

Our Strategic Plan

2020 to 2023

Introduction

JustRight Scotland is a charity founded by human rights lawyers. We use the law to defend and extend people's rights by providing direct legal advice to people who would otherwise struggle to access justice.

We work in collaboration with others to achieve social justice, with the aim of reducing discrimination and disadvantage. In only 3 years we have, with our partners, established three centres of legal excellence:

- the Scottish Women's Rights Centre
- the Scottish Refugee & Migrant Centre
- the Scottish Anti-Trafficking & Exploitation Centre.

We also operate JustRight for All, our legal policy, research and training hub which supports the work of all our centres.

All of our legal centres have been recognised as making a significant contribution to defending people's rights across Scotland.

We have also recently established:

- the Scottish Just Law Centre, our fourth centre of legal excellence (with an initial focus on disability and transgender justice)
- Just Citizens, a project to amplify the voices of EU citizens and other migrants in Scotland, examining what it means to 'belong' in Scotland.

None of us anticipated this level of growth during our first three years, but we have moved swiftly to meet need and to seize opportunities. Over the next three years we will further consolidate our existing and planned projects, and continue to ensure we are resilient and sufficiently agile to thrive.

Alongside our core legal work with the people we serve, we will continue to develop our capability to influence policy, to communicate effectively and to support others to learn and build on the approaches we have pioneered.

Uncertain Times

We operate in uncertain times. We stand at a pivotal moment in Scottish history and in the evolution of this nation. As we set out this strategy, in mid-2020, the UK has left the EU and its impact on EU citizens living and working in Scotland remains unclear; the Scottish Government has announced plans to incorporate key human rights in Scottish legislation (so as to better protect the rights of people living in Scotland following Brexit); the growing strength of first #MeToo and now #BlackLivesMatter is also throwing into sharp relief injustices that we must continue to acknowledge, confront and overcome.

Overshadowing all of these is Covid-19. This pandemic threatens us all. All of the data shows that it particularly threatens those who have the least.

Although we have seen a positive response to the pandemic, including an acknowledgement from communities and government that our response must be inclusive because we are all interdependent, we have also seen an increase in inequality for some people. The vulnerable are being pushed closer to poverty or an increased risk of harm and exploitation. For families, this means more children living in poverty. For everyone, this means that our limited resources must stretch further to meet growing needs at every level of society.

Even once the immediate crisis is passed, there will be long-lasting scars on our economy, and our communities.

In this new world, the work of JRS is more important than ever. The need for organisations like ours to use the law for positive change has never been more urgent and pressing. We must continue to respond quickly and flexibly to challenges by drawing on strong partnerships, bridging gaps in access to advice, and innovating with technology to broaden our impact and reach. We draw on a range of tools to highlight inequality and discrimination, and to reach individuals and organisations who need us with timely and trustworthy legal information and advice.

What drives us

Our mission is to use the law to defend and extend human rights.

We help people and organisations build a collaborative vision of a fair and equal Scotland.

Our Values

Our core values shape how we do what we do. We are:

Expert

- we bring specialist legal knowledge and a deep understanding of the subject, drawn from frontline and lived experience, to our work

Inclusive

- we welcome diverse perspectives, and frontline and lived experience informs how we design, deliver and communicate about what we do

Strategic

- we think and act strategically, pioneering new ways of using the law to promote social justice, for individuals and society

True

- we are trusted partners, and make principled decisions about who we work with, how we work, why we do this work, and the impact we want to make

How we work

We build models of **collaborative social justice**. This means lawyers working with legal and non-legal partners to pool skills, expertise and resources, with the shared aim of increasing access to justice and reducing inequality.

We focus on strategic legal interventions. This might include:

- providing targeted legal advice and representation to individuals
- producing legal information for individuals and legal advice for organisations
- taking or supporting strategic litigation
- contributing to research
- delivering specialist legal training and public outreach events
- making strategic policy interventions
- supporting strategic communications campaigns

We currently deliver projects in partnership with 33 third sector and statutory partners in Scotland, UK, Europe and internationally. Our partners include Amnesty International, Aberlour, COSLA, Kids in Need of Defence (KIND UK), Rape Crisis Scotland, the

University of Strathclyde Law Clinic, Shelter Scotland, the Trafficking Awareness Raising Alliance, the Anti-Trafficking Monitoring Group and the Scottish Refugee Council.

