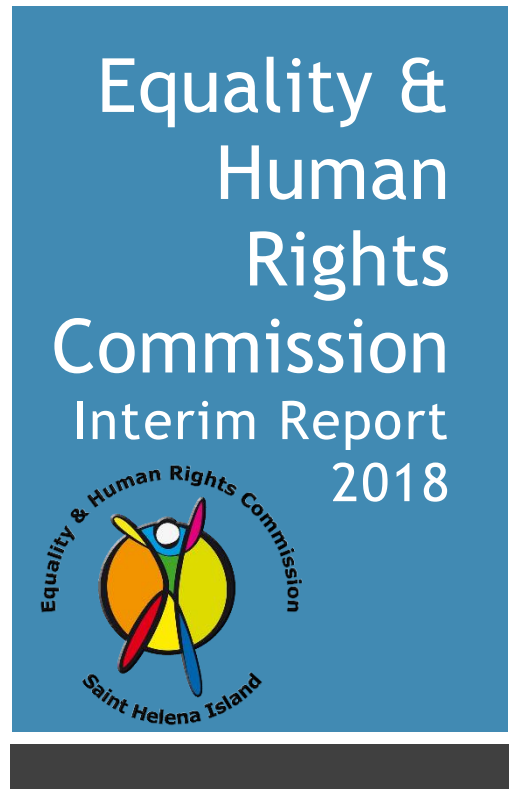


1<sup>ST</sup> APRIL 2018 – 31<sup>ST</sup> AUGUST 2018



## Overview

In the first half of this year the Commission has continued to be very busy. Enquiries have ranged from domestic abuse to access to justice and discrimination. The largest increase in request for assistance have been around social benefits, increases in the cost of living on the island and lack of availability of the cheaper goods has meant people have just not been able to afford basic food items.

The Commission has now published two Annual Reports, available to the through the Library and on our website at [www.humanrightstshelena.org](http://www.humanrightstshelena.org) and is coming to the end of its first 3 year strategic plan. So along with completing the report on our first formal Inquiry we are working hard to develop our plan for 2019-2023.

We still have our full complement of Commissioners, chaired by Cathy Harris Cranfield, Danielle Anthony is deputy chair and they are assisted by Janine Egan and Barry Francis. All the Commissioners and staff are currently engaged in distance learning through the MOOC diploma in Human Rights or the United Nations Gender training programme.

## Our Work

The Commission has had 244 new contacts in the first 5 months of the year, the majority of whom have been referred to another agency (see fig 3). 65 have issues which potentially have human rights implications and were therefore assisted and followed up by the EHRC.

The Commission continues to be concerned about and lobby on the gaps in our legislation which leave

the door open to human rights abuses:

- 🔥 Our legislation does not adequately protect the survivors of domestic abuse; domestic abuse is not an offence.
- 🔥 There is a lack of protection from sexual harassment and bullying in the private sector
- 🔥 There is no Equality Ordinance which is a failure to protect those in minority groups from discrimination in a non-governmental setting.

These gaps do not fulfil SHG's obligations under the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).

The key areas of concern remain the prison, social benefits and employment in the private sector. The lack of proper protection for employees in the private sector is particularly concerning as it leaves people open to exploitation.

