project reported feeling abandoned once proceedings ended, with many left with unanswered questions.

While feedback to barristers is framed as a learning exercise, trustees note that regulatory bodies currently lack the power to compel engagement, leaving complainants without meaningful routes to closure.

Identified systemic gaps

Trustees have identified several systemic weaknesses contributing to harm: - The absence of a formal oversight or feedback mechanism for complainants; - Significant inconsistency in complainant experience between courts and cases; - A lack of mandatory accreditation for defence barristers undertaking RASSO work; - Insufficient education on perpetrator behaviour and offending patterns within legal training.

Current and pilot initiatives

During the year, Justice Is Now: - Piloted engagement with defence barristers to explore a voluntary Code of Conduct towards complainants; - Continued to deliver balanced legal education incorporating both complainant perspectives and cases highlighting fairness and due process; - Developed proposals for accountability measures, including structured court observations and national consultation on a mandatory feedback mechanism.

Recommendations for reform

Trustees support the following reforms: 1. A national consultation on a mandatory complainant Feedback Loop; 2. A review of RASSO eligibility and accreditation requirements; 3. Development of a co-designed Code of Practice for complainant treatment; 4. Support for a pilot programme with Justice Is Now and selected OPCCs to evaluate impact on survivor wellbeing and professional practice.

Risk Management

The trustees regularly review the major risks facing the charity and have established systems to mitigate them. Key risks include: - Safeguarding risk: managed through robust policies, training, supervision, and DBS checks. - Financial risk: mitigated through budgeting, monitoring, and

funder diversification. - Operational capacity: addressed through phased growth, use of consultants, and volunteer support.

External recognition and professional endorsement

During the reporting period, Justice Is Now continued to receive strong professional endorsement from senior legal practitioners and academic leaders, reflecting the charity's credibility, integrity, and impact within the justice sector.

The trustees particularly note formal support from Tejal-Roma Williams, Supervising Solicitor at the City Community Legal Advice Centre and Co-Director of The City Law School Innocence Project and IPP Appeals Service. In her endorsement, Ms Williams highlighted:

- The charity's vital role in addressing systemic failings in the criminal justice system's response to sexual violence;
- Its professionalism, integrity, and survivor-centred approach;
- Its contribution to improving investigative, prosecutorial, and courtroom practice;
- Its significant educational impact on law students and future legal professionals through court observation and experiential learning.

Trustees also note the charity's ongoing engagement with barristers and court professionals in supporting complainants during post-trial proceedings. During the year, Justice Is Now provided written advocacy to ensure that complainants' experiences were formally acknowledged within appropriate legal processes, including correspondence with legal representatives to support trauma-informed consideration of complainants' perspectives at court.

This work reflects the charity's role in amplifying survivor voices while respecting judicial independence and legal boundaries.

Trustees consider such endorsements and professional engagement important evidence of public benefit, sector confidence, and the charity's growing influence in promoting fairness, accountability, and trauma-informed practice across the justice system.

Plans for the Future

In the coming year, Justice Is Now plans to: - Expand survivor peer support services and referral pathways; - Scale education and training programmes nationally and internationally; - Strengthen monitoring, evaluation, and impact reporting; - Diversify income streams to improve long-term sustainability.

Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities

The trustees are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Annual Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards.

Approval

This report was approved by the trustees and signed on their behalf.