Our Impact

Our strength is the depth and breadth of legal expertise and specialist skills across a lean team.

Our Board of Trustees has an exceptional mix of skills and experience and ensures robust and challenging governance and financial control.

In just three years, JRS has grown to have 13 staff supported by 5 expert consultants (in the fields of law, policy, comms and management support) as well as 44 interns. We work across 2 offices, in Glasgow and Edinburgh, and had turnover in 2019 of £640k, from a mix of earned income and grant funding.

We have acted in 520 cases in areas of unmet legal need over the past three years, as well as provided advice to hundreds more people through our legal helplines, legal surgeries, and free, confidential second-tier advice for individuals and organisations. In addition, in the last 12 months alone, we estimate we have reached a further 1,200+ people through our legal training and outreach events, and this number is growing year on year.

Our Strategic Aims

Our five strategic aims for 2020-23 are:



These strategic aims will drive every decision we make.

A priority over the next three years is to ensure that we continue to have strong operational leadership and effective and efficient systems and processes. We want to continue to make space for our committed staff to use their skills and energy to deliver our strategic aims.

Following a period of rapid growth, we will consolidate our centres and our position in the Scottish landscape. Further growth in staffing is likely to be modest and will be focused on ensuring that the organisation is sustainable in the longer term. We will continue to ensure that our projects remain agile, relevant and responsive to shifting demands for our expertise. We will only pursue new projects if there is a strategic fit with existing work and our strategic aims.

The Impact We Will Have

Over the next three years, we will meet our strategic aims by achieving the following objectives:

Increase Access to Justice

We will continue to play a leading role in increasing access to justice in Scotland, by delivering specialist, targeted legal advice and information in the areas in which we are expert: human rights and equalities, gender-based violence, asylum and immigration, and trafficking and exploitation.

We will do this by:

- continuing to deliver agile strategic legal solutions (including direct advice, surgeries, helplines and second-tier advice) designed to meet evolving need
- leveraging technology and pioneering best practice in remote provision of advice to close the gap for specialist legal advice in so-called “advice deserts”
- continuing to target key issues for taking strategic litigation to achieve change.

Our newly launched Scottish Just Law Centre will focus on making the case for using the law as a tool for social change, by empowering people and organisations to understand their legal rights and to take strategic legal action to protect and expand those rights. We will focus initially on disability and trans justice, whilst building capacity for pro bono legal representation in Scotland and convening a network of strategic litigation projects in the UK and across Europe.

Empower People to Secure Their Human Rights

We will continue to empower people to understand their legal rights by designing and disseminating legal information that is clear, relevant and accessible. We will also support

strategic communications campaigns that increase public understanding of rights-based issues that we work on.

We will build and maintain the infrastructure and resources we need in order to support the ambitions of our centres with communications, policy and digital media capacity, as well as ensuring that our contributions remain credible, evidence-led and driven by our core values.

We will leverage new technologies in order to continue to deliver a targeted programme of legal education and public outreach events to increase understanding and raise awareness of issues that affect the people we work with. In 2020, we will establish a new social enterprise, JRS Knowhow. Operating separately from JRS, it will generate income to meet its costs and, in time, will grow to support the work of JustRight for All, through provision of training, rights-based information and training and IT consultancy.

Use Evidence and Lived Experience to Create Positive Change

We will continue to contribute to national and international research and policy, through our partnerships and membership of key expert bodies in the areas in which we work.

We will focus on building opportunities for ensuring the lived experience of the people we support and empower informs how we design and deliver our projects, as well as how we communicate about what we do.

We will develop permanent, in-house strategic policy and communications expertise, to support the work of our legal experts and experts by way of lived experience – leading to greater capacity to contribute to policy and influencing during a crucial time for Scotland, and the UK.

