

# LiverpoolLaw

February 2021

Liverpool  Law Society

The magazine for the legal sector in  
Merseyside and the North West

## LGBT+ History Month



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24th February

24th March

21st April

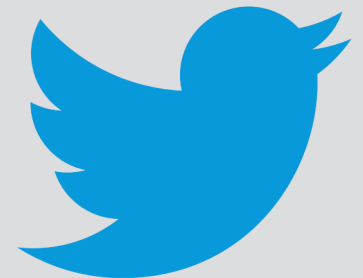
26th May

24th June

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This month's front cover was taken by Jason Leung on Unsplash



Liverpool Law Society Magazine is produced by and for Liverpool Law Society Members. This is our opportunity to share our news, events and celebrations with our friends in the legal community.

All members' contributions to Liverpool Law are warmly welcomed. Please send your article (and photo captions where possible) or request for further information, or assistance to the editor at [editor@liverpoollawsociety.org.uk](mailto:editor@liverpoollawsociety.org.uk)

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## Welcome to the February 2021 edition of Liverpool Law

**Jennifer Powell**  
[editor@liverpoollawsociety.org.uk](mailto:editor@liverpoollawsociety.org.uk)

I'm fearful of writing about the pandemic as things changed so dramatically between the time of writing my last article and our publication date (!). But there's just no getting away from it is there?! We remain at home for the foreseeable and our children may return to school on 8 March. I admire you all trying to achieve some form of home schooling whilst also trying to work yourselves. I say 'try' twice as that's all we can do, try our best.

So, how are you all coping? Please be honest. I feel quite lucky in one respect as my daughter is still in nursery, but with cases rising and new strains appearing I also fear whether this is the best place for her. Added to this is my worry that she is also with my parents two days a week and what if she unknowingly passes the virus onto them? It's enough to make your head spin.

We have so many movers and shakers this month, which is so reassuring to see in this current climate and such a brave step. I'm sure that joining a new team, without actually seeing anyone in the flesh must be quite a strange feeling. Even more so if you

are moving into a different area of law and have the confidence dip that naturally comes with this. My admiration goes to our trainees during COVID and the approaching SQE qualification (also detailed in this month's magazine.) You are really venturing uncharted waters, but if this is the future of our work environment what a way to learn the ropes and become future leaders.

I'm sure however you are all feeling you aren't alone. Our magazine again features the amazing services from the Samaritans and Lawcare, they are there to help so please use them and don't suffer in silence. Get in touch and I'm sure there will be a friendly virtual face or voice on the end of the phone who can help you.

In the meantime wrap up, enjoy the outdoors as much as you can and check in on your friends, family and colleagues. We are all in this together and we will get through it.

**Jennifer Powell**  
**Editor**  
[editor@liverpoollawsociety.org.uk](mailto:editor@liverpoollawsociety.org.uk)

## DIARY DATES

For further information on any of these events, please view our website or contact the Society.

Due to the coronavirus the following forthcoming meetings and events will be online to maintain safe distancing:

|                  |  |
|------------------|--|
| 09/02/2021 12:30 | General Committee                              |
| 10/02/2021 13:00 | Family Business Sub-Committee                  |
| 16/02/2021 13:00 | Editorial Sub-Committee                        |
| 23/02/2021 12:30 | Finance & Policy Sub-Committee                 |
| 24/02/2021 13:00 | In-House Lawyers Sub-Committee                 |
| 25/02/2021 13:00 | Non-Contentious Business Sub-Committee         |
| 25/02/2021 13:00 | Access to Justice in Liverpool Project meeting |

## Editorial Committee Dates

All meetings start at 1pm

Tue 16/02/2021  
Tue 16/03/2021  
Tue 06/04/2021  
Tue 18/05/2021  
Tue 15/06/2021  
Tue 20/07/2021  
Tue 17/08/2021  
Tue 15/09/2021  
Tue 19/10/2021  
Tue 16/11/2021



# Committee Profiles

**Nina Sahu**

**Chair of the Equality Diversity and Inclusion  
Sub Committee**

Nina Sahu is a Senior Associate in the health litigation team at Hill Dickinson and specialises in defending claims against the NHS. Nina was born and raised grew up in Southport and went to the University of Manchester to study. She trained at Pannone & Partners in Manchester, returning to Merseyside in 2004 and has worked at various firms in the region acting for both claimants and defendants in the clinical negligence field.

Nina joined the newly formed EDI Committee last year. She says "I was prompted to get involved after reading about the BLM movement and the discrimination some young people are up against which really hit home. As an asian woman I felt that I should become more pro-active to help to improve the situation for young people coming into the profession. I also have two daughters aged 11 and 14 and I want them to live in a better world."

Nina became Chair at the beginning of the year and one of the aims of the Committee is to produce a best practice guide for member firms.

Nina hopes that during the course the of year they will be able to run some events highlighting EDI issues, whether that be equal pay, becoming an ally and what the legal profession can do to become more inclusive.

Nina enjoys cooking, spending time with her family, reading and puzzles. She adds "We used to enjoy family holidays and I am looking forward to the time when we can all travel again."



**Nina Sahu**



Vauxhall Community Law & Information Centre

Are proud to announce

**The Tommy Monaghan Bereavement Support service.**

Which includes a Bereavement Information Pack produced in remembrance of our late Board member to offer guidance on all matters related to bereavement.


Our pack covers:

- What to do in the Event of a Death
- Funerals
- Administration
- Money and Finances
- Bereavement Advice
- Legal Support

Visit <https://www.vauxhalllawcentre.org.uk/bereavement-support-and-advice/> to download a copy of the latest pack.

We are also helping families with assessing any benefit entitlements or any debt issues arising from bereavement.

Contact us at: Tel: 0151 482 2540 or  
Email: [advice@vauxhalllawcentre.org.uk](mailto:advice@vauxhalllawcentre.org.uk)



**Environmental Law:  
Climate Change in the UK**

Friday 5th March, 10am-11am  
With Mark Taylor & Sally Redman

**\*\*This event is FREE to members\*\***

Governments, markets and regulators have been reacting to the reality of climate change. This session will look at the UK's response to the threat of climate change and how commercial property owners and investors may need to react to changing requirements and policies, to make businesses and property more energy efficient and climate resilient.

