

# ANNUAL

# REPORT

## 2025



CAJ  
Committee on the  
Administration of Justice

Promoting Justice / Protecting Rights

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# Chairperson's Foreword

## Professor Anna Bryson

For more than a decade now we have witnessed a worrying swing towards right-wing populism across the globe. Democratic and civic liberties are obvious casualties. In territories such as the Middle East, Ukraine, Sudan, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Niger and Myanmar human rights have been decimated in extreme and brutal ways. The climate crisis meanwhile threatens all human rights – to life, health, housing, water and sanitation.

This annual report confirms the Committee on the Administration of Justice (CAJ) as an exemplar of the type of resistance that is required to meet such challenges. Across six strategic priority areas it has yet again demonstrated how a locally rooted and globally relevant human rights organisation can help to hold the front line of defence of human dignity and fundamental rights.

One of the things that struck me on reading this report is the vast array of organisations with whom CAJ now collaborates. It has a proud tradition of working closely with academics but, through its joint leadership of the Equality Coalition, it has also carefully nurtured effective working relations with grassroots and policy-focused networks right across civic society. On migrant rights issues, for example, it has this year worked with groups including the North West Migrants Forum, Migrants Organise, the Refugee and Asylum Forum, the Hate Crime Stakeholder Forum, the Racial Equality Subgroup, the Ethnic Equality Monitoring Working Group and the Racist Bullying in Schools Working Group.

This year has also seen a welcome growth of CAJ's international influence across a range of policy areas, including combatting impunity, policing and justice and minority language rights. Daniel Holder's election as Vice-President of the International Federation of Human Rights at its triannual Congress in Colombia this October consolidated CAJ's leading role at the forefront of nearly 200 human rights organisations from over 115 countries across the globe.



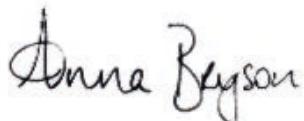
International Federation of Human Rights triannual Congress in Colombia: CAJ Director, Daniel Holder is pictured with the international panel of Vice Presidents following his election

It has also been heartening to witness a greatly enhanced communications capacity - reflected in the appointment of our new Communications Officer, Hannah Loughran. The growth of our online presence has undoubtedly helped to streamline and maximise impact. What is equally apparent is that CAJ's contribution is never confined to media soundbites or superficial statements. One of the organisation's 'unique selling points' is its ability to bring comprehensive, rigorous and legally informed analysis to bear on complex human rights issues. For example, in response to the deeply troubling manifestations of far-right and racist activity in Ballymena earlier this year, CAJ worked closely with technical experts at the Rabble Cooperative to forensically document and analyse the growth of far-right and racist discourse online. This resulted in a significant report, the findings of which sparked both national and international media attention.

I would like to sincerely thank my colleagues on the Executive Board for their help and support in maintaining accountability and good governance during the past year. On a personal note, as I approach completion of my five-year term as Chair, I would like particularly to thank Professors Rory O'Connell, Louise Mallinder and Fionnuala Ní Aoláin who stepped in for me as required during a period of ill-health this year. It has been an absolute privilege to serve as Chair under the Directorship of Brian Gormally and to see the organisation go from strength to strength under the leadership of his successor, Daniel Holder.

Eleanor Roosevelt once cautioned that, if universal human rights don't have meaning in small places, close to home, they will have little meaning anywhere. From our small corner of the globe, CAJ has for the past forty-four years given active meaning to universal rights. With a staff complement of just seven persons, it continues to demonstrate how energetic and persistent commitment to the rule of law and a rights-based order can offer a beacon of hope in deeply challenging times.

Long may it continue to do so!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Anna Bryson".

Professor Anna Bryson  
**Chairperson of the CAJ Executive Board**



# Introduction

## Daniel Holder, CAJ Director

2025 has been another productive year for CAJ working with a small yet dynamic staff team we have continued to achieve high impact and high-profile work in typically challenging areas across our areas of strategic priority.

Coinciding with a new funding cycle from the Human Rights Fund, CAJ revised and adopted a new three-year strategic plan for 2025-2028. Notwithstanding some additions and significant reframing to reflect present day challenges, our core priorities remain largely consistent with our previous three-year plan:

Our first strategic priority area '**safeguarding the peace process**' – witnessed continued activity to seek full implementation of the rights-based provisions of the peace agreements. Of particular note was our successful judicial review in early 2025 against the Northern Ireland Executive for failing to adopt the Anti-Poverty Strategy required further to the St. Andrews Agreement. In relation to minoritised language rights, CAJ was heavily involved with representatives of the Irish-speaking community in NI in seeking implementation of peace settlement and treaty-based obligations towards the Irish language, with considerable success in 2025.

CAJ was also involved in work on paramilitary transition and challenging NI-implications of the proscription of Palestine Action under the Terrorism Acts. With environmental groups and PILS, CAJ produced an NI Right to Protest Guide. CAJ also engaged on the issue of Stormont Reform and the GFA-mandated NI Bill of Rights, published a report on the ECHR and GFA and worked with the UK-EU structures to safeguard GFA-rights in the context of Brexit.

Our second strategic priority area '**combatting impunity**' involved being at the forefront of work to challenge the 2023 Legacy Act which closed viable legacy investigations in Northern Ireland. This involved extensive engagement with civil society, the two governments, Parliamentary Committees and the UN and Council of Europe human rights machinery as well as a strong media presence.

The blueprint for reform produced by CAJ in November 2024, to reform the institution set up by the Legacy Act into a viable entity, was ultimately reflected in significant aspects of a new the UK-Ireland agreement on legacy (the Joint Framework) published in September 2025.<sup>1</sup> During the year, CAJ also undertook extensive international dissemination and exchange, presenting the findings of the International Expert Panel on State Impunity and the Northern Ireland Conflict in Brazil, Mexico, Colombia and Chile, and strengthening our ties to global networks focused on accountability and transitional justice.

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<sup>1</sup> The blueprint produced by CAJ in November 2024 in collaboration with a number of academics at the QUB School of Law (Prof. Louise Mallinder; Prof. Anna Bryson; Prof. Kieran McEvoy; Prof. Fionnuala Ni Aoláin and Anurag Deb) to reform the institution set up by the Legacy Act into a viable entity was ultimately reflected in significant aspects of a new the UK-Ireland agreement on legacy (the Joint Framework) published in September 2025.

