



annual review

2014-2016

**Welcome to the
Compass Annual
Review 2014-2016**

The world of politics is
changing fast - and we
are changing with it

Join Compass and help make a good society a reality



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annual review

2014-2016

Compass has changed a lot over the last two years. We are serious about the need to transform our economy and politics, so we have to take ourselves seriously. From our campaigns and events, to our publications and thinking, we are becoming more strategic and more systemic in what we do. We want to be less about chasing today's headline and more about digging the deep foundations of ideas and organisations for a good society.

We have put together this short review to keep you up to date with what we have been working on and what we're up to next.

Compass is a unique organisation with links to both grassroots activists and to progressive Westminster politicians. Over the past two years, through events like **Change:HOW?** and **Radical Hope**, and with big, creative campaigns like **Move On Trident**, we have demonstrated that when horizontal and vertical politics meet, meaningful change can start to happen. Over the next year we will continue this work, experimenting with new ways of doing politics through campaigns like **Good London** and **Good Europe** to test our ideas, values and theories of transformation. We will keep building a network capable of creating a Good Society.

“What I love about Compass is meeting so many insightful people who are open about the need to re-engage with left wing and progressive values and to change the narrative from one of despair to one of hope and determination, where communities count. **Nick McMaster**, local organiser in Brighton & Hove”

meet the team

Since the last annual review, Compass has a whole new office team. Please meet:



1. Clare Coatman - Campaigns and Ideas Organiser

Clare gets Compass' ideas out into the world and helps make sure we work strategically. She also works on website content, events and campaigns.

2. Ayeisha Thomas-Smith - Operations Officer

Ayeisha ensures the smooth running of the organisation, organises events and looks after everything to do with our new membership system, NationBuilder.

3. Jacqui Howard - National Organiser

Jacqui ensures that Compass' work is strategic, member-led and that we stay true to our values. She co-ordinates our projects and campaigns, works with local Compass groups and organises events and workshops.

4. Neal Lawson - Chair

Neal works with the Management Committee and staff to help direct Compass, work. He believes that politics needs a new way of thinking and organising.

The four of us don't do it alone. Alongside us are a whole host of activists, thinkers and campaigners, the Management Committee, Associates, local group organisers, volunteers and so many more who make what we do possible with their commitment and wisdom.



values

Over the past two years, Compass has been working hard to put our values of democracy, equality, sustainability and pluralism into practice - with kindness, empathy, openness, inclusivity, and democracy at the heart of what we do.

Politics is not just something that happens in Westminster, it's what happens in our communities, parks, workplaces, at home, with our friends, neighbours and it's deeply personal. The ways we have these conversations and engage is as important as that we do it. So Compass is experimenting and trying to be the change we want to see. Our meetings and events have become a lot more participatory – we know real wisdom resides not with the few but with all. We make mistakes, and we have a long way to go - we will keep challenging you and ourselves along the way.

We have also been working hard to ensure we create space for marginalised groups to have their say. Our big national events like Utopia and Change:HOW? were our most diverse events yet and challenged what political events are by bringing in the arts, activists and people from all backgrounds.

We've started to have difficult and desperately needed conversations with members and supporters about how Compass can better understand and challenge structural and systemic oppressions – from racism and sexism to ableism – and how we move from discussion to practice. If you want to get involved in any of these projects, and especially around challenging power & privilege, please email Jacqui. We have gender quotas on our Management Committee, blogs, events and publications to counter the under-representation of women in the world of politics and campaigning.

There is still a long way to go to ensure Compass lives by its values, especially in BAME representation and making Compass genuinely accessible to all - from our website to our events, publications and campaigns. We recognise this as an ongoing challenge and will be working hard over the next year. We hope you will work with us.

creating alternatives

Compass has been creating space for real change with progressive campaigns and initiatives over the past two years including:

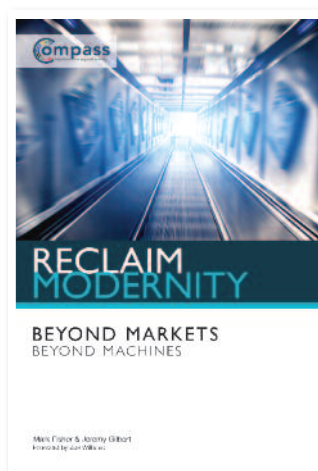
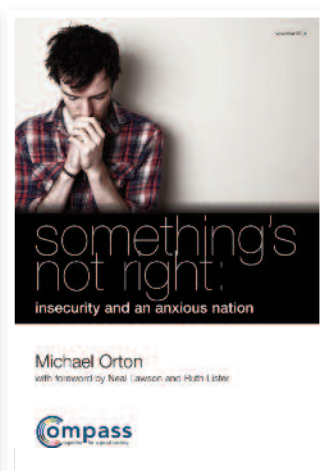
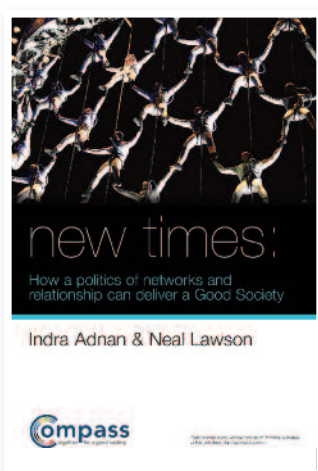
- **Trident: It's Time to Move On** - A campaign to stop the replacement of the UK's Trident missile system.
- **Citizen's Income** – an idea whose time has come. We've held events and consultations with researchers, politicians and activists. The report is coming soon. In the meantime, watch Neal put forward the case on BBC's Newsnight.
- **21st Century Hegemony** - A significant project exploring how to build a progressive hegemony to replace the current one. The Osborne Supremacy was just the start. Soon there will be a report on what political parties could look like in the 21st century.
- **All On Board** - A campaign bringing together many organisations for a publicly owned and publicly accountable railway system that puts the needs of people and the environment first.
- **Secure and Free** - the notion of insecurity to explore a world without poverty. A report is coming soon and we will continue exploring this in the year ahead.
- **Big Education** - Big Education: learning for the 21st century is a vision for education and the result of two years of conversations with students, teachers, parents, experts, members and supporters.
- **Good London** - A conversation and shared story about what the city of London could be if it put all of us first, working with civil society groups, politicians and citizen's of London.
- **Good Europe** - Asking what is the purpose of the EU in the 21st century? How do we create a good Europe?



publications

Our publications have again been leading the way in progressive thought and ideas. Highlights include:

- **New Times** - A discussion of the massive migration of agency from the vertical to the horizontal, and how it's transforming society and politics.
- **Riding the New Wave** – The valuable lessons feminism can teach Labour about political participation and engagement outside the mainstream.
- **Something's Not Right** - Shining a light on the precarious, insecure and anxious state of our country.
- **Reclaim Modernity** - We don't have to fear modernity, or capitulate to it. It doesn't have to be the acceleration of everything that's bad about the present. It could actually be better.
- **Downfall** - A post 2015 election defeat analysis of what Labour must do now.



other highlights

- **Progressive Alliance** - Every month we host a breakfast event with progressive organisations, thinkers and activists to connect our work and grow the progressive community.
- **Local groups meet-up** – In November, members of seven local groups met up to connect, learn from each other and build for the future.
- **Trident Move on Campaign in the news** - We broke through on Channel 4 news, ITV, in the Guardian and the Independent.
- We're continuing our work building progressive alliances inside and outside of parliament, working with people like Caroline Lucas MP, Lisa Nandy MP and Jon Trickett MP, alongside grassroots campaigns, think tanks, NGOs and academics. The fruition of this can be seen, for example, in the Trident campaign with Greens, Labour, Plaid and SNP working together to stop its replacement. The key to this is Proportional Representation – an idea we will continue to campaign for.



thoughts & writing

Our blog continues to grow in readership these past two years, and has consistently produced thought provoking debates. Some of our most read pieces include:

- Sheffield's Radical Hope Conference
- How can Labour break the Osborne supremacy?
- A new Labour leader – thoughts from the progressive movement?
- Post-election statement: finding radical hope
- Scotland: a light that will never go out

You can access all of our past blogs and if you have a piece you would like to see published on our blog please email Clare. Generally blog posts are no more than 500 words long and we are particularly looking for female and/or BAME writers.



local groups

Local Compass groups are dedicated to building a Good Society in local areas. They meet to have debates, discussion, campaign, and to connect with like-minded people. Over the past two years, new local Compass groups have formed and there have been exciting initiatives and events from existing groups. In 2015, Compass held over 60 local group events, up from 12 the previous year.

