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The Future of GBC

In May of this year GBC took a break from all outward facing activities, including delivering training workshops and coordinating legal observers. For the last couple of years GBC has been run by 5-10 people, handling an unsustainable workload. We had long exceeded our organisational capacity and we knew something had to change. At our recent strategy weekend, we decided to move to a new structure based on our original approach – this applies both to our organisation and to the work we do.

GBC will now focus exclusively on devising and delivering trainings and producing resources relating to two areas: protest rights and legal observing. Instead of being a single 'GBC', we will operate as the GBC Trainings Collective and the GBC Resources Collective, with other work being taken up by other groups. Part of this change is to reduce our organisational load by separating out different areas of the work that we (and other legal support groups) do, but also we hope that this makes it easier for other people to get involved in this work.

LO call outs for demonstrations and back office support will be performed by a new organisation, the Independent Legal Observer Network (ILON), which will include some people involved in GBC, and many others involved in other organisations. While we will continue to train people to act as legal observers, GBC will no longer be coordinating or supporting LOs directly.

Our telephone helpline and advice service will continue to operate but will be run by a separate collective of people.

Get Involved!

Legal support work has always been important to empower people to take political action and protect them while doing so. The GBC crew is quite small, made up entirely of volunteers, and (as always) we are looking for more people to get involved in the work we do.

We are excited to go forward and we invite you to join us.

The GBC Trainings and Resources Collectives welcome new volunteers to work on our trainings and resources. If you fancy being part of this, send us an email at legal@greenandblackcross.org and we'll tell you how to get involved.

The Independent Legal Observer Network welcome new volunteers to help coordinating and supporting LOs at demonstrations across the country. This is not a GBC project and while we'll help it off the ground, it needs volunteers to take it up and run with it. If you're interested, drop them a line at legal-observer-network@protonmail.com.

The Phone Helpline & Advice Collective welcome new volunteers to help answer queries, your help to offer advice and support is much needed – email legal-observer-network@protonmail.com or phone the helpline.

What Now?

– We hope to roll out new and improved Know Your Rights and Legal Observer trainings over the next few months. If you have a training request you can email gbctrainings@protonmail.com to lodge it and we'll get back to you as soon as we're arranging trainings again.

– If you are organising a demonstration and would like to put in a request for legal observers, please email legal-observer-network@protonmail.com or call the legal support helpline on 07946 541511.

– If you have an urgent question about your rights while protesting or taking direct action, please call the legal helpline on 07946 541511. Alternatively, see the guides section of our website greenandblackcross.org/guides/#Protest_Laws

– Or get in contact with one of our recommended solicitors: netpol.org/solicitors/ for legal advice