Including:

- Introduction on climate change: accelerating global events
- Paris Agreement: top level overview
- TCFD: What is it and their recommendations
  - Better Building Partnership
  - UK Green Finance Strategy
- Climate Change Risks (as set out by TCFD) for UK
  - Physical
  - Transition
  - Liability and Reputational

**CLICK HERE TO BOOK**



# Consultation Papers

The following sub-committee of Liverpool Law Society is considering responding to these consultation papers. If any member would like to send in a comment, please do so to [committees@liverpoollawsociety.org.uk](mailto:committees@liverpoollawsociety.org.uk)

Regulatory  
**Draft strategy, and our 2021-22 business plan**  
5th February

Criminal & Family Business  
**Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) Call for Evidence**  
19th February

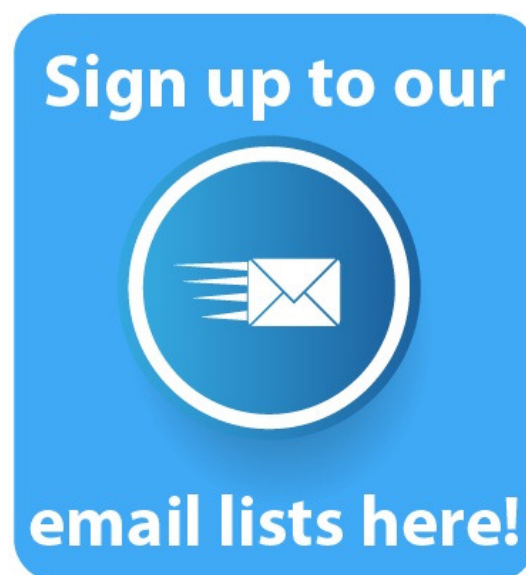
Employment Law  
**Measures to reform post-termination non-compete clauses in contracts of employment**  
26th February

Employment Law  
**Measures to extend the ban on exclusivity clauses in contracts of employment**  
26th February

# Newsletter Sign Up

Subscribe to our email mailing lists to keep up to date with the latest news, legal training programme and other events from Liverpool Law Society.

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Liverpool Law Society

**Effective management of short-term and long-term sickness absence: how to identify and reduce the risks**

Wednesday 24th March, 1pm - 3pm

It is inevitable that employees will sometimes be unwell and unable to work. However, high levels of sickness absence can lead to low morale amongst staff, reduced customer satisfaction, missed deadlines, and may indicate that there is something about the workplace or a particular job that is contributing to employees' poor health.

**Emma Tegerdine will cover:**

- Monitoring sickness absence
- Reasonable adjustments and sick leave
- Holidays and sickness absence
- Returning to work while signed off sick
- When to request medical evidence
- Misconduct while on sick leave
- Permanent health insurance
- Claims a sick employee might bring
- Notice pay for sick employees
- A review of key case law

[CLICK HERE TO BOOK](#)

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**Cohabitation: Law and Practice**

Monday 15th March, 1.30pm - 4pm

The course will consider the various factors surrounding advising cohabitants in family law matters. It will be of benefit to those delegates who seek to become more confident with how to run/defend a case through the courts involving trusts of land and Schedule 1 Children Act Matters.

**Safda Mahmood will cover:**

|  |   |
|--|---|
| • Joint Tenancies and Tenancies in Common                            | • Civil Procedure Rules   |
| • Resulting and Constructive Trusts                                  | • Practice following Stack v. Dowden, Kernott v. Jones and Barnes v. Phillips |
| • Trusts of Land and Appointment of Trustees Act 1996 – Applications | • Schedule 1 Children Act Applications  |
| • Estoppel   | • Case law Update   |
| • Drafting and Procedure   | • Compliance with Court Directions and Procedure                              |

Core Competencies: B

[CLICK HERE TO BOOK](#)



# LGBT+ History Month

LGBT+ History Month is an annual month-long event in February which aims to observe the history of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender history and the history of the gay rights and related civil rights movements. LGBT+ History Month opens up honest conversations about what it is like to be LGBT+.

As a member of the LGBT+ community, I have been able to witness first-hand how far we have come in terms of equality. I am able to celebrate at Pride parades, I am able to marry my partner legally and I am allowed to adopt. Analysing the history of the LGBT+ history is important for me to appreciate the sacrifices that others have made, which allow me to live my life the way I do today. Unfortunately, despite this, discrimination towards the LGBT+ community is still very much prevalent in our society and the work must continue. In the UK, one in five LGBT people have experienced a hate crime or incident based on their sexual orientation and/or gender identity in the last 12 months and two in five trans people have experienced a hate crime or incident because of their gender identity in the last 12 months.

I have had numerous incidents in the past and one that sticks in my mind is when I was working at a bar part-time whilst I completed my law degree. A customer entered the bar and when I asked what he would like, he proceeded to say his order with 'hold the AIDS' and then asked to be served by another member of the team as he didn't want to 'catch' anything. Imagine not being able to even work your part-time job without being discriminated against. Unfortunately, this is a trivial case compared to what other members of the LGBT+ community have faced and will face.

I have just finished watching Channel 4's new series 'It's a Sin' and it definitely deserves a mention in this article as it depicts the experiences of what it was like to be LGBT in the 1980's in the United Kingdom. It is a five part series which examines the lives of a group of young gay men who move to the city of London for new opportunities when they are hit by the outbreak of HIV. Another programme which deserves a mention is Netflix's 'Pose' which is about New York City's Black and Latino LGBT+ and gender nonconforming drag ball culture scene in the 1980's. There are also many 'unseen' harms as some LGBT people don't experience overt discrimination and instead, witness subtle behaviour which leads them to change how they behave to fit into society's norms. I remember the first time I held the hand of my partner walking through the town centre, whilst nobody hurled abuse at us, I felt the glares, the facial expressions, my heart pumping out of my chest, I just felt uncomfortable and out of place.