Our third strategic priority area relates to human rights compliant '**policing and justice'** reform. In this area of work, we supported journalists Barry McCaffrey and Trevor Birney in their landmark case before the Investigatory Powers Tribunal (IPT) finding unlawful surveillance by the PSNI, and in the subsequent McCullough Review into broader PSNI practice of surveillance of journalists and lawyers, on which CAJ sat on the oversight group. Through the CSO Coalition on Counter Terrorism and Human Rights, CAJ also led a new workstream on comparative practice on the regulation of informants and state agents; we also held a further cross border conference with the Irish Council for Civil Liberties on policing and the far right, delivered workshops at the National Black Police Association conference in London, on NI police reform.

Under our priority of '**tackling structural racism and protecting migrant rights**', CAJ continued a wide programme of interventions. A central focus was the commissioning and publication of two landmark reports mapping far-right activity online in Northern Ireland and campaigning for a more effective state response. The first report, *Far-Right Activity Online in Northern Ireland*, which became a reference point for international media coverage, set out a series of case studies including the disorder of summer 2024. The second report, *Inciting a Pogrom?*, examined the racist violence in Ballymena in June 2025 and featured prominently in a BBC Spotlight documentary, helping to highlight the scale and seriousness of the threat posed by online mobilisation and misinformation.

CAJ also continued our joint project with the North West Migrants Forum, focusing on tackling racist intimidation, application of the hostile environment in Northern Ireland and racial profiling within the UK-Ireland Common Travel Area. Through the Equality Coalition we have also developed a mechanism for collaboration in responding to racist intimidation. CAJ has also continued high level engagements with the PSNI and Ministers, securing a significant policy change in practice of removing materials placed in public space for the purpose of racist and sectarian intimidation from housing.

Our work on '**promoting equality and tackling prejudice**' focuses on the realisation of socio-economic and environmental rights. Much of this work is taken forward and



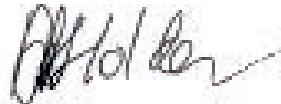
Meeting with NI Secretary of State, Hilary Benn MP. Left to right: CAJ Director, Daniel Holder; Secretary of State Hilary Benn MP; Grainne Teggart, Amnesty International; and Anna Bryson, Chair of CAJ Board.

facilitated by our Equality Coalition network, co-convened by CAJ and UNISON, with over 100 member groups. The Coalition was strengthened by funding from the Barings Foundation for a dedicated coordinator post and the establishment of a Legal Interventions Subgroup. The packed regular plenary meetings of the Coalition continue to be a key forum for collective exchange and action. The Coalition held a seminar with Ulster University in early 2025 on the enforcement of statutory duties and launched a research report into local government and equality and minority rights compliance in June. Among environmental rights issues has been the preparations for a 'community inquiry' into the Mobufoy illegal waste site.

CAJ is an active member of a number of international networks, including the International Federation of Human Rights (FIDH) representing the global human rights movement. I was pleased to be elected as a Vice President of FIDH at the triannual FIDH Congress in Bogota, Colombia in October, which will deepen our ties and involvement. CAJ has also been active in the CSO Coalition on Counter Terrorism and Human Rights, leading a new workstream on the regulation of state agents and informants. CAJ is also active within the European Implementation Network (EIN) which supports members in the implementation of European Court of Human Rights rulings.

CAJ could not carry out its work without the generous support of our funders and the commitment of our volunteer Executive Committee. We are grateful to our core funders - the NI Human Rights Fund, Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust, Paul Hamlyn Foundation and AB Charitable Trust - several of whom also provided additional project support during the year. Through the Human Rights Fund, we also received new backing from the Oak Foundation for our legacy work. The Legal Education Foundation continued to support our Senior Policy Officer post on rights and equality, Esmée Fairbairn funded our joint project with the North West Migrants Forum, and the Barings Foundation supported the development of the Equality Coalition's legal interventions subgroup.

The Equality Coalition programme also benefited from the UNISON Campaign Fund, and our policing projects were supported by the Community Foundations for Ireland and Northern Ireland. We remain deeply indebted to all our funders, and to our Executive Committee, whose expertise and governance underpin CAJ's ability to meet the challenges ahead.



Daniel Holder  
**Director**



# OUR VISION



CAJ's vision is a peaceful society based on human rights and equality. A peaceful, rights-based society must have a number of elements, or supporting pillars, which we aim to help build.

We work for:

- Safeguarding the Peace Process
- Accountability in Policing & Criminal Justice
- Combatting Impunity
- Combatting Racism & Promoting Migrant Rights
- Promoting Equality & Tackling Prejudice
- An Effective CAJ

It is under these headings that we organise this account of our policies and work during 2025.

# Safeguarding the Peace Process

**CAJ strives for the full implementation of the rights-based commitments of the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement (GFA) and subsequent peace-process implementation agreements.**

This strategic priority area of our work included interventions on retaining core safeguards of the GFA, including the incorporation of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) in Northern Ireland law; litigation to compel the adoption of an anti-poverty strategy by the Stormont Executive; campaigning for reform of the Stormont institutions to ensure rights-based governance; engagement in the post-Brexit UK-EU structures, and a raft of interventions to ensure compliance with the commitments towards the Irish language and Ulster Scots within the peace agreements and associated Council of Europe treaties.

In this year we also engaged in sensitive work regarding the potential for paramilitary transition of those armed groups which remain active in Northern Ireland. We also sought to intervene in the judicial review proceedings regarding the proscription under the Terrorism Acts of the direct-action protest group, Palestine Action. CAJ was also part of a guide on the right to protest in NI. We also continued our regular engagement with the Council of Europe and UN human rights structures, engaging also

in initiatives to share the lessons of the Northern Ireland peace process internationally.

## The Anti-Poverty Strategy

A core peace process safeguard for socio-economic rights is the statutory duty introduced under the 2006 St Andrews Agreement, requiring the Northern Ireland Executive to adopt an Anti-Poverty Strategy based on objective need. Despite this clear legal obligation, the duty has never been fully implemented.

During the 2011–2015 mandate, CAJ successfully took judicial review proceedings that found the Executive had acted unlawfully in failing to adopt such a strategy. Although that ruling became final in 2016, progress was halted during the subsequent suspension of the Executive between 2017 and 2020. Under the restored institutions, significant groundwork was undertaken: an Expert Advisory Panel produced a comprehensive blueprint and a co-design group advanced proposals for implementation. By the time the Executive collapsed again in 2022, officials confirmed, at a Stormont event organised by CAJ, that a draft strategy was ready for ministerial adoption.

Due to slow progress on the Anti-Poverty Strategy from the newly appointed Minister for Communities following



Launch of the Anti Poverty Strategy Group at Stormont

the restoration of the Executive in 2024, CAJ, with support from Public Interest Litigation Support (PILS), initiated judicial review proceedings to ensure compliance with the statutory duty. Building on this long history of advocacy, CAJ continued its leadership this year in holding the Executive to account.

