



# 10 FREE HUMAN RIGHTS WORKSHOPS IMPACT REPORT

October 2021

**“Engaging and educational. I now understand how my rights have been violated in the past.”**

Attendee at our workshop on inclusive education

## 1. Context

At BIHR we seek to bring about change by supporting people, communities, and systems to use human rights in everyday life to achieve positive change. We believe that knowledge is power, and a core part of our work sees us delivering learning programmes with people who regularly interact with public services, their loved ones, and those who care for them.

Throughout the Covid-19 pandemic, we have seen new human rights issues arise, as well as an exacerbation of existing human rights issues. From excessive restrictions placed on people living in care homes, to Do Not Attempt Resuscitation orders being used without involvement or knowledge of the person or their loved ones, the importance of knowing about and using human rights when interacting with public services has been highlighted.

Thanks to our generous funders (the [Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust](#), the [Tudor Trust](#), the [Bromley Trust](#), [Comic Relief \(Covid fund\)](#) and the Three Guineas Trust), we were able to continue providing human rights workshops virtually as our team began to work from home in response to national lockdowns. Between May 2020 and May 2021, we partnered with 16 different organisations and delivered 27 different workshops, free of charge to community groups with an appetite for human rights knowledge.

With the final pot of money from our funders, we decided to offer a final 10 human rights workshops to new partner organisations. We invited community-led and grassroots organisations supporting people who access public services to apply, and we were overwhelmed with applications from across the UK, showing the popularity of human rights workshops. This report looks at the final 10 free partner sessions delivered June – August 2021.

## 2. What we did

This work involved four stages of action:

1. Application and Selection Process
2. Designing Workshop Content
3. Workshop Delivery
4. Evaluation

### 2.1 Application and Selection Process

In order to have a wide and sustainable impact with our final 10 free human rights workshops, we varied our approach in identifying partner organisations. Having already delivered 27 workshops to 16 different organisations using funding from the [Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust](#), the [Tudor Trust](#), [the Bromley Trust](#), [Comic Relief \(Covid fund\)](#) and the Three Guineas Trust, we anticipated that an offer of free human rights workshops would be popular. Therefore, we invited organisations to submit applications and planned to select partners based on criteria including reach, annual turnover, and geographical location – see below for full details of our criteria.

To spread the word about this offer, we shared information about how to apply for a workshop in our monthly eNews, on our website, and on Twitter and Facebook. We also reached out to different networks, asked them to share information with any groups or organisations that might be interested.

We received applications from 34 groups and organisations in total. These came from all four nations and from across the public, private and voluntary sector. We were pleased to hear from groups and organisations supporting people in a variety of situations, including those experiencing homelessness and poverty, the LGBTQIA+ community, refugees and asylum seekers, people with substance use issues, women experiencing domestic abuse, people with disabilities, carers, and more.

To identify 10 partners from the large number of applicants, we used a selection criteria which was as follows:

#### ESSENTIAL

- UK-based group or organisation
- Training will be attended by people who use, have used or are trying to use public services / carers / loved ones / staff in small community organisations
- Has not attended a BIHR session before
- Minimum of 10 attendees

#### DESIRABLE

- At least one group from Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales
- Groups or organisations where there is a possibility of creating new workshop content. For example, e.g. people experiencing homelessness, refugees and asylum seekers, young people, etc.
- Small organisation – turnover of less than £750k

Based on this criteria, we were able to select 10 new partner organisations:

1. [The Alliance for Inclusive Education](#)
2. [Bristol Somali Resource Centre](#)
3. [Cheshire Disabled People's Panel](#)
4. [dates-n-mates Scotland](#)
5. [Friends, Families and Travellers](#)
6. [HERe NI](#)
7. [Northern Ireland Refugee and Asylum Seeker Women's Association \(Bomoko NI\)](#)
8. [Rock Trust](#)
9. [Silverline Memories](#)
10. [Welsh Refugee Council](#)