Inspire Collaborations for Social Justice

We will also continue to support wider social justice collaboration in Scotland, across the UK, and internationally, by convening networks of people and organisations determined to tackle social justice issues – like migrant destitution – and helping to build effective campaigns for change.

We will increase our capacity to share legal, policy and communications expertise with smaller frontline organisations and grassroots and activist campaigns, and work to continue to be perceived as a trusted partner and an independent force for positive change around issues of human rights in Scotland.

Build Agile Solutions and Long-Term Sustainability

We will ensure that JRS has strong operational leadership and effective and efficient systems and processes, by continuing to invest in the development of our core organisational functions.

We commit to developing diverse, confident, and resilient teams. We will also continue to invest in the future of the legal profession by creating opportunities for the next generation of social justice lawyers, and making space for our staff to use their skills, energy and absolute commitment to deliver our strategic aims.

We will also work to secure the financial resources to build agile solutions, as well as to ensure longer-term sustainability of our organisation, by working to diversify our sources of income and to increase our unrestricted income. JRS Knowhow, our social enterprise partnership, launching in 2020, will also play a key role as an alternative source of income for the wider organisation.

Monitoring Success

We recognise that our environment is rapidly changing and mid-2020 is a particularly challenging time to set out a confident three-year strategy. For this reason, we see this as a developing strategy and intend to work with our Board to revisit our objectives on a six-monthly basis.

Our individual projects and centres will continue to be monitored and evaluated annually, to provide assurance to funders that project aims are being achieved.

By the end of 2020 we will develop an evaluation framework for the whole of JRS, which will allow us to understand and demonstrate the added value of the organisation as a whole, assess the success of our collaborative model, and identify learning points both for JRS and for others seeking to emulate our approach.

Our Challenges

Our key challenges over the next three years will be successful consolidation of our existing services, and the planned launch of the Scottish Just Law Centre and JRS Knowhow in the context of a rapidly changing external environment.

To succeed in achieving our aims, we will need to continue to ensure that we remain agile and able to respond flexibly and effectively to external needs as they arise, whilst continuing to build strong partnerships, ensure long-term sustainability and support our team as we grow our breadth and areas of expertise.

Conclusion

Over the past three years, we have assembled a dynamic team that has forged strong partnerships and delivered expert and strategic solutions to increase access to justice in Scotland.

Our response to the challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic has demonstrated that we are resilient and agile, able to respond effectively to rapid and unanticipated change, by

leveraging technology to work remotely, and by relying on our strong partnerships, to bridge gaps in access to legal advice.

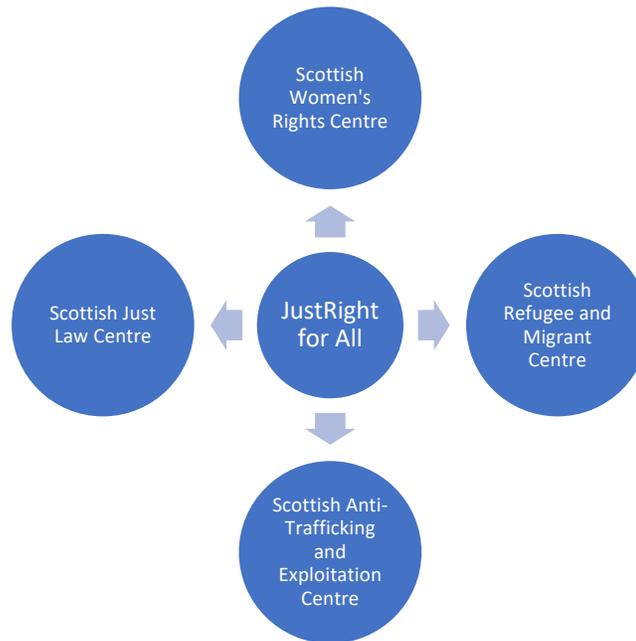
Our approach works because it is inclusive and rooted in authentic principles, and the pandemic demonstrates how we are all interdependent.