The case was heard in January, and a successful verdict was delivered in March 2025. The ruling generated significant political and media attention, including coverage on BBC Sunday Politics, and was accompanied by strong trade union-led mobilisations organised through the Equality Coalition. CAJ also spoke at the widely attended launch of a new civil society Anti-Poverty Strategy group at Stormont, ensuring that community voices remained central to the process.

In the months that followed, the issue remained high on the political and media agenda. After a remedies

hearing, the Executive announced in May that a draft strategy had been agreed for a consultation exercise which took place over summer 2025. Whilst the litigation has prompted the taking forward of the Strategy, the draft was very limited.

Throughout the remainder of the year, CAJ and Equality Coalition members continued to mobilise around the principles of objective need and socio-economic equality, and a more maximalist strategy. CAJ was also involved in a number of other legal interventions.

Collectively, this work has helped reassert the Anti-Poverty Strategy as a key test of the Executive's compliance with human rights and equality standards. CAJ will remain at the forefront of ensuring that any adopted strategy is both legally compliant and genuinely effective in addressing poverty and social exclusion across Northern Ireland.



CAJ, PILS, UNISON staff outside the High Court following the Anti-Poverty Strategy Judicial Review hearing.



International Cohort attending European Language Equality Network Conference (ELEN) in Barcelona



CAJ attend High Court with Conradh na Gaeilge following initial review for their third Irish Language Strategy Judicial Review



Dara Keeve, CAJ Policy and Legal Officer - Equality Coalition, addresses ELEN conference in Barcelona



Irish Language delegation with ELEN secretariate at international conference

## Minoritised Language Rights: Irish and Ulster Scots

CAJ's work on language rights advanced significantly in 2025, reinforcing the organisation's long-standing commitment to cultural equality and compliance with international standards. We continued partnership work with the Irish-speaking community, in particular Conradh na Gaeilge, to seek a human rights-based approach to realising the language rights commitments of the peace agreements. We engaged in targeted interventions on bilingual signage at Belfast Central Station, the repeal of the 1737 Act (which had long prohibited the use of Irish in courts), and progress toward the adoption of an Irish Language Strategy.

CAJ addressed procedural concerns surrounding the recruitment of the Irish Language and Ulster Scots Commissioners, arguing that both posts must require relevant linguistic expertise to meet international standards.

During the second half of the year, CAJ played a significant role in advancing Irish language policy at local level. We provided evidence to a Belfast City Council committee and contributed to discussions that ultimately led to the Council's adoption of a progressive Irish Language Policy, a landmark development in promoting language rights in the city.

CAJ also contributed to public and media debate, including commentary on the availability of interpreters during the Kneecap trial, and continued to provide legal and policy input on ongoing cases concerning the Irish Language Strategy and signage issues at Grand Central Station.

In November, CAJ were represented at the European Language Equality Network (ELEN) international conference in Barcelona. Participation in this forum helped to strengthen international networks and highlight the ongoing challenges and opportunities for minoritised language rights in Northern Ireland within a wider European context.



The new Irish Language Policy passed by Belfast City Council was widely picked up within media. Pictured: Joe.ie promoting the Belfast City Council policy change via their Instagram account.

## Rights Based Governance

CAJ continued to press for reform of the Stormont institutions to reflect the rights-based commitments of the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement (GFA), including in written and oral evidence to the Assembly and Executive Review Committee of the Northern Ireland Assembly.

## Brexit and the Northern Ireland Protocol/ Windsor Framework

CAJ continued to actively engage with the structures for the implementation of the Protocol/ Windsor Framework, focusing on its implications for human rights and equality protections under the Brexit withdrawal arrangements. A key safeguard within this framework is Article 2, which guarantees that there will be no diminution of certain GFA rights as a result of the UK's withdrawal from the EU.

CAJ engaged regularly with the NI Human Rights and Equality Commissions (in their role as "Dedicated Mechanisms" to oversee the safeguard) on issues raised by our sector which engage the Article 2 commitment. Through the Equality Coalition, CAJ are also a member of the NI UK-EU Civic Working Group and we sit on the Civic Delegation to Co-Chairs of Joint Committee on the Implementation of the Windsor Framework. These networks allow us to raise rights and equality issues directly with the UK and EU.

## Belfast/ Good Friday Agreement and the European Convention on Human Rights

During the year, CAJ continued to play a leading role in clarifying and defending the integrity of the foundation commitments established under the GFA.

In response to recent claims that a potential UK withdrawal from the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) would not affect the operation or obligations of the GFA. CAJ published a detailed legal explainer: The Belfast/Good Friday Agreement 1998 & European Convention on Human Rights, authored by Professor Colin Murray (Newcastle University) and Professor Aoife O'Donoghue (Queen's University Belfast).



Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission Strategic Litigation Forum attended by CAJ Senior Solicitor, Úna Boyd



## Rights to Protest

Early in the year, in partnership with the Public Interest Litigation Support (PILS), Environmental Justice Network Ireland (EJNI), and Friends of the Earth, CAJ co-launched Know Your Rights to Protest - a practical guide on the right to peaceful assembly in Northern Ireland. The publication explains protest laws and policing powers in clear, accessible language, drawing on real examples from environmental and equality campaigns.

The guide was launched to a sold-out audience at 2 Royal Avenue, Belfast, with a keynote address by Emily Williams of the Irish Council for Civil Liberties (ICCL) and an expert panel discussion reflecting strong public interest in protest rights. A follow-up launch in Derry extended the guide's reach across the region.

CAJ also engaged in legal advocacy on protest rights. Following the proscription of the direct-action protest group Palestine Action under the Terrorism Acts, CAJ through PILS, sought permission to intervene in the judicial review in the High Court in England.

Our intervention application focused on failure to assess the implications of the proscription decision on the peace process and rule of law in this jurisdiction. While the initial application was not accepted, CAJ has remained active on this issue in the media and litigation.

# Accountability in Policing & Criminal Justice

**CAJ continued to promote rights-based, accountable policing both within Northern Ireland and internationally, sharing lessons from the peace process and contributing to wider efforts to embed equality and human rights in policing practice.**

In 2025, a major area of concern related to revelations of PSNI surveillance of journalists and lawyers, leading to an independent review (McCullough) to which CAJ was appointed to the oversight board. Through an international network, CAJ also led a new area of work into the regulation of state agents and informants and we continued work in our joint cross-border policing reform project with the Irish Council for Civil Liberties (ICCL).