## 2.2 Designing Workshop Content

Our four Human Rights Officers were paired up with partner organisations and held planning meetings with the organisers. We asked organisers if there were any pressing human rights issues affecting the people who would be attending the workshops and asked for specific human rights case study examples which would bring the content to life. Through these conversations, new case studies were created on a variety of issues, including:

- Adult social care charging policies in local authorities.
- Discrimination against people without ID or fixed address when registering with a GP.
- A person with a learning disability being made to leave an evening event early because their support worker's shift was ending.
- Lack of adaptations to support young people in educational settings.
- Children with LGBTQIA+ parents being bullied at school.



**Activity: Laura**

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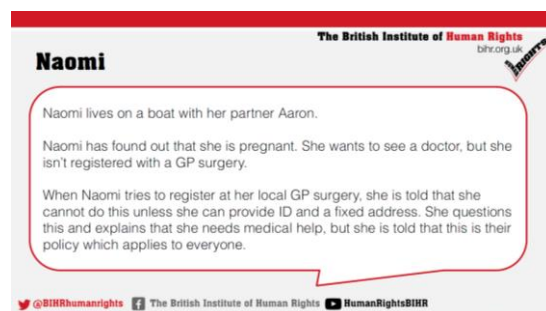
One night, Laura goes to a quiz night at her local pub with her support worker.

Laura makes some new friends. She wants to stay and chat with them after the quiz has finished.

At 8pm, Laura's support worker says she has to go home because he is finishing his shift at 9pm.

8:00

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**Naomi**

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Naomi lives on a boat with her partner Aaron.

Naomi has found out that she is pregnant. She wants to see a doctor, but she isn't registered with a GP surgery.

When Naomi tries to register at her local GP surgery, she is told that she cannot do this unless she can provide ID and a fixed address. She questions this and explains that she needs medical help, but she is told that this is their policy which applies to everyone.

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We also spoke to organisers about accessibility requirements and opportunities for interactivity in the workshops. This allowed us to tailor workshops which enabled everyone to learn and engage with the content; some workshops contained Easy Read information, some used breakout rooms, and some had a Q&A portion at the end.

## 2.3 Workshop Delivery

The 10 human rights workshops took place between 18 June and 5 August 2021. These were attended by 159 people in total, which included people who are supported by or are members of the partner organisations, as well as some staff from those organisations. As

mentioned above, the content and format of each workshop was unique as this was tailored to suit the requirements of each group. Here is an example of a workshop we delivered:

## Rock Trust

Rock Trust is a charity based in Scotland which aims to end youth homelessness. They advise, educate and support young people to enable them to build skills and resources to make a positive transition into adulthood. The organiser at Rock Trust applied for a free human rights workshop for young people they support, and advocates who could pass on their learning to others. They told us that the biggest challenges faced by the young people they support in using human rights include a lack of awareness around how human rights affects them on a daily basis and the use of complicated language.

Our Human Rights Officer tailored the human rights workshop to suit the needs of those who would be attending from Rock Trust. The content was presented in Easy Read format and included content aimed at increasing attendees' knowledge and confidence in using human rights to create positive change in their lives. The workshop covered a number of topics, including:

- Human rights law and how rights are protected in Scotland
- The legal duty on public bodies to respect, protect and fulfil human rights in everything they do, every day
- Which human rights are protected in the UK and how they work
- Three rights which are particularly important when people are experiencing homelessness or inadequate/insecure housing
- Case studies and real-life examples of how these rights apply in everyday situations
- Using human rights as a tool to speak up, challenge public services and find better solutions to problems encountered

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### Who has human rights?



Everyone!

Human rights are universal – they belong to everyone, it does not matter who you are

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### Does the Human Rights Act mean that I have a right to housing?

**No.**

- The Human Rights Act does not give an entitlement to housing in Scotland.
- The HRA sets out to protect other rights that might be at risk through homelessness, or inadequate housing.

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### Do I need a Lawyer to use the Human Rights Act?