There are however many moments in recent history to celebrate:

- In 2012, the Protection of Freedoms Act was passed meaning men with historical convictions for consensual gay sex could apply to remove them from criminal records;
- In 2013 the first Trans Pride event took place in Brighton;
- In 2014 the marriage of same sex couples became legal in England, Scotland and Wales;
- In 2017 the deferral period for gay and bisexual men wishing to donate blood was reduced from 12 months to 3 months;
- In 2018, the UK government published its LGBT Action Plan which included an end to so-called conversion



**Adrian Davies**

- therapy (although it is still legal today in the UK); There is also new criteria being implemented by summer 2021 in relation to blood donation which aims to take a more individualised risk approach, acknowledging that all donors have the potential to carry infections including heterosexual men and women.

## Alan Turing

Alan Turing was a computer pioneer, maths genius and codebreaker. Turing played a crucial role in cracking intercepted coded messages that allowed the allies to defeat the Nazis in the war. Unfortunately, following this, Turing was more so recognised for being gay, and like many men in the 1950's, this also labelled him a criminal. Instead of going to prison, Turing was chemically castrated after having an affair with another man.

Turing's treatment was part of a 'witch hunt' of gay and bisexual men which led to 1,000 people being imprisoned at any one time during the 1950's.

Today, Alan Turing is not only an icon for the LGBT+ community, but an iconic figure for the whole of society in the UK. To celebrate his life he is being included on the new £50 bank notes which will be in circulation towards the end of 2021.

Whilst nothing can ever right the way LGBT+ people were treated, it's vital that we learn from the past in order to better the future. Everyone deserves the right to be truly themselves and to be proud of who they are without fear. Let's make LGBT+ oppression history.

## Adrian Davies

**Trainee Solicitor at EY Riverview Law and Social Representative at the Merseyside Junior Lawyers Division.**

## STFC Hartree Centre 'How to use AI in legal and professional services' webinar – 21 January



*Photo courtesy of STFC*

On behalf of Liverpool Law Society, I had the pleasure of joining the panel (remotely!) at this LawTech Event on 21 January 2021. The event was hosted by the Hartree Centre, which is part of the Science and Technology Facilities Council (STFC). This is part of a series of webinars all about adopting digital and data driven technology into specific industry sectors. This webinar was about how to take advantage of AI and data analytics in legal and professional services.

The expert panel comprised: Dr Catriona Wolfenden - Weightmans (Partner & Innovation Manager), Dene Rowe - Keoghs (Partner & Innovation Director), Steven Zdolyny - ME Group and KIM Technologies (General Counsel) and Tom Collingwood - STFC Hartree Centre (Data Engineering Specialist). Allan Carton - Inpractice UK Limited (Solicitor & Director) did an excellent job in facilitating the panel discussion. Allan began by saying there has been plenty of scepticism about AI. Over a year ago, he sat in a roomful of lawyers and IT people where most were saying AI was a long way away and won't come any time soon. In the same room there were people who had been working on it for 2 years and more already. That resonated with me, as I myself, as a lawyer was a bit of a sceptic when my business started its AI journey 6 years ago. Time has moved on quickly and that business, Kim Technologies, now has a number of patents granted for AI and machine learning tech, which has been actively deployed in large corporates all around the world. So AI is very much here.

Allan asked Dene, how as a law firm do you get started on that digital journey if you think you could benefit from AI or data engineering. Dene answered that it was important to start small and identify the right business/use case for your business. This could begin by asking yourself 'what end to end process could be automated - the end to end dream'. Also, there's no shame in seeing what are other organisations doing in legal and other sectors e.g. how has the technology been deployed and what benefits have they seen post deployment.

Catriona, was then asked by Allan how do you make the case for budget? Catriona said it was necessary to articulate a) why should we do this, and b) what are the benefits. These may include increasing profitability, saving costs and increasing market share for the firm. It was also important to focus on client benefits, which may include reduced fixed fees through automation. So rather than work in isolation, law firms should discuss with clients what do they need and how they could also benefit. High volume/low risk work was a particular focus, as ripe for automation. By earning your stripes, showing value with your first successful tech project, that would gain internal buy-in and momentum for future tech initiatives.

Allan then asked me, how do you tackle cultural issues and win hearts and minds? I responded by saying that behaviour and culture change are the central challenge of leading successful innovation and as we all know, changing culture doesn't happen overnight.

Implementing innovation and technological change really takes a lot of commitment. You may come up with the best technological solution, but if in parallel you don't change people's mind-sets, change their way of working, and change the culture of the team, then the technology will not work. Adopting a disruptive mind-set is not easy. This can be especially hard for lawyers who may find themselves burdened with legacy systems and deeply rooted working methods that are difficult to shift.

To address this challenge, law leaders encourage piloting and safe experimentation of new approaches to assess what works for your needs, and what does not. This is coupled with a focus on easy quick wins that will build momentum and convince sceptics of the need to change and embrace new ways of working. When people feel well supported through a pilot phase, initial sceptics can be transformed into valuable champions for the innovation cause.



For legal innovation to gain real traction it needs to be articulated through both a shared long-term vision and achievable short-term goals. A credible business case is also important to win over sceptics. It is important to communicate the business case, explaining how new technologies will change the way people are expected to work on a day-to-day basis and the benefits for them. It's important also to debunk any myths at an early stage e.g. process automation is not about taking work away from lawyers or losing jobs, but making their life easier. We need to involve the lawyers in the whole process, so they feel they are part of the solution and will gain the benefits, which may include removing the mundane and better work/life balance. In summary, communication and early lawyer participation is key. Communicate the opportunity which change offers to all stakeholders. Generate enthusiasm. Get lawyers involved with identifying what would make work easier for them. Get started with a pilot and build momentum with quick wins.

An example of one entrepreneurial business starting its tech journey is ME Group, which uses its Quantafi e-Discovery Platform to enable access to justice by consumers by automating the dispute process quickly and efficiently by validating claims on behalf of law firms. This involves firstly structuring large amounts of unstructured data and then performing an automated analysis of the data to determine whether the dispute is likely to meet the criteria (in terms of merits and quantum) for funding and insurance.