## Covert Policing: McCullough Review

CAJ supported journalists Barry McCaffrey and Trevor Birney in their landmark case before the Investigatory Powers Tribunal (IPT) which found PSNI had unlawfully obtained the journalists communication data and raised concerns regarding broader practices. Following this

tribunal and campaigning for an inquiry, an independent review was established by the PSNI Chief Constable to examine PSNI conduct and wider concerns about the surveillance of journalists, lawyers and other civil society groups.

The review was led by Angus McCullough KC. CAJ Director, Daniel Holder, was subsequently appointed to the Group of Experts and Stakeholders (GoES) to advise and provide direction to the review. The report of the Review was published on 24 September, revealing further instances of surveillance of journalists and lawyers and making a series of remedial recommendations.

CAJ responded with Amnesty International and the National Union of Journalists (NUJ) in a joint press conference. CAJ, with Amnesty, also called for a public inquiry into the role of MI5 in such surveillance, (which was outside the scope of the McCullough Review) and renewed our long-standing call for the establishment of the office Northern Ireland Covert Law Enforcement Commissioner, an institution recommended by the GFA-mandated Patten Commission into Northern Ireland policing reform.



Barry McCaffrey and Trevor Birney addressing media following the publication of the McCullough Review



McCullough Review Press Conference: Seamus Dooley, NUJ; Daniel Holder, CAJ; Patrick Corrigan, Amnesty International

**Policing for Peace report launch:** Left to Right - Lucia O'Farrell, Justice for Shane; Daniel Holder, CAJ Director; Claire McEvoy, Head of Policy and Research ICCL; Osgur Breathnach, Sallins Men



## Joint Policing Project with the Irish Council for Civil Liberties

CAJ continued its cross-border collaboration with the Irish Council for Civil Liberties (ICCL) through the Joint Policing for Peace Project, which examines policing and human rights across both jurisdictions on the island of Ireland. In February, we published *"Repeal and Replace" the Northern Ireland Legacy Act: How should the Irish Government Deal with Legacy Investigations in its Jurisdiction?*

The report launch press conference was attended by campaigning groups and widely covered across Irish media, generating significant political engagement. The project was funded by the Community Foundations of Ireland and Northern Ireland.

In May, CAJ and ICCL co-hosted ICCL's Annual Conference in Dublin, under the theme "Policing of Far-Right Intimidation in the Republic of Ireland." The event featured participation from senior members of both the PSNI and An Garda Síochána, alongside a keynote address on misogyny and the far right. The conference fostered vital dialogue on cross-border cooperation, public safety, and the role of human rights standards in contemporary policing.



CAJ Director, Daniel Holder, addressing the press conference for the Policing for Peace final report launch

## CSO Coalition on Counter Terrorism and Human Rights

CAJ is a member of the CSO Coalition on Counter Terrorism and Human Rights, a global network of civil society organisations advocating for an end to the misuse of counter-terrorism measures. Following a strategic planning retreat in Brussels in March, a decision was taken to open a new-workstream led by CAJ on covert policing and the regulation of informants and state agents. This initiative began with an initial mapping exercise to assess existing legal frameworks, oversight mechanisms, and areas of concern.

Building on this foundation, CAJ also launched an Advocates Project in partnership with a Harvard University student research team, to conduct primary research into the legal regulation of state agent conduct within counter-terrorism policy. This collaboration strengthens the Coalition's evidence base and supports ongoing advocacy for greater accountability and human rights compliance in security practices.

## Policing and Accountability

CAJ contributed to ongoing discussions on accountability and human rights compliant practice in policing. We delivered workshops at the National Black Police Association (NBPA) Conference in the London Guildhall in October, on the subject of "Building Trust, Accountability and Buy-In in the Northern Ireland Policing Transition," which explored the lessons learned from the peace process and their relevance for policing across the UK.

Building on previous international engagements, CAJ and senior representatives of the PSNI met virtually with the United Nations South America Regional Office to discuss opportunities for collaboration on public order policing reform. The meeting followed earlier work in Chile and focused on how elements of the Northern Ireland policing transition, particularly approaches to community engagement and public order management, could help inform reform efforts elsewhere.



National Black Police Association Conference: CAJ Director, Daniel Holder delivering a training session on "Building Trust, Accountability and Buy-In in the Northern Ireland Policing Transition"



National Black Police Association Conference: Andy George, PSNI, opens the conference

# Combatting Impunity

**CAJ remained at the forefront of civil society efforts to challenge and reform the Northern Ireland Troubles (Legacy and Reconciliation) Act 2023, continuing to advocate for victims' rights, truth recovery, and compliance with international human rights standards.**

In July 2024, the new UK Labour Government came to power with a commitment to repeal the 2023 Legacy Act. In November, CAJ published a major report setting out how the controversial ICRIR could be fundamentally reformed into a distinct institution capable of delivering independent, ECHR-compliant investigations with public confidence.

CAJ engaged closely with both Governments, parliamentary committees, human rights and victims' organisations, the Council of Europe, UN mechanisms, the media and in litigation to help shape reform. In September 2025, the UK and Irish Governments published a new Joint Framework on legacy, followed in October by legislation to repeal and replace the 2023 Act. While challenges remain, the Framework and bill reflect many recommendations from CAJ's 2024 report.

CAJ also represented Eugene Thompson, next of kin of Paul Thompson, in proceedings brought by the Secretary of State to the UK Supreme Court to prevent disclosure of a gist of "sensitive" information with major implications for national security disclosure. Eugene died before judgment was delivered.

Internationally, CAJ continued disseminating the Northern Ireland experience of transitional justice, particularly through engagements in South America linked to the International Expert Panel Report into State Impunity and the Northern Ireland Conflict. In February, CAJ and the Irish Council for Civil Liberties also launched a joint report on the Irish Government's role in legacy investigations, accompanied by a press conference and photocall at the Oireachtas.

## Interventions to Reform the 2023 Legacy Act

CAJ Director Daniel Holder, alongside Professor Anna Bryson and Alyson Kilpatrick, Chief Commissioner of the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission, was among the first to give oral evidence to the Northern Ireland Affairs Committee (NIAC) as it examined the Labour Government's new approach to legacy legislation. During this period CAJ continued extensive advocacy, including a Belfast meeting with Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights Michael O'Flaherty, a Stormont briefing for MLAs, and coordinated initiatives with partner NGOs.

In May, CAJ co-organised with Amnesty International, Relatives for Justice and the Pat Finucane Centre a large open-air press conference outside the ICRIR offices on the anniversary of its establishment. The event, attended by over one hundred people, most of them victims' families, sent a clear message of opposition to the Legacy Act framework. CAJ continued to publicly highlight concerns about the ICRIR's independence, investigative capacity and workload, attracting significant media attention.

