

# WHAT GOOD LOOKS LIKE

CJA AWARDS  
2020



**Criminal  
Justice  
Alliance**



# Foreword



I was delighted to be asked to host the CJA Awards 2020, which is generously supported by the Hadley Trust. It has been a challenging year on multiple fronts, but through the darkness there have been glimmers of hope and causes for optimism for the future. The entries to this year's CJA Awards, which have highlighted the passion and determination of individuals and organisations working to build a fair and effective criminal justice system, have reinforced this hope within me.

COVID-19 has piled pressure on a criminal justice system that was already at breaking point. Individuals and organisations in the criminal justice sector have responded with creativity and a fierce resilience to continue supporting some of the most vulnerable in our society. Whether that was young people at risk of exploitation; prisoners locked in their cells for up to twenty three and a half hours a day; people leaving prison and attempting to navigate a crime-free live in a world very different to the one they left behind; or victims, locked down at home with their abusers. The individuals and organisations shortlisted in this year's CJA Awards are shining examples of this adaptability and innovation.

And then there was the brutal killing of George Floyd, which inspired people across the world to exercise their right to peaceful protest, calling for the change that we so desperately need. Systemic racism is not just a problem in the US, but in the UK too. This year, many individuals and organisations have continued vital work to address race disparity in our own criminal justice system, including some of the individuals and organisations shortlisted in the CJA Awards 2020.

Though we can only give trophies to a select few, it is fair to say that there are so many deserving of an award for their efforts throughout 2020.

This year's CJA Awards feature a new category, an award for Outstanding Local and Regional Organisations. We have seen in the entries to this category that smaller organisations are not only delivering an exceptional local service, but they are also using their frontline expertise to influence national policy and cultural change. I was also inspired by the entries to the Outstanding Individual Award, with many demonstrating the vital importance of lived experience throughout the sector, from peer support to leadership, and how it can be utilised to achieve systemic change.

I will end with a word on the CJA Media Awards. I regularly engage with the media because I know that it is through the media that we can improve public understanding, bringing our unseen and often misunderstood criminal justice system into the light. This year, the CJA introduced an Outstanding Documentary category, in recognition that documentaries can reach and influence audiences who might not otherwise take an interest in criminal justice. Through the Media Awards, we can continue to build a movement of journalists, digital media champions and documentary makers who report on criminal justice sensitively and constructively. This will ultimately lead to a better-informed and more engaged public, who will join the call for a fair and effective criminal justice system.

Good luck to all those who have been shortlisted. I am sorry I cannot meet you in person, but I know it will be an uplifting ceremony and a well-deserved celebration of the vital work of everyone in the sector.

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**JUNIOR SMART**  
FOUNDER OF ST GILES TRUST SOS PROJECT

# 2019 winners



## OUTSTANDING ORGANISATION 2019

### **Circles UK**

'It was an incredible honour for Circles UK to win the Outstanding Organisation Award. It raised our profile and affirmed that the work we do to prevent further victims of sexual abuse has immense value. The award ceremony was a wonderful event and being presented with the award was truly the highlight of the year for the organisation.'



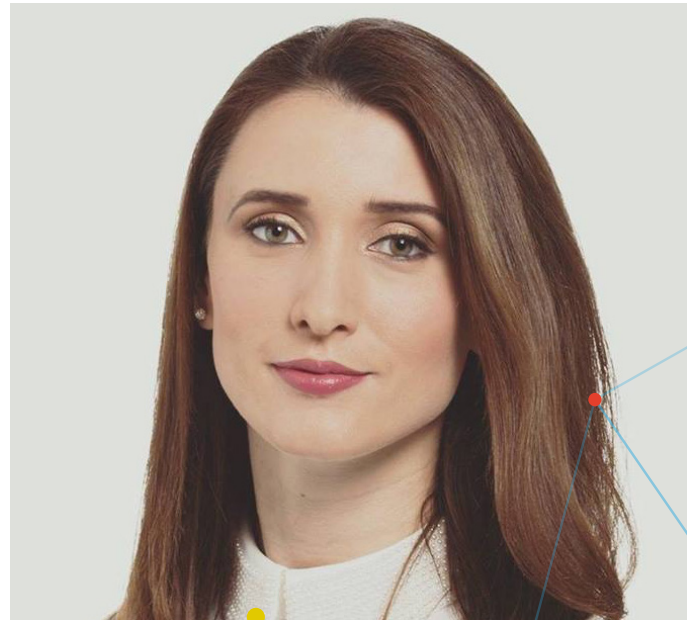
## OUTSTANDING INDIVIDUAL 2019

### **Barry Flanagan, Recycling Lives**

'I was genuinely shocked to win this award. I love my job and certainly don't expect to win awards for it, but to be recognised was an honour! It wasn't just a win for me but for the whole team, as well as all the men and women we support. We used the prize money for drug and alcohol training for our team, giving them the ability to support an even wider range of people. The CJA Awards are important because they bring together people from all areas of criminal justice who are working to improve outcomes. Good luck to all those shortlisted for this year's CJA Awards!'

