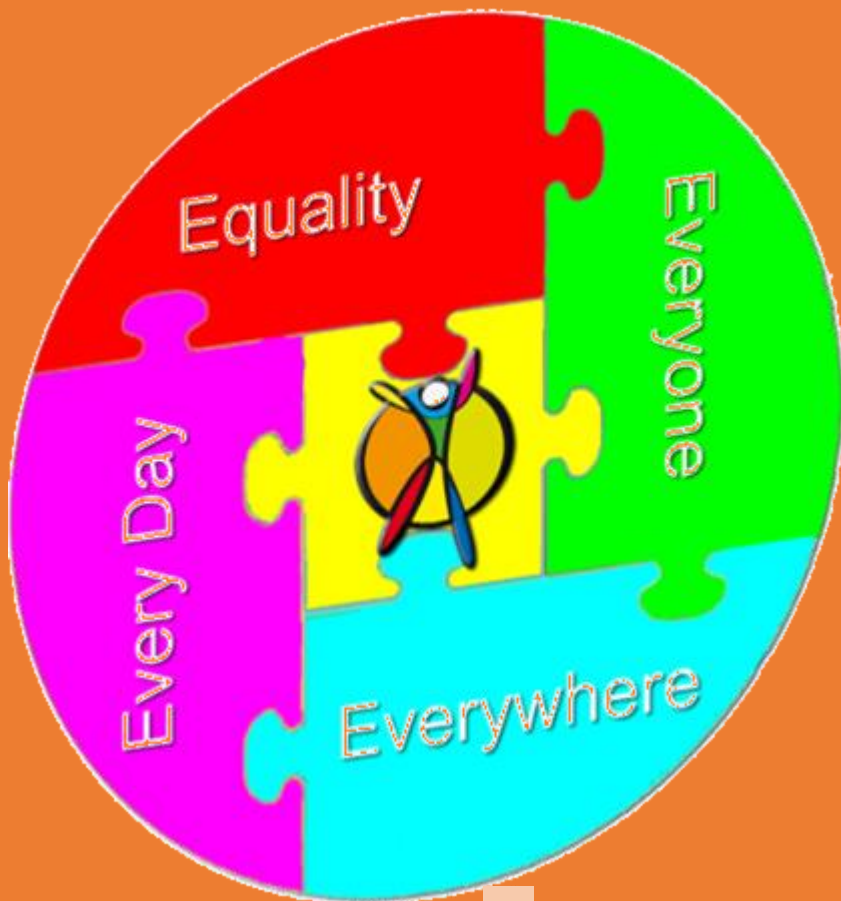




# Equality & Human Rights Commission

## Annual Report 2020–21



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## PRIVACY

The Commission complies with the confidentiality provisions of the Commission for Equality & Human Rights Ordinance 2015. Our privacy policy, is available online at [sthelenaehrc.org](http://sthelenaehrc.org) or by contacting us.

The EHRC respectfully acknowledges the Saint Helenian people past and present, their diversity and their history.


## OUR PROMISE

Our role is to empower those people to resolve their disputes and to shape law and policy, advocated for change and work closely with a range of partners to create a fairer society; preventing similar problems for others.

Over the next three years we will continue this work. We will work with our partners and engage more people across the island to encourage people to discuss, value and stand up for human rights.

We will continue to develop as an organisation to ensure that we have the strongest possible evidence base to lead change where it is needed and increase the impact and value of our work. We will advocate for systems and laws that are developed around principles of fairness and equity and ensure that everyone is treated humanely and with dignity.

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# Contents

<b>Our Promise</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>Contents</b> .....	<b>2</b>
<b>Forward</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>Introduction</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>About the Commission</b> .....	<b>6</b>
The Framework Document.....	6
Our strategic plan.....	6
Our principles.....	7
Role of the Commission .....	7
<b>Review of 2020–21</b> .....	<b>9</b>
Investigate Complaints.....	9
Complaint Subject.....	11
<b>Protected Characteristics</b> .....	<b>13</b>
<b>Disability Issues</b> .....	<b>13</b>
Research .....	15
Education.....	16
Working with diverse communities .....	16
Advocate & EMPOWER. ....	16
Submissions to Third Parties .....	17
<b>Constitution &amp; Legislation</b> .....	<b>17</b>
<b>Policy</b> .....	<b>18</b>
<b>Monitor</b> .....	<b>18</b>

Enforce .....	19
Interventions.....	19
Development of the EHRC.....	19
<b>Conclusion .....</b>	<b>20</b>
Legislation, Policy & Justice:.....	21
Individuals and Groups: .....	25
<b>Internal: .....</b>	<b>26</b>
Legislation, Policy & Justice: .....	27
Organisations: .....	28
Organisations .....	35
Individuals and Groups .....	36

**FORWARD**

In accordance with the *Commission for Equality & Human Rights Ordinance 2015*, I am pleased to present the Equality & Human Rights Commission’s Annual Report for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021.

Yours sincerely



**Catherine Turner**  
**CEO & Equality & Human Rights Commissioner**

## INTRODUCTION

The past year has seen very public debate both internationally and here on island on issues that are at the heart of what the EHRC stands for: the right to access cultural sites and goods; raising awareness on the systemic racial inequities that exist locally and globally and the value of a democratic society founded on a robust and relevant constitution. We have worked across all of these issues and helped bring a human rights focus to SHG policies and practices, to planning and economic development decisions and to the proposed government reform.

Covid-19 concerns dominated the year and the EHRC worked with the team protecting the island and advised on human rights issues on travel restrictions, quarantine and other regulations. The Commission has a robust contingency plan in place to enable it to continue working should the virus reach St Helena.