Ongoing engagement with the NIO, the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs, political parties and other stakeholders ensured that CAJ's November 2024 reform report remained central to discussions on shaping replacement legislation. When the UK-Ireland Joint Framework on Legacy was published in September 2025, CAJ met both Governments and swiftly produced an influential briefing analysing its implications.

Shortly afterwards, CAJ co-hosted with Queen's University Belfast's Mitchell Institute and Human Rights Centre a major conference, "Unpacking the UK-Ireland Joint Framework on Legacy," which brought together experts, policymakers and victims' representatives. The Framework reflected many of CAJ's long-standing recommendations, particularly those set out in our 2024 reform report.



Open-air press conference outside the ICRIR offices on the anniversary of its establishment co-organised with Amnesty International, Relatives for Justice and the Pat Finucane Centre



Oral evidence provided to Northern Ireland Affairs Committee (NIAC): Left to Right - Daniel Holder, CAJ Director; Alyson Kilpatrick, Chief Commissioner, Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission; Professor Anna Bryson



'Unpacking the Joint Framework on Legacy' Seminar: Left to right: Gráinne Teggart, Deputy Director Amnesty International; Daniel Holder, Director CAJ; Mark Thompson, CEO, Relatives for Justice (RFJ); Alan Brecknell, Advocacy Support Worker, Pat Finucane Centre (PFC); Professor Louise Mallinder, Mitchell Institute Queen's University Belfast



International engagement with United Nations staff in the regional office of Santiago, Chile: Left to right - Paula Berruti, UN Human Rights Officer; Paul O'Connor, Pat Finucane Centre; Daniel Holder, CAJ; Maria José Guembe, human rights lawyer; Jan Jarab, UN Regional Representative for South America; Filepe Gonzalez, UN Human Rights Officer



Paul O'Connor, Pat Finucane Centre; Maria José Guembe, Human Rights Lawyer and Daniel Holder, CAJ meeting with human rights groups in Bogotá, Colombia



CAJ Director Daniel Holder taking part in an FIDH panel on Cultural Rights and Peace Agreements



CAJ Director, Daniel Holder and Pat Finucane Centre Director, Paul O'Connor meeting with Maurice Politi

## International Expert Panel on State Impunity and the NI Conflict

CAJ continued to lead international engagement through the International Expert Panel on State Impunity and the Northern Ireland Conflict, promoting global dialogue on transitional justice, and the lessons of Northern Ireland's peace process. The Panel was established at the request of CAJ and the Pat Finucane Centre (PFC) and produced its landmark 'Bitter Legacy' report in May 2024, to coincide with the coming into force of the Legacy Act.

In May, CAJ's Daniel, together with Paul O'Connor (Pat Finucane Centre) and María José Guembe (Impunity Panel), undertook a South American dissemination mission to Colombia, Brazil, and Chile. The visit shared the Northern Ireland experience of state impunity and examined the implications of the Legacy Act within a comparative global context. The delegation held a wide range of high-level meetings with transitional justice practitioners - including the President of Colombia's Special Jurisdiction for Peace (JEP), former Truth Commissioners, and senior officials from the Chilean Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Human Rights.

The programme also included academic seminars in São Paulo, Medellín, and Santiago, a training seminar for federal judges in Brazil, and a roundtable of EU ambassadors hosted by the Irish Embassy in Santiago, with UK participation. Meetings with UN Regional Office representatives and UN Special Rapporteur Gina Romero, alongside visits to key memory sites, further deepened exchange on truth, justice, and institutional reform. The Panel's report has since been incorporated into international reference materials at several of these institutions.

Building on this engagement, CAJ co-organised a global webinar with the FIDH Global Initiative Against Impunity, comparing experiences from Northern Ireland, Brazil, and Lebanon. CAJ also partnered with the Pat Finucane Centre and INQUEST to host a major London event, 'State Impunity & Injustice: Northern Ireland, Britain and the Fight for Accountability', featuring Gareth Peirce and other leading human rights advocates. Both events highlighted the dangers of emerging "pseudo-inquest" models under the Legacy Act and underscored the need for genuine accountability mechanisms.

In November, CAJ attended the triannual FIDH Congress in Bogotá, presenting on a number of panel discussions at the Congress and concurrent Civil Society Human Rights Forum on transitional justice issues. This was followed by a series of academic presentations, civil society and Government meetings in Mexico on the shared question of impunity, including a roundtable jointly hosted by Irish and UK diplomats.



John Finucane and Gareth Peirce pictured at our State Impunity & Injustice event in London

## Thompson Vs. Secretary of State, NI

Paul "Topper" Thompson was a Catholic civilian murdered by loyalist paramilitaries in 1994 in West Belfast amid credible allegations of state collusion. CAJ represented his next of kin, Eugene Thompson, in a landmark case challenging the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland's (SOSNI), attempt to block the release of a limited "gist" of information to Thompson's family, by the Coronor. The highest authorities in this jurisdiction agreed the information should be shared. The High Court and Court of Appeal ruled in favour of disclosure. The PSNI, under Jon Boucher, supported this ruling. However, the UK government, through the Secretary of State, Ministry of Defence and Home Office, chose to appeal this decision right to the UK Supreme Court.

CAJ represented Eugene Thompson at the UK Supreme Court on 11–12 June 2025. The case challenges the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland's attempt to introduce a ministerial "national security veto" over judicial legacy verdicts, particularly those relating to the involvement of state agents in serious human rights violations. The outcome is expected to set a significant precedent for the independence of the judiciary and accountability in legacy cases.

Despite being terminally ill, Eugene Thompson was able to attend the Supreme Court hearing virtually. International observation of the case was facilitated through FIDH, represented by Turkish human rights lawyer Reyhan Yalçındağ Baydemir. The judgment has been reserved, with the Court noting Eugene's circumstances.

In July, CAJ secured an official apology from the PSNI Chief Constable, Jon Boucher, to Eugene for the force's failings in relation to Paul Thompson's death. The apology was delivered in person at Eugene's hospital bedside.

Eugene Thompson passed away a week later.

The Supreme Court ruling in Thompson remains awaited at the time of writing.

CAJ extend our deepest sympathies to Eugene's loved ones, especially Briege. We also reaffirm our support for all families still seeking truth, justice and accountability. Eugene should not have had to fight this long, and he should not have died without answers.



Thompson family: Left to right - Paul 'Topper' Thompson, Margaret Thompson, Eugene Thompson



Eugene Thompson's legal team and next of kin representatives attending the UK Supreme Court

# Combatting Racism & Promoting Migrant Rights

CAJ continued a range of interventions aimed at tackling structural racism and protecting the rights of the migrant community in Northern Ireland. This included the publication of two major reports mapping far right activity online and recommending remedial state practice.

