



# **Howard League for Penal Reform**

**Annual  
Review  
2018–2019**

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# Welcome from the chair

I assumed the responsibilities of Chair of the Board of Trustees in February 2019. As a long-standing member, supporter and admirer of the Howard League’s work, I was honoured and delighted to be asked to do so. I knew that I’d be joining an exceptional team of talented and energetic staff and trustees all committed to pursuing the charity’s aims in line with its values.

Sadly, those aims and values matter more than ever. Our criminal justice system has been in a downward-spiralling crisis for some time – one that has become particularly acute in our over-crowded, over-stretched and under-staffed prisons and probation systems. We can tell the story of that crisis through statistical data but, of course, this is a human crisis. Behind the numbers lie lives interrupted and lost, and people harmed and hurt both by crime and by punishment. Despite the best efforts of good people working hard within these systems to reduce these harms, a lack of coherent, brave and intelligent political leadership all too often blocks constructive change.

The current political and constitutional crisis occasioned by Brexit makes that kind of leadership seem a depressingly distant prospect.

In the midst of this mess, our renewed strategy focuses on two clear messages. Firstly, since the criminal justice system is part of the problem, we must stem the flow of people into it wherever and whenever possible -by finding better ways of preventing and responding to crime and conflict. Secondly, if we must use criminal justice, then we should do justice better by emphasising rights and remedies rather than by multiplying hurt and harm. Working in practical ways to develop and support these kinds of policies and practices requires us to continue to be a strong and well-governed charity and so that is our third objective.

This report provides only a glimpse of the quantity and quality of the vitally important work carried out by our remarkable staff team. I hope, like me, you will re-commit yourself to supporting them in pursuit of our shared goals.

Professor Fergus McNeill, chair of the board of trustees





## IMPACT:

We did 10 to 15 television interviews every month and about 20 radio interviews

We have had seven secretaries of state for justice in nine years. They bring with them new ideas and priorities that can lead to a fundamental shift in the justice landscape. David Gauke was secretary of state for seventeen months until July 2019 and Rory Stewart was prisons minister for most of that time, and they did their best to continue the rational and reforming discourse initiated by Michael Gove, in a febrile political atmosphere dominated by the Brexit debate. The prisons minister, Robert Buckland, was promoted to justice secretary in July 2019 and we have yet to see how his leadership develops.

*Since the drastic cuts to officers and managers from 2015, prisons have deteriorated. There has been a similar decline in the probation service due to the part-privatisation, which led to a lack of confidence in community sentences.*

Prisons recorded 57,968 incidents of self-injury in the 12 months to the end of March 2019 – a rate of one every nine minutes.

Over the same period, prisons recorded a total of 34,425 assault incidents – an 11 per cent rise on the previous year. This included 10,311 assaults on staff.

309 people died in prison custody including 86 people who lost their lives through suicide.

Report after report showed that the private community rehabilitation companies ostensibly managing people in the community were failing in every respect.

Something had to change.

We welcomed the announcements that probation would be reunified into a public service sometime before 2021. However, the structural problems look set to remain with the service divided into huge regions distanced from local people and the outsourcing of unpaid work and accredited programmes.

We welcomed the efforts to get rid of short prison sentences, although this was abandoned following the intervention of the new Prime Minister, Boris Johnson.

We worked with ministers, officials and professionals across the criminal justice system to support a reasoned discourse and encourage reform. I am pleased to report that we contributed to a massive reduction in child arrests yet again which is stemming the flow into the system.

We celebrated great initiatives giving awards to projects working across the country to keep people out of the system.

We published policy and research papers. We acted for young people in prisons and we took firm legal action to secure system change. For only a medium sized charity with 19 staff, I am proud that we have a high public profile that commands respect and we are consulted by Parliamentary committees and the media regularly.

There is much more to be done.

Frances Crook OBE



# Report of the trustees

A woman in a prison uniform stands in a long, brightly lit corridor. She is looking at a notice on the wall. The corridor has a blue metal railing on the right side and a white wall on the left. The ceiling is high with exposed pipes and lights.

## IMPACT:

We stopped the building of more prisons for women

Some years ago the trustees set the strategic framework for the charity around five key themes and continued to pursue the same broad objectives this year and so the annual report is structured on these themes.

The charity worked to achieve systemic change based on research, evidence and experience. We conducted policy reviews and investigated practice across the criminal justice and penal systems. The legal team supported hundreds of children and young adults in the penal system. We put together all this work to form our recommendations for reform.