This year the Commonwealth Forum of National Human Rights Institutions (CFNHRI) voted unanimously first to alter their mandate to include the Overseas Territories and then, again unanimously to admit the St Helena EHRC as a member, so far the first and only such organisation to achieve this status. The Commonwealth Forum of National Human Rights Institutions is a member-led network of human rights institutions, ombudsmen, and public defenders who protect, promote and advance human rights within their respective countries. By providing a united voice on human rights priorities, together we are able to influence the regional and global human rights agenda and learn from our colleagues to develop the access to human rights and best practice on St Helena.

Additionally, the Commission has extended its reach to the local community by creating an EHRC website that is designed and maintained in a manner that allows for greater accessibility to human rights related resources for all. Furthermore, we now release monthly newsletters and weekly noticeboards items, ensuring that the community is educated and made aware of relevant, urgent and local human rights matters that impact them.

This year the EHRC has devoted the majority of our focus to ensuring that the constitutional and government reform is conducted according to international human rights standards. The EHRC agrees that a more open, transparent and accountable method of governing our island is necessary in order to respond properly in reasonable timescales to situations as they arise. The Commission will continue to monitor the process of reform as it needs to be based on the broad participation of all parts of society in an objective manner.

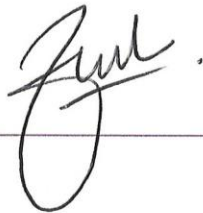
Much of our work continues to be helping individuals resolve their issues of discrimination and other Constitutional issues. This year we took 142 enquiries, raising 156 discrete issues. Most complaints were related to issues pertaining to Government Landlord Housing, with the next most common areas of complaint being issues with benefits, complaints related to the prison and /or police and concerns related to employment in both the private and public sectors. We use what we learn through our individual dispute resolution service to advocate for changes to the structures, systems and policies that entrench inequality. During the course of the next year the Commission will be reviewing the

Citizen's Complaints division to facilitate a more efficient use of resources by tackling recurring themes strategically for a greater long-term resolution.

Promoting and protecting human rights on Saint Helena is extremely rewarding work where real improvements to people's lives are made on a daily basis. The Commission prides itself on fortifying our talented and dedicated staff and commissioners, committed to cultivating a human rights culture for ALL.

Annina van Neel

Chair



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Cathy Harris Cranfield

Deputy Chair

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## ABOUT THE COMMISSION

The EHRC is an independent statutory body with responsibilities under the Commission for Equality & Human Rights Ordinance 2015. It reports to Elected Members through the Social & Community Development Committee and liaises with the Civil Service through the Chief Secretary.

In terms of SHG's 10 year plan, the EHRC plays a pivotal role in assisting in achieving the Altogether Safer objective.

Our current Commissioners are:

Annina van Neel	Chair
Cathy Harris Cranfield	Deputy Chair
Mark Brooks	
Janine Nyschens	
Catherine Turner	CEO & Commissioner ( <i>ex-officio</i> )

## THE FRAMEWORK DOCUMENT

The Framework Document sets out the independent working relationship between the EHRC the Elected Members and the Public Service. It outlines the relevant roles and responsibilities of each party, the deliverables and timescales. The full text is available by clicking on the icon below



Final Signed EHR  
Commission Framew

## OUR STRATEGIC PLAN

For the period April 2019 to March 2022 the EHRC will focus on the four priorities outlined in our Strategic Plan. Through consultation and the evidence gathered during the previous strategic cycle (2016-2019) we identified areas for development of human rights on St Helena and for the Commission's development to meet those challenges. These priorities also take into account our mandate, expertise and the current needs in our community along with SHG's 10 Year Plan

The Strategic Plan sets the direction for our work towards achieving our vision and mission.

**OUR VISION IS FOR A FAIR, SAFE AND INCLUSIVE ST HELENA WHERE EVERY PERSON IS TREATED WITH DIGNITY AND RESPECT.**

**Our mission is to work with and influence law and policy makers, organisations, groups and individuals to protect and promote human rights in St Helena, allowing everyone an equal opportunity to reach their full potential**

#### Strategic priorities

- Embedding a human rights culture on St Helena
- Improving workplace equality
- Protecting human rights in closed environments
- Advancing Freedom of Information and Data Protection in St Helena

These are explored in more detail below.

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#### OUR PRINCIPLES

We will ensure that:

- **Participation** - People should be involved in decisions that affect their rights.
- **Accountability** - There should be monitoring of how people's rights are being affected, as well as remedies when things go wrong.

- **Non-Discrimination and Equality** - All forms of discrimination must be prohibited, prevented and eliminated.
- **Empowerment** - Everyone should understand their rights and be fully supported to take part in developing policy and practices which affect their lives.
- **Legality** - Approaches should be grounded in the legal rights that are set out in our Constitution as well as the local and international laws.

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#### ROLE OF THE COMMISSION

The Commission's role is to protect and promote human rights in St Helena, and we do this through a range of functions under our laws. These functions cover our important day-to-day work, as well as key projects and initiatives, and enable us to:

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#### INVESTIGATING COMPLAINTS

We have powers to investigate complaints of human rights infringements including discrimination, sexual harassment and racial and religious intolerance by providing a free and confidential assistance service.

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#### RESEARCH

We undertake research here on island, to understand and find solutions to systemic causes of discrimination and human rights breaches. We also follow international human rights news, trends and thinking to bring and keep the rights of Saints on a par with the UK.



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## ADVOCATING AND EMPOWERING

We raise awareness across all parts of the community about the importance of equality and human rights, encouraging meaningful debate and challenging discriminatory views and behaviours.

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## ENFORCING

We intervene in court proceedings to bring an expert independent perspective to cases raising equal opportunity and human rights issues. We conduct inquiries and investigations to identify and eliminate systemic discrimination.