But we also know that Covid-19 has led to increased discrimination and inequality, pushing more people closer to poverty and risk of exploitation, and is putting our limited collective resources under ever greater strain.

We reflect that we have never been more needed. And there is much work yet to do.

Appendix 1: More About Our How We Operate

JustRight Scotland is a charity founded by human rights lawyers. We use the law to defend and extend people’s rights by providing direct legal advice to people who would otherwise struggle to access justice.



Our **Scottish Women’s Rights Centre** is a collaboration with Rape Crisis Scotland and the University of Strathclyde Law Clinic. SWRC provide advice to women who have suffered gender-based violence, including domestic abuse, rape and sexual harassment, and work closely with specialist advocacy workers and law students to offer helplines, legal surgeries and direct advocacy and legal representation.

The **Scottish Anti-Trafficking & Exploitation Centre** works to reach and empower survivors of trafficking and exploitation, providing independent legal advice to help them make informed decisions about accessing rights and safety. We also contribute to research and development of policy as recognised experts on trafficking at national, UK and EU level.

The **Scottish Refugee & Migrant Centre** works with people from abroad to ensure equal access to protection and support, and to counter discrimination and disadvantage which leads to destitution and homelessness. We specialise in working with migrant and refugee children, migrant women and girls affected by violence, and in refugee family reunion. We also use our expertise to provide advice and influence policy in key areas, for example in respect of EU citizens affected by Brexit.

The **Scottish Just Law Centre** was launched this year, working with partners Inclusion Scotland and the Scottish Trans Alliance. SJLC empowers people and civil society organisations to use the law as a tool for social change, focusing initially in the areas of disability justice and trans justice, to make the case in Scotland for greater strategic use of the law and legal remedies to reduce inequality and discrimination.

Underpinning the individual projects is **Just Right for All**, our legal research, policy and training hub. The recently launched **Just Citizens** project working to raise the voice of EU citizens and other migrants in Scotland in the debate over 'belonging' in Scotland sits within this centre.

Appendix 2: Our People

Our Core Team

Kirsty Thomson is a co-founder and Partner/Director of JustRight Scotland responsible for its development as well as overseeing its legal centres. Kirsty has an LLM in International Human Rights Law and 13 years' experience in practice as a human rights lawyer in Scotland with significant expertise in a number of legal areas.

Kirsty is a member of various national and international expert and advisory groups in the areas she works in. She is an international legal expert in human trafficking and has published best practice standards, training and written publications in this area. She co-convenes the Scottish Working Group of the Immigration Law Practitioners Association and is the Scottish member for the Strategic Litigation Fund expert panel.

Jen Ang is a co-founder and Partner/Director of JustRight Scotland, responsible for its development as well as overseeing our legal training, research and policy hub, JustRight for All. She is an experienced human rights lawyer qualified to practice in Scotland, England and Wales, and New York State. She is a legal expert on asylum, human rights and children's rights, and on the rights of survivors of torture. Jen is also an experienced lecturer in law with the Open University. She is an enthusiastic advocate of open education and widening access to education for all.

Andy Sirel is a co-founder and Senior Associate and heads our Scottish Refugee & Migrant Centre. He has an LLM in International Human Rights Law and has been working in human rights law since 2010. Andy is a legal expert in immigration, asylum, and human rights law, with a particular specialism in working with unaccompanied asylum seeking children, child victims of trafficking and around age dispute and age assessment.

Andy previously worked as a Legal Officer at the Council of Europe in Strasbourg, supervising the implementation of British, Irish and Cypriot judgments from the European Court of Human Rights. He also enjoys lecturing at the University of Glasgow, where he has taught European Human Rights Law for over 7 years.

Jenny Cook is our Head of Operations. She manages our daily operations and is the first point of contact for general enquiries about our organisation. Jenny has a Postgraduate Diploma in Psychology and over 5 years' experience working for charities.

Jenny has also held positions in administrative teams across the United Kingdom, gaining experience in Finance, Human Resources and Quality Assurance. She has most recently worked with a Glasgow-based charity providing support to asylum seekers and refugees.