1. Reform sentencing
2. Justice for children and young people
3. Transform prison
4. Investing in the community
5. Strengthening the charity

# Reform sentencing:

To have fewer people in prison

## IMPACT:

The Sentencing Council has recognised the particular needs of young adults



Problem gambling is leading to crime. We set up a Commission on Crime and Problem Gambling, a three year programme to investigate the links and look for solutions.

Women are being sentenced to custody unnecessarily. We support the All Party Parliamentary Group on Women in the Penal System that published a report on its inquiry into the sentencing of women.

Young adults have particular needs and challenges. We worked with the Sentencing Council to get new guidelines for judges.

*Short prison sentences are a scourge for the individuals, expensive for the taxpayer, hopeless for victims and clog up prisons. We supported ministers' calls for their abolition – a struggle that will continue.*

Women are arrested when it is not necessary. We have launched a new programme of work to reduce the arrests of women.

Public education is a key charitable objective. We do radio interviews almost daily, advise politicians and journalists, meet ministers and give talks to students and professionals.



# Justice for children and young people:

to work for less crime and fewer children and young people in the penal system

## IMPACT:

Ofsted is now monitoring how often children's homes call the police



Children are arrested far too often. We have worked with the police for seven years and are proud to have contributed to a massive two thirds cut to child arrests, down yet again last year and so saving tens of thousands of children from the trauma of arrest.

*Children in residential care are being criminalised by their failing care homes. We have a programme of work to put a stop to it.*

Children in prison called the Howard League legal advice line in ever greater numbers. We helped them with getting settled on release, getting better treatment in prison and getting justice inside prison.

Children held in solitary confinement managed to phone us. We are acting for a 16 year old put in isolation for months and taking his case to the Supreme Court.

Young adults experience some of the worst prison conditions in the system. Our legal team helps them get improvements, get justice and get better resettlement.

Children and young adults need help to understand their rights in a penal system that is abusive and bureaucratic. The Howard League legal team is the only specialist service helping to get them their rights.



# Transform prison:

to foster a good and useful life inside prison

## IMPACT:

Government is taking justice inside prisons seriously and working with us on reform

Excessive punishments in prison are damaging justice, inflating the prison population and tying prisons up in an administrative quagmire. Our legal team represents children and young adults at adjudications and helps sort things out.

Justice and fairness inside prisons would help to make them safer and prepare people for release. Our new programme of work engages with prisons, officials and political leaders to improve justice inside prisons.

*Legal work is the unique specialism of the Howard League. Our team of expert lawyers and caseworkers advises and represents children and young adults in custody when they are being badly treated, neglected, punished and face destitution on release.*

Safer prisons can only come about when there are far fewer prisoners and no overcrowding. We have made a contribution by providing advice to ministers, working with prisons and raising concerns when things go wrong.

Public education about prison conditions is a constant activity. We make our research and policy work freely available and provide background information to hundreds of journalists and professionals every month.

International concern about UK prison conditions has increased. We were invited to give evidence to the UN and Council of Europe.





# Investing in the community:

to develop partnerships to promote safer communities

## IMPACT:

Projects that keep people out of the criminal justice system were able to celebrate and promote their good work locally



The Community Awards celebrate the best ideas and project across the nation. There are fantastic schemes out there working with very challenging people, changing lives and making things better. We bring them together so we learn from each other.

Open days are organised with award winners to promote their great work in the local community with the public, sentencers, academics, police and decision-makers.

We scan the landscape and develop relationships with people working at the coal-face so we find new ideas and promote them.

*Probation reform is desperately needed. We have worked with ministers and officials to get the probation service brought back into the public sector.*

The international community is where ideas can be shared. We promote our ideas at international events with academics and practitioners.

The academic community provides research for our work. The Howard Journal of Crime and Justice, our Research Advisory Group and the Early Career Academic Network promotes the brightest and the best research.



# Strengthening the charity:

to increase the strength and influence of the organisation

## IMPACT:

We have strong relationships with funders and donors who give generously and trust the delivery of our work



*Thank you. We have built our membership and supporters family and keep in touch with them so we can work together to achieve reform. Financial independence ensures our integrity and courage to shine a light on dark corners and to be fearless in campaigning for what is right.*

Grant-giving trusts have continued to support our work generously and we rely on their gifts which fund particular strands of work and our core campaigning.