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## EDUCATION

We provide information to help people understand and assert their rights. We are happy to conduct reviews of programs and practices to help organisations comply with their equal opportunity and human rights obligations. During these 3 years we aim to extend our work with SHG, businesses and the community to drive best practice in equality, diversity and human rights.

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## MONITORING

We monitor the operation of the Constitution and the Human Rights instruments extended to the island and track St Helena's progress in protecting fundamental rights. We produce reports for the UK and United Nations about what is or is not being done to protect our rights.

This document sets out under the above headings the work the EHRC carried out during the period under review, how it achieved against its targets and how the EHRC has helped SHG progress its 10 year plan.

In 2020–21 we undertook a wide range of work under these functions, as well as projects that aim to increase the impact of our work and build a stronger, more effective organisation.

## INVESTIGATE COMPLAINTS

We have powers to investigate complaints of human rights infringements including discrimination, sexual harassment, racism and religious intolerance by providing a free and confidential assistance service.

The EHRC empowers complainants (we call them contacts) to resolve their complaints by listening to everyone who contacts us, hearing their complaints and assisting with those that fall within our remit. Where a complaint is not of a human rights nature we advise on the correct person or agency to contact. If necessary, we will initiate contact on behalf of the contact to ensure the matter is dealt with.

We use the information from all the Contacts to inform our work to address systemic issues, every contact is recorded on our data base. A client file is opened for each complainant with a human rights complaint. A client file may contain a number of different complaint issues for example, a client file might include an issue of sexual harassment in the workplace, as well as discrimination on the basis of race, and a homeless person may also have difficulty accessing benefits.

Table 1 (below) Shows that this year we had 142 new contacts from people believing they had a human rights complaints covering 156 themes. This was very slightly down on the previous year. We closed the year with 20 open files requiring further input, legal advise/action, research or advocacy.

<b>Table 1</b>	<b>2019/20</b>	<b>2020/21</b>
<b>New Contacts</b>	144	142
<b>Themes Raised</b>	161	156
<b>Files Closed during the year (includes files opened in previous years).</b>	109	122
<b>Files remaining open as at 31<sup>st</sup> March</b>	35	20

FIG. 1



For 37% of the contacts, we the EHRC was able to deal with their concern within the year (see fig 1). Many required little more than an email or phone call to resolve the issue. Sometimes just explaining to the complainant that the policy/explanation they had been given was correct was enough, others may have required several weeks or months getting to the bottom of the problem. Almost a quarter of the contacts were referred to the Public Solicitor's Office as their cases required legal advice, most of which involved employment issues. Those with human rights issues continue to receive our help as well as we work in tandem with the public solicitor, assisting with research etc. Currently we have seven clients that fall within this category.

31 issues were passed to Children & Adult Services either through the referral system or by contacting the complainant's allocated Social Worker/Care Officer.

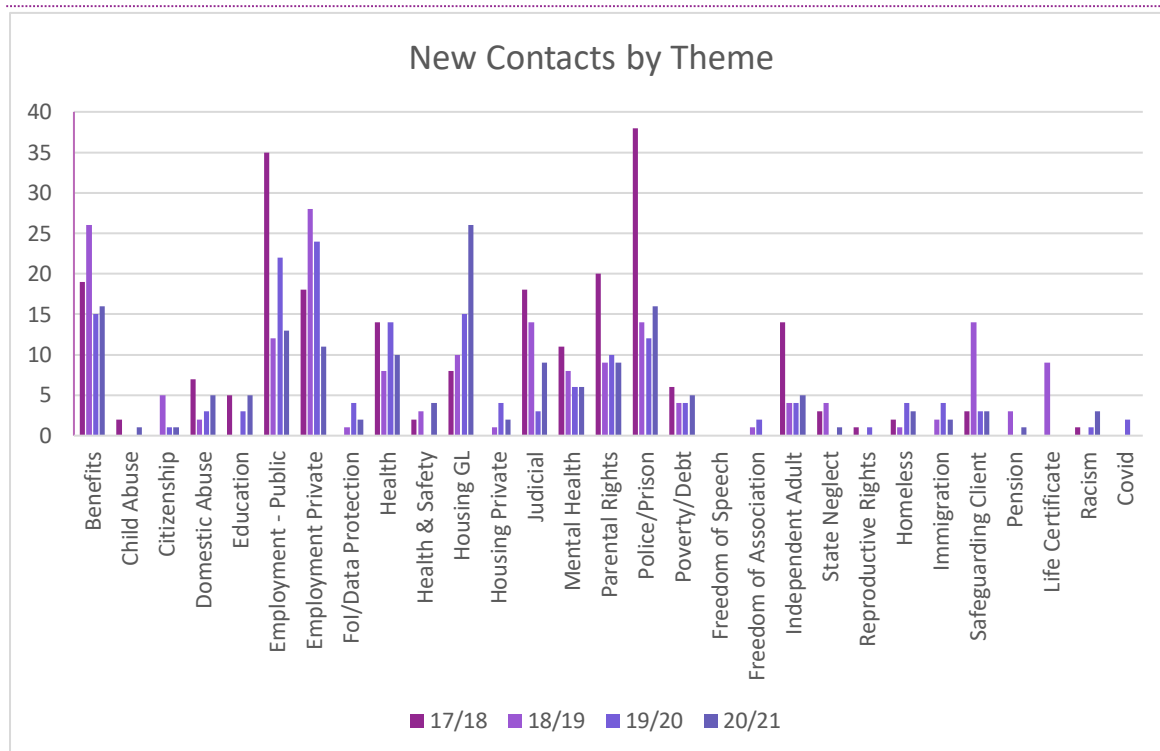
Other cases have been referred to Mental Health, the Police and other SHG directorates.