Trustee name: _Dr Dominic Willmott_____

Signature: __ *D Willmott*

Date: __19/01/26_____



CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Justice is Now

1194627

Receipts and payments accounts

CC16a

For the period
from

01/04/2024

To

30/03/2025

Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted funds		Restricted funds	Endowment funds	Total funds	Last year
	to the nearest	£	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £
A1 Receipts						
Sebba Foundation	-		61,292	-	61,292	17,000
Essex Community Foundation	-		-	-	-	4,000
Private Trusts non disclosure total	-		-	-	-	26,000
Local councilor pots total	-		-	-	-	5,000
Individual donor private legacy	-		-	-	-	12,000
Course donation	-		-	-	-	2,500
Community chest, 4 localities	-		-	-	-	9,000
The Blue Threads	-		15,000	-	15,000	-
Cripps LLP	-		150	-	150	-
Garfield Weston Foundation	-		10,000	-	10,000	-
Grants	19,000		-	-	19,000	-
Other Income	10,000		-	-	10,000	300
Sub total (Gross income for AR)	29,000		86,442	-	115,442	75,800
A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).						
	-		-	-	-	-
	-		-	-	-	-
Sub total	-		-	-	-	-
Total receipts	29,000		86,442	-	115,442	75,800
A3 Payments						
App Development IT component	891		-	-	891	1,260
Barrister lecture to student	-		-	-	-	500
Health insurance	-		-	-	-	15
HRMC Paye Tax payment	942		-	-	942	1,599
Salaries	35,889		-	-	35,889	22,590
Travel student court observers	-		-	-	-	4,721
Pension auto enrolment employee cost	691		-	-	691	1,227
Podcast editor	595		-	-	595	810
CAF Bank fee	-		-	-	-	120
Project workers only - locality support work	-		-	-	-	9,000
Podcast Editor	-		-	-	-	160
JotForm Subscription	282		-	-	282	120
Volunteer expenses total	-		-	-	-	4,000
Insurance legality/Trustee/employers	174		1	-	174	1,200

Hotdesking	-	-	-	-	1,400
Volunteer recruitment costs (including social media)	-	-	-	-	600
DBS Checks enhanced 24 - DBS	-	-	-	-	1,000
Development and delivery of training material for	3,566	-	-	3,566	220
Marketing materials for potential clients	388	-	-	388	750
Volunteer insurance	-	-	-	-	750
Volunteer expenses - travel and parking	3,083	-	-	3,083	500
Monthly supervision for peer support volunteers	-	-	-	-	1,250
Room hire	120	-	-	120	2,400
Moodle Subscription	-	-	-	-	390
Subscriptions	2,460	-	-	2,460	-
Bank Charges	71	-	-	71	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	49,153	-	-	49,153	56,582

A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)					
	-	-	-	-	
	-	-	-	-	
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-

Total payments	49,153	-	-	49,153	56,582
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Net of receipts/(payments)	- 20,153	86,442	-	66,289	19,218
A5 Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-	-
A6 Cash funds last year end	25,418	-	-	25,418	6,200
Cash funds this year end	5,265	86,442	-	91,707	25,418

Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period

Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B1 Cash funds	cash	5,265	86,442	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
	Total cash funds	5,265	86,442	-
	(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))	OK	OK	OK
		Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B2 Other monetary assets	2	-	-	-

	-	-	-
	-	-	-
	-	-	-
	-	-	-
	-	-	-

B3 Investment assets

Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-

B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use

Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-

B5 Liabilities

Details	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
		-	
		-	
		-	
		-	
		-	

Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees

Signature	Print Name	Date of approval
<i>Lilly Muiyang</i>	Lilly Muiyang	22/01/2026
<i>D. Willmott</i>	Dominic Willmott	19/01/2026



Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees

Charity Name
Justice Is Now

On accounts for the year
ended

30 March 2025

Charity no
(if any)

1194627

Set out on pages

1-2

(remember to include the page numbers of additional sheets)

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended **30/03/2025**.

Responsibilities and
basis of report

As the charity's trustees, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent
examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination (other than that disclosed below *) which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; or
- the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
- the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

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 accounts to be reached.

* Please delete the words in the brackets if they do not apply.

Signed:

Robert Couser

Date:

10/01/2026

Name:

Robert Couser

Relevant professional
qualification(s) or body
(if any):

ICAEW

Address:

Couser Accountants Limited, 162 Kingsquarter, Maidenhead, SL6 1AW

Section B	Disclosure
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Only complete if the examiner needs to highlight material matters of concern (see CC32, Independent examination of charity accounts: directions and guidance for examiners).

Give here brief details of any items that the examiner wishes to disclose.

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