Fundraising is a constant effort to make sure that we have the resources to support our legal representation of children and young adults and can carry out independent policy scrutiny and campaigns.

Strong relationships form the basis of our influence with government, officials, decision makers and community partners. Magistrates and academics have been successfully nominated to become Howard League Fellows, to form a cohort of senior leaders promoting penal reform.

Collaboration with other charities and voluntary organisations, at national and local level, keeps us informed and strengthens our story.

Trustees oversee high standards of governance and give strategic direction to the charity. Staff and volunteers are the bedrock of all we do.



## IMPACT:

Over seven years  
there have been  
166,771 fewer  
child arrests

Child arrests in England and Wales  
2017, September 2018

Sentencing young adults: making  
the case for sentencing principles  
for young adults, September 2018

All Party Parliamentary Group  
on Women in the Penal System:  
sentencers and sentenced:  
exploring knowledge, agency  
and sentencing women to prison,  
October 2018

Howard League for Penal Reform  
annual review, November 2018

Ending the criminalisation of  
children in residential care: 'This  
is our story': children and young  
people on criminalisation in  
residential care, December 2018

Sentencing principles for young  
adults, January 2019

Playing for change: probationary:  
a partnership, May 2019

Ending the criminalisation of  
children in residential care:  
'Know your numbers': using  
data to monitor and address  
criminalisation, July 2019

All Party Parliamentary Group  
on Women in the Penal System:  
arresting the entry of women  
into the criminal justice system,  
September 2019

Representing looked-after children  
at the police station: a step by step  
guide for lawyers, published jointly  
with Youth Justice Legal Centre and  
Just for Kids Law, September 2019

Two editions of The Howard  
newspaper were published and  
distributed to 10,000 members  
and supporters.



## IMPACT:

Our expertise is consulted daily by journalists, parliamentarians and officials

Submission to the Sentencing Council on draft general guidelines for sentencing offences for which there is no specific guideline, September 2018

Response to the Ministry of Justice consultation on 'strengthening probation and building confidence', September 2018

Response to the Parliamentary joint committee on human rights consultation on the draft Human Rights Act 1998 (Remedial) Order 2019, October 2018

Evidence to the Parliamentary joint committee on human rights inquiry into youth detention: solitary confinement and restraint, October 2018

Response to the LASPO post-implementation review, October 2018

Submission to the draft national standards for youth justice, November 2018

Written evidence as part of the joint civil society shadow report to the UN committee against torture review of the UK, November 2018

Response to NHS England's refresh of the intercollegiate healthcare standards for children and young people in secure settings, December 2018

Submission to the United Nations committee against torture for consideration at its 66th session: list of issues with regard to the UK, January 2019

Response to the Ministry of Justice consultation on home detention curfew, January 2019

Response to HMPPS consultation on transition of young people from youth to adult custody policy framework, February 2019

Response to the government's national autism strategy, May 2019

Evidence to the APPG on Runaway and Missing Children and Adults inquiry into out of area care placements for looked after children and young people, May 2019

Evidence to Parliament justice committee inquiry into prison governance, May 2019

Response to the National Assembly for Wales Health, Social Care and Sport committee inquiry into the provision of health and social care in the adult prison estate, May 2019

Response to the Sentencing Council consultation on expanded explanations in sentencing guidelines, June 2019

Response to proposed changes to 'The transfer and remission of adult prisoners under the Mental Health Act 1983 good practice guidance 2019', July 2019

Evidence to the Labour Party national policy forum consultation: building an effective criminal justice system, July 2019

Response to the Sentencing Council consultation on sentencing offenders with mental health conditions or disorders, July 2019

Evidence to Parliament justice committee aging prison population inquiry, October 2019

Submission to Parliament justice committee inquiry into children and young people in custody, October 2019



The Howard League for Penal Reform is grateful to Clifford Chance LLP for seconding trainee solicitors to support the legal work for children and young people in custody and for the generous use of its premises for events.

The Howard League for Penal Reform benefited from the contribution of students and volunteers during the year – thank you.

