Impact Report

2024

The British Institute of Human Rights

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1. Our Story So Far: Human Rights Action Here At Home

2024 was a turning point for human rights in the UK. With the immediate threat of repealing the Human Rights Act (HRA) behind us, BIHR remained at the forefront of championing the practical use of human rights, every day, beyond the courtroom.

At BIHR, we help people, communities, services and policymakers to understand and use the HRA to solve and prevent real problems that impact lives.

This report shows how we're enabling the building of a culture where human rights are upheld, not just on paper, but in practice. There is a long way to go, but also much progress to celebrate and grow.

Sanchita Hosali, CEO

Imran Khan KC, Chair

The British Institute of Human Rights is a registered charity (1101575) and registered company (4978121).
Correspondence and registered office address: BIHR, 167-169 Great Portland Street, Fifth Floor, London W1W 5PF.

2. Who We Are, What We Do

Our Vision

BIHR's vision is 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.

Our Mission

Our mission is to enable positive change and social justice through the practical use of our Human Rights Act, working with people, communities, public bodies, and policymakers across the UK.

Find out more About Us online

What Makes BIHR Different

We don't go to court.
→ **We work on the ground.**

We don't offer legal advice.
→ **We build capacity.**

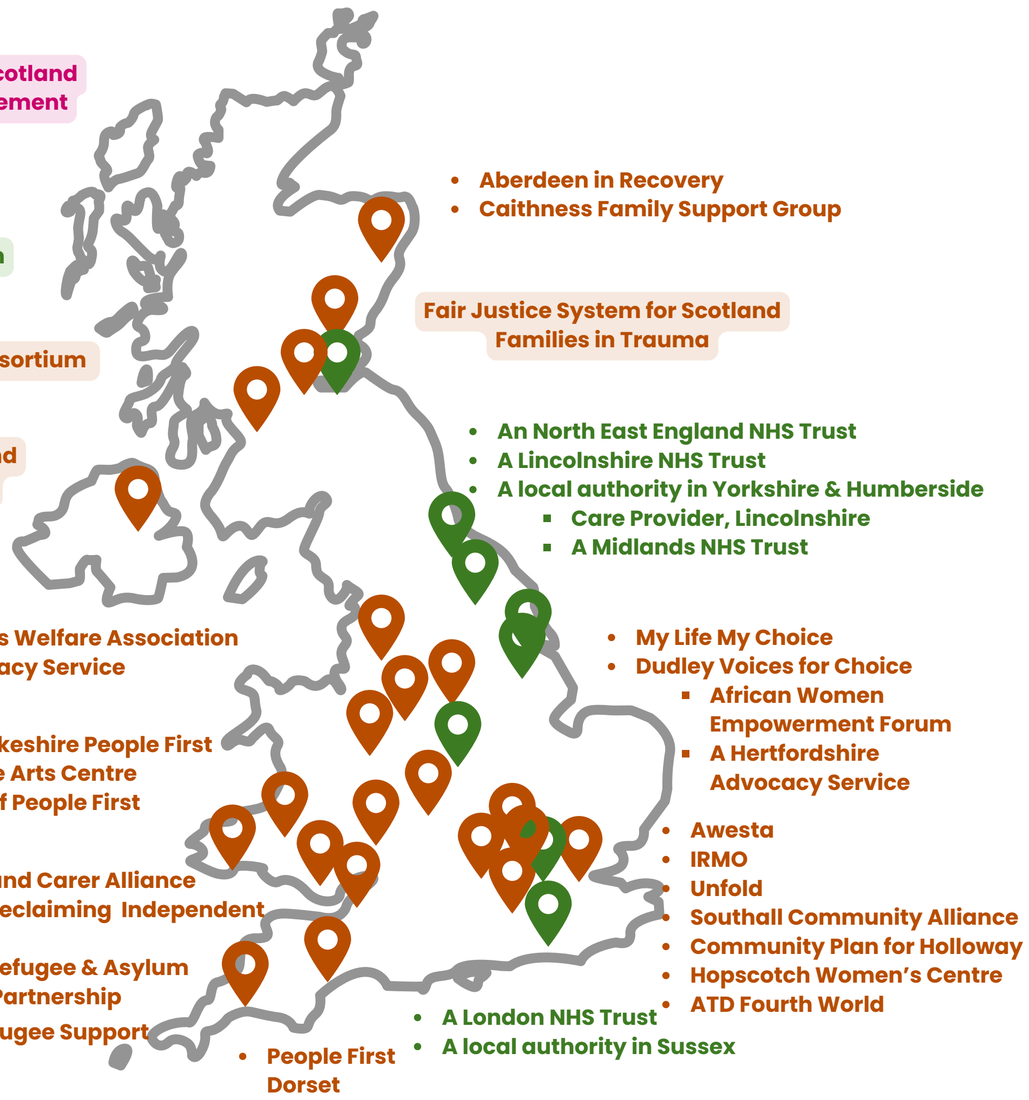
We don't campaign for new laws without implementation.
→ **We make existing laws work.**

