



Helpline & online support

- Our helpline responded to **9,019** enquiries
- Over **1m** visits to our information and advice websites
- Our disclosure calculator was used **43,198** times
- Increased numbers accessing TheForum.
- **Five** volunteers helped to run Unlock's advice services

*"Thank you so much for your detailed and informed advice. I am very grateful. You were brilliant on the phone and think **what you do and how you help people is just amazing**. We can't change the world but we can change the little bits around us and **make a difference**. You do that!"*

Unlock helpline user

Casework

We supported 12 individuals to make challenges. Here's a couple of examples of successful challenges:

- A large retailer who dismissed an employee after becoming aware of their spent conviction. Working with ACAS, we were able to negotiate a financial settlement for the client prior to the case going to an employment tribunal.
- A college and a housing provider whose application forms and admissions processes included ineligible and misleading questions.



Our amazing volunteers

Our information & advice services depend on a group of amazing people who give up their time and share their knowledge, expertise and skills; our peer volunteers.

This year, we supported a regular volunteer to achieve an NVQ2 in Information, Advice and Guidance. They subsequently moved on into full-time paid work.

Thanks to all Unlock volunteers.

Policy & influencing

Making change at a structural level is key to longer-term change. We do this by challenging organisations and decision-makers using evidence from research and the voices of people with criminal records.

In 2021/22, we:

- Supported the case of an anonymous applicant challenging the disproportionality of criminal record laws in Northern Ireland, alongside colleagues at NIACRO and the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission. The case had a successful outcome with the judge ruling that individual case reviews are reasonable.
- Engaged with MPs and peers from all parties as the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts (PCSC) bill made its way through parliament. We approached 30 peers, briefing seven in detail, resulting in an amendment being tabled for the Lords committee. We also gave evidence to the bill committee.
- Published reports and briefings and responded to government consultations.
- Continued to pressure the DBS and Home Office about problems with the DBS update service.



Fair access to employment

As part of our work to improve access to employment for people with criminal records, in 2021/22 we:



- Worked with employers in healthcare, charity, and education sectors on developing a fair approach to asking and assessing criminal records information.
- Worked with Job Centre work coaches and sharing expertise with the Department of Work and Pensions.
- Published updated guidance for charities recruiting trustees and senior managers
- Spoke on a panel at Clinks' annual conference about working with women in the criminal justice system

Training

In 2021/22 we saw an increase in people accessing our online workshops and webinars. We also began to take bookings for face-to-face training for the first time since the start of the pandemic, and began gaining CPD accreditation for our courses.

Across the year we delivered 28 training sessions to 326 attendees.



*"Varied delivery with a mix of activities and **really helpful** handouts and **excellent delivery** by the trainer."*

Training participant



Fair access to university

In 2021/22 we conducted a major review of criminal records policies for all universities, building a searchable database on our website. We also successfully supported a student appealing a decision to refuse admission to a regulated postgraduate programme.

We continued to co-supervise a PhD student at Nottingham University as part of our collaboration with the growing community of academics interested in the effects of criminal records.

Relaunch of the #FairChecks campaign

In February 2022 we worked with partners Transform Justice to relaunch the #FairChecks campaign, calling for reform of the criminal records system.

Over the relaunch period we secured several pieces of positive coverage, including an interview with our Chief executive on Woman's Hour, alongside a FairChecks supporter with a criminal record.

Following the relaunch we more than doubled the size of the supporter mailing list, and numerous FairChecks supporters have arranged meetings with their MPs about the issue.



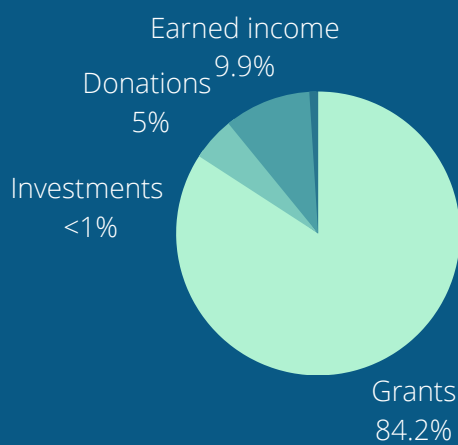
Redeveloping our websites



In 2021/22 we completed the redevelopment of the Unlock website. We incorporated content from our existing sites theInformationHub and theRecord into the newly redeveloped Unlock.org.uk site, reducing the number of separate websites for users to navigate between. The main focus for the redevelopment was making it easier for users to find what they need, when they need it.

*"I need to do a ton of research into my nightmare situation and I'm going to find it **far, far easier** to do it on this new site!"*

Website user



Fundraising & finance

We are hugely grateful to be supported by a range of sources including generous trusts and foundations and individuals in addition to earned income from our training courses.

In 2021/22 we raised £390,967 and spent £358,859.

Goodbyes and new faces



In 2021 we officially welcomed Angela Cairns as our new CEO and Sue Kent joined us as Administration and Finance officer. In 2022, we said goodbye to Deputy CEO Julie Harmsworth after more than 20 years with Unlock. We also said goodbye to Rachel Tynan, who previously led our work with employers and universities, and Debbie Young who managed Unlock's admin and finance for more than a decade. Nigel Parsons stepped down from the board in January 2022.



THANK YOU

Unlock exists because of you: because you share your story, because you help fund change, because you pick up the phone and ask a question.

Whether you have a criminal record, donate in support of our work, campaign with us or help raise awareness, you are helping make the world a fairer place for people with criminal records.

Thank you from us all at Unlock.

Read our annual report & accounts in full

There's much more information about what we've been up to and how we've used your kind donations to change the lives of people with criminal records. You can get all the details in our Annual Report and Accounts - year ending 31st March 2022.

[Download
annual report & accounts](#)



Donate - help us make a fairer world

Unlock is both a charity and independent of government. We push for positive change based on what matters to people with criminal records. Your donation, whatever the size, will help people to overcome everyday barriers to work, housing, insurance, travel and education.

Help us make a fairer world for people with criminal records by [making a donation](#).

