

Annual Review 2008

Transform Drug Policy Foundation

Report from the Chair

I was delighted to take over as Chair of Transform, the campaigning think tank that has led the debate on reforming drug policy in the UK for the last decade.

Transform has never allowed political expediency or fundraising to interfere with our commitment to being as open and honest in public as we are in private about the need to replace drug prohibition with regulation and control.

This principled position is now paying off, and it is an exciting time. Transform, and all our supporters, should take pride in having successfully moved drug legalisation from "Maverick to Mainstream", as the BBC's Mark Easton put it recently. With a growing number of other groups now using Transform's language to call for regulation and control, we have set the ball rolling.

With that first key step successfully achieved, our board and staff have carried out a review of our structure and the challenges we face. This has led to some organisational changes, an increase in staff, and the development of an imaginative and challenging new five-year strategy.

"The last few years have seen an extraordinary shift in thinking about this issue with increasingly mainstream figures arguing we should consider legalisation as an alternative to what they regard as the failure of the law-enforcement strategy."

BBC's Mark Easton, Radio 4 Today, "Legalise drugs: from Maverick to Mainstream"

It is clear that attaining a rational drug policy will require more than an exclusive focus on the criminal justice domain. We now need to engage with opinion formers and decision makers on a much wider basis to drive forward the political and public climate change already happening around regulation and control of drugs, until real policy change becomes inevitable. Then we will finally see the War on Drugs - which is in reality a war on people fought for political gain - coming to an end.

"Increasingly, the UK media, and ordinary people up and down the country, realise that government drug policies are not only failing, but are actually making a bad situation worse. Transform is leading the debate for more realistic and effective policies, both to reduce drug related crime, and to protect our children from its consequences."

Conservative Peer Lord Mancroft

As millions of individuals, communities, and society as a whole start reaping the huge social, economic and health benefits, people will look back on drugs prohibition in the same way they do at US alcohol prohibition, and wonder why such an appalling, senselessly destructive aberration was allowed to continue for so long.

To that end, Transform is prioritising work in three key areas:

- Highlighting and engaging with the international dimensions to drug policy
- Promoting wellbeing as the key paradigm for drug policy development
- Exposing the economic impact of prohibition based drug policies and regulation

In addition to refocusing our research and campaigning work, we have established a new expanded organisational structure, with three teams:

- Operations: Led by our Chief Executive and focusing on funding and management
- Policy and Communications: Led by Danny Kushlick, Transform founder
- Research: Led by Steve Rolles, lead author of our major publications



Dr. Paul Crawford Walker

The new strategy and structure has opened up a range of exciting possibilities for Transform, utilises the strengths of our staff, and will, I hope, enable us to maximise our impact and influence. I invite you to lend Transform your support too!

Board

Transform is a charitable foundation overseen by a board of trustees.

- Chair: Dr. Paul Crawford Walker
 Treasurer: Nathalie Griffin
 Mike Jay
 Tim Malyon
 Henry Shaftoe
 Axel Klein
 Gary Wallace
 Neil Anderson
 Karen Haas

Finances

Statement of Financial Activities for the year ended 31 March 2008

Income (£)	
Donations	87,663
Consulting	481
Bank Interest	3,871
Total Incoming Resources	92,015
Expenditure	
Salaries	81,524
Other Direct Charitable Expenditure	39,683
Accountancy	725
Administrative Expenses	4,438
Legal and Professional Fees	898
Total Resources Expended	127,268
Net (Deficit)	35,253
Total Funds at 01/04/07	90,399
Donations in Advance	38,969
Total Funds at the End of the Year	94,115

Transform Funders

Transform would like to express gratitude to all the individual donors and charitable trusts that have supported our work over the last 12 months. In particular:

- Esmée Fairbairn Foundation
- The Linnet Trust
- The Glass-House Trust
- Atlantic Philanthropies
- J Paul Getty Jr Charitable Trust
- Pilgrim Trust
- Our major donors

Transforming the Drugs Policy Climate

Publications

Transform has continued to produce ground-breaking publications to shape the drug policy debate. The most recent include:

1. After the War on Drugs: Tools for the debate. Provides the language and analysis needed to engage in the drug law reform debate with confidence and clarity
2. Drug Policy 1997-2007 – The Evidence Unspun: An in-depth critique of the Government's record on drug policy
3. Submissions to a range of Government department and expert body consultations including:

- Submission to, and briefing unspinning the Government's new drug strategy consultation document "Drugs: our community, your say"
- Department of Health: The future of tobacco control
- Department of Justice: Titan Prisons
- Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs: Review of ecstasy classification
- Department of Health: Alcohol policy consultation

Media

Transform continued to punch well above its weight in the media. Staff appeared on numerous broadcasts including repeatedly on Radio 4's flagship Today programme, Channel Four News, and the hugely popular BBC Five Live breakfast show, plus Law in Action, an hour long special by Ireland's equivalent of Newsnight, and many local radio stations.

We have also set up influential media appearances for external voices speaking in support of regulation and control of drugs, including both Julian Critchley (Ex-Director UK Anti-Drug Coordinating Unit) and Jack Cole (Law Enforcement Against Prohibition) on the Radio 4 Today programme.