Allan then asked Catriona to explain how Weightmans have been using AI to automate its case management system. She explained how they've integrated MS Outlook emails and attachments into case management systems. This also began by identify the use case, scoping the project out, proving the concept before scaling up, understand accuracy and limitations, committing to investing necessary time, effort and resource and looking to de-risk the project by partnering with experts and grant funding opportunities.

Dene stressed the sooner you start the digital journey, the better. For example, his firm had developed their own in house SaaS automated review of medical reports, reducing time from 0.5hrs to 1min. The company's ready for the next innovation as it seeks to maintain its competitive edge.

Allan then asked me how do you bring it all together when most businesses have multiple standalone systems and people work in silos? I agreed this was a challenge but there can be tremendous efficiencies gained from breaking up silos and joining up systems. Legal often does not have a core operations platform. Finance, tax, HR, Sales all have a range of platforms to select from; SAP, Oracle, Sage, Workday, Salesforce ... Legal has a series of point solutions which do not talk to each other (matter management, e-billing, document review ...). They have different data layers and no overarching and comprehensive reporting solution producing holistic accurate data.

As a result, legal departments typically do not know all the work they have, how complex it is, what is their risk profile, where it is coming from, who is handling it, how long it takes, what is their status or why it closed. On a cross-department, global basis their leaders lack the real time and trend data to allocate work effectively (internally or externally), manage risk, improve processes, pre-empt issues, reduce costs, and improve customer experience.

This is all beginning to change with the rise of Legal Operations Platforms that integrate with other enterprise-wide systems and

point solutions. These platforms enable law leaders to make informed decisions about how they can best support the tactical and strategic objectives of their business.

An example is the Kim Legal Operations Platform. This platform combines neural networks with machine learning, deep learning and other cutting-edge technologies to create a unique platform that puts the power of process automation into the hands of lawyers. This Kim platform is being used by large in house teams in global companies to automate legal work, drive greater efficiency, consistency and compliance across global legal operations. It self serves and re-directs appropriate requests. It speeds up document/contract creation. It frees lawyers up from mundane tasks to be business partners and add value. Allan then asked Tom, as new types of systems are developed, what are the ethical and privacy concerns when joining up multiple systems. Tom replied that data privacy and confidentiality were important considerations, but could be properly managed through careful planning in the design stage and role based access controls.

So, for anyone who's reading and still wondering how to get started, you could begin by doing some more reading. A good place to start is the McKinsey & Co 'An executive's guide to AI' or even more specific to the legal sector, The Law Society's Lawtech Adoption Research report.

The publicly funded STFC Hartree Centre may also be able to help. They operate on a commercial basis with collaborative R&D projects, as well as assisting with accessing grant funding for project work. Throughout a project, they provide knowledge transfer, to enable businesses to develop their own internal capabilities. To initiate the engagement, it helps to have a clear challenge statement. This includes: 1) Setting the scene – where are you, what have you done already and what are the desired outcomes; 2) Outline how this work has the potential to impact your business; 3) Quantify any potential changes to productivity; 4) Access to the appropriate data – quantity and high quality.

I have no doubt that AI and other law tech will have significant implications for the future of the law and legal profession with new skills, new delivery models and a new competitive environment all coming into the sector. So if any of our members have suggestions for future legal tech events that would be of interest, please get in touch with the Society!

A link to the video recording of the event can be found here: <https://ukri.mediasite.com/Mediasite/Showcase/hartree/Presentation/326425e10aad480ea897b02c07cebc3a1d>

**Steven Zdolyny**  
**Vice President of Liverpool Law Society**  
**General Counsel of ME Group and Kim Technologies**

# Obituary: Crawford Davidson

George Crawford Davidson (always known as Crawford) was born on 13th April 1941 in Chorley, Lancs. Sadly, both his parents died when he was young and was then brought up by his mother's sister and her husband in Formby. Crawford was educated at St Peter's Primary School Formby and Merchant Taylors' School, then attended Durham University, from where he graduated with a law degree.

Crawford served his articles with Gerry Thompson at the firm of Garnett Tarbert Lindsay and Elsworth, later Garnetts. He qualified in 1962, and subsequently became a partner in that firm. In 1985 Garnetts merged with Morecrofts and Owen Dawson to become Morecroft Dawson and Garnetts, later Morecroft Urquhart, and ultimately Morecrofts.

Crawford specialised in commercial property and corporate work, and ultimately became Senior partner of Morecrofts. He retired from the partnership in 2006, but remained with the firm as a part-time consultant until March 2011.

Sport played a major part in Crawford's life. On the school athletics field he excelled as a sprinter. He was always a keen rugby player, playing in the 1st XV for Merchant Taylors and Durham University, and then for Hightown Rugby Club as a fly-half. He helped with coaching mini-rugby teams at Waterloo, including his son Iain's team where one of the other members of the team was Ben Kay, later to play for England. He was a keen golfer and sailor, and loved Abersoch, where he kept a boat. He was also active for some years in the Territorial Army.

For many years Crawford was co-owner of the Exchange bar in Old Hall Street, which proved an ideal location both for his own form of networking with work contacts and friends, and also for many Morecrofts' celebrations, including his send-off from the firm in 2011, which saw a great turn out of current and past colleagues, reflecting his great popularity.

Crawford qualified and spent most of his career in an era when practice was very different to today, seeming to have revolved around long coffee breaks and lunches, however what we would today call "networking" certainly served to bring him plenty of work and loyal clients. His former partners remember him as supportive and innovative for his time, and his attitude of inclusivity to all his work colleagues, whatever their role, was certainly ahead of many of his generation.

Sadly, his health declined fairly rapidly following his retirement. He suffered in recent years with progressive vascular dementia, and he died in hospital on 27th December from Covid related pneumonia.

I asked many of my partners and former partners for their memories of Crawford, and as soon I mentioned his name, their first instinct was to smile, despite the sadness of the moment. All the anecdotes related to me have included the word "fun". Whilst he had a highly incisive and creative legal brain, the things I have been reminded about are his infectious giggle and ability to entertain; that he was always to be found at



**Crawford Davidson**

the heart of any party, and particularly was at the centre of the good times we as partners used to have at our annual weekends away in Abersoch.