## Adele Robinson, Sky News

‘Winning the CJA Media Award for Outstanding Journalism has without a doubt been one of the highlights of my career. I felt that it was recognition and encouragement that my work had made a difference, and making a difference is why I do this job. The Award has opened doors to other worthwhile stories too, and people seem to have more trust in my style of journalism as a result, and that’s invaluable.’



## OUTSTANDING DIGITAL MEDIA CHAMPION 2019

### The Bird Podcast

‘We were so surprised when we won the award for Digital Media Champion. Attending the ceremony was really inspiring and we got to meet many like-minded individuals doing great work in this space. After the ceremony we felt very encouraged to continue our work with Bird, so much so that we decided to create a second season!’

# Outstanding National Organisations



**Unlock has been key in influencing some significant changes to the criminal records disclosure scheme.**

## UNLOCK

Unlock is a national independent advocacy charity that provides a voice and support for people facing stigma and obstacles because of their criminal record. Unlock has been key in influencing some significant changes to the criminal records disclosure regime this year. This includes the government announcing plans to remove the automatic disclosure of youth and multiple convictions from standard and enhanced DBS checks, which will benefit over 45,000 people a year, and to reform legislation that will allow some sentences of over four years in prison to become spent. This year, Unlock also launched the #FairChecks campaign, and encouraged 18 trailblazing UK universities to lead the way in helping people with convictions access higher education by signing Unlock's 'Fair Chance for Students with Convictions' pledge. These policy changes, combined with the advice and information that Unlock provides to people with convictions, ensure more people can gain employment and make positive contributions to society, which reduces reoffending.

## PAROLE BOARD

The Parole Board is an independent body that carries out risk assessments on prisoners to determine whether they can be safely released into the community. At the beginning of the pandemic, there was concern that parole would grind to a halt and that it would be difficult to maintain a timely review of prisoner's cases. Ordinarily, the Parole Board releases around 250 prisoners each month, so there was significant potential to exacerbate overcrowding in the prison estate. The Parole Board committed to review all cases to explore if they could be progressed by way of a remote hearing or on the papers. Throughout the pandemic, the Parole Board has actually made more decisions than it ordinarily would have made. Three times the number of victims read out their personal statement as remote panels became the default, while the number of people awaiting a hearing reduced by 43 per cent. Through innovation, collaboration and commitment, the Board has kept the wheels of parole turning.



## BLACK PROTEST LEGAL SUPPORT

Black Protest Legal Support (BPLS) provides legal observation, advice and assistance to Black Lives Matter (BLM) protesters; calls out and fights racism in the criminal justice system; and promotes legal education and racial inclusivity. When the BLM protests began in May, barrister Ife Thompson brought together lawyers from Black and other racialised group backgrounds to form the BPLS committee, which went on to recruit volunteers with legal training or education. After receiving practical training, BPLS' legal observers have attended protests across the country, taken notes of police conduct, provided 'bustcards' with succinct legal information to protesters and publicly called out police misconduct. Through its network of pro-bono volunteers and associated law firms, BPLS has also connected protesters in need with professional legal support. As the organisation has grown, BPLS has taken advantage of its members' knowledge and reputations to expand its push against racism in the criminal justice system via expert articles and powerful panel discussions.



**Black Protest Legal Support has taken advantage of its members' knowledge and reputations to expand its push against racism.**

## MUSLIM WOMEN'S NETWORK UK

There has been great concern about victims being locked up with their abusers during the pandemic. In the early stages of COVID-19, the Muslim Women's Network UK (MWN UK) was concerned that Muslim women experiencing domestic abuse were not reporting or reaching out for support. So MWN UK filmed its helpline staff explaining how women could access support in five different languages - English, Urdu, Sylheti Bangla, Arabic and Gujarati - and disseminated these videos via WhatsApp. When the MWN UK helpline received an increase in calls as a result, the team provided support to domestic abuse victims, in some cases finding safe accommodation as well as arranging counselling for the women. By responding to individual needs, MWN UK helped to keep women safe, protecting their physical and mental wellbeing. This follows a report from MWN UK last year which found that female Muslim victims of crime receive poor standards of service within the criminal justice system.



## BIRTH COMPANIONS

Birth Companions is a small national charity with a specialist focus on pregnant women and new mothers and babies affected by the criminal justice system. This year, Birth Companions led the campaign to secure the early release of pregnant women and new mothers and babies from prison during the COVID-19 pandemic, and challenged the low level of releases in the ensuing months. The charity worked intensively with Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) to widen the focus of the new Policy Framework for Mother and Baby Units to include the care needs of all pregnant women and new mothers, including those separated from their babies, across the prison estate. It also developed a new service to provide practical and emotional support to pregnant women and new mothers released from prison during the pandemic. Birth Companions places lived experience at the heart of all its work and hosted a roundtable with prisons minister Lucy Frazer, where five women shared their personal experiences of pregnancy and motherhood in prison and made recommendations for improved care.