Our work supports and enables everyone: individuals, community groups, public bodies and services, governments, and parliaments.

"BIHR really held our member's interests at heart and worked with us to make sure that they were included in the process and that their voice was at the centre of our human rights community capacity building. This has allowed our members to see themselves within the final resource, generating a sense of pride, motivation to want to do more, and eagerness to share our work. We believe that the co-design project has generated a great foundation for us to champion human rights better in the future and to ensure that people with learning disabilities are not forgotten, overlooked or devalued when accessing and interacting with public services.

Cwm Taf People First, a South Wales learning disability self-advocacy charity

3. This Year at a Glance



Migrants Rights Network
Allies for Justice & Families for Justice
Association for Young People's Health, London
Supported Loving
The Traveller Movement
Learning Disability England
Just Fair

NHS England Teams
Housing Services Ombudsman
Public body leadership including with NDTi
Local Government Association
Partners in Care and Health
House of Commons Training Unit
Parliamentary & Health Service Ombudsman

UK parliamentary engagement with MPS, Peers and Committees
UK Government engagement
Regulator engagement, including the Care Quality Commission
Civil society networks including the Save our Human Rights Act Coalition and Equally Ours

In person evidence at the United Nations in Geneva on the UK's human rights compliance

Community organisations BIHR has supported this year
UK or nationwide community group and organisations
Policy engagement - UK and in the nations

Public bodies & services BIHR has worked with this year
UK or nationwide public bodies and services
Policy engagement - international

People directly supported:	3000+
Community partners across the UK:	24
Frontline staff trained:	1000+
Lived Experience Experts supported:	10+
Practical rights resources created:	10+
MPs contacted after General Election:	355
UK Government Ministerial meetings:	2
United Nations evidence	2
Website visits:	330K+

"This was an incredible opportunity and working with the BIHR team has been really insightful and useful – we have learnt a LOT!"

4. Enabling People to Know & Secure Their Human Rights

Human rights are most powerful when people know how to use them. This year we:

- Created **Easy Read** explainers and **multilingual** guides.
- Provided **free workshops** for individuals and small groups.
- Enabled people to **challenge poor decisions affecting care, housing decisions,** and **access to education.**
- Empowered people become advocates in their own communities.
- Supported people and civil society to understand the Human Rights Act and European Convention on Human Rights in real, relevant ways for their lives and work

> **Working with the BIHR... has resulted in a fantastic new resource for our families with disabled children. This will make a huge difference and the impact of the work that has been achieved will help so many more families in the future.** - Lucy, Parent and Carer Alliance (Gloucester)

5. Empowering Communities

We worked with grassroots groups, community and voluntary sector groups - small and large - to address real-life injustices using human rights advocacy. From housing to healthcare, welfare to education, we helped communities use the Human Rights Act to hold power to account.