## RISK AREAS

- (1) Five serious cases are now with us needing overseas expert legal advice for which the EHRC has no budget, this is preventing these clients from exercising their rights and seeking redress for the damage caused. Furthermore, it is a financial and reputational risk to SHG.**
- (2) The Public Solicitors Office is flooded with work and short staffed.**
- (3) The lack of independent complaints procedures for bodies such as the Public Solicitor, the Police and the Hospital increases the dissatisfaction, the number of conflicts of interest and the general feeling of unfairness among our clients.**

COMPLAINT SUBJECT

Fig 2



The Commission finalised 122 client files in the period under review, including files that were opened in previous financial years. While there was a slight drop in the number of issues raised by complainants this year, figures have remained steady and indicate similar patterns for the type and nature of complaints. As Fig 2 shows the most complaints were on Government Landlord Housing (26), followed by Benefits, mainly arising out of the household income rules (16) and police complaints (16) it should be noted however that some of the police complaints are historic in nature. Private sector employment and the lack of contracts for employees continues to be a problem.

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## RECOMMENDATIONS

Report it Sort it to be relaunched and strengthened to deal with SHG complaints at least initially.

A Citizens Advice Service to be established.

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## GL HOUSING

The issues here are, due to the lack of investment in our housing stock over many years resulting in a shortage of housing availability for those finding themselves homeless and for those living in overcrowded conditions. It is difficult to cite examples for fear of individuals being identified and no criticism is made of the housing staff who have an exceedingly difficult job to do.

An issue that the EHRC would like to highlight as a concern is the introduction of shared accommodation for single people. While accepting that this is a short-term solution in emergencies, we now have people who are into their second year of living in such an arrangement. The fact that people are being forced to live with others that they do not know well or have little in common with has led to threats to kill, alleged damage to property and one person being subject to an assault, which was dealt with through the courts.

**Housing and Homelessness will be the subject of a special report planned for publication in August 2021.**

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## BENEFITS

The Benefits Issues will, it is hoped, be addressed by the long-awaited Social Security legislation and have been covered in previous reports. The review of the Minimum income standard is welcomed by the EHRC and it is hoped that the results will inform the setting of the benefit and pension levels in the coming year.

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## POLICE COMPLAINTS

As mentioned above some of these complaints are historic and are being handled by the Acting Chief of Police. Some result from the conditions in the custody cells at the Prison which have now been replaced by the new custody suite. All current complaints are being/have been fully investigated by the Police.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The EHRC however recommends the introduction of an independent body to investigate complaints against the police and other public bodies to increase the openness and objectivity of such investigations and ensure public faith in the process.

## PROTECTED CHARACTERISTICS

The 10 most complained about protected characteristics/vulnerability are listed in table 2 below:

Protected Characteristic	Total complaints
Disability	3
Age	2
Place of Birth	2
Children's Rights	2
Gender	1

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### DISABILITY ISSUES

Most of these were around the level of care and respite care available. Our clients have not access to overnight respite for over 5 years. Parents of disabled adults, often in their late sixties and seventies are caring for their dependents 24/7/365. Couples have not had an evening out together for over 5 years and not had an unbroken night's sleep for a similar period.

There were many complaints about the derisory amount carers are paid to look after their loved ones and the failure to increase the Better Life Allowance and Carer's Allowance in the last 5 years. This is particularly disappointing as other benefits have increased in line with the minimum income standard (MIS).

Access to work and public buildings and public transport also are high on the list of complaints.

For example, anyone who cannot manage stairs cannot access the Council Chamber which is our seat of Government.

## RECOMMENDATION

The better Life and Carers Allowances be reviewed as a matter of urgency to bring them back in line with the cost of living on St Helena.

Urgent consideration is given to the provision of overnight respite care for disabled adults and children.

Elected members consider the extension of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities to St Helena.

Disability was the focus of our work for 2019/20 and into 20/21 and the table below shows what was achieved.

TABLE 3: DISABILITY: OBJECTIVES AND ACHIEVEMENTS TO JUNE 21

Objective: our premises and services are accessible to, and used by, people with disabilities.	<p>We have maintained our accessibility standards in relation to our service delivery and are working to provide all our core publications in multiple accessible formats. We have improved our website making it easier to access and read. Our first accessibility audit will be undertaken early in the financial year 2020/21.</p> <p>Our premises are accessible however we have no access to disabled access toilets. The lack of space in the office makes access to some areas of the office difficult for wheelchair users.</p>
Objective: ensure our personnel with a disability are properly resourced.	We have reviewed our policies to ensure that they meet the needs of those with disabilities. For example, providing additional internet access to enable working from home.
Objective: use our powers to improve outcomes for people with disabilities.	We have developed practical leaflet on rights and duties under the Constitution for those with learning disabilities. We are consulting with disability advocates in the design process and plan to develop and pilot training in 2021/22, in partnership with the Disabled Persons Aid Society (DAPAS)
Objective: work respectfully and effectively with each other and with key stakeholders and learn from experts, particularly those with lived experience of disability.	<p>Key achievements include informing the development of the Commission's Strategic Plan.</p> <p>Advocating on behalf of persons with disabilities and their Carers for access to the care and facilities needed.</p> <p>Working with DAPAS &amp; SHAPE to develop proposals for equality legislation which was presented to SCDC in October 2019 and again in 2021.</p>

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## AGE

Of those that felt they were discriminated against because of their age, both were over 60 and having difficulty accessing employment or could only access employment on less favourable terms than their younger counterparts. For example, they did not qualify for pension and/or could only have a one-year contract.