Credit: Simon Rawles

# Outstanding Local and Regional Organisations

## CHANGING THE GAME

Changing the Game is a group therapy programme, delivered in prisons in London, to improve engagement and outcomes for Black and minority ethnic men who have been involved with gangs and serious violence. Many young Black and minority ethnic men arrive in prison suffering from significant and unaddressed trauma, often stemming from unresolved adverse childhood experiences and exposure to serious violence. Changing the Game, developed by Paul Kassman, supports participants to recognise and start to resolve the impact of their experiences, introducing basic approaches for managing emotions and improving thinking skills. The programme understands, explores and reframes their experiences as young Black and minority ethnic men, using positive social and cultural narratives to support the development of a more positive sense of identity. Changing the Game has also provided training for staff at HMP/YOI Isis on unconscious bias and working with trauma-affected young adult prisoners, which has led to culture change and better relationships within the prison. The programme has also contributed to a significant reduction in violence at the prison, as reported in the outcomes of the 10 Prisons Project.

**Offploy offers its services to any candidate, irrespective of conviction.**

## OFFPLOY



Offploy is the brainchild of Jacob Hill, who wrote the business plan while serving a custodial sentence. Offploy's mission is to support people with criminal convictions into meaningful, mentored and sustainable employment, with the aim of reducing reoffending and creating safer communities. Offploy has a rich seam of lived experience at all levels of the organisation, developing its services based on collective experiences and supporting peers to tackle many of the same challenges team members have faced. By the close of 2020, Offploy will have supported close to 200 candidates across Yorkshire and Humberside this year, despite having to temporarily suspend its services in the early days of COVID-19. Offploy offers its services to any candidate, irrespective of conviction. It challenges employers to give opportunities to candidates who they may previously have been uncomfortable to work with, while challenging its candidates to not let a criminal conviction stop them from achieving their goals in life.





## THE FOOTPRINTS PROJECT

The Footprints Project delivers through-the-gate and community support to adult men and women in Hampshire and Dorset, most of whom have complex needs and are caught in the revolving door of offending. This year, Footprints transformed a disused basement into a woodwork training centre, retraining over 50 people in Approved Premises to make furniture, either for sale or for their move-on accommodation. At another Approved Premises, Footprints developed an employment support scheme, teaching basic cookery and a food hygiene qualification. Footprints also developed a new Out of Court Diversionary Scheme, in partnership with Dorset Police and the Dorset Police and Crime Commissioner, in which vulnerable women who have committed a first offence receive a conditional caution and work with Footprints for 16 weeks. Footprints develops an action plan with the women, and a support worker meets them once a week. Footprints successfully brings together the voluntary sector, police, prisons and probation to identify and fill gaps in services, meeting the needs of those who are currently under-supported.



## ODD ARTS

Odd Arts is a Manchester charity delivering creative programmes for vulnerable and excluded groups. Odd Arts responded quickly to COVID-19, designing creative packs for young people in secure units and when restrictions allowed, delivering theatre workshops on doorsteps and in parks. Odd Arts worked with the most isolated prisoners during the pandemic, using mime and acting to explore complex and traumatic emotions. Odd Arts also held community meetings and co-created a community-led strategy to violence reduction. This strategy earned Odd Arts and other community leaders meetings with the Greater Manchester Mayor and influenced the Manchester Violence Reduction Unit to adopt a community-led model. Odd Arts is committed to using restorative approaches in its work, and delivered workshops with young people in secure units, youth justice teams and those who had experienced trauma and bereavement through youth violence. Odd Arts also delivered a theatre-based programme exploring the root causes of knife crime with young people, and used professional actors to perform the finished piece, including people who had lived experience of knife crime.

## CHILDREN HEARD AND SEEN

Children Heard and Seen is an Oxfordshire charity that supports children and families impacted by parental imprisonment. Children Heard and Seen aims to break the cycle of intergenerational offending by providing young people with the tools to manage complex emotions, allowing them to find a sense of community and belonging, and giving them the means to maximise their own potential. When lockdown began, Children Heard and Seen quickly moved support online, providing online groups and one-to-one support to 158 children this summer. Children Heard and Seen was also invited to the Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board's annual conference, where the children it works with spoke about issues that they face, including witnessing their parent's arrest, the impact of media reporting and visiting their parent in prison. By providing children with the opportunity to use their voice, they can regain some degree of control over the narratives that continually relegate them to the sidelines.