## IMPACT:

We contributed to the decision by government to bring probation back into a unified public service

### Trustees

Dr Rachel Condry  
Samantha Kennedy  
Sally Lewis OBE, treasurer  
Gerry Marshall, vice chair  
Professor Fergus McNeill, chair  
Elizabeth Morony  
Lucy Scott-Moncrieff  
Professor Pamela Taylor  
Danielle Vidal

### Staff during the year

Lorraine Atkinson	senior policy officer
Dr Eleanor Careless	campaigns officer
Frances Crook OBE	chief executive
Hannah Cheesebrough	admin officer
Dr Helen Churcher	research and project officer
Anita Dockley	research director
Marie Franklin	caseworker
Philip Goring	finance and admin officer
Natasha Hermans	caseworker
Dr Laura Janes	legal director
Euginia Lolomari	finance director
Sophie Lumsden	membership manager
Sinead MacCann	solicitor
Andrew Neilson	campaigns director
Barbara Norris	events and website manager
Rob Preece	communications manager
Claire Salama	solicitor
Anna Spencer	caseworker
Catryn Yousefi	programmes manager

### Editor in chief of the Howard Journal of Crime and Justice

Professor Ian Loader	University of Oxford
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### Editors

Dr Rachel Condry	University of Oxford
Dr David Green	John Jay College, New York, USA
Professor Elena Larrauri	Universitat Pompeu Fabra, Barcelona, Spain
Professor Simon Mackenzie	Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand

### Managing Editor

Anita Dockley	Howard League for Penal Reform
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### Book Review Editor

Dr Mary Rogan	Trinity College Dublin, University of Dublin, Ireland
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### Publishing Editor

Brenda McWilliams	Cambridge, UK
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## IMPACT:

we stopped children being held in the segregation block in Feltham prison

The trustees held a strategic planning meeting this year and put in place a new direction for the charity for the coming five years. The Howard League for Penal Reform will focus on three broad strategic priorities. We shall evaluate our activities and proposals for new initiatives against our principles and these priorities.

### 1) Stemming the flow

The Howard League for Penal Reform will focus work on stemming the flow of people into the system, advocating for solutions which, as much as possible, lie outside of the criminal justice system.

### 2) Better justice

The Howard League for Penal Reform will focus work on better justice which emphasises rights and remedies. When solutions must be sought from within the system, then these should be as non-invasive and flexible as possible. Prison must be a true last resort.

### 3) Strengthening the charity

Work on stemming the flow or better justice is impossible without a solid underpinning for the charity.



## IMPACT:

Our legal team has helped secure safe accommodation and supported release for hundreds of children and young adults

## Honorary treasurer's report

The finances of the Howard League for Penal Reform are in a healthy state and are being carefully managed.

The charity made a surplus of £1,169,000 in 2018/19, as compared with a deficit of £369,000 in the prior year before gains and losses on investments due in large part to a payment for the Commission on Crime and Problem Gambling which is for three years work. The regulatory settlement arranged by the Gambling Commission comprised restricted funds of £1,390,000 from Power Leisure Bookmakers. Only £141,000 was spent in this year. The remaining £1,248,000 of funds are held in restricted funds as planned for the coming three years.

We have once again drawn on unrestricted funds in line with our long planned policy of investing in core activities. This reduced the charity's investments by £153,000 in the year after investment losses. The good news is that we drew less than half the amount as the previous year. This is partly due

to the receipt of a significant unrestricted legacy in the year and partly due to lower staff costs.

Our accounts show the capital value of the building which was an investment made some years ago. The building is owned freehold and outright by the charity and part of it is let to a sister charity, thus bringing in some revenue income to our core funding.

Following a recommendation from the auditors, we carried out an informal revaluation of the building.

The biggest expenditure of the charity remains the staff team. The charity prides itself on being a good employer and this is reflected in the long standing core team and the excellent and skilled addition to the staff complement during the year.

The trustees are grateful to the trusts and individuals who donate to our work, many of whom have supported the Howard League for many years.