Our UK-wide programme supported 19 community and grassroots groups across the UK to understand and use human rights in tackling injustice. Co-Produced Projects:

Empowering refugee women with Bomoko NI

building **confidence to secure housing rights** and **influence poor practice** placing children far from school, with meeting pocket cards, including in Arabic & Somali. (Northern Ireland)

Advancing disabled people's rights with Cwm Taf People First

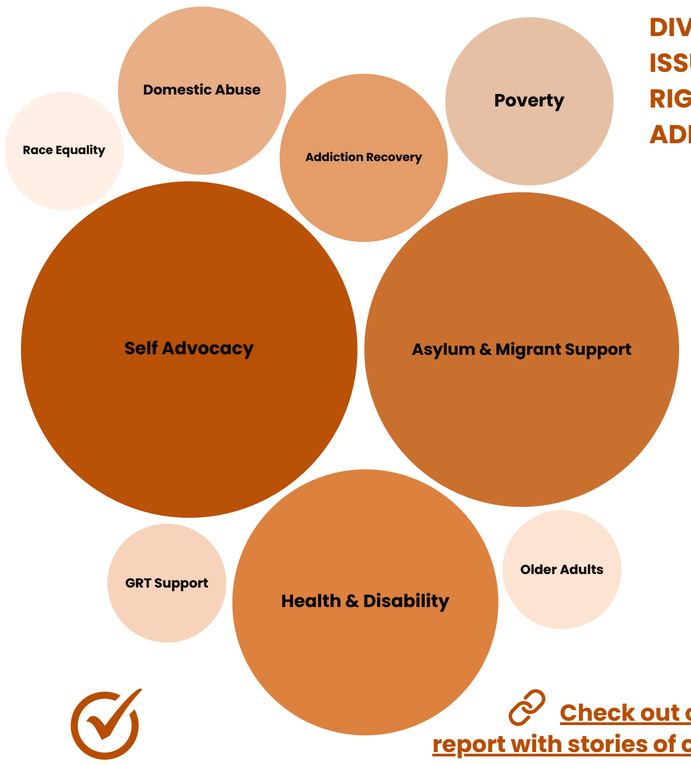
through an Easy Read card game **strengthening self-advocacy** and **working towards systemic changes** in community support (South Wales)

Backing African women to challenge racial injustices with AWEF

equipping women newly arrived in the UK to understand their rights to **non-discrimination when accessing essential services.** (Midlands)

Enhancing family advocacy with the Parent and Carer Alliance

stepping up the **challenge systemic failures, driving accountability** and **improving care and education** for disabled children and their families.



DIVERSITY OF GROUP ISSUES OUR HUMAN RIGHTS ACT SUPPORT ADDRESSED

The spread of issues we worked on with grassroots and community and groups to build human rights capacity through our UK Community Programme (2022-2025)

Check out our impact video, and report with stories of change on our website

London Communities Human Rights Programme

4 COMMUNITY LEARNING EVENTS

4 HUMAN RIGHTS RESOURCES MAPPED TO THE NEEDS OF LONDON'S COMMUNITY GROUPS

2 SUMMER SESSIONS WITH FUNDED PLACES

ACCESSIBLE OPEN PARTNERSHIP CALL WITH 50 APPLICATIONS

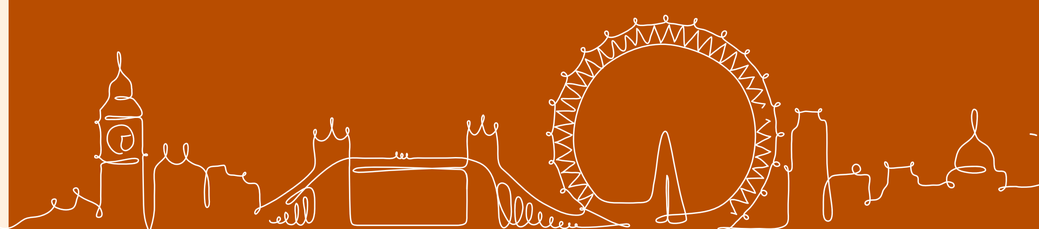
4 FULLY FUNDED PARTNERS FOR 4 YEARS:

Indoamerican Refugee Migrant Organization IRMO

SOUTHALL Community Alliance

COMMUNITY PLAN FOR HOLLOWAY

unfold Empowerment through mentoring



6. Building Human Rights-Respecting Public Bodies & Services

Throughout 2024, BIHR enabled public sector staff to embed human rights in daily decision-making:

- Trained 800+ staff across social work, care, housing, and health.
- Co-produced a digital resource for professionals working with young autistic people and young people with learning disabilities. Get the Guide
- Provided Practice Leads programmes for healthcare staff to champion human rights-based care.
- Facilitated peer learning spaces to enable human rights reflection and problem-solving with staff in public services.

Services and bodies we worked with on human rights practice included:

- Range of NHS Trusts & councils
- Housing Ombudsman Service
- Partners in Care & Health (Local Government Association (LGA) & Association of Directors of Adult Social Services (ADASS))

> **the training sessions were extremely interesting and informative, alongside the thinking spaces, which were instrumental to my learning and development, enabling me to apply the tools we learned in the training sessions to real time scenarios. Having the BIHR lead at the sessions listening and guiding us to explore possibilities and ideas was critical.** - Abbie, NHS staff member

7. Lived Experience: RITES Committee

BIHR's RITES Committee (Real-life Insights, Tips, Experiences & Stories) shows lived and living experience can be combined with practical legal expertise in human rights law to guide national policy and practice. We support the RITES Committee through core funding, ensuring members have the resources, support and time needed to be meaningful partners.

- **United Nations Testimony**: RITES members gave evidence in Geneva on the UK's compliance with human rights in real life. Find out more.
- **Human Rights and Co-Production:** Learning event for civil society, public sector, funders and policy makers. Watch clips from the event.
- **Social Media Toolkit**: Helping people to speak up for and challenge disinformation about human rights. Get your copy.
- **Influencing Civil Society:** Co-leading sessions with 250+ member coalition working on human rights.
- **Action Plan Launch:** Empowering ordinary people to act for rights. Find out more.

8. How We Do Experience-Informed National Influencing

Our policy work is powered by a simple but vital principle: the Human Rights Act must be protected, understood, and used - because it works. By grounding policy analysis in the law and people's lived experience of rights, we work to ensure **Human Rights Act is not only defended but is an enabler for EVERYONE.**

> **"I was heard by the UN on the treatment of my autistic son as an inpatient and to highlight the plight of him and many other families like mine who are subject to high levels of restrictive practice, solitary confinement and inhuman and degrading treatment. I feel that I was listened to, I was respected and more importantly that I was heard. I'd like to thank BIHR for that wonderful opportunity and let's hope it makes a big difference.** - Kirsten

HUMAN RIGHTS ACT: THE LEGAL BACKBONE

HARNESSING THE LAW SO THAT CHANGES TO LAWS & POLICIES STRENGTHEN, NOT WEAKEN, PEOPLE'S HRA PROTECTIONS.

GROUNDED IN REAL & LIVED EXPERIENCE

ENGAGEMENT & CO-PRODUCTION WITH PEOPLE WHOSE RIGHTS ARE AT RISK, BRINGING TO LIFE THE LEGAL PROTECTIONS THE HRA PROVIDES.

PRACTICE TO POLICY BRIDGE FOR CHANGE

UNIQUELY CONNECTS FRONTLINE PRACTICE WITH HIGH-LEVEL POLICY, ENSUING RELEVANCE & PRACTICALITY FOR REAL-WORLD CHALLENGES.

CHANGING SYSTEMS, LAW & POLICY

DIRECTLY INFLUENCING & CHANGING THE SYSTEMS, LAWS, AND POLICIES THAT SHAPE PEOPLE'S EVERYDAY LIVES.