# Outstanding Individuals

## IFE THOMPSON

Ife Thompson is a lawyer, community activist and United Nations Fellow. This year, she founded Black Protest Legal Support UK (BPLS), an organisation that provides legal observation, advice and assistance to Black Lives Matter protesters and campaigns against racism in the criminal justice system.

Ife also founded Black Learning Achievement and Mental Health (BLAM), which aims to improve outcomes for Black Britons. Notably, Ife and BLAM have provided advocates to represent children at school exclusion hearings for free, helping to end the school-to-prison pipeline. Ife is currently working with the Howard League to create a guide for anti-racist lawyers, which will lay out practical steps lawyers and practitioners can take to change outcomes for Black people in the criminal justice system. Colleagues said Ife's passion and determination inspires senior members of the legal profession to give back. Ife has also engaged with the media, scrutinising and forcing those with power to consider how they can make the criminal justice system fair, safe and effective.



## GAVIN MCKENNA

Gavin McKenna founded Reach Every Generation, which supports marginalised young people involved in or at risk of criminal exploitation and serious violence, as well as providing training and coaching to the frontline organisations working with them. He uses his lived experience to inspire hope in young people and to empower professionals to see beyond the child's behaviour to their potential. Gavin has coached young people being released from prison as well as those at risk of entering the criminal justice system. One young man that Gavin mentored has recently enrolled at university to study economics. Since Gavin founded Reach Every Generation in 2015, it has trained 70,000 professionals and reached over 100,000 young people nationally. Gavin also founded the Building Lives Project, which offers training and coaching to children aged 9-17 in Essex, to prevent them from becoming caught up in crime and violence. Gavin plays an active role in networks for policy reform and is a board member for the Standing Committee for Youth Justice.

**Ife's passion and determination inspires senior members of the legal profession to give back.**



## KYLE MULLINGS

Kyle Mullings is a Community Support Worker at Community Led Initiatives. Through sharing his lived experience, Kyle inspires others and shows that change is possible. He provides weekly peer mentoring to people on probation, supporting them with their physical and mental health and helping them to overcome the obstacles they face. He often takes service users out into the community to try new activities, such as exercising at the gym, playing pool and attending museums, boosting their self-esteem. Kyle also encourages service users to engage with their probation officer, helping to remove any of the factors which might stop them from attending an appointment. But Kyle does not just help people on the frontline; he is also passionate about influencing systemic change in the criminal justice system. He has met with judges and diplomats from other countries to share his experiences of the criminal justice system in the UK, and has also contributed to service user groups on his experiences of probation, providing insights on how delivery and engagement might be improved.

## MICHAELA BOOTH

Michaela Booth is the National Patient and Family Engagement Lead at Practice Plus Group, the healthcare provider in 47 prisons across England. In leading this work, Michaela identified a need for a standardised peer support model within prison healthcare. Using examples of best practice from national research, Michaela co-designed the Health Champion model. Health Champions are people serving prison sentences who are trained to perform health checks and deliver health promotional advice to peers. Additionally, Health Champions signpost prisoners to other health support services and help with the Practice Plus Group's Through the Gate strategy. The Health Champion model aids rehabilitation in two ways; it provides people in prison with vital skills, accredited by the Royal Society of Public Health, and influences the prison population as a whole to adopt a healthier lifestyle. As well as spearheading this innovative programme, Michaela is a first class criminology graduate and writes a powerful blog about criminal justice and lived experience. She also recently played a significant role in the design of a new leadership programme for people with lived experience working in the criminal justice sector.



## BRENDAN ROSS

Brendan Ross is the Peer Circles Manager at St Giles Trust. Earlier in his career, he became known for his special aptitude in supporting some of the most vulnerable adults into employment through his person-centred approach. He now leads the Peer Circles service, which uses a peer approach to help people with multiple and complex needs into work. Since April 2017, the service has helped 950 people make positive progress in their lives and a third have moved into further training or employment. COVID-19 has hit service users hard, but Brendan and his team have gone above and beyond to provide emotional and practical support, assisting with food deliveries, linking people up with online training and helping those who have lost jobs maintain hope and get back on track. Brendan, who has lived experience himself, is a passionate advocate for the employment of people with lived experience in the criminal justice sector. He attends forums with the Ministry of Justice and HMPPS to ensure that lived experience and peer-led approaches remain on the agenda of policy makers.

# Outstanding Journalism



## RIA CHATTERJEE, ITV NEWS

In her reporting, Ria Chatterjee has examined how factors such as poverty, mental health, policing, domestic abuse, social media and school exclusions have played a part in knife and gun violence on the streets of London. Ria's work has required her to build trust with communities who are often misrepresented by the media, and she has spent extensive time filming people who have served sentences for violent crime, the families of victims, the families of perpetrators and grassroots organisations. Ria's reporting has challenged powerful institutions to question and consider their approach to the underlying causes of youth violence, and she has held the Metropolitan Police Commissioner and the Mayor of London to account over stop and search tactics and violence reduction. Her reporting has led her to the mayoral chambers at City Hall, to help launch a report on gang-associated girls, and to Chicago, where she reported on the city's public health approach to gun violence.