To me, Crawford was extremely welcoming, when he was the first person I was introduced to on joining Morecrofts. He could emanate the air of a mischievous schoolboy, always with a twinkle in his eye, and this endeared him to everyone he came across. He had the ability to engage with everyone he met, and was the person all the staff wanted to sit with at the Christmas party, which just about sums up what he meant to us all.

Crawford is survived by his wife Angela and three children Fiona, Belinda and Iain.

**Alison Lobb**  
Managing Partner  
Morecrofts LLP



A LEADERS IN LAW MEETING BROUGHT TO YOU BY LIVERPOOL  
& MANCHESTER LAW SOCIETIES

# MEET THE DIT AND THE MOJ: A VIRTUAL ROUNDTABLE

*Wednesday 17th March, 1pm - 2pm*

**MEMBERS ARE INVITED TO FIND  
OUT HOW TO DEVELOP AN  
INTERNATIONAL CLIENT BASE  
FROM INDUSTRY EXPERTS**

Colin Russell and Louise Cross, International Trade Advisers with the Department for International Trade, and Elizabeth Ward, Director and Founder of Virtuoso Legal will discuss:

- How to win international business
- What support is available
- Their experiences in growing legal firms

**To book your place, please email  
[socialevents@liverpoollawsociety.org.uk](mailto:socialevents@liverpoollawsociety.org.uk)**



**Manchester Law Society**  
Instituted 1838 Incorporated 1871

## Interpreting Company Accounts

On Thursday 11th March, 10am - 12.30pm

With Ian Johnson

The overall aim of the course will be to equip those who are new to company accounts, or those with a limited knowledge of accounting, to know what to expect when presented with a set of company account and to understand how to read and interpret those accounts.

The session will start by giving an overview of the different types of corporate structures and how the reporting requirements differ between them so that attendees will get an overall understanding of what a set of accounts may, or may not, include depending on the business.

### Ian will cover:

- Typical accounting jargon that readers of accounts may see
- How to analyse and understand an example set of accounts
- Key areas of estimation and judgement.

[CLICK HERE TO BOOK](#)

## Restructuring and succession for law firms

Thursday 18th March, 10am-12pm

This course is suitable for partners, managing partners, senior fee earners and senior finance professionals in law firms, as well as advisers to law firms.

### Ian Johnson will cover:

The session will begin by looking at the different structures commonly used by law firms, including partnerships, limited companies and LLPs, as well as other corporate hybrid structures.

It will then look at the differing taxation treatments of these structures and the availability and importance of remuneration planning under different structures.

Finally, the session will consider some of the practical and regulatory challenges of changing the legal status of a law firm (for example transferring from a partnership to Limited Company), including applications to the SRA, preparing information for the banks and dealing with other stakeholders.

[CLICK HERE TO BOOK](#)

## Commercial Property Update

Tuesday 23rd March, 9.30am-12.45pm

Commercial Property has undergone major changes within the last 2 years. In particular, the last year has seen some very important case law and regulatory changes. In addition, the Coronavirus Act 2020 has major implications for commercial property. The course aims to look at these changes.

### Ian Quayle will cover:

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recent case law on the Landlord and Tenant Act 1954</li> <li>• Frustration and Leases</li> <li>• Leasehold minimum energy performance standard</li> <li>• The Electronic Communications Code: Recent case law</li> <li>• Recent case law on business rates and empty properties</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Service Charge liability and recent cases</li> <li>• The Coronavirus Act 2020 as amended and its impact on commercial leases</li> <li>• Corporate Insolvency and Governance Act 2020 and its impact on commercial leases</li> </ul> <p><b>&amp; much more...</b></p> |
|---|---|

Core Competencies: B  
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## \*NEW\* End of life care planning With Caroline Bielanska

Wednesday 10th February, 10am - 12.15pm

Lawyers drafting health and welfare lasting powers of attorney will benefit from this training session, which will consider advance care planning through Lasting Powers, Advance Decisions to Refuse Treatment and the interaction of various decision makers.

### This course will include:

- Types of advance care planning
- Capacity to consent or refuse consent to medical treatment
- Application of the validity and applicability of advance decisions
- Drafting advance decisions to refuse treatment
- Advising and drafting health and welfare lasting powers
- Status of a Do Not Attempt CPR 'orders'
- Refusal of patient to eat or drink
- Euthanasia and Assisted suicide

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**Vauxhall Community  
Law & Information  
Centre**

## Our regular column from the team at Vauxhall Community Law and Information Centre who support the local community and promote access to justice.

### Looking forward to the challenges of 2021

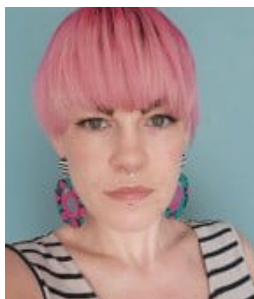
Vauxhall Community Law & Information Centre is looking forward to challenges presented in 2021 and overcoming them! We are still providing our advice and representation services in respect of Benefits and debt and are now able to provide advice on Housing/Homelessness issues following the recruitment of Siobhan Taylor Ward as our Housing and Social Welfare Solicitor (see below) We are also looking at future developments in respect of immigration advice, employment advice, particularly in respect of people working on zero hours contracts and in the gig economy.

Unfortunately, our face to face advice provision is still severely disrupted by the Coronavirus Pandemic, however, we are continuing to provide our services to the vast majority of our clients and partners by telephone, email and online.