**No!**



Just knowing what your human rights are is powerful.

Use 'human rights language' to change the conversation.

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### Our right to respect for family and private life, home and correspondence (Article 8)



#### Wellbeing:

- ✓ Wellbeing = physical and mental health.
- ✓ If a decision is having a serious mental or physical impact, consider Article 3 of HRA here.

#### Autonomy:

- ✓ Respect all decisions – even 'unwise' decisions.
- ✓ People have the right to be given information in a way in which they understand.
- ✓ Always respect feelings and wishes.
- ✓ People have the right to change their minds.
- ✓ Involved in decisions that affect your life.

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## 2.4 Evaluation

We invited all attendees to complete two surveys, one before and one after the workshop. The purpose of these surveys was to map changes in human rights knowledge and confidence of those who attended. These surveys provide us with useful insight into the impact of our work, which we explain more below.

To make the workshops interactive, we also frequently use Slido. This allows participants to engage anonymously with polls and open questions. For some, but not all, of these workshops, Slido was used to gather people's views on the workshop they had just attended. Using Slido gives attendees another way to feedback on the workshops while this is still fresh in their mind.

## 3. Outcome

The surveys meant we were able to gather the following data on the impact of the sessions for the different groups we delivered free sessions to. We have highlighted the data from 2 different workshops as examples, as well as an average score across all workshops:

- Cheshire Disabled People's Panel
- HERe NI

This report focuses on the development of:

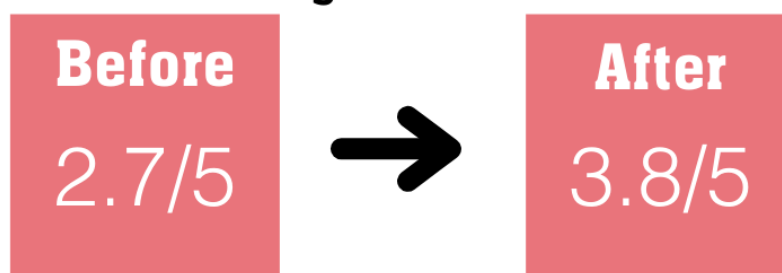
- Knowledge of human rights
- Confidence in using human rights

### 3.1 Impact on Knowledge of Human Rights

For each group, we asked attendees to describe the level of knowledge of human rights law in the UK out of 5. Building knowledge of human rights law is crucial for people to be able to recognise where human rights are engaged in real life, to talk about human rights with public services and to advocate for change where their rights or the rights of loved ones are not being respected and protected.

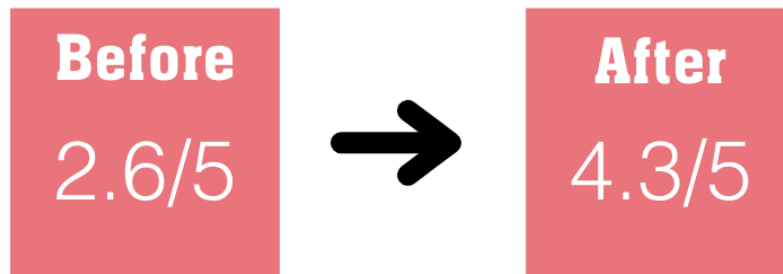
Cheshire Disabled People's Panel

#### How would you describe your level of knowledge of human rights law in the UK?



HERe NI

### How would you describe your level of knowledge of human rights law in the UK?



Average across all 10 workshops

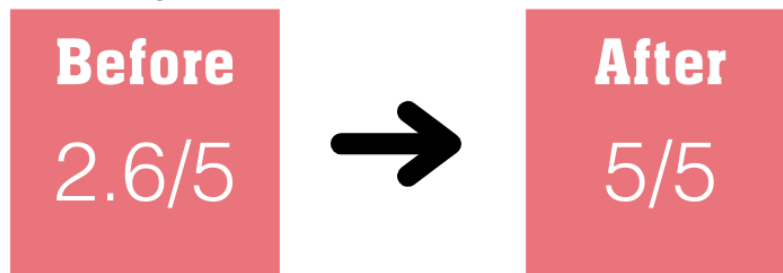
### How would you describe your level of knowledge of human rights law in the UK?