Ria's work has required her to build trust with communities who are often misrepresented by the media.

## THE SECRET BARRISTER SERIES, CHANNEL 4

In this four-part series, Channel 4 teamed up with the Secret Barrister to explore the impact of poor policy decisions and budget cuts on the criminal justice system. The short films focused on the backlog in court cases, legal aid, rape prosecution and the impact of the pandemic. Each episode used real-life cases with testimony from victims, defendants and lawyers. Finding victims and defendants willing to talk on camera took many months and involved many emotionally difficult conversations. Given the sensitive nature of the films, Channel 4 paid special consideration to how the interviews would be conducted as well as how contact would be maintained with interviewees after the films were released. The Secret Barrister advised throughout, contributing staggering statistics on the failings of the system. The series showed in July 2020, when average viewing figures were between 800,000 to 1.3m per night, bringing these often unseen issues to a wide audience. The series was produced by Sara Moralioglu.





**In his reporting, Symeon Brown strives to consider what justice means in a system that is riddled with inequalities.**

#### SYMEON BROWN, CHANNEL 4

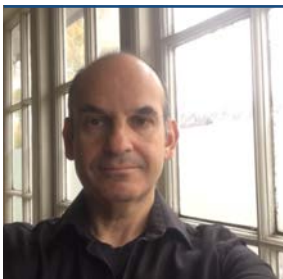
In his reporting, Symeon Brown strives to consider what justice means in a system that is riddled with inequalities. In one report, Symeon interviewed a Black teenager who was racially assaulted at a Black Lives Matter protest, and when he sought the help of police, was treated as a suspect and stopped and searched. The report triggered an investigation into his treatment, and the teenager received letters of support from concerned viewers. In another piece, Symeon investigated the overrepresentation of Black and minority ethnic children in the youth justice system, summarising a complex Youth Justice Board report to its core findings. In this piece, Symeon challenged what we consider a drug dealer to look like by featuring a suited, middle class white man, who believed he was given a shorter sentence because of his ethnicity. Symeon's reporting uses accessible language for a mainstream audience and humanises the people swept up in the criminal justice system's inequalities.



**JAMIE GRIERSON,  
THE GUARDIAN**

Jamie Grierson focused on the controversial Imprisonment for Public Protection (IPP) sentence in articles and a Guardian Today in Focus podcast. IPPs were designed to detain people indefinitely who were perceived to pose a high-risk to the public, but they were used much more widely than planned, including for low-level crimes. Several people have experienced severe mental health decline and committed suicide while serving an IPP. Jamie met and built relationships with the family members of those who have died while serving

an IPP; most recently, the father of Charlotte Nokes, a talented artist with a personality disorder who died in 2016. Jamie portrayed the stories of Charlotte and others sensitively, while setting IPPs within a wider policy context of poor mental health access and overcrowded prisons. IPPs were abolished in 2012, but not retrospectively. With his reporting, Jamie aimed to raise awareness of the thousands of people still in prison on an IPP and apply pressure on the government to review cases.



**DANNY SHAW**

Danny Shaw has focused on a wide range of issues within criminal justice through online articles and radio documentaries. In one online article for the BBC, Danny explored declining crime detection rates, explaining the issues in clear and simple terms with official figures and charts. His piece on the failures of some rehabilitative programmes within prison for BBC Radio 4's File on 4 drew on research into their efficacy, the experiences of victims, and highlighted positive schemes that are helping to reduce reoffending. Danny also wrote and presented a piece on racism in the

police for File on 4, which looked at why, despite numerous reviews, inquiries and action, the problem persists. In this piece, Danny uncovered disturbing evidence that discrimination is subtly embedded within policing structures, and two former police officers opened up to Danny about their experiences of racism, having never been interviewed about them before. Danny avoids cliché and sensationalism, and every item was carefully written and presented to reach younger and excluded groups.

# Outstanding Digital Media Champions

## UCL'S COLLABORATIVE CENTRE FOR INCLUSION HEALTH

This moving animation explores what it is like to be a prisoner visiting the hospital for healthcare. People in prison narrated the animation in their own words, providing authentic, unscripted content on the current problems that exist within hospital care and what good care could look like. Animators attended several focus groups to immerse themselves in the prison context, ensuring they created a film which was sensitive and relevant. The aim of the animation was to encourage hospital staff to consider how they could make their services more inclusive for people visiting from prison. University College London (UCL) screened the animation with doctors and senior healthcare managers at numerous hospital trusts, who said that it was highly-moving, thought-provoking and informative. Junior medical staff in particular said that it fills an important training gap, as no medical training is given on patients from prison settings. The animation was created by Tjoff Koong Studios. The team behind the project was UCL, User Voice, Surrey Heartlands Health and Care Partnership and Surrey County Council Public Health.