We would like to extend our best wishes to our funders, partners, client's, volunteers, board and staff for their ongoing support and their respective roles in making 2020 a successful year for Vauxhall Community Law & Information Centre. Despite the challenges of dealing with a lockdown for large parts of the year and the ongoing and devastating effects of austerity policies on our communities and #accesstojustice

If anyone needs advice we can still be contacted by telephone on 0151 482 2540, please leave a message if staff are busy, or alternatively we take queries via email our email address for advice is: - [advice@vauxhalllawcentre.org.uk](mailto:advice@vauxhalllawcentre.org.uk)

### Siobhan Taylor-Ward



We are really pleased that Siobhan has settled into her new role here at the Law Centre. Siobhan's appointment brings the number of solicitors employed at the Centre to 3 and our overall number of staff to seven

Siobhan will be providing advice and assistance for people within the Liverpool City Region on issues relating to housing and homelessness.

### Bereavement Pack

Volunteers and staff from the Law Centre and community have been working for several months now developing a bereavement pack to provide information.

We have created this new service in memory of the late Tommy Monaghan who served on our board for many years. The service provides a Bereavement Information Pack which Vauxhall Law Centre has produced in response to the number of enquiries we have



**Vauxhall Law Centre  
Bereavement Pack**

received throughout the year, the pack covers:

- What to do in the Event of a Death
- Funerals
- Administration
- Money and Finances
- Bereavement Advice
- Legal Support

Vauxhall Law Centre is able to help families with assessing any benefit entitlements or any debt or housing issues arising from this and we encourage you to share this pack to anyone who needs help or to contact us directly at [advice@vauxhalllawcentre.org.uk](mailto:advice@vauxhalllawcentre.org.uk). <https://www.vauxhalllawcentre.org.uk/ourservices/bereavement-support-and-advice/>

### Volunteering

The Law Centre has had brilliant support from its volunteers over the difficult lockdown period. We are always looking for volunteers without whom the Law Centre couldn't exist, although it may be difficult in the circumstances, we can provide support in terms of phones and computer software/hardware if required.

**We are particularly desperate for people with Accountancy or Website development skills to support us but we appreciate all offers of help. If you or your organisation can help us, please contact us at [recruitment@vauxhalllawcentre.org.uk](mailto:recruitment@vauxhalllawcentre.org.uk) or you can call us on, on 0151 482 2540, we are a friendly bunch of people and all offers of help are much appreciated. Thank you**







# News from Merseyside Law Centre

**Fighting for equality through social justice to combat poverty & homelessness**



We recently welcomed Samantha Maher to Merseyside Law Centre. Samantha is our new trainee solicitor, who joins us as part of the Justice First Fellowship Scheme run by the Legal Education Foundation. Prior to joining us Samantha had worked for 15 years campaigning for labour and human rights, specifically in the garment and textile industry. As a case worker for the Clean Clothes Campaign she worked on numerous cases of trade union repression, wage violations and unsafe workplaces, most notably working on the design and implementation of two multi-million dollar compensation funds for victims of the Rana Plaza and Tazreen factory disasters in Bangladesh. After deciding to retrain in law Samantha studied part time for her GDL and LPC at MMU, and achieved a distinction in both. In 2018 she was shortlisted for the “Best Contribution by an Individual Student” award at the LawWork Student Pro Bono Awards for her work as a student welfare rights advisor at Greater Manchester Law Centre. We’re really excited to have Samantha on our team.

We'd like to convey our sincere thanks to Weightmans LLP for their continued support of our Justice First Fellows.

Our specialist welfare benefit team have had a number of successes at Tribunal this month securing substantial Personal Independence Payment and Housing Benefit arrears and ongoing entitlements for clients. We have continued to represent at hearings remotely throughout the pandemic ensuring our clients continue to receive access to justice.

As always, we remain busy giving advice over the phone and by e-mail while our staff work from home, providing advice and assistance on housing, welfare benefits and asylum support.

Our current contact details are below so please do pass these onto anyone you think may benefit from or require our services.

**E-mail:** [enquiries@merseysidelawcentre.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@merseysidelawcentre.co.uk)

**Twitter:** @MerseyLawCentre

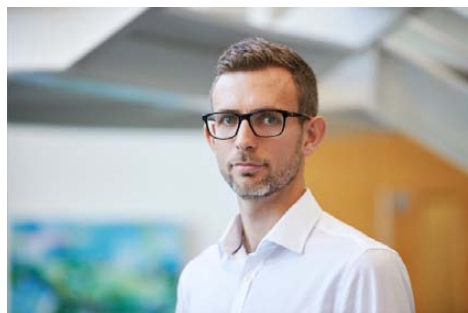
**Facebook:** Merseyside Law Centre

**Website:** [www.merseysidelawcentre.co.uk](http://www.merseysidelawcentre.co.uk)

**Tel:** 0151-709-0504

# Housing Plan U-turn: Back to Urban Brownfield?

**Under pressure from “Nimby” backbenchers, the Government has been forced into making early changes to its much lauded Housing Plan and a shift away from rural to redundant urban land. Tim Champney, Managing Director, Future Climate Info considers whether this will encourage a wider adoption of brownfield land, be enough to stimulate construction to meet demand and the impact of more complex sites on developers and neighbours.**



**Tim Champney**

The Government's recently published Housing Plan was built on an algorithm that calculated numbers based on population growth and housing need. It looked to balance demand across the country, helping to “level up” the north and generate construction jobs. All very logical on the surface, but it has fallen at the first hurdle through resistance from its own backbench MPs, including former PM Theresa May, who called the plans “mechanistic”.

Robert Jenrick has been forced to re-prioritise plans away from the rural shires, especially in the south that would have seen the greatest gains, and focus again on building new homes in England's cities.

## Reinvigorating our Urban Spaces

MPs criticised the plans for accelerating the flight from declining town and city centres into the countryside, creating doughnut spaces of deprivation. Covid-19 had already led to a surge of wealthier buyers fleeing urban areas in search of space and fresh air, so the planning system didn't need to encourage this any further. Critics may view this as running scared, of rebellion in the ranks and a further heavy dose of middle-class nimbyism. But the u-turn is better for our countryside and seeks again to reinvigorate our town and city centres through re-purposing our plentifully available brownfield land and vacant commercial sites.

Another “mutant algorithm” has been ditched with the announcement that the government would aim to build 300,000 dwellings a year, with cities being encouraged to plan for more family homes in the nation's 20 largest cities to help revitalise high streets ravaged by the Covid-19 pandemic.