### Impact on Confidence in Using Human Rights

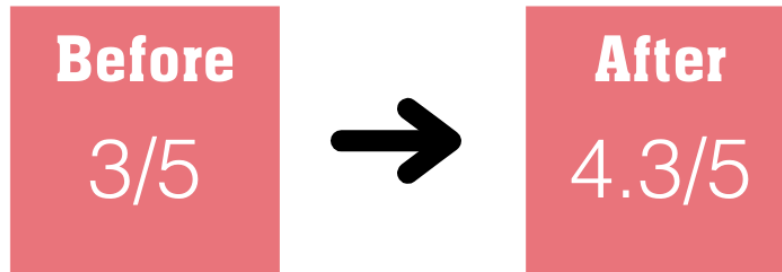
Cheshire Disabled People's Panel

### Do you feel confident when using human rights when you talk to staff in services?



HERE NI

## Do you feel confident when using human rights when you talk to staff in services?



Average across all 10 workshops

## Do you feel confident when using human rights when you talk to staff in services?



### 3.2 Feedback from Workshop Participants

We asked everyone who attended one of the 10 free human rights workshops how this had impacted them and what they thought about the session. Here is what they said:

#### 3.2.a Survey Responses

“ I left with a lot more knowledge about human rights than I had when I entered, and I'm surprised I didn't know a lot of this before - it's very simple but vital to your place in the world. Important for everyone to know. ”  
Attendee at our workshop with Friends, Families and Travellers

“ I feel like I got a superb understanding and how it is relevant to my job and the people I work with and also to myself. I liked the interaction and having space to discuss and ask and answer questions in a really non-judgemental way! If only all subjects were portrayed in such an accessible and interesting manner! ”  
Attendee at our workshop with Rock Trust

”  
“

A total eye opening, empowering gamechanger. I walk the way with the embodied feeling that yes, knowledge is power. I am not sure how I have made it to 30 working with different communities and young people without being so aware of Human Rights and how it fits into everything. I feel like I have my own filter that is now being created. When was listening to a podcast this morning I thought, OH that is against your Human Rights and now I want to take my time and to learn how to transfer this filter and lens into my own practice. Thank you for sharing this powerful knowledge.

Attendee at our workshop with Rock Trust

”  
“

This session made me realise we can all ensure human rights are respected, and I have the power to challenge public authorities when they are not!

Attendee at our workshop with Rock Trust

”  
“

Brilliant opportunity to find out more about human rights and increase your confidence in referring to/using them.

Attendee at our workshop with Cheshire Disabled People’s Panel

”  
“

Great, informative and engaging session. Certainly have a good insight into this subject and left me wanting to learn more.

Attendee at our workshop with Silverline Memories

”  
“

Interesting and informative. Good to have real life examples.

Attendee at our workshop with HERe NI

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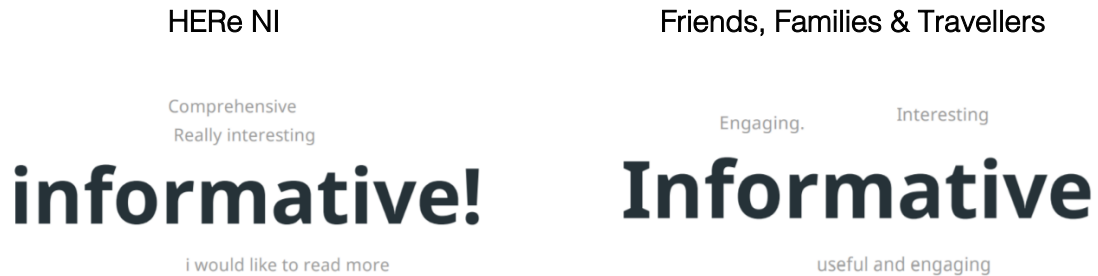
A great session to understand some basic human rights principles and laws that are most relevant to life as a disabled person in the UK.

