

On behalf of everyone at the Good Governance Institute I would like to wish you all a very Merry Christmas.

GGI exists to support the leaders of organisations such as the NHS and other public or third sector organisations to ensure the health and wellbeing of citizens. Our vision is to create a better, fairer world. 2020 has been an eventful year for GGI. It has been a privilege to support the organisations that rose to the challenge of the coronavirus pandemic.

I am proud of all the achievements of the growing team at GGI.

We wasted no time in making our advisory service free of charge until March 2021.

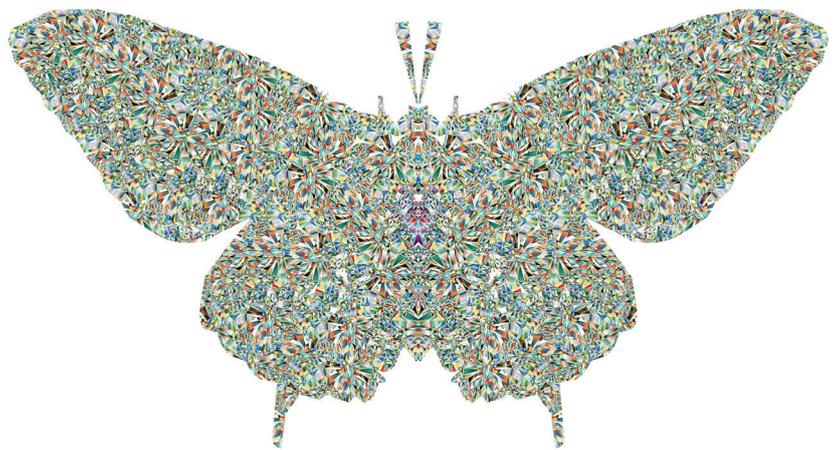
We quickly established networks of non-executive directors and the chairs of mental health trusts – both of which are ongoing and still attracting up to 80 colleagues at our weekly webinars. These give our health service colleagues an opportunity to share their experiences and ideas and they have created bonds that we hope will continue long into the future.

We supported the development and launch of the Seacole Group, a network of black and minority ethnic non-executive directors in the NHS with one vision: that NHS Boards reflect the ethnic diversity of patients and communities they serve.

From the start of the first UK lockdown on 23 March, GGI published 100 bulletins in 100 working days, giving practical advice on a range of topics that included lessons learnt from previous pandemics, how to take quick minutes and run virtual meetings, the new challenges facing councils, housing and art sector organisations, how to adapt the role of nurses, doctors, directors and executive teams. We also published guest bulletins by organisations offering legal advice, innovations in flexible property use and appropriate digital solutions. We highlighted the need for kindness and empathy. We led on the need to take action when early data showed the disparity in health outcomes among BAME people in our communities and we were encouraged by the feedback from boards that used the bulletin series to steer their organisations through the many changes.

The total wordcount of the bulletin series exceeded 90,000, the same as J.R.R Tolkin's *The Hobbit*, and represents a truly remarkable achievement.

As September approached, our thoughts turned to our annual Festival of Governance. If the coronavirus pandemic taught us anything, it is that we cannot predict the future, but we can approach it with an open mind and a lot of creativity. Once again, the GGI team stepped up and created four weeks of digital events. We were zoomed into the kitchens, home studies and dining rooms of colleagues across the country who participated in workshops on diversity, community interplay, digital humanism and modern governance, all through the lens of Renaissance 2.0 for 2020. The Festival was a look at what needs to change and how it could practically be achieved.





A by-product of staging our sixth annual Festival of Governance virtually was that GGI was able to transform through a lot of experimentation, research, learning and advice. The Festival was a great success, welcoming 380 guests and culminating in our annual lecture, delivered this year by Rob Whiteman, Chief Executive of the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy, who explored the blurred lines between government, governance, the third sector and the public sector, with an audience dressed in pink to express solidarity with all those who have been made to feel different.

This work, together with the ongoing pressures of home-working, hosting a further 92 one-off online events, client work and the ongoing internal transformations, hardly left us with time to produce the 200-page 2020 Review. But it was not an opportunity to be missed. The festival of governance tagline, Good Governance because it is time to think again, contextualised the chaos of 2020 by inviting readers to embark on the GGI time machine and travel back to Renaissance Italy, to 17th century London and 18th century Lisbon, and to New York in the 1980s before returning to the present day, in a series of creative vignettes offering a fresh perspective for today's readers. It was our biggest and most ambitious Review yet. It received incredibly positive feedback and if you have not yet received one, I would encourage you to order your copy by contacting the team as it serves as a unique memento of a momentous year.

Preparations for 2021 have also been in development throughout the year.

We launched the GGI Faculty, a group of 100 friends with a diverse range of skills and experience. They have committed to a two-year programme to increase the value and impact of good governance. We want the Faculty to develop as an active community of interest that meets the need to think differently and collaborate in a fast-changing world.

We're in the process of building the newly formed GGI Academy, with our first mass training events delivered for clients on all aspects of good governance.

The National Commission continues to explore the contribution governance could and should make to the long-term future of the public sector in the UK. And it continues to host a series of thought-provoking events bringing together thought leaders to explore the big governance issues of our time – including leadership, place and digital.

To deliver these new services we have had to evolve as an organisation, transforming ourselves into a digital-by-design agency. While many around us were furloughing staff or downsizing, we have grown during 2020, adding new consultancy expertise and communication specialists to address our clients' changing needs. We have also been working on our new website, which will launch early in the new year. And we have grown our associate team too.

To address these needs we launched eight new service lines to help our clients in the best, most effective and ethical ways. These are: governance and recovery, board development, reviews, digital, engagement, people and investigations, public protection, and sustainability and systems.

2020 has been an eventful year at the Good Governance Institute. It has been a privilege to support our NHS and other public or third sector organisations as people all over the country did their part to rise to the year's many challenges. And we thank all of our clients and fellow travellers who have stepped up to the challenge with us.

In closing I would like to take the opportunity of this Christmas message to join the world in expressing admiration for the work done by frontline health workers. 2020 is the International Year of the Nurse and when we say thank you and applaud their service, we do that while remembering the sacrifice these heroes have made for all of us.

Professor Andrew Corbett-Nolan
Chief Executive, GGI