## RESEARCH

We undertake research here on island, to understand and find solutions to systemic causes of discrimination and human rights breaches. We also follow international human rights news, trends and thinking to bring and keep the rights of Saints on a par with the UK and current best practice. We also provide information to SHG, Elected Members and the Office of the Governor. Of particular note during this year are:

1. Altogether Fairer research into levels of racism and xenophobia. (See TORs at annex 1)
2. Children's Rights and the Sustainable Development Goals have been a specific focus through the year. The EHRC through THRA Nicole Paulsen and Commissioner Annina van Neel have developed a research strategy for carrying an audit of children's rights. They have met with the Children's Champion and Nicole assisted with the World Café Events run by PhD Student, Samantha Dunn.
3. Disability Rights - a proposal for equality legislation which was submitted to SCDC in March 2020 is still sitting with SCDC who have decided to pass it over at the General Election to the new Minister.
4. Gender Monitoring- this is an ongoing project, statistics are gathered on issues which may exhibit gender bias, trends are reviewed and researched as they develop.
5. Elected Members – research has been carried out for various Elected Members on subjects such as Covid, housing, cannabis oil and access to internet.
6. Covid-19 – the CEO was appointed to the Incident Executive Group, for handling the potential arrival of Covid-19 to the island. This has allowed the EHRC the opportunity to review the management proposals from a human rights perspective and advise the Covid-19 Command Structure on the potential engagement of human rights and the proportionality of proposed actions.
7. Cultural rights – This has been an area of growth over the year. Changes to our fishing industry and our Constitution, the industrialisation and development of Ruperts Valley and the plans of potential inward investors have all raised concerns about the effects



on the culture of the island. **These will be the subject of special reports to the UN during 2021/22.**

## EDUCATION

We provide information to help people understand and assert their rights. This may be in the form of leaflets, books, films or training. We also offer an education and consultancy service to government, business and the community to drive leading practice in equality, diversity and human rights.

### EXAMPLES

- Police – the EHRC runs a training session for all new recruits to the Police Service and offers ongoing support/advice to the officers.
- Leaflets – The EHRC produces a wide range of information leaflets specific to St Helena, however lack of budget and increasing printing costs are limiting availability. This year leaflets on teen dating abuse and Maternity Leave have been produced.
- Adult Services – The EHRC have participated in the World Day on Elimination of Elder Abuse and White Ribbon Day and supported work at the Safe Haven.
- The EHRC publishes a monthly Newsletter and Human Rights Noticeboard is posted in local media and on social media.

## WORKING WITH DIVERSE COMMUNITIES

Under the strategic priority of developing a human rights culture, the Commission has undertaken several projects to raise awareness about people's rights under our laws.

### EXAMPLES

- Elder Abuse Awareness.
- White Ribbon Day.
- Black Lives Matter posting on social media.
- Children's rights through the World Café project

## ADVOCATE & EMPOWER.

We raise awareness across our communities about the importance of equality and human rights, encouraging meaningful debate, leading public discussion and challenging discriminatory views and behaviours.

The EHRC listens to its clients, we hear their stories and provide information about who can help them, what their rights are and how to access those rights.

Where people lack capacity to act for themselves a Commissioner will advocate on their behalf but where possible we try to support and empower people to speak for themselves.

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## ENGAGING WITH THE MEDIA

During 2020–21 the Commission engaged with the media to join public discussions about key human rights issues and to ensure that our campaigns, reports and interventions reached the public.

This year we spoke about disability and domestic abuse.

In addition, we have launched a new website this year please see [sthelenaehrc.org](https://sthelenaehrc.org).

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### EXAMPLES

#### SOCIAL MEDIA

An important part of the Commission’s engagement comes from social media. Our social media channels, including Facebook, are used as an integral part of our communications and allow us to broadcast our messages, amplify the voices of others, and engage with the community online.

We also publish our Human Rights Noticeboard in the Sentinel.

Our Facebook page 471 people like our page 476 people follow it.

**Facebook** <https://www.facebook.com/HumanRightsStHelena>

**Website** [sthelenaehrc.org](https://sthelenaehrc.org)

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## SUBMISSIONS TO THIRD PARTIES

This year, due to the Covid Pandemic the submissions to the United Nations were put on hold however the EHRC has continued to prepare reports to the following UN committees:

- International Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR)
- International Committee on Race Discrimination
- C24

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## Constitution & Legislation

The EHRC submitted proposals for changes to the employment legislation, Equality legislation and commented on proposed changes in the Constitution.

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## Policy

The EHRC has commented on various SHG policies throughout the year including the fees charged by the public solicitor, changes to the Minimum Income Standard calculation and the better life allowance.

In addition we are regularly asked to assist private sector businesses with their policies.

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## CONSULTATION AND COMMITTEES

Commissioners and staff are actively encouraged to work with advocacy groups on the island and are currently involved with DPAS, League of Friends, the Safe Haven and various religious organisations etc. in their personal time. The EHRC also is involved with several working groups including the Custody User Group and the Safeguarding board.

## MONITOR

We monitor the operation of the Constitution and the Human Rights instruments extended to the island and track St Helena's progress in protecting fundamental rights. We produce reports for the UK and United Nations about what is or is not being done to protect our rights.

The report to the United Nations Committee on Civil and Political Rights (CCPR) was submitted in April 2020. The full text of which is available from the EHRC website.

During this year we commenced work on Altogether Fairer

Since it began operating 5 years ago the Equality & Human Rights Commission (EHRC) has years received complaints of unfair treatment that the complainant believed were of a racist nature. These complaints have come from all sections of the community, Saint and non-Saint. The word Xenophobia has been used to describe some press articles and broadcasts and some social media posts. In addition, there is anecdotal evidence that the frustrations of some sections of the Saint community have increased of late possibly due to, inter alia:

- Black Lives Matter.
- Brexit.
- The Ruperts Development and the perceived lack of respect for the "Liberated African" remains.
- The Governor's police investigation into LegCo.
- The quarantine rules.
- The proposed sale of the islands fishing industry.
- The perceived increasing divide between the rich and the poor.
- The review of the immigration policy.

The EHRC is concerned that there is an undercurrent which is coming to the fore which some have described as discontent and others xenophobia or racism and has carried out some initial research. It has examined recent letters and articles in local newspapers, looked at Facebook and its own database.

At this stage the EHRC cannot conclude that xenophobia is the correct word to use as the sorts of comments seen in our initial research have also been aimed at local officials particularly those in very senior positions. This cursory research also indicates that this is a situation that may have been in existence for a long time. The EHRC does recognise that there is a divide between some sections of society and agrees that this is unacceptable.

#### RECOMMENDATION

Once the report is published SHG and other relevant stakeholders should work together, with the EHRC to address all the issues raised.

An education package should be developed to assist in this work.

#### ENFORCE

We intervene in court proceedings to bring an expert independent perspective to cases raising equal opportunity and human rights issues. We conduct investigations to identify and eliminate systemic discrimination. This year the EHRC has not had cause to carry out an inquiry but it has been delighted with the completion of the work resulting from its inquiry into the Prison in 2018. Works to the prison on fire safety, lighting, ventilation etc. have all been completed and while the current prison will never be fit for purpose, conditions have been much improved.

The new custody suite was on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021, nearing completion and that will end a very regrettable chapter.

#### INTERVENTIONS

There have not been any interventions during the period under review.

#### DEVELOPMENT OF THE EHRC

The EHRC is committed to investing in our people and our workplace by embedding our values, nurturing a diverse, inclusive and respectful workforce and ensuring a safe, healthy and productive work environment that aims to bring the best out of our people and make the Commission a great place to work. All our internal policies were reviewed over the year to ensure they reflect this aim.

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#### ACHIEVING INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS

It is the stated aim of the EHRC to become an accredited National Human Rights Institution and this year we achieved two major milestones.

1. Developing our Framework Document setting out how we work with SHG and the Legislature.
2. Changes to our legislation to enable more transparent, independent selection of Commissioners.

## CONCLUSION

The last year was one of development for the EHRC, changes to our Board of Commissioners have given us fresh impetus to tackle some of the more challenging issues on the island and review the way we work. Changes to our staffing model with the welcome promotion of our Trainee Human Rights Assistant, Nicole Paulsen, to Human Rights Assistant have allowed us to implement those changes, making us a more efficient and effective organisation.

The EHRC has devoted the majority of our focus to ensuring that the constitutional and government reform is conducted according to international human rights standards. The EHRC agrees that a more open, transparent and accountable method of governing our island is necessary in order to respond properly in reasonable timescales to situations as they arise. The Commission will continue to monitor the process of reform as it needs to be based on the broad participation of all parts of society in an objective manner.

Much of our work continues to be helping individuals resolve their issues of discrimination and other Constitutional issues. This year we took 142 enquiries, raising 156 discrete issues. Most complaints were related to issues pertaining to Government Landlord Housing, with the next most common areas of complaint being issues with benefits, complaints related to the prison and /or police and concerns related to employment in both the private and public sectors. We use what we learn through our individual dispute resolution service to advocate for changes to the structures, systems and policies that entrench inequality. During the course of the next year the Commission will be reviewing the Citizen's Complaints division to facilitate a more efficient use of resources by tackling recurring themes strategically for a greater long-term resolution.

Promoting and protecting human rights on Saint Helena is extremely rewarding work where real improvements to people's lives are made on a daily basis. The Commission prides itself on fortifying our talented and dedicated staff and commissioners, committed to cultivating a human rights culture for ALL Saints.

# Action plan 2019-2022

# 2020-21

Strategic Priorities	Strategic Goal	ACTIONS	Outcome/indicator	Priority/ deadline	Progress
Embedding a human rights culture	St Helena's Constitution provides public bodies with a framework for considering human rights when making decisions, planning, delivering services and interacting with the community. Embedding a human rights culture across government and the broader community	<p>Legislation, Policy &amp; Justice:</p> <p>Work with ExCo/LegCo and senior staff to embed a culture of human rights across the public sector</p>	<p>Increased understanding of Human Rights and what they mean for St Helena.</p> <p>Base line and final Questionnaire</p>	<p>Baseline questionnaire completed – follow up in Jan 2022</p>	
		<p>Review of Constitution.</p>	<p>Research issues (if needed)</p> <p>Engage with process</p>		<p>Several reports, letters to HEG, ExCo, LegCo.</p>
		<p>Review of Employment Legislation</p>	<p>Draft proposal for changes in Employment Legislation to clearly reflect Human Rights. Proposals put to SCDC</p>	<p>Sept 2020</p>	<p>Draft with SCDC</p>

Strategic Priorities	Strategic Goal	ACTIONS	Outcome/indicator	Priority/ deadline	Progress
	through increased knowledge and skills will lead to fairer more democratic decisions, good governance and more equitable outcomes for everyone on St Helena.	Review of the Domestic Abuse legislation	Proposals submitted to S&CDC	Sept 2020	Draft with SCDC
		Equality & Disabilities Legislation		In place Sept 2020	Proposals submitted to SCDC  Being shelved until after General Election
		Review of Equality & Human Rights Ordinance. (Recruitment of commissioners complete)	EHRC fit for purpose and Paris Principles compliant	In place Jan 2022	
		Framework document drafted	Draft complete & signed off	End April 2020	Completed
		Solicitors Fees reviewed	Fees reduced for lower earners	June 2020	Have written to SHG/SCDC & CS but due to the lack of a substantive PS

Strategic Priorities	Strategic Goal	ACTIONS	Outcome/indicator	Priority/ deadline	Progress
Strategic Priorities					for the period no progress.
		Minimum Income Standard Calculation Review	Review document to SCDC	May 2020	
		Organisations: Provide a review of the state of equality and human rights in St Helena in order to map our progress in protecting fundamental rights and inform policy, decision making and debate, informing fair and equitable decision making.	ICCPR Stakeholder Report part 2	21/22	Part 1 submitted.  Delayed due to Covid
			ICRD	June 2020	
ICSECR	Jan 21				
CAT	2021				
		CRC	2020		



Strategic Priorities	Strategic Goal	ACTIONS	Outcome/indicator	Priority/ deadline	Progress
		<p>Send newsletter to all organisations giving a brief overview of EHRC progress since August 2015. Invite organisations to give their suggestions on how Human Rights can be embedded in our culture.</p>	<p>Newsletter issued by email following the Year End and P6 reports. Short one page summary</p>	<p>April &amp; Oct 2020 ongoing</p>	
		<p>Work with Disabled Persons Aid Society, Children’s Champion, Lay Advocates, Age Ways and other organisations representing the potentially vulnerable to understand issues and promote solutions. To develop and maintain an up to date understanding</p>	<p>Develop joint outreach programmes and celebrations on Human Rights Days</p>	<p>Ongoing Autism Day April 2020 White Ribbon 25<sup>th</sup> November IHR Day 10<sup>th</sup> December</p>	

Strategic Priorities	Strategic Goal	ACTIONS	Outcome/indicator	Priority/ deadline	Progress
		Leaflets for Contractors on Human Rights matters possibly through Chamber of Commerce.	Contractors Engaged  Reduction in number of issues brought to Commission	2020 date to be confirmed <b>Budget implication</b>	Done by Labour Reg
		Individuals and Groups:  Work with the people of St Helena to embed a culture of human rights.	Identify the types of issues, age groups/gender affected etc. through district clinics.	Commencing June 2020	Altogether Fairer
		Build human rights competency, empowering the vulnerable to gain equal access to the opportunities and wealth on the island. Through workshops	No of Workshops  Number of attendees	First half 2021  date to be confirmed <b>Budget implication</b>	No budget

Strategic Priorities	Strategic Goal	ACTIONS	Outcome/indicator	Priority/ deadline	Progress
Strategic Priorities	Strategic Goal	Landlords/tenants agreements - Private & SHG	Both Parties protected	20/21	Priority Report to be published August 21
		<p>Internal:</p> <p>Gender unit in line with the requirements of CEDAW to assist in creating a society where men and women, boys and girls have their needs met, enabling them to achieve their full potential.</p>	latest statistics recorded	Sept 20	
		Training – Paris Principles	All Commissioner and Staff	August 20	

Strategic Priorities	Strategic Goal	ACTIONS	Outcome/indicator	Priority/ deadline	Progress
Strategic Priorities		Checklist for assessing compliance with Paris Principles.	Update, Circulate with suggested actions	May 20	
		Refresher training for all elected members	All Trained	2021 after GE	
		<p>Legislation, Policy &amp; Justice:</p> <p>Contribute to SHG initiatives aimed at preventing and responding to unequal treatment and practices whether it is gender bias or discrimination on any of the protected characteristics</p>	Initiatives contributed to	Ongoing	
		Equality & Disability Legislation	Legislation request submitted	As above	

Strategic Priorities	Strategic Goal	ACTIONS	Outcome/indicator	Priority/ deadline	Progress
Improving workplace equality	Significant social and structural barriers to inclusion and equality in the workplace remain in both the public and private sectors. This is particularly true for women, people with a disability, LGBT+ people and people from a culturally diverse background. Older people are experiencing discrimination in the	Employment law reviewed to protect private sector employees.  Actions now with SCDC	Stronger employment protection legislation Bill	Sept 2020	
		Policy Consultation – Human Rights Core to all business operations (Private and SHG)	A measurable increase in the understanding of equality and diversity issues in key organisations that the Commission has worked with.	date to be confirmed 21/22 Budget implication	
		<p>Organisations:</p> <p>Partner with employers through developing our education and consultancy service to identify the drivers for workplace inequality and implement structural and cultural changes to increase equality and diversity</p>		date to be confirmed Budget implication.  2021/22	

Strategic Priorities	Strategic Goal	ACTIONS	Outcome/indicator	Priority/ deadline	Progress
	workplace and on occasions people have been refused jobs because of their religious beliefs.	Education and Promotion to businesses and public	A reduction in then gender pay gap.	date to be confirmed Budget implication. 2021/22	
		Schools – building human rights into the curriculum using age-appropriate subjects and lesson plans	Human rights covered across the curriculum and age groups	21/22	
		Develop Play/drama for schools		Sept 2020	No budget available
		Schools Policies to be reviewed to strengthen gender equality and general diversity. Through Diversity Training with HR	Policies in place and working	21/22	
		Employers/Community Groups - Offer training on <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Equality and Diversity</li> </ul>	Numbers engaged.	date to be confirmed Budget implication	

Strategic Priorities	Strategic Goal	ACTIONS	Outcome/indicator	Priority/ deadline	Progress
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Anti-Harassment &amp; Victimization</li> <li>• Anti-bullying</li> <li>• Protection of Migrant workers</li> </ul>			
		<p>Individuals and Groups: Continue to support individuals and minority groups with workplace issues, ensuring they are directed to the Public Solicitor or other sources of assistance as necessary</p>	Reduction in contacts on the subject	20/21	Ongoing
		<p>Internal: Establish a gender unit in line with the requirements of CEDAW to assist in creating a society where men and women, boys and girls have their needs met, enabling them to achieve their full potential.</p>	Accurate and reliable data on gender related issues.	1 <sup>st</sup> September 20	

Strategic Priorities	Strategic Goal	ACTIONS	Outcome/indicator	Priority/ deadline	Progress
Protecting human rights in closed environments	People living in detention or in residential care where their liberty is restricted, have limited control over their lives and life choices. They are more vulnerable to having their human rights abused or denied through poor treatment or neglect, possibly as a result of poor training.	<p>Legislation, Policy &amp; Justice:</p> <p>assist in the extension and implementation of the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (OPCAT) and its standards for monitoring places of detention. We will work towards the extension of the Convention on</p>			



Strategic Priorities	Strategic Goal	ACTIONS	Outcome/indicator	Priority/ deadline	Progress
	Issues faced by people in closed environments include lack of access to news and limited connection with the community, separation from family and a lack of respect for privacy and dignity in daily activities.	the Rights of Persons with Disabilities			
		Push for New Prison	New Prison	Ongoing until in place	
		Extension of OPCAT.	In place	With new Prison	
		Review of Prison Ordinance	In place	With new Prison	
		Review Care Centres	Meeting OPCAT standards	date to be confirmed <b>Budget implication</b>	No Budget
		Review Children's Home if in use		date to be confirmed <b>Budget implication</b>	No Budget
		<b>Organisations:</b> Identify and address the systems, structures and practices that may result in unfair treatment, abuse or neglect in closed environments		date to be confirmed <b>Budget implication</b>	No Budget

Strategic Priorities	Strategic Goal	ACTIONS	Outcome/indicator	Priority/ deadline	Progress
		Training of Carers and Staff in Human Rights		date to be confirmed <b>Budget implication</b>	No Budget
		<b>Individuals and Groups:</b> raise awareness of the importance of human rights in closed environments and how vulnerable individuals, particularly the young and the disabled can assert their rights	Increased awareness measured through...	date to be confirmed <b>Budget implication</b>	No Budget
		Slide Show or Film to help develop understanding.		date to be confirmed <b>Budget implication</b>	No Budget
		Easy to read leaflets for staff and clients Complete for all sectors.  Elderly, learning difficulties, children in care, prisoners	New Constitution	date to be confirmed <b>Budget implication</b>	No Budget
		Review Dementia client's rights & practice			No Budget

Strategic Priorities	Strategic Goal	ACTIONS	Outcome/indicator	Priority/ deadline	Progress
		Internal: Develop our knowledge skills and capacity to effectively deliver the above.		date to be confirmed Budget implication	No Budget
		Review current practices/policies to ensure they are compliant with Human Rights Practices.	All Reviewed		
		Review of internal policies and workplace procedures, how complaints are reported and managed			
		Training and coaching available to staff and commissioners		date to be confirmed Budget implication	
Advancing Freedom of Information and	With the advent of the mobile phones, high speed internet and the introduction of CCTV cameras and drones on the	Legislation, Policy & Justice: Partner with SHG and other stakeholders to develop robust Freedom of Information and Data Protection legislation, suitable for St. Helena and compliant with human rights principles	Legislation in place		

Strategic Priorities	Strategic Goal	ACTIONS	Outcome/indicator	Priority/ deadline	Progress
	<p>island the need for data protection legislation, to protect the right to privacy for individuals, tailored to the needs of St Helena, is becoming increasingly apparent.</p> <p>Yet at the same time the need for openness and transparency by SHG and government owned organisations has never been greater. Decisions are made which affect the whole island over which the population has little or no say or control and the</p>	<p>Agreed policy in place in the absence of legislation or until legislation is enacted</p>	<p>Policy in place</p>	<p>before September 20</p>	
		<p>Workshop with NGO's and private sector to discuss legislation on freedom of information and data protection.</p>		<p>date to be confirmed <b>Budget implication</b></p>	
		<p><b>Organisations</b></p> <p>We will assist Private sector organisations and NGOs to comply with the legislation and best practice.</p>		<p>date to be confirmed <b>Budget implication</b></p>	

Strategic Priorities	Strategic Goal	ACTIONS	Outcome/indicator	Priority/ deadline	Progress
	reasons for such decisions are not given.	<p>Individuals and Groups</p> <p>Work with individuals and minority groups to promote understanding of everyone's rights and responsibilities around information and data sharing.</p>			
		<p>Internal: Ensure the Commission is operating all its data handling in compliance with best practice and legislation.</p>	Best practice identified	June 20	
			Policy agreed	July 20	
	Investigating Complaints	<p>Set timeline from date of complaint.</p> <p>Follow up on whether EHRC advice was acted on</p>			

Strategic Priorities	Strategic Goal	ACTIONS	Outcome/indicator	Priority/ deadline	Progress
Core Tasks	Research	As required.			
	Advocating & Empowering	See above.			
	Enforce				
	Education				
	Monitoring				
	Continue to monitor poverty and wealth			Annually date to be confirmed Budget implication	
	Lobby for robust rehabilitation services for perpetrators of domestic abuse			20/21	

Strategic Priorities	Strategic Goal	ACTIONS	Outcome/indicator	Priority/ deadline	Progress
	Work with the Police to ensure all law enforcement measures are human rights compliant and proportionate to St Helena.	Police Training for new recruits	Every Course	Ongoing	Last one 23/10/19
		Regular Communication meetings		Ongoing	Latest one Mach 21