Our Board of Trustees

Deirdre Hanlon is our chair, and has over 17 years' experience in the voluntary legal sector; specifically providing specialist legal advice, assistance and representation to people with a mental health diagnosis or disability across a wide range of civil legal issues. Deirdre is a partner in Kirk Hanlon solicitors where she specialises in incapacity law.

Since 2013, Deirdre has sat as a Legal Convener to the Mental Health Tribunal for Scotland and was further appointed as Convener to the Additional Support Needs Tribunal for Scotland in 2015. Deirdre also edits the Health and Education Chamber Tribunal Members Bulletin.

Beth Anderson is our Treasurer, and has 30 years' experience in the finance sector working in a variety of roles for charities such as Turning Point Scotland, Richmond Fellowship, Legal Services Agency and latterly Quarriers. Beth is a Qualified Law Accountant and a member of the Society of Law Accountants Scotland.

Maria Fletcher is Senior Lecturer in European Law and Deputy Head of the School of Law at the University of Glasgow. She teaches and researches EU law, with a particular focus on the fields of migration, citizenship and criminal justice. She is on the Steering Group of the University of Glasgow's Refugee Asylum and Migration Network (GRAMNet) and the Director of the Scottish Universities Legal Network on Europe (SULNE).

Maria is currently working with Human Rights Consortium Scotland to inform, support and advise civil society organisations in Scotland about the impacts of Brexit. She has experience of governance in charitable sector through her previous campaigning and chairing role with a Glasgow community centre.

Annika Joy is Director of Glasgow Night Shelter for Destitute Asylum Seekers, a charity that develops and delivers accommodation for people made destitute by the UK asylum system, and for whom access to statutory homelessness services is prohibited. She is also an active voice in advocating for the policy and legislative changes that would mean the organisation is no longer required!

Her professional background is in the development of museums and galleries that actively address their institutional history and practice of exclusion and exclusivity.

Colin McKay is a Professor of Mental Health and Capacity Law at Edinburgh Napier University. He is on the Executive team of the current Review of Scottish Mental Health Law.

From 2014-2020, he was Chief Executive of the Mental Welfare Commission, which works to protect and promote the human rights of people with mental illness, learning disabilities, dementia and related conditions. Previously Colin was a senior civil servant

in the Scottish Government, working on areas including mental health law, strategy and public service reform. Before that he was a solicitor, and spent 10 years with ENABLE Scotland, where he led campaigning and policy work.

Ros Micklem is a coach and mentor. Before her retirement she worked in the public sector in England and Scotland, latterly as Scotland Director of the Equality and Human Rights Commission. Ros has extensive governance experience on the boards of public bodies and charities. Most recently she was a Trustee of Shelter, the housing and homelessness charity, and served for several years as Chair of its Scotland Committee.

Lindsey Reynolds is a senior solicitor at the Equality and Human Rights Commission. As part of that role, she sits on the legal working group of Equinet, the European Network of Equality Bodies. She also sits as a Legal Convener to the Mental Health Tribunal for Scotland. Lindsey has an interest in legal education. She has a Masters degree in Human Rights Law and teaches human rights on the diploma in legal practice at the University of Glasgow.

Robin Wallace is the Advanced Specialist Care Operations Manager at Balhousie Care Group, having spent over 17 years' experience working in the health and social care sector. Robin has a professional focus on workforce development, improvement methodologies, and strategic planning. Robin also serves as a Trustee for Share Scotland, which is a third sector organisation focussed on realising life ambitions for people with additional support needs.

Appendix 3: Our Legal Structure

We have an organisational structure which supports our range of activity.

JustRight Scotland is a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SC047818).

We provide legal services through our limited liability partnership, JustRight Scotland LLP (SO 305962).

Any income that we make from providing legal services, after payment of outlays, is donated by JustRight Scotland LLP to the SCIO, JustRight Scotland.

We plan to supplement this structure by establishing a social enterprise, JRS KnowHow, which can undertake trading activity, particularly in the areas of training and education.