CAJ also continued to take forward our joint project with the North West Migrants Forum, with a focus on tackling racist intimidation; the application of the hostile environment in Northern Ireland and racial profiling within the UK-Ireland Common Travel Area.

## Rabble Cooperative: Far Right Online Activity Monitoring

CAJ continued its partnership with tech experts the Rabble Cooperative to document and analyse the growth of far-right narratives and racist mobilisation online in Northern Ireland. This collaboration, supported through a multi-phase monitoring project, has provided a crucial evidence base for understanding how online hate translates into real-world harm.

In May 2025, CAJ and Rabble launched the first major publication in the series, *Mapping Far Right Activity Online in Northern Ireland* authored by Dessie Donnelly. The report presented a series of case studies of racist incidents and responses, mapping patterns of online organisation and amplification. It revealed how international actors have reshaped online narratives.

The report was launched at UNISON headquarters in Belfast and the Guildhall in Derry on 2 and 6 May, receiving extensive media coverage.

Following the racist protests and disorder in Ballymena, the project's findings became an international media point of reference for understanding the events, with interviews featured in the New York Times, Al Jazeera, and a live segment on BBC Radio 4's The World Tonight.

CAJ and Rabble established a monitoring group and commissioned a further study on the role of social media in fuelling the June 2025 Ballymena riots. The report 'Inciting a Pogrom? Social Media and the Racist Disorder in Ballymena and Beyond During Summer 2025' was released in the autumn and featured in a BBC Spotlight documentary. This study examined how social media activity amplified fear and hostility, contributing to offline attacks and protests across Northern Ireland. It also analysed how local organising efforts and political responses shaped both escalation and community resilience.

To enhance cross-sector collaboration, CAJ also secured additional Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust (JRCT) funding, in partnership with Participation and the Practice of Rights (PPR) and the Irish Council for Civil Liberties (ICCL), to establish a far-right monitoring subgroup within the Equality Coalition. The subgroup is coordinating analysis, information sharing, and advocacy responses to far-right activity across Northern Ireland.



Full attendance at the launch of 'Inciting a Pogrom' report authored by Dessie Donnelly, Rabble Cooperative



Dr. Naomi Green and Dessie Donnelly sat on the expert panel Chaired by Patricia McKeown, Regional Secretary UNISON and Co-Convenor of the Equality Coalition

Attendees at the Advancing Racial Equality Awards hosted by North West Migrants Forum, with Shannon Doherty of CAJ and NWMF CEO Lilian Seenoi-Barr.



## Joint Campaign with North West Migrants Forum (NWMF)

CAJ and the North West Migrants Forum (NWMF) continued to strengthen their long-standing partnership through the second year of our joint project supported by the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation. The project, led by CAJ's Shannon Doherty, brings together research, campaigning and strategic policy engagement to challenge racism, intimidation, racial profiling within the Common Travel Area, and the wider hostile environment in Northern Ireland.

Through sustained advocacy we raised concerns with politicians and statutory bodies, sought improved protections for visa nationals, and pressed for safeguards against the expansion of immigration controls. We also contributed to a range of consultations and inquiries, including submissions to the UN Special Rapporteur on Minority Issues and the Northern Ireland Affairs Committee. The project also provides secretariat support to the All-Party Group on the Ethnic Minority Community, helping to connect community perspectives with political representatives.

## Rolling Back the Home Office Hostile Environment

CAJ continued its work to challenge and roll back the Home Office's hostile environment policies in Northern Ireland, building on our previously published Model Bill setting out practical legislative and policy steps to remove immigration checks from essential public services. Over the year, CAJ engaged with a range of Northern Ireland government departments to explore how devolved powers can be used to mitigate or disapply hostile environment measures, with a focus on protecting access to health, housing, education, and social protection for all residents.

Alongside the Social Change Initiative, we also engaged with We Belong, an organisation representing young migrants, to identify and address some specific barriers created by hostile environment rules for young people in Northern Ireland. This kind of collaboration strengthens evidence on the lived experience of affected communities and supports our ongoing advocacy for rights-based, non-discriminatory approaches to immigration and public service delivery.

## Racist Hate Crimes, Hate Expression and Housing Intimidation

CAJ continued to respond to escalating racist hate crimes, intimidation, and hate expression through a combination of legal advocacy, casework, policy engagement, and coordinated civil society action. In particular, following threatened legal action by CAJ with PILS support on past approaches, CAJ secured policy changes from the PSNI and the Department for Infrastructure (DfI) regarding the removal of racist and sectarian material in public spaces. The materials in question, which previously were not routinely removed given suspected paramilitary involvement, were placed with the purpose and effect of racist and sectarian intimidation from housing. The policy change, with new operational guidance now under development, has now led to targeting for removal of the most harmful materials.

As part of our international reporting work, CAJ made a submission to the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) highlighting the role of paramilitary groups in housing intimidation and calling for strengthened state responses and protections for affected families. We also assisted victims of racist attacks in navigating the criminal damage compensation scheme, ensuring that individuals facing violence and intimidation received practical support.

This work was complemented by insights from the aforementioned Rabble Cooperative far-right monitoring project, which documented the online trends and organising patterns underpinning local racist mobilisation. CAJ's interventions attracted substantial media coverage, helping to ensure that racist violence, intimidation, and the structural factors enabling them, remain firmly on the public and political agenda.

## Common Travel Area

CAJ continued to raise concerns about the rollback of the Common Travel Area, responding to growing evidence that immigration checks, often informed by racial profiling, are restricting the right to move freely across these islands. Working with the Migrant Rights Network and grassroots groups, we gathered lived experience evidence and examined the legal basis for the increase in immigration raids in Northern Ireland.

CAJ provided detailed evidence to bodies such as the Northern Ireland Affairs Committee, the Joint Committee between the two Human Rights Commissions (IHREC and NIHRC) on this island, highlighting the human rights risks associated with the expansion of enforcement activities within the Common Travel Area.



CAJ Senior Solicitor, Úna Boyd meeting with NI Minister for Infrastructure, MLA, Liz Kimmens



Equality Coalition Co-Conveners meeting with Junior Ministers Pam Cameron and Aisling Reilly at Stormont

## Networks and Collaboration

CAJ continued to work collaboratively across a wide range of immigration, equality and human rights networks, ensuring that evidence, policy concerns and lived experience are shared across sectors. As part of this work, CAJ actively participated in key forums including the Refugee and Asylum Forum, the Migrant Forum, the Hate Crime Stakeholder Forum, Stronger Together, the Racial Equality Subgroup, the Ethnic Equality Monitoring Working Group, and the Voluntary and Community Sector Working Group on Refugee and Asylum Issues. We also contributed to the Racist Bullying in Schools Working Group, the EUSS Alliance, the EU Delegation Monitoring Network, the Cross Sector Migration Coalition, Save Our Human Rights Act, and the Ad Hoc Committee on North, South, East, West Cooperation.