High streets were already declining through the switch to online by shoppers, and now plenty of commercial to residential conversions are underway across the country, helped in part by the planning use class changes in the summer. But Covid-19 has created what Jenrick calls a “generational opportunity for the repurposing of offices and retail as housing and for urban renewal”

**Under the new plans**, a £100m Brownfield Land Release Fund will promote urban regeneration and development on public sector land. More than £67m in funding is also being allocated to the West Midlands and Greater Manchester authorities to deliver new homes.

## Covid-19 stalled new starts, but optimistic future

It feels like we have been here before with announcements heralding brownfield land as the saviour and perhaps this will be the case this time as, with many things this year. Covid-19 has perhaps now created a fundamental shift in thinking on town centres.

But this comes at a time when the pandemic has also put the brakes on new build housing supply as construction inevitably ground to a halt in the first lockdown, to re-open again and seek to catch up over the summer. Homes England housing programmes only

saw 11,313 new houses started on site and 11,358 homes between 1 April and 30 September 2020. This is down 38% compared with the first half of 2019, with completions down 25%. Affordable housing starts made up 79%, a fall of 32% year on year on last year.

Homes England has pointed to government confirmation of £12 billion of funding through the Affordable Homes Programme to give the construction sector a confidence boost over the next five years. The construction sector continues to recover and grow strongly, with house building performing particularly well and the prospect of vaccine delivery through 2021 should improve economic sentiment later in the year to sustain the housing market which may enter a temporary (and artificial) shadow after the SDLT holiday ends on the 31st of March.

Delays built up in 2020 could see a slew of major builds in urban areas, together with remaining ones on lower quality green field sites given fresh momentum in 2021. While longer-term, the impact on rural villages and small market towns may diminish, this won't necessarily cancel those schemes that are in the pipeline or earmarked through local authority calls for land through Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessments (SHEELAs) **such as that we recently reported at Hursley, Hampshire.**

## Will Brownfield Land Finally Deliver?

Brownfield land may not be capable of single-handedly solving the housing shortage, but its contribution to regenerating previously developed, avoiding ecological damage and minimising urban sprawl, cannot be underestimated.





Brownfield sites are often complex: not only in terms of complicated ownership and usage restrictions, but from a design or cost perspective in relation to contamination issues and ground preparation. For these reasons (and many more), brownfield sites are sometimes unfavoured and left forgotten, despite the stipulations within the National Planning Policy Framework to support such reuse.

The government's intention to champion regeneration development initiatives in England's cities with the release of funding is encouraging on many levels. But there are always two sides to every coin. Renewed enthusiasm for brownfield development in some areas will have both positive and negative effects on those already living in close proximity.

Urban landscapes can be attractive and sought after, as well as the current proximity to favourite shops, cafes, work or amenities. However, an expectation for the urban landscape to remain unaltered is potentially a road to disappointment.

House-hunters really should take the time to consider the environment surrounding their prospective-purchase. They should ask whether surrounding buildings appear properly occupied and in use and how any changes to their surrounds might impact upon their own enjoyment of the urban ecosystem?

### Be Alert to Local Planning changes for your Client

Homebuyers looking at property adjacent to vacant brownfield or commercial/retail units will need to stay vigilant for changes to land use designations or scheme approvals for regeneration. On the one hand, it improves derelict sites and could raise market values through gentrification and renewal, but it could equally increase housing density, loss of views and privacy, increased traffic movement and air pollution.

Conveyancers and their clients need to be wary of these situations and review any guidance in local plans. They should therefore closely examine planning data as part of their due diligence searches.

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**You've advised a client who's completed on their family home with a view of open fields – only to be faced with the prospect of a new estate development application that was just outside of traditional searches. It's going to be painful, for you and them.**

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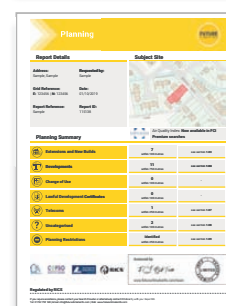
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# Summary of the Supreme Court judgment in FCA business interruption test case

**Pamela Feeland and Sarah Irwin of Weightmans LLP give a summary of the Supreme Court's decision on the appeal of the FCA business interruption test case.**

Last month the Supreme Court handed down its much-anticipated decision in the FCA business interruption test case.

Lead judgment was given by Lords Hamblen and Leggatt with Lord Reed in agreement. Lord Briggs gave a concurring judgment with which Lord Hodge agreed.

After seven months of intense debate, where does the Supreme Court judgment leave us in respect of business interruption claims for COVID-19-related losses?

## Disease clauses

- ♦ The Supreme Court deviated from the findings of the High Court in respect of the construction of disease clauses although, for reasons of causation, (referred to below) such interpretation did not alter the overall finding of *prima facie* cover under disease clauses.
- ♦ The Supreme Court disagreed with the High Court's interpretation of "occurrence" and found that it is synonymous with "event", i.e. *"something which happens at a particular time, at a particular place, in a particular way"* (Axa Reinsurance (UK) plc v Field [1996] 1 WLR 1026). It follows that each case of COVID-19 across the United Kingdom was a separate occurrence of the disease, rather than defining "occurrence" as the general outbreak of Covid-19 as a whole.
- ♦ Although an infectious disease has the potential to affect a wide area and spread outside of any geographical restriction, this did not mean that the policy wording could be manipulated to extend any geographical requirement. Therefore, any cases of COVID-19 outside of the prescribed radius do not form part of the insured peril and cover is only provided for interruption caused by cases of COVID-19 within the specified radius.
- ♦ The Supreme Court therefore found that there was no difference between policies which referred to an "occurrence" of a disease and those which referred to an "incident" or "event". This removed the differentiation at first instance between the majority of the representative disease clauses and QBE 2 and 3.

## Prevention of access/hybrid clauses

The points on appeal relevant to prevention of access and hybrid clauses included (i) the High Court's findings that "restrictions imposed" or orders of a relevant authority required the force of law, and (ii) that an "inability to use" or "prevention of access" required a complete cessation of business or total closure of the insured premises.