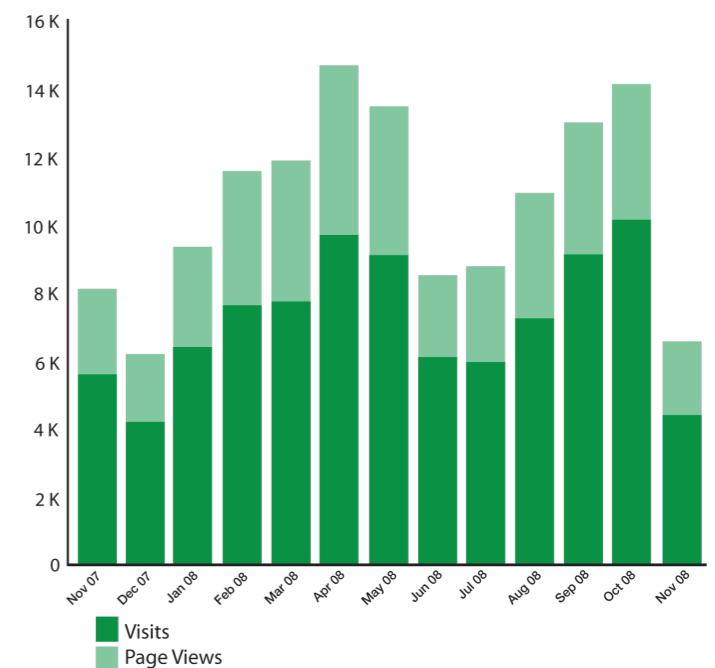
Danny Kushlick, Founder and Head of Policy and Communications

Transform has also had a significant presence in print and on-line media, with numerous articles published, hundreds of mentions and quotes in tabloids, broadsheets, periodicals, specialist media and web-outlets. We also briefed many high profile opinion writers and columnists.

Transform on-line

- The ground-breaking Transform volunteers Drupal website now has over 200 members worldwide from diverse backgrounds including academics, activists, media, and students contributing to our research, actions and other work
- The Transform Blog goes from strength to strength, now getting over 10,000 unique visitors per week, with a new mini-blog added recently
- Transform's Facebook pages have been launched
- Work on an ambitious video project is gathering voices from criminal justice, health, drugs policy and media arenas to create video products for use on-line, at conferences, parliamentary and other events, and for public use

Blog Hits



Public and Political Engagement

There is not room here to detail the huge numbers of meetings and events Transform has organised or participated in, but to give a flavour of the last year:

- Transform had its UN special consultative status ratified by the ECOSOC
- Transform participated in meetings in Vienna for the UN Commission on Narcotic Drugs and the UN's international NGO forum reviewing the UN drugs strategy
- Chatham House: Transform brought together influential figures from a spectrum of international institutions, NGOs and political parties under Chatham House rules to discuss taking the drug law reform agenda forward
- After extensive discussions with Transform staff, N. Wales Police Authority backed their Chief Constable's request for them to submit a call for legalisation/regulation to the Government's consultation on the drug strategy
- Transform supporter Lord Cobbold sponsored a debate on drug policy reform in the House of Lords
- Danny Kushlick spoke to the Liberal Democrat Alliance in the European Parliament about organising for the UN Review of the international strategy 2008/9



UN buildings, Vienna



UN Commission on Narcotic Drugs

Drugs and Health Alliance (DHA)

Transform has again shown leadership to help build a more inclusive NGO movement to shift policy away from the worst excesses of ideologically driven criminal justice and enforcement led policies, towards a more evidence based health led approach.

In particular we have led the recruitment of DHA members, successfully securing funding for and hosting the DHA Coordinator post, and helping draft the DHA submission to the government's drugs consultation. The growing membership of DHA includes the International Harm Reduction Association, Release and the UK Public Health Association.

Transform is also hosting the Drugs and Health Alliance website:
www.drugshealthalliance.net

Our Mission

Transform Drug Policy Foundation exists to promote sustainable health and wellbeing by bringing about a just, effective and humane system to regulate and control drugs at local, national and international levels.

Our Activities

- Research, analysis and innovative policy development
- Challenging government to demonstrate supporting evidence for its policies
- Promoting alternative, evidence-based policies to the public, parliamentarians, government agencies and non-governmental organisations
- Providing an informed, rational and clear voice in the public and media debate on UK and international drug policy

Our Vision

- Social justice: restoration of human rights and dignity to the marginalised and disadvantaged, and the regeneration of deprived neighbourhoods
- Reduced social costs: an end to the largest cause of acquisitive crime and street prostitution, and consequent falls in the non-violent prison population
- Reduced serious crime: dramatic curtailment of opportunities and incentives for organised and violent crime
- Public finances: benefits from discontinued drug enforcement expenditure and the taxation of regulated drugs
- Public health: creation of an environment in which drug use can be managed and drug users can lead healthier lives
- Ethics: adherence to ethical standards and principles, including fair trade, in the manufacture, supply and distribution of drugs
- Reduced war and conflict: an end to the illegal drug trade's contribution to conflict and political instability in producer and transit countries

The Future

In the coming year, Transform will continue to lead the drugs debate in the UK, and increasingly on the international stage, through cutting edge campaigning, policy and media work.

We will also underpin our efforts, inform the public, educate the media and policy makers, and expose hypocritical politicians through producing hard-hitting, well referenced reports and briefings. These will include:

Blueprint for a Regulated Drug Market

As drug prohibition's failure becomes more and more apparent, the debate is moving on to what should replace it. Transform is now leading the way internationally by engaging with academics and experts worldwide to explore the options, and will soon publish a landmark report detailing how a regulated and controlled drug market would work in practice.

The Costs and Benefits of Prohibition vs Regulation

The UK Government has refused to carry out a cost-benefit analysis of current or alternative drug policies, because they know it would show how beneficial a move to regulation and control would be. As the then Home Office Minister Bob Ainsworth MP said when asked about an audit; "Why would we do that unless we were going to legalise drugs?". In the absence of government funded research, Transform will publish its own.

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