Attendee at our workshop on inclusive education



### 3.2.b Slido responses

In a number of the workshops, attendees were asked ‘What one word would you use to describe today’s workshop?’ Here are two groups’ responses:



### 3.3 Feedback from Organisers

After all workshops had been delivered, organisers from each partner organisation were contacted and asked to provide feedback on this project, from working alongside Human Rights Officers to plan the workshops, to the delivery of the workshop itself.

Here are some quotes from organisers at our partner organisations:

Louise McEwan, Regional Lead, dates-n-mates Aberdeen

“We were delighted when the BIHR offered to host a human rights workshop for Dates-n-Mates staff and members. Our work is underpinned by a human rights-based approach and therefore this topic is especially important for us.

The team at BIHR were helpful throughout the planning process and happy to discuss our needs and answer any questions ahead of the workshop. They were able to shape the workshop around our member’s needs and the rights that we felt most closely aligned with the work we do.

The online session was packed with lots of interesting examples alongside the information to really help everyone understand how human rights fit in to their lives and why they are so important. The hosts, Annie and Sanchita, provided a welcoming space where Dates-n-Mates’ members and staff felt comfortable sharing their thoughts and questions throughout the workshop.

Members and staff went on to say how interesting and useful the session was. It has helped us raise more conversations on human rights with our members.

Many attendees went on to think about how they can protect their human rights in their own lives after relating to some of the examples in the workshop.

Thank you for helping our staff and members develop their understanding around human rights.”

Mimi Unamoyo, Founder, Bomoko NI

“In order to defend one’s rights, one must know what rights belong to them.

While every human is entitled to basic human rights as enshrined by law, it can at times be difficult to know what rights belong to us, how to access them and what they mean for us in the workplace, at home, in school, healthcare or in society more broadly.

Bomoko NI is delighted, therefore, to partner with the BIHR during refugee week 2021 to run the ‘Know Your Rights’ session which offer information and support in order to make human rights law accessible.

Looking at the 1951 UN Refugee Convention, also known as the Geneva Convention, BIHR have delivered an information session of well-planned and timely information session using accessible language to ensure that each aspect of the convention, and how it pertains to our everyday life was explained with clarity.

The session enabled the women of Bomoko NI to further develop their understanding of their basic human rights under law, how they can use them in their day-to-day life and most importantly, what those rights mean for them when accessing public services.

At Bomoko NI, we are incredibly proud of the outstanding efforts made by Bomoko NI members and the BIHR, as well as the positive impact the session has had on the lives of our members.”

See Annexe 1 for additional quotes from organisers.

## 4. Goal and Next Steps

The aim of this project was to build the capacity of people to use human rights law in their interactions with public services, and tackle social justice issues affecting them during what has been an incredibly challenging year. This forms part of BIHR’s overall mission to enable change through human rights by supporting people and organisations to use human rights advocacy and approaches in their everyday life to achieve positive social change.

The quantitative and qualitative data gathered across all 10 groups we worked with evidences that the knowledge and confidence of attendees in using human rights increased significantly. These workshops were delivered in summer 2021, and the aftershocks of the pandemic were still being felt. Having lived through this period where we have seen human rights put at risk, supporting people to recognise where human rights are relevant, and use them to create positive change in their lives, and the lives of their loved ones, has never been more important.

We are committed to continuing to support people and their communities to know about their human rights and have the confidence to talk about and advocate for their rights in everyday situations where they interact with public bodies.

In order to evaluate the long-term impact of this series of human rights workshops, we plan to follow up with the ten partners organisations six months after the workshops took place. We hope to hear stories of how those who attended the workshops have used the knowledge they gained from these workshops to create positive change in their lives. We will update this report in due course with some of our findings. Stay tuned!