## PRISON BAG

Prison Bag is a blog and podcast series which explores the experiences of Josie Bevan and her family after husband Rob was sentenced to nine years in prison. Josie describes the experiences of families and loved ones with emotion, precision and humour, exploring issues such as the bureaucracy of prison visits, maintaining a relationship while separated by the prison walls and the failings of the prison system. Since launching Prison Bag, Josie has appeared on the BBC's Woman's Hour and has written about her experiences for national newspapers. She has received lots of mail from people in prison and their loved ones, who have expressed how glad they are to know they are not alone. Garry Newnes, governor of the prison where Josie's husband is incarcerated, said: 'I have championed this blog to my staff to encourage them to think differently about the roles they do, myself included.' Prison Bag gives a voice to the voiceless, the families and loved ones of prisoners.





## MORE THAN MY PAST

More Than My Past is a national campaign from The Forward Trust, challenging stigma towards people with convictions and those in recovery from addiction. More Than My Past shares the inspirational stories of people who have turned their lives around through written articles, short films and a podcast series hosted by actor Jason Flemyng. The people behind the stories, or Campaign Ambassadors, range from well-known figures like Lord John Bird and Alastair Campbell to members of the public. The Forward Trust carries out background research and pre-screening calls with all potential ambassadors, explaining the possible impact of sharing their stories publicly, before their stories are captured. The campaign aims to influence policy and recently called for investment in recovery communities. It has also encouraged landlords and employers to provide housing and job opportunities for people with convictions or in recovery. Many people have got in touch to share their story, and The Forward Trust has received lots of positive feedback from people with lived experience, who say the campaign affirms that they are more than their past.

## PRISON RADIO ASSOCIATION

The Prison Radio Association (PRA) runs the National Prison Radio, in partnership with HMPPS, and creates radio, films and podcasts focusing on issues within prisons and criminal justice. This year, the PRA launched several new podcasts. Among them was Future Prison and The Secret Life of Prisons. Future Prison brings people who have lived in prison face-to-face with senior figures from the Ministry of Justice – to start a dialogue about what the future of criminal justice could look like. The senior officials pledged to make significant changes and agreed to return in six months to report on progress. The Secret Life of Prisons podcast takes the bars off the windows in order to explore what life inside is really like. It was launched following concerns from people in prison about the lack of balanced and accurate representation in the media regarding the reality of prison life. It has been downloaded more than 100,000 times and received positive reviews in the Telegraph, Guardian and on BBC Radio 4. The PRA puts lived experience at the core of these podcasts, before zooming out to examine the bigger picture and to challenge perceptions of criminal justice.



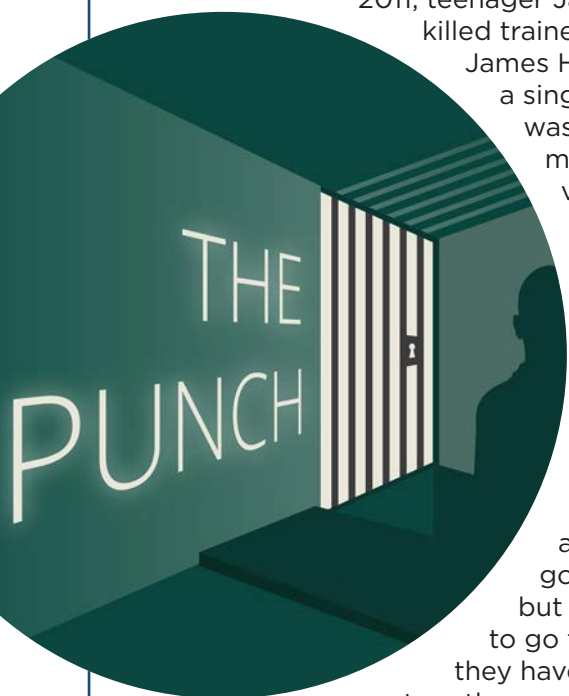
## BLESSING AT THE BAR

Blessing Mukosha Park launched Blessing at the Bar (BATB) to document her journey to becoming a barrister as a Black woman, and to encourage other 'non-traditional' entrants to the profession facing similar pressures and prejudices. Advocating for diversity in the Bar is at the core of her platform. Through a combination of blog posts, YouTube videos, Instagram livestreams and Twitter threads, Blessing has addressed issues such as dealing with imposter syndrome, networking as a minority and practicing self-care. She also provides practical advice on taking the courses necessary to become a barrister and securing a pupillage. Through her platform, Blessing has encouraged students and practising barristers to have an open dialogue about the issues facing aspiring barristers from diverse backgrounds. Blessing frequently receives positive feedback from people who have read her blog and watched her videos before they made an informed decision to pursue the Bar. Through her work on BATB, Blessing was invited to join the committee of Bridging the Bar, a charity committed to ensuring the diversity of the Bar at all professional levels.