If you want to start your own local group please get in touch with Jacqui in the office. Some of the recent highlights include:

- The Birmingham Compass group has held a series of workshops on public narrative, building an alternative to austerity and movement building with guest speaker Zoe Williams.



- We held our very first Compass local organisers meet-up to build community and help each other learn the skills necessary to create a good society – from understanding power & privilege to facilitation and communications. Over the next year, we will develop more skill-shares and trainings with local organisers and continue building outside of London.



national events

We've held hugely successful, exciting, thought-provoking, national Compass events.

In 2015, we hosted **Change:HOW?** - a political festival bringing together over 600 participants with 100 politicians, artists, musicians, poets, writers, thinkers, activists and campaigners from the UK, Denmark, Spain and beyond. They all had one thing in common – they are people making change happen. **Have a look** and get your small doses of hope.

“For once all the different aspects of my working life were in one place! Innovation meets politics. Theory meets practice. More of this please.” Charlotte Millar, Co-founder, the Finance Innovation Lab & Campaign Lab

We tested new ground with **Utopia** – a sold out night in the main space of the iconic Roundhouse, in collaboration with artist Penny Woolcock. Fifteen speakers shared their stories of struggle, oppression, hope and their visions for change. Speakers included Sian Berry from the Green Party, Amina Gichinga from Take Back the City, author and columnist



Owen Jones, speakers from Podemos and Syriza, poet Anthony Anaxagorou and activist group London Latinxs. Catch up on all the [inspiring stories](#).

“Utopia was amazing! It gave us, participants from different backgrounds, the opportunity to come together to share ideas of the type of society we want to live in. It also allowed a better understanding of the plans that we all have for the future and ideas on how to work together. The event was very inspiring and it helped us to realise that there are alternative ways to talk about politics and bring about change.” Tatiana Garavito, The London Latinxs

The months post-election were a grim time for UK politics. People across the UK are trying to deal with the consequences as the NHS is dismantled, inequality and poverty soar, and many hard fought for rights are eroded. It's so much bigger than just Labour losing - the election showed up the complete inadequacy of the electoral system: the need for electoral reform and a complete reimagining of political parties and social movements in the 21st Century.



Radical Hope was about just that – hope. A week after the election, 400 people came together to listen to speakers like Zoe Williams, Jon Cruddas, Caroline Lucas, Jon Trickett, feminist economist Yuan Yang and John Harris. Using open space technology, we participated in conversations ranging from open tribes, social movements to feminism and young people in politics. Inspiring Radical Hope meetings were held across the UK.

“I had a sense of people really wanting to engage with otherness and difference, rather than being contemptuous of it, and that gave me a lot of hope.” – Harriet C, Compass member

our future

Our future must be to help organise and coordinate the ideas and institutions that have the capacity to make transformative change happen; the visions, the programme and the theory of change to make a good society. We will defend what we can – but our goal is to make a real alternative both desirable and feasible. Society is changing, from the bottom up people are finding new ways to work and think collaboratively and organise. We need to make sure there is potential to connect to the power of the state to make meaningful change possible. The old ways of doing politics – solely in the hope that one party or one movement can carry the burden of change – disappear in the rear view mirror.

The future is something we must understand, own and shape. Compass, with your help, is at the cutting edge of this. But we have to do more and better!



online community

In recent years our online presence has grown significantly. Our [Twitter account](#) has gained over 14k followers, making it one of the most followed progressive accounts in Britain. Our [Facebook page](#) has also continued to grow and nearly 1,000 comments were posted on our blogs. We look forward to more fascinating discussions and conversations to come.

governance & finances

Compass has an A+ rating on [Who Funds You?](#), which means we disclose our annual income, display funding information on our website, and name our funders and how much they give us. Our most recent financial report can be read below.