Thank you once again to our funders, the [Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust](#), the [Tudor Trust](#), [the Bromley Trust](#), [Comic Relief \(Covid fund\)](#) and the Three Guineas Trust, without whom this important work would not have been possible.

A final thank you to our ten partner organisations for sharing your time, ideas and experiences with us, all of which helped bring these human rights workshops to life.



Annexe 1.

## Cheshire Disabled People's Panel

"The Cheshire Disabled People's Panel (CDPP) launched on 27 April. Our founding organisations are Cheshire Disabled People Against Cuts (DPAC), Deafness Support Network, Disability Positive (the new name for Cheshire Centre for Independent Living), Dial West Cheshire, and Disability Information Bureau. Rick Burgess, Outreach and Development Lead for the Greater Manchester Mayor's Disabled People's Panel is our advisory member.

CDPP's strategic aim is to work in partnership with and amplify the voices of people with lived experience of disability and long-term conditions in Cheshire. CDPP work in co-production with senior public sector decision-makers to ensure that the rights of disabled people are widely understood and upheld in our region.

BIHR's training opportunity came about at the ideal time for us, shortly after our launch. We really appreciated our trainer Katrin's thoughtful preparation of our session - she worked with us to ensure the training was relevant and accessible to our third sector professional members, as well as invited social care service users. All our member organisations advocate for people with care needs in our region. From our work, we know the distress and financial hardship that often results from non-residential care charging. Katrin understood the issues and delivered our training in a highly knowledgeable, engaging and empathic way.

The CDPP are confident that BIHR's training will enrich our co-production and advocacy work in Cheshire, and will enable us to deepen public sector decision-makers' understanding of the rights of disabled people, and the barriers disabled people routinely face in dealing with public organisations, environments, and public transport."

## HERe NI

"Here NI were pleased to be selected as one of the 10 organisations to receive a free workshop with BIHR. Before the workshop there were email communications and a meeting with the Human Rights Officer to find out more about our service users and the topics which may be of interest to them. Before the session I was sent slides on our chosen case study to review and make sure they were appropriate for attendees. The workshop was engaging and easy to understand, even though the topic of Human Rights Law can be quiet dense. Everyone got involved in the discussions and it seemed that as the session went on they gained a greater understanding of how human rights are relevant to their day to day lives. Despite being on zoom the use of break out rooms and polling meant people stayed engaged and could interact with each other and the facilitator. Having the general overview of human rights law, with the tailored case study, meant the session was more relevant to attendees than an 'off the shelf' workshop. I am hopeful that attendees will engage with future focus groups Here NI holds on consultations, particularly with the LGBTQI+ Strategy consultation coming this autumn."

## Rock Trust

"For your report I'm happy to say that the session was really well organised and tailored around Rock Trust's needs. Human rights' language can often be intimidating, but Natalie

explained everything in a way that made this complex topic much more accessible, giving examples that helped us better understand how human rights can be used and protected, and our role in all this. The workshop was very informative and made us realise that human rights are extremely relevant in our field of work. After the session, my colleagues asked me whether there was an opportunity to get more training on the topic, so a total success!"

### **Silverline Memories**

"This session was a fantastic opportunity for beneficiaries our charity, who were largely unaware of how relevant Human Rights are in the lives of people living with Dementia. Decisions are often made for people with Dementia, and discussions take place about them, while their own wants and desires can be overlooked. There is an assumption that people with Dementia lack the capacity to make decisions and are therefore often subjected to changes that would not choose for themselves. Understanding the legislation that protects them from this , and hearing about this from the BIHR, provided the tools and confidence to challenge unwelcome pronouncements inflicted upon them. The session was tailor made for our group and was pitched at an accessible level, with slides that considered the difficulty people with Dementia can have processing the written word.

I am very grateful for the time that was taken to understand the needs of people with Dementia, and how this was evident throughout the presentation. Thank you all involved."