### Restrictions imposed

- ♦ The Supreme Court widened the definition of "restrictions imposed" by a competent authority and removed the strict requirement that such measures have the force of law.
- ♦ The Supreme Court agreed that "imposed" connotes compulsion but considered that a mandatory instruction from a competent authority **could** qualify as a "restriction imposed" even if it did not involve the exercise of legal powers.
- ♦ The pronouncement of the Prime Minister of 20 March 2020 which required businesses to close was a *"clear, mandatory instruction given on behalf of the UK Government"* even when it was not yet reinforced by legislation.



**Pamela Freeland**

- ♦ Consideration should be given to how a reasonable policyholder would interpret the word "imposed". The Supreme Court noted that an instruction may qualify as a "restriction imposed" if it would be reasonably understood that compliance would be required. Such instruction must be *"in mandatory terms, but also in clear enough terms to enable the addressee to know with reasonable certainty what compliance requires"*. Such assessment will of course be fact-specific and open to discussion.
- ♦ The Supreme Court did not conclude whether "restrictions imposed" would extend to the general measures introduced in March 2020 including the stay at home message, social distancing advice, and the prohibition on gatherings and commented that this point would not be resolved by the test case and would be left over *"for agreement or further argument, although the argument is clearly stronger in relation to the latter"*. Uncertainty on this issue therefore remains.
- ♦ This wider definition of "restrictions imposed" did not extend to policies which required "enforced closure" which would not be triggered by advice or exhortations.

### Inability to use

- ♦ The Supreme Court agreed that an inability to use would not be satisfied by an impairment or hindrance in use. However, it did not agree that such clauses would require a complete inability to use the premises for all purposes. Instead, the judgment finds that "inability to use" would be satisfied if *"the policyholder is unable to use the premises for a discrete part of its business activities or if it is unable to use a discrete part of its premises for its business activities"*.
- ♦ However, it must still be an inability to use part or all of the premises, rather than a disruption or hindrance. In highlighting this, the Supreme Court confirmed that it considered it to be unlikely that a Category 3 or Category 5 business (businesses which were not ordered to close) would be able to establish an inability to use the premises.

### Prevention of access

- ♦ In much the same way, the Supreme Court decided that a business could suffer a prevention of access if it experienced



such prevention “to a discrete part of the premises and/or for the purpose of carrying on a discrete part of the policyholder’s business activities”.

♦In applying this conclusion to the example of a restaurant which started a takeaway business when required to close, the Supreme Court held that there could be a prevention of access/inability to use the dining area of the restaurant and/or a prevention of access or inability to use the premises for the business activity of providing a dine-in service.

♦The Supreme Court further held that the Prime Minister’s statement on 16 March 2020 telling people to stay at home did not cause a prevention of access to an insured business. Further, cases in which the stay at home order found in Regulation 6 of the 26 March Regulations qualified as a prevention of access would likely be rare.

### Causation, trends clauses and pre-trigger losses

The Supreme Court provided detailed and helpful analysis of the correct test of causation and the application of the test of proximate cause, including the consequences of its findings on the application of trends clauses and the effect of pre-trigger losses.

♦The starting point when considering causation should be to focus on the “common sense” view of what actually caused the loss claimed.

♦The Supreme Court decided that, whilst the ‘but for’ test was almost always the correct test of causation, it would be inadequate in certain circumstances.

♦Since the Supreme Court found that disease clauses provided cover only for losses caused by occurrences of COVID-19 within the specified radius, it had to determine whether such

occurrence was a proximate cause of the loss. In doing so:

♦The Supreme Court held that all cases of COVID-19 across the United Kingdom were “equal causes of the imposition of national measures” and that each occurrence of COVID-19 was a separate cause of the loss and they together formed multiple concurrent causes of the Government action and subsequent losses.

♦It would be enough for a policyholder to show that its business interruption was a result of the Government action which was taken in response to all cases of COVID-19, as long as they could evidence at least one case of Covid-19 at the time within the geographical limit.

♦Under prevention of access clauses, it would not be correct to reject cover because loss would have been suffered anyway due to other consequences of the COVID-19 measures such as the general public reaction to the pandemic. Just because such losses would have occurred even without the imposition of restrictions does not mean that they would not be recoverable.

♦Cover for risk of all elements of the insured peril “acting in causal combination to cause business interruption loss” whether concurrently caused by other uninsured, non-excluded consequences of the pandemic.

### Trends clauses

♦Trends clauses should not be applied to delineate the scope of cover and are solely part of the quantification machinery. The Supreme Court therefore held that trends clauses should be construed consistently with the insuring clauses and should not be treated as a form of exclusion.

♦The purpose of a trends clause is to “arrive at the results that would have been achieved but for the insured peril and



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circumstances arising out of the same underlying or originating cause”.

♦Therefore, trends clauses should not be interpreted to reduce the level of cover on the basis that the business would have suffered a reduction in turnover anyway due to uninsured losses which were “inextricably linked” to the insured peril, i.e. uninsured losses which had the same underlying or originating cause.

## Pre-trigger losses

♦The Supreme Court allowed the FCA’s appeal concerning the treatment of pre-trigger losses. Whilst the High Court had determined that insurers could account for a downturn in trade due to the effects of COVID-19 prior to cover being triggered, the Supreme Court did not agree with this approach.

## Orient Express

One of the headline points from today’s judgment is the Supreme Court’s decision that the case of ***Orient Express Hotels Ltd v Assicurazioni Generali SpA*** [2010] EWHC 1186 (Comm) was wrongly decided and should be reversed.

♦The Supreme Court found that where an insured peril and uninsured peril arise from the same underlying cause, i.e. the hurricane in Orient Express, and operate concurrently, loss resulting from both causes would be covered (unless such uninsured peril was expressly excluded). The Supreme Court’s assessment was that circumstances which had the “*same underlying originating cause*” as the insured damage should be excluded from the application of the trends clause, i.e. any damage stemming from the occurrence of the hurricane should not be included in any trends assessment.

♦Lords Hamblen and Leggatt recognised the