In addition, CAJ remained an active member of professional networks central to access to justice, including the Immigration Law Practitioners Association (ILPA) and the Law Society NI Immigration Practitioners Group, strengthening connections between policy, practice and legal advocacy.

## Data Sharing with the Home Office

CAJ continued to address concerns about the sharing of victims and witnesses' personal data with the Home Office, a practice that risks deterring people with insecure immigration status from reporting crime or seeking protection. We engaged directly with the PSNI to seek clarity on current data-sharing practices and to press for safeguards that ensure victims and witnesses can access policing services without fear of immigration consequences. Work is now ongoing on a significant policy change.

CAJ also worked with organisations in Great Britain that are challenging similar practices, contributing to a growing body of evidence showing the harms caused when policing and immigration enforcement become intertwined. This collaboration supports wider efforts to develop rights-based approaches that protect access to justice for all communities.

## Access to Justice

CAJ continued to highlight the impact of underfunded immigration legal aid on access to justice in Northern Ireland. We played an instrumental role in supporting the Northern Ireland Immigration Practitioners Group during its industrial action, which was taken in response to the long-standing failure to increase immigration legal aid rates. This action, backed by the Immigration Law Practitioners Association UK, ultimately demonstrated the strength of the sector's collective voice and the urgency of meaningful reform.

CAJ was also invited by Migrants Organise to speak at an event on immigration advice capacity, where we outlined how industrial action in Northern Ireland achieved progress and shared lessons for practitioners working in other parts of the UK. Through this work, CAJ has continued to ensure that access to justice remains central to public debate and policy development on immigration and asylum.



CAJ Policy Staff, Eliza Browning and Dara Keeve attending the United Nations for their presentation to ICESCR

# Promoting Equality & Tackling Prejudice

## The Equality Coalition

The Equality Coalition, co-convened by UNISON and CAJ, has long been a critical partnership vehicle to achieve CAJ strategic goals. The Coalition has over 100 member organisations, with membership continuing to grow further year-on-year.

A number of these members are themselves umbrella groups and the largest and most diverse is the trade union movement. There has been, and remains, no other collective voice on equality in NI and no other overarching consistent 'critical friend' of the equality oversight bodies, public authorities, and local government. A key part of the Coalition's work centres on encouraging application of the Section 75 equality duties and engaging regularly with the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland (ECNI). The work of the Coalition is supported by the UNISON Campaign Fund and the Baring Foundation.

Throughout the year, the Coalition maintained a high level of activity and engagement. New funding supplied by the Baring Foundation resulted in the creation of the new role of Equality Coalition Policy and Legal Officer

and the establishment of a Legal Interventions Subgroup. The Subgroup meets regularly, with members sharing expertise and coordinating strategic equality-related litigation. The Coalition continues to hold regular meetings with our members, where we discuss how best to advance the equality agenda in NI, in addition to offering our members capacity building training sessions and organising events about key issues.

## Research and Policy Work

Our policy and advocacy work remains grounded in collaboration, ensuring our members' voices are represented in consultations and decision-making processes. We commissioned independent researcher Robbie McVeigh to examine the use of Section 75 and the 'call-in mechanism' in local councils. He produced a report which was launched in Stormont in June 2025. Additionally, we responded to the NI Assembly and Executive Review Committee's inquiry into institutional reform, pressing for implementation of outstanding rights-based safeguards from the Good Friday Agreement. We also provided members with briefings on the Final Programme for Government and the draft Anti-Poverty Strategy.



Researcher Robbie McVeigh presents findings from the Equality Coalition commissioned report 'Screened Out Without Mitigation'



## Advocacy Work

The Coalition has maintained a strong focus on protecting and enhancing human rights. This year, we continued political engagement on the Anti-Poverty Strategy and equality strategies, NI Assembly delivery structures and the political response to racist and sectarian intimidation. We also met with the Equality Commission to discuss a range of pressing issues identified by our members.

## Administrative Remedies

We continue to promote the effective application of the public sector equality duty (Section 75) in public policy decisions at all levels. Following our recommendations, the Department of Finance committed to changes in their Equality Scheme, which are now being formalised.

Through the new Legal Interventions Subgroup, we supported member organisations in coordinating Section 75 interventions on housing intimidation, bilingual signage and the Anti Poverty Strategy, drawing on expert legal input. The Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman also provided training to members on how to access and use its services effectively.



Equality Coalition Co-Conveners meeting with NI Minister for Health, MLA Mike Nesbitt



Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman (NIPSO) presented to EC Legal Interventions Subgroup

## Training and Capacity Building

The Equality Coalition continued to enhance the collective capacity of equality advocates across Northern Ireland through a dynamic programme of training and knowledge-sharing sessions:

### Gender Budgeting

Hosted a presentation by Jonna Monaghan (Women's Platform NI) on her experience at the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), followed by Alex Brennan (NI Women's Budget Group) and Aoife Mallon (Ulster University) on practical approaches to gender budgeting.

### Fact-Check Training

Delivered an interactive fact-checking workshop with Dr Orna Young (FactCheckNI), strengthening members' capacity for evidence-based advocacy.

### Disability Benefits Seminar

Convened a session with Dr Ciara Fitzpatrick (Ulster University) and Becca Bor (NI Anti-Poverty Network) examining the impact of proposed cuts to disability benefits.

### Statutory Duties Event

In partnership with Ulster University's Transitional Justice Institute (TJI), hosted an event on the enforcement of Section 75 statutory equality duties, exploring how legal obligations can be more effectively implemented.

### Just Transition Seminar

Environmental Justice Network Ireland presented their new report 'Mapping Just Transition Initiatives on the Island of Ireland' to members.



Children's Commissioner Chris Quinn following his presentation to Equality Coalition members

### Mapping Far-Right Activity

Launched the Mapping Far Right Activity Online in Northern Ireland Project Report in Derry and Belfast, receiving widespread media coverage and strengthening public understanding of online extremism.

### Council Call in Research Report

Launched Screened Out Without Mitigation: Returning Equality in Northern Ireland to the Margins at Stormont. This report examines how the statutory equality duties under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, as well as the use of the 'call-in' mechanism, are operating within Northern Ireland's 11 local councils.

### Co-Design Seminar

Held a seminar on co-design where members shared experiences of departmental equality and rights strategy processes; the event identified major shortcomings, and CAJ is now compiling these findings for publication.

### UN Convention on the Rights of the Child presentation

Children's Commissioner Chris Quinn gave a presentation to members on the work being undertaken to incorporate the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child into NI law.