Ensuring the financial sustainability of Compass remains a tough challenge. We don't just want money for projects, but we need funds to build a movement for change - if you can contribute even a little every month then it helps us remain independent and focussed on the big picture of changing the world. Please [donate](#) or [join](#) as a member.

management committee

Thank you to our brilliant Management Committee (MC), chaired by Baroness Ruth Lister, for their engagement, advice, and commitment over the past year and a half. Our members vote in the MC every two years and this helps determine the strategic direction of Compass. A full list of the MC along with short bios is [on the website](#). If you'd like to join our MC, keep an eye out later in the summer for elections.



associates

Compass achieves a lot because of our amazing members and supporters who engage, research, write, campaign and volunteer with us. Last year, we initiated **Compass Associates** to help develop the Compass network and share in the ever-expanding workload of the organisation.

get involved

Join Compass and help make a good society a reality

Visit our website

<http://www.compassonline.org.uk/join/>

Like us on Facebook

<http://www.facebook.com/compassgoodsociety>

Follow us on Twitter

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These are just some of the things we did in 2014-16. It's a lot for an organisation with only three full time members of staff. We can achieve so much and give a political home to you because so many people volunteer their time, energy and experience. Calls for a new politics are coming from all directions now - it's essential we keep on innovating and experimenting in the search for a better politics and a Good Society.

Thank you to everyone who makes Compass what it is. We look forward to campaigning, thinking and working with you!

Jacqui, Clare, Ayeisha, Neal and the whole Compass team



treasurer's report

Our finances have continued to strengthen, with a surplus being achieved on the General Fund for the fourth year in succession. This has enabled us to achieve a positive balance, albeit small, on the General Fund for the first time in several years.

We have also received generous donations to our Development Fund from Ruth Lister, which has provided us with a fund of over £57,000. We are now in a position to increase our investment in developing our membership income and engagement over the next few years.

At present we remain heavily dependent on project funding, and while this has been strong during the year (and continues to be strong in 2015-16), this is a less reliable source of income than a regular income from members. Increasing this will increase the long-term financial stability of Compass, as well as giving us more capacity to pursue our own strategy independent of the priorities of funders.

Can I thank everyone who has contributed to Compass financially and encourage other members and supporters to do so - however small or large the amount you can afford, it all comes together to build our organisation.

Mark Cooke, 7th February 2016

COMPASS income and expenditure for the years ended 31 March

	2015 £	2014 £
General Fund		
Member income		
Members' subscriptions	29,849	29,022
Members' donations	28,052	30,178
Event income	14,080	11,213
Grant income	153,153	153,482
Other Income	8,500	7,839
Total Income	233,634	231,734
Staff costs		
Payroll costs	88,982	62,660
Consultancy - Chair's service	60,000	60,000
VAT on Consultancy	12,000	12,000
Other staff costs	6,260	7,101
Office costs	28,254	33,258
Activity costs		
Event costs	18,794	16,691
Publication costs	4,949	1,695
Project Costs	5,275	2,560
Other costs		
Bank Charges	4,160	1,487
Fundraising costs	0	5,005
Membership recruitment	0	3,245
Other costs	4,154	1,987
Total Expenditure	232,828	207,689

Surplus/(deficit) on General Fund	806	24,045
Development Fund		
Balance Brought forward	16,480	23,900
Income	50,000	0
Expenditure	(8,610)	(7,420)
Balance remaining	57,870	16,480
Total net surplus for year	42,196	16,625

Balance Sheet as at 31 March	2015	2014
	£	£
Debtors and accrued income	29,24	34,932
Cash	47,20	34,797
Total Assets	76,456	69,729
Creditors	18,371	15,273
Deferred Income	-	38,567
Total Liabilities	18,371	53,840
Net Assets /(Liabilities)	58,085	15,889
Representing:		
General Fund	215	(591)
Development Fund	57,87	16,480
Net Assets /(Liabilities)	58,085	15,889

major funders

Individuals and organisations providing funding of £5,000 and over during the year.

Funder	Project	2014-15
Betterworld Ltd	Core funding	£15,000
Earth Resources Research Ltd	Red/ Green Alliance	£15,200
Frank Lowe	Core funding	£20,000
Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust	Living Wage Commission	£23,700
Joseph Rowntree Reform Trust	English Votes for English Laws project	£12,000
Poldham Puckham	Trident: It's Time to Move On	£5,000
Ruth Lister	Development Fund	£50,000
Teddington	The State in the 21st Century	£13,000
Trevor Chinn	The State in the 21st Century	£5,000
Trust for London	Movement Review	£7,500
TSSA	Rail Campaign	£6,633
TUC	Rail Campaign	£10,000
Webb Memorial Trust	Social Security Project	£8,400
		£191,433

This information is provided in the interests of funding transparency. We are equally grateful to the many members and supporters who contributed smaller amounts.

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