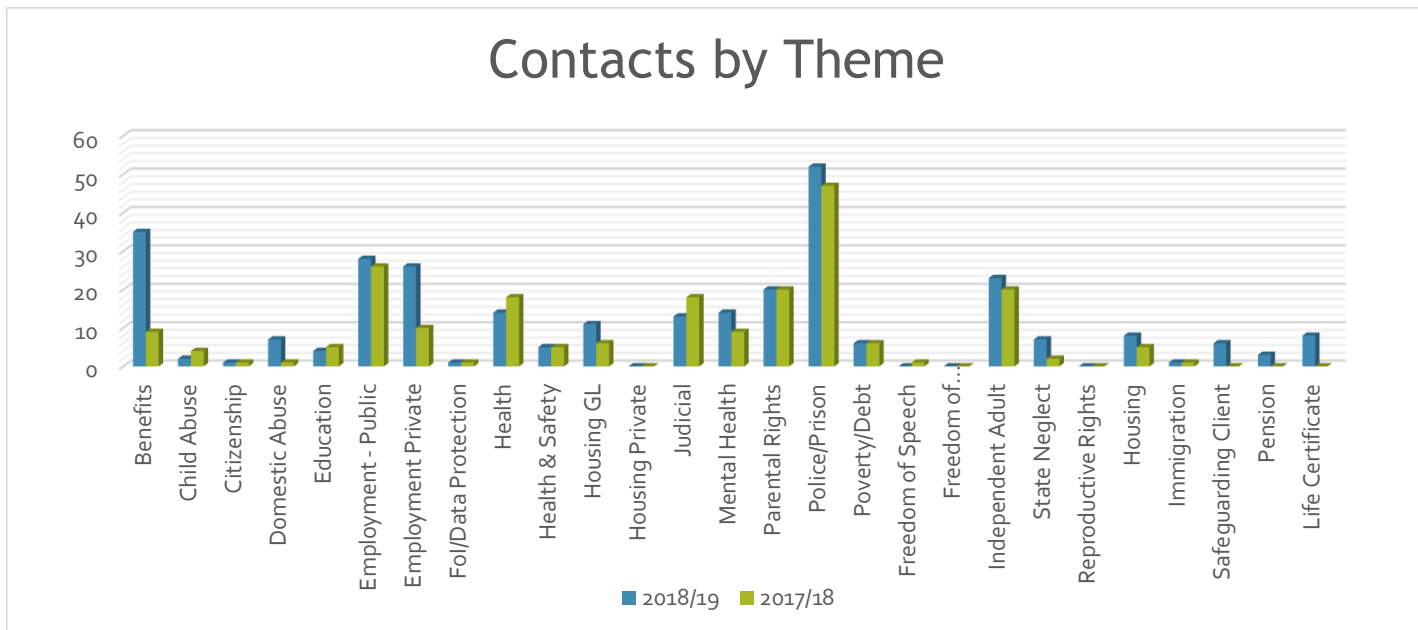
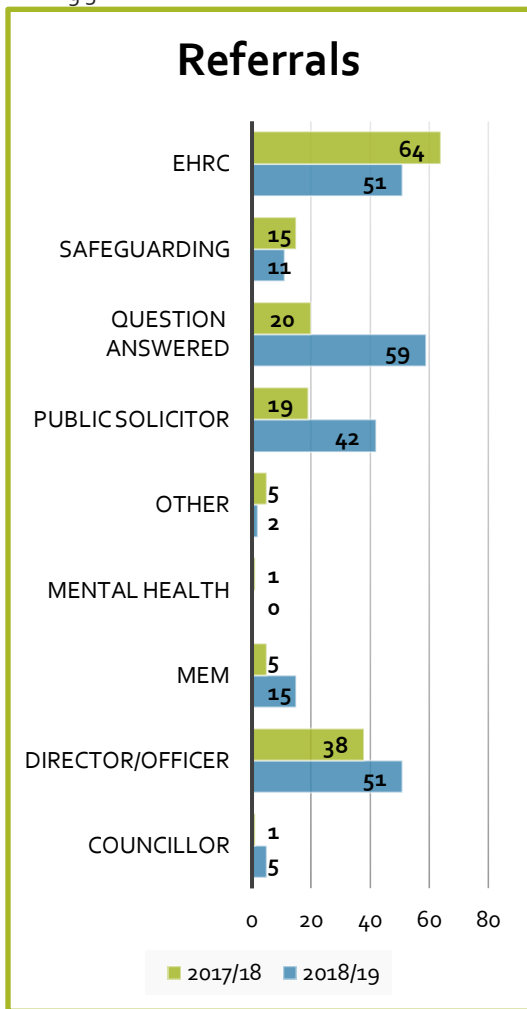


Fig 2

Fig 3



## Commitments v Achievements

The Commission committed that this financial year our priorities would be:

- 🕒 Equality Legislation, drafted and ready for Formal LegCo March 2019
- 🕒 Domestic Abuse Legislation as above
- 🕒 An increase in the number of disabled people employed in mainstream work
- 🕒 A baseline report on CEDAW and a work plan for implementation by June 2018
- 🕒 Improved Conditions at the Prison – reflected in a reduction in the number of complaints by prisoners
- 🕒 Work towards the extension of the Optional Protocol on the Convention Against Torture (OPCAT) with a timeline in place for extension
- 🕒 The implementation of a fully functioning Gender Unit by Sept 2018
- 🕒 The development of a Youth Forum to give children and young people a voice in matters that affect them and increase their participation in decision making.
- 🕒 Outreach Roadshow – Visits to the various districts, schools, CCC, Cape Villa etc. To gather information/statistics and to provide information and assistance to the general public.

This would be on top of our day to day work

- 🕒 Dealing with Contacts from the public (see above)
- 🕒 Communication and work with SHG Directorates, Public Solicitor etc.

- 🐝 Shadow report preparation
- 🐝 Half year & Annual reports to Elected Members
- 🐝 Quarterly, Period 5 and Annual report to Finance
- 🐝 Annual Audit
- 🐝 Working with the relevant directorates to highlight issues
- 🐝 Provision of information to elected members, SHG and the public
- 🐝 Developing and maintaining policies, management systems and internal communications.
- 🐝 Personal training and development

**In the first half of this year the Commission has achieved or is on track to achieving many of those commitments however due to a lack of funding we will be unable to:**

- 🐝 Develop a Youth Forum to give children and young people a voice in matters that affect them and increase their participation in decision making.
- 🐝 Run the Outreach Roadshow – Visits to the various districts, schools, CCC, Cape Villa etc. To gather information/statistics and to provide information and assistance to the general public.
- 🐝 Carry out any detailed investigations or inquiries that require a Commissioner's time.

**What we have achieved:**

- 🐝 Work has commenced on both pieces of legislation but despite the CEDAW requirement there appears to be little political will to progress it.
- 🐝 A lengthy and detailed Inquiry into the prison is almost complete.
- 🐝 Received 245 new contacts/ enquiries compared to 129 in the same period last year.
- 🐝 Written Articles/supplied information for the newspapers on various subjects.
- 🐝 Carried out research on the cost of living on St Helena which has been shared with the Social and Community Development Committee and the Social Security Review Working Group.
- 🐝 Regularly met with Safeguarding, the Public Solicitors office, Housing and the Social & Community Development Committee
- 🐝 Delivered our Annual Report
- 🐝 Almost completed developing the Gender Unit. Collection of data has started.
- 🐝 Research on various topics has been carried out for various elected members and officials.
- 🐝 The Commission commented on the proposed building regulations
- 🐝 A submission to the Foreign Affairs Committee Inquiry into the resilience of UK Overseas Territories
- 🐝 Finalised the audit for 2015/17 and submitted accounts for audit for 2017/18.
- 🐝 Written and approved four new internal policies and reviewed all policies.