SECURING OUR HRA VIA ITS USE SHOWING VALUE FOR ENABLING CHANGE

DEFENCE WITHOUT DEFENSIVENESS

9. Making Systems, Law & Policy Change

Securing the HRA

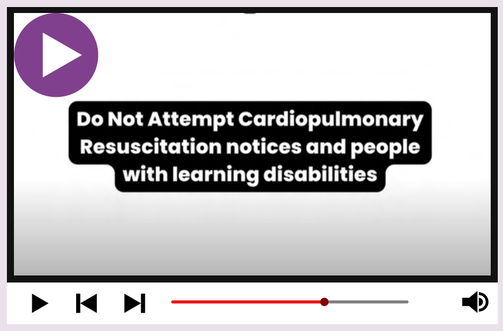
Ensuring people's lived experience of the Human Rights Act was heard at the UN (🔗) review of the UK's compliance with international human rights obligations (ICCPR), resulting in **recommendations** we and civil society **can harness to support HRA implementation.**

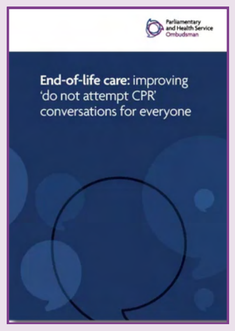
Steering Group member of the Save Our HRA Coalition guiding 250+ groups in **advocating for human rights,** addressing the **Rwanda policy,** and ensuring UK compliance with the **European Convention on Human Rights**

Key work with new parliament, including delivering **training for MP caseworkers and outreach with new Committees.**

Rights Changes

Co-produced **"Do Not Resuscitate" research with disabled people** (🔗), **influencing the Ombudsman's report** for government action.





Long-term policy process following Covid resulting in **direct inclusion of the HRA right to family life in Care Regulations** ensuring **people have stronger protections**. Find out more(🔗)

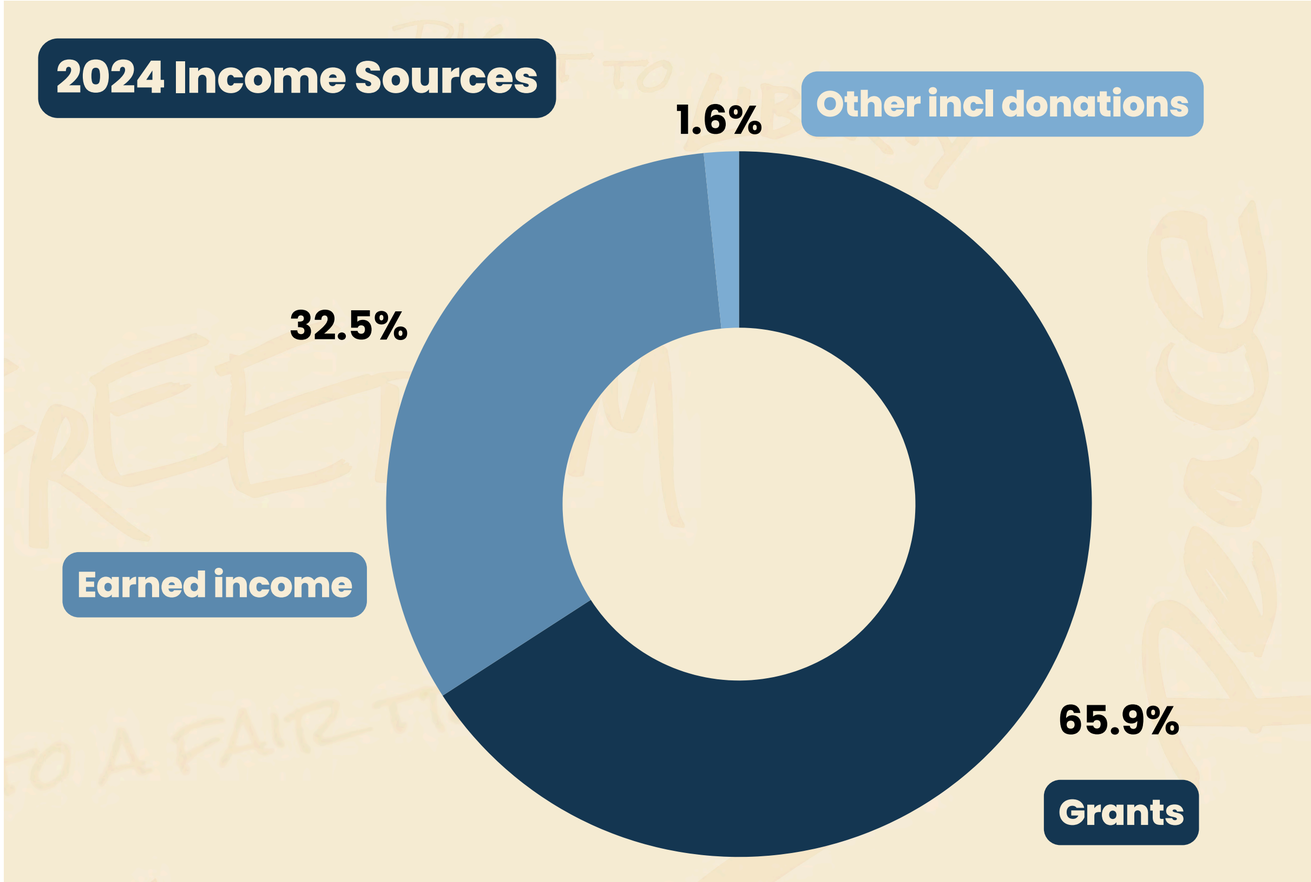
Evidence on the inclusion of **human rights expertise in public health decision-making, adopted by the Independent Commission in it's final report** (🔗)

10. Funding, Finances, and Future Challenges

2024 Headline Figures*

£462,574	TOTAL INCOME THROUGHOUT THE YEAR
£183,456	FUNDS AT YEAR START
£524,096	TOTAL EXPENDITURE THROUGHOUT THE YEAR
£121,934	FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD AT YEAR END
£103,074	UNRESTRICTED RESERVES (TARGET: £125-250K)

*BIHR's financial year runs Jan-Dec



OUR BIGGEST RISK:

As the political threat to the HRA recedes, we are witnessing funder priorities shifting away from human rights community capacity building, despite increasing demand.

OUR BIGGEST NEED:

Sustained investment to expand community, policy, and lived experience leadership work ensuring rights are real in everyday life, building solidarity in the face of increasing division, and not sleepwalking into another HRA crisis.

Trusts & Foundations Supporting BIHR:

- AB Charitable Trust
- Baring Foundation*
- Bromley Trust
- City Bridge Foundation
- John Ellerman Foundation*
- Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust**
- Tudor Trust**

*(Final year 2024-5) ** (Final year 2025-26)

Access our latest Annual Accounts on the Charity Commission website

11. Looking Ahead, Next Year and Beyond

WHAT'S NEXT?

- **Secure long-term funding for our community upskilling** and bringing together **grassroots and voluntary groups** across the UK to **achieve positive change using Human Rights Act advocacy**.
- **Expand public sector** peer learning and **human rights leadership** programmes.
- **Close HRA protection loopholes in NHS, asylum, and housing services** through law and policy changes.
- **Share our co-production model and learning to enable wider action.**
- **Build new tools with & for people to use & defend their rights in real time**.

WE'RE FOCUSED ON

PRACTICAL SUPPORT & REAL CHANGE

PREVENTION & ACCOUNTABILITY

UNITY, NOT DIVISION

LAW & LIVED EXPERIENCE WORKING TOGETHER

12. Join In

PEOPLE'S SUPPORT MAKES HUMAN RIGHTS REAL

As a charity we rely on the support of people who care about meaningful positive change focused on universal legal protections made real. Join in and support BIHR's work to make the Human Rights Act a living tool for fairness, dignity, and justice — from Parliament to public services, community halls to homes.

We'd love to chat about ...

- Donations, regular giving, legacies and community fundraising.
- Funding a project or our essential core costs.
- Commissioning BIHR's training, a programme or an event talk.
- Partnerships for funded work or to submit joint applications for funding.
- Supporting a policy project or commissioning our practical human rights research & analysis.

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