Large attendance at the Enforcement of Statutory Duties event co-hosted with Ulster University's Transitional Justice Institute

## Environmental Rights

Throughout the year, we continued expanding our involvement in the intersection of environmental rights and human rights.

The Mobuoy illegal waste site outside Derry is one of the largest environmental scandals in Europe, with more than 1.6 million tonnes of waste unlawfully buried across a 46-hectare site beside the River Faughan, the city's main drinking water source. Despite the serious risks posed to water quality, public health and environmental regulation, the independent public inquiry unanimously endorsed by the NI Assembly in 2014 was never established, leaving communities without answers or accountability.

In response, environmental group The Gathering, in partnership with CAJ, Public Interest Litigation Support, Environmental Justice Network Ireland and Friends of the Earth, launched a Community Inquiry into Mobuoy. This community-led process enables independent experts to gather evidence, hear local testimony and produce findings in the absence of a statutory inquiry. A series of well-attended events in Eglinton, Strathfoyle, Drumahoe and Cultúrlann Uí Chanáin invited residents to identify priority issues, propose key questions and shape the Inquiry's Terms of Reference. The initiative aims to secure transparency, accountability and meaningful action on one of Northern Ireland's most significant environmental justice failures.



Large turnouts for briefing meetings on the Mobuoy Community Inquiry hosted by The Gathering, in partnership with CAJ, Public Interest Litigation Support, Environmental Justice Network Ireland and Friends of the Earth

# Communications

**It remains important that CAJ's work is not only impeccably accurate and authoritative, but that it is also widely disseminated. This year, we maintained our focus on enhancing our engagement through a wide range of events. and beginning to expand our online presence.**

CAJ strengthened its communications capacity this year with the appointment of a new Communications Officer, Hannah Loughran, in February 2025. This allowed us to begin designing official CAJ publications fully in-house, including the 2024 Annual Report, translations of the Bitter Legacy executive summary, Policing the Protectors, and design support for the far-right monitoring reports produced by Rabble Cooperative.

Our online presence expanded with the launch of new BlueSky, LinkedIn and Instagram accounts, reducing reliance on X due to ethical concerns regarding the platform. Data from the first two quarters of our social media analytics shows clear and consistent growth across platforms. All three newer channels recorded increases in followers, impressions and engagement rates, with Instagram showing the fastest early growth, LinkedIn demonstrating the strongest professional reach, and BlueSky attracting steady, high-quality interaction from policy, academic and civil society audiences. Overall, combined engagement rates across the first four analytical sheets were significantly higher in Q3 than Q1, indicating rising interest in CAJ's work and increasing visibility for our policy interventions.

This increased visibility also generated major media opportunities. A short social media promoting our Rabble Cooperative report, Far-Right Activity Online in Northern Ireland, posted in response to the Ballymena racist violence became a key reference point for international journalists and led directly to CAJ being contacted by the New York Times, Al Jazeera and the Australian Broadcasting Corporation for interviews and expert comment.

CAJ maintained a strong media profile throughout the year and was cited in more than 120 articles across our five policy areas. Our press conference following the Anti-Poverty Strategy Judicial Review judgment and the large public event marking the ICRIR anniversary, jointly organised with Amnesty International, reflected CAJ's role as a trusted expert voice in public debate.

We published two editions of Just News, with two further special editions currently in development: one documenting sectoral experiences of the co-design process and another analysing the new Joint State Framework on Legacy. Regular Just Updates ensured that members and networks remained informed about key events, publications and opportunities.

CAJ continued to benefit from a strong and streamlined volunteer programme, with consistently high levels of interest throughout the year. We were delighted to welcome Caroline Arnold (Harvard University) in January, who contributed research on the St Andrews Veto. Over the summer, Ruby Martinez (University of Chicago) and Sarah Markey (Yale University) completed substantial research projects on Police Ombudsman historic investigations and legacy inquests. Most recently, Sofia Debernardi (Queen's University Belfast) joined as a communications volunteer and is supporting the delivery of events and the production of *Just News* and *Just Updates*. Their contributions have strengthened our research, communications and policy capacity. We are deeply grateful to all of our volunteers for their commitment, expertise and energy, which continue to strengthen and enrich CAJ's work.

Looking ahead to 2026, CAJ plans to continue developing our membership model, creating new avenues for engagement and added value for members. This includes exploring the commissioning of professional archival work to digitise more than 40 years of CAJ documents, creating a searchable archive for members, researchers and academics.



# Finance and Funding

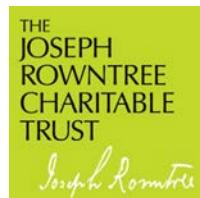
CAJ is supported by the Human Rights Fund - a dedicated fund managed by the Community Foundation for Northern Ireland, supporting CAJ, the Participation and the Practice of Rights (PPR), Public Interest Litigation Support (PILS) and others.

CAJ is also very grateful for the support of:

AB Charitable Trust  
The Baring Foundation  
Community Foundation for Northern Ireland  
Community Foundation for Ireland  
Esmée Fairbairn Foundation  
Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust  
Legal Education Foundation  
OAK Foundation  
Paul Hamlyn Foundation  
UNISON Campaign Fund

CAJ has also raised funds through Local Giving and would like to thank everyone who has made a donation. You can find our Local Giving page here: [www.localgiving.org/charity/caj/](http://www.localgiving.org/charity/caj/).

CAJ's most recent audited annual accounts are available on the Companies House website at the following link: <https://find-and-update.company-information.service.gov.uk/company/NI032591/filing-history>



# Staffing & Executive

## Staff

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**Roisín Brennan**, Office & Finance Manager

**Ellie Carson**, Office & Finance Manager (Maternity)

**Úna Boyd**, Senior Solicitor

**Eliza Browning**, Senior Policy Officer

**Michael Avila**, Senior Policy Officer (Maternity)

**Shannon Doherty**, Joint NW Migrants

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**Dara Keeve**, Policy Officer

**Hannah Loughran**, Communications Officer

## Executive

**Professor Anna Bryson**, Chairperson

**Professor Rory O'Connell**, Vice-Chair

**Professor Fionnuala Ni Aolain**, Editor of Just News

**Chris McCartin**, Treasurer

**Professor Louise Mallinder**

**Cathy Bollaert**

**Anurag Deb**

**Professor Kieran McEvoy**

**Dáire McGill**

**Ciarán Ó Maoláin**

**Dr Anne Smith**

**Professor Colin Murray**



'Angel of Peace' sculpture,  
carved for CAJ.









# CAJ

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Promoting Justice / Protecting Rights

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