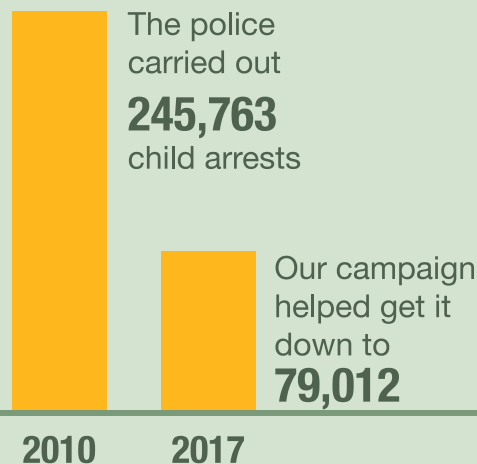
Sally Lewis OBE



# The year in numbers

**82,368**  
PRISON POPULATION  
As at 31 may 2019  
562 fewer than last  
year at the same time

**68%**  
reduction  
in child arrests



**700**

ATTENDEES AT  
OUR CONFERENCES  
AND EVENTS  
THIS YEAR

**6**

SECRETARIES OF  
STATE FOR JUSTICE  
SINCE 2015

**193,000**  
VISITS TO  
OUR WEBSITE



**42**

TRUSTEES,  
STAFF AND  
VOLUNTEERS

worked with us this year



THE NEWS

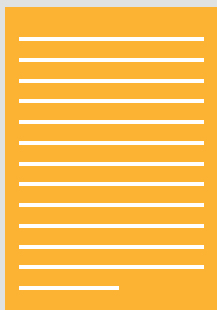
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**THE HOWARD LEAGUE**

WAS QUOTED BY MORE THAN

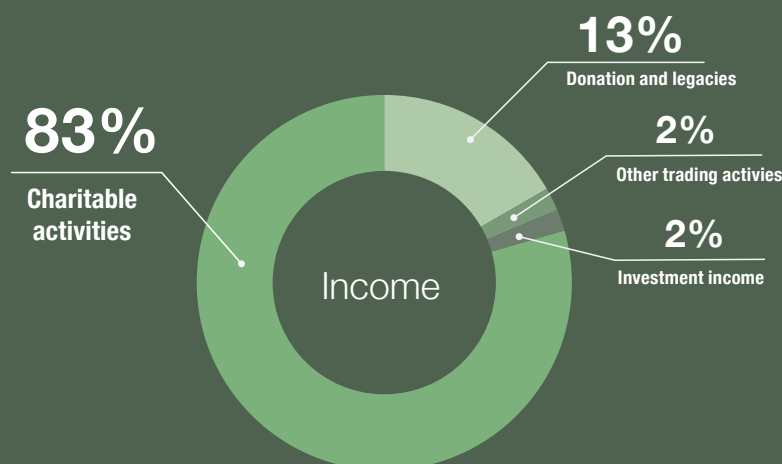
**500** MEDIA OUTLETS  
IN ONE DAY

after it criticised the government  
proposals to build more prisons



**30k**  
FOLLOWERS

## Summary of financial performance 2018/2019



### Income

Donations and legacies	£317,540
Other trading activities	£59,612
Investment income	£40,630
Charitable activities	£2,016,925
<b>Total income</b>	<b>£2,434,707</b>
Investment loss	(£27,496)

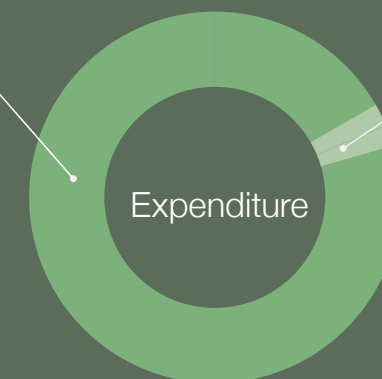
### Expenditure

Raising funds	£50,118
Charitable activities	£1,215,565
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>£1,265,683</b>

**96%**

Charitable activities

**4%**  
Raising funds



### Own use assets

**£ 1,213,234**

### Long term investments

**£ 1,430,698**

### Other assests

**£ 1,020,882**

**Total Liabilities**  
**-£74,559**

The summary of financial information shows the income raised for our activities, the cost of raising the income and amounts spent on our charitable activities. The information is taken from the full financial statement which was approved by the trustees on 15 October 2019. In order to gain a full understanding of the financial affairs of the charity, the full audited financial statements, trustees' annual report and auditors report can be consulted. Copies can be obtained from the Howard League offices or [www.howardleague.org](http://www.howardleague.org)



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# How you can support the Howard League

## Join us

Add your voice to our movement. Every voice counts and we hope that you will add yours.

## Sign up to our updates

Keep up to date with our latest news, events and campaigns by signing up to email updates on our website.

## Make a donation

We rely on voluntary donations to continue our work for less crime, safer communities and fewer people in prison.

## Leave a legacy

A legacy ensures that your commitment to penal reform will continue beyond your lifetime. Your gift will help us continue to inform, inspire and campaign for real change in the criminal justice system.

## Life membership

Become a life member and help us ensure our future.

## Follow us

Our Twitter, Facebook and Instagram channels will keep you up to date on our work and let you know how you can get involved.

For more information visit  
[www.howardleague.org](http://www.howardleague.org)

**Howard League** for Penal Reform

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