# Outstanding Documentaries

## THE PUNCH, BBC RADIO 4

The Punch shows the transformative power of restorative justice through one tragic story. In 2011, teenager Jacob Dunne killed trainee paramedic James Hodgkinson with a single punch and was convicted of manslaughter. The victim's parents - Joan and David - had many unanswered questions and invited Jacob, after his release, to participate in restorative justice (RJ). Through RJ, Joan and David not only got their answers but encouraged Jacob to go to university, and they have since worked together on an anti-violence campaign. This five-part series, produced by Just Radio for BBC Radio 4, explores forgiveness through recorded conversations between Jacob and James' parents. Jacob discusses with searing honesty why he threw the punch that killed their son, his experiences in prison and his subsequent difficulties in finding employment. Experts such as an RJ facilitator, a prison officer and the Forgiveness Project provided extra detail to the programme, highlighting that increased availability of RJ could benefit victims and lower reoffending. The Punch was met with an overwhelming response, receiving sterling reviews in national newspapers and being shown to children in school assemblies.



## UNCHAINED, BBC RADIO 4

Government reports have found that short-term prison sentences for women lead to higher reoffending rates than community sentences, and yet their use has increased. Unchained is narrated by Brenda Birungi, AKA Lady Unchained, who shares her own experience of being tried, convicted and sentenced through powerful verse. We also hear from Paula, who called the police to her house 9 times to report domestic violence in the year before her arrest; Amanda, who became a sex worker to support her partner's drug use; Krystal, who was arrested after stealing a duvet for her child; and Georgia, who was left to fend for herself at 15 while her single mum served a three month sentence. These powerful stories illustrate damning statistics on short sentences from Women in Prison, set to a beautiful and moving score by sound designer Axel Kacoutié. The documentary ends by highlighting the role of Women's Centres, which can provide an effective alternative to custody. Unchained, produced by the Prison Radio Association, sets out a powerful case for women-centred approaches and services.



## HOW TO STAY OUT OF JAIL, CHANNEL 4

How to Stay Out of Jail focuses on the Checkpoint scheme in County Durham. The scheme aims to keep people who have been arrested out of the courts and prison system by offering them help with the issues that caused them to commit the crime – be it drug addiction, a history of abuse, gang membership, homelessness or mental health issues. The documentary was shot by Jemma Gander and Martha Bailey of Spring Films. It was the pair's first ever full length documentary. They spent six months following the police and immersing themselves in the lives of people engaged in the scheme. The documentary shows that the reliance on court and imprisonment as the only solutions to crime can be counterproductive and that Britain could benefit from more rehabilitative and diversionary schemes like Checkpoint. Many other policing and social inclusion organisations have since contacted Checkpoint about its work, indicating an increased interest in diversion across the country as a result of the show. The documentary was reviewed favourably in the press and is due to be aired in other countries, which will help make the case for diversion around the world.



## THE CHOIR, AYLESBURY PRISON, CHANNEL 4

In 2019, Laura Sapwell, the governor of Aylesbury Young Offenders Institute, asked Gareth Malone to set up a choir in the prison. The main aim was to reduce the amount of time that residents spent in their cells and help them change their behaviour through music. The BBC and Twenty Twenty filmed Gareth as he spent time in the prison, recruiting, songwriting and performing with the young men. These residents explored difficult feelings and major life events through songwriting, and viewers were given the opportunity to see them in a new light, as brothers, sons and friends. Consideration for the victims and their families was paramount, and wherever possible, the BBC and Twenty Twenty worked closely with the Ministry of Justice and its specialised Victim Liaison Unit to answer any questions and concerns. The documentary was watched by 1.5 million people when it first aired, and has since reached millions more with repeats. This extensive reach has made a wide audience aware of the rehabilitative power of music in prisons and the need for a distinctive approach when working with young adults.

## CRIME - ARE WE TOUGH ENOUGH? BBC

In this documentary, two lawyers with opposing views consider whether Britain is tough enough on crime. Chris Daw QC believes that we should send fewer people to prison and for less time, instead focusing our time and resources on diverting people away from the system. Solicitor Ayesha Nayyar believes we should prosecute more people, and those found guilty should be sent to prison for longer. Across five episodes, Chris and Ayesha travel up and down the country, considering the role of police, courts and prisons and speaking to professionals, victims and people with convictions. In the final episode, Chris and Ayesha present their arguments to a jury of 12 people, and come together to form a five-point plan for criminal justice, which includes taking a public health approach to crime and establishing a Victims' Council. The series was an attempt to bring the complex and nuanced conversation about criminal justice reform to a mainstream audience. It was thought provoking, emotionally raw and at times incredibly challenging content for a daytime audience, but the series was well-received, with an average audience of 1.1 million.



# Lifetime Achievement Award



## Leroy Logan MBE

Leroy Logan is a retired Superintendent who completed his 30 years with the Metropolitan Police in 2013. He was a founding member and former Chair of both the Metropolitan and National Black Police Association (BPA). Leroy's passion to become a police officer was something he did not share with his family straight away. His father had been brutally beaten up by police and left him conflicted as to whether or not he should join. Rising above the loyalty to his family and armed with a strong sense of social justice and a determination to change things from within, he made the decision to join the Metropolitan Police in 1983.

Many things can be attributed to Leroy's presence in the job, as it's affectionately known. He fulfilled several operational roles, including during the 2012 London Olympics. However, his contribution to diversity in policing is what really stands out. He was part of the MetBPA contingent that gave evidence to the Macpherson inquiry and following the inquiry was invited to be part of the steering committee. Leroy was also an adviser to Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and the High Potential Development Scheme run by the National Police Improvement Agency now the College of Policing. He worked with the Home Office in setting the recruitment, progression and retention targets for Black and Asian officers and set up a team of BPA members to help solve the Damilola Taylor murder. Leroy was recognised for his services to policing in 2000 when he received his MBE from the Queen and a few months after retiring received his alma mater PhD from the University of East London.

One of his greatest passions is the welfare and nurturing of young people. As the Chair of the BPA Charitable Trust, he has overseen VOYAGE (Voice Of Youth And Genuine Empowerment), which produced the Young Leaders for Safer Cities (YLfSC) programme in 2001. This ongoing programme delivers an accredited BTEC level 2 qualification to give underprivileged young people that extra start to their careers by providing and promoting essential leadership skills.

For many Black and Asian officers within the Met, the details of Leroy's journey is unknown. However, the depiction of his achievement and impressive career have been captured in a new short film titled 'Red, White, and Blue' by the award-winning director Steve McQueen. The British actor John Boyega depicts his on-screen character. Leroy's autobiography 'Closing Ranks: My Life as a Cop' is a testament to his moral fibre and will leave a legacy that will inspire all.

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JANET HILLS  
CHAIR, METROPOLITAN BLACK POLICE ASSOCIATION

## FROM THE DIRECTOR

This is the sixth annual CJA Awards, and my third as Director of the CJA. I am thrilled that we have continued to grow the reach and impact of the Awards, recognising more individuals and organisations than ever before.

This year, we introduced a new category for Outstanding Local and Regional Organisations, with the generous support of the Hadley Trust. Small organisations play a vital role in the criminal justice sector. As we have seen in the entries to this category, grassroots organisations not only work fiercely on the frontlines, but use their insights and experience to influence wider systemic change too.

This year, we also introduced an Outstanding Documentary category. The criminal justice system is largely hidden from the public view. Often, when it is discussed and debated by the public, politicians and the media, assumptions are made, and it is misunderstood. The aim of our Media Awards is to celebrate journalists, podcasters, bloggers and filmmakers who improve understanding of criminal justice in society, resulting in a more conducive environment for reform. Documentaries have an incredible reach and power, reaching millions of viewers and listeners. The entries to this new category have shown what is broken within the system, but most importantly, what works and what should be implemented.

It has been a very difficult year, one that has revealed the cracks in the criminal justice system. But the sector has risen to the challenge, tearing up business plans, innovating and working incredibly hard to ensure positive outcomes for people within the system. There are so many inspiring individuals and organisations deserving of an award this year.

I want to thank our wonderful judges, who had such a difficult job to do; as well as Jamie Morrell, our Communications and Engagement Officer, and Paul Grady, our Awards Intern and a Longford Scholar, for all their hard work putting together the Awards. I also want to thank Junior Smart, Founder of the St Giles Trust SOS Project, for presenting this year's Awards. Junior's work is a fantastic example of the passion, collaboration and powerful use of lived experience which captures the spirit of the CJA Awards. Finally, I would like to thank the Hadley Trust, without whom our Awards would not be possible. We look forward to hearing about the incredible campaigns and projects you have delivered in the coming year.

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**NINA CHAMPION**  
DIRECTOR, CRIMINAL JUSTICE ALLIANCE



## THE JUDGES



**Alexandra Wilson**  
Barrister and Author of 'In Black and White'



**Jamie Bennett**  
Former prison governor and senior civil servant at HMPPS



**Whitney Clark**  
Youth consultant and Advisory Board Member for Peer Power



**Pastor Lorraine Jones**  
CEO and Founder of Dwaynatics



**Anushka Asthana**  
Guardian Editor-at-large and host of the Today in Focus podcast



**Emmanuel Onapa**  
Freelance journalist and youth leader at Hackney CVS



**Professor Chris Frost**  
Chair of the National Union of Journalists' Ethics Council



**Philippa Budgen**  
Criminal justice media consultant and former BBC journalist

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Registered Charity  
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Company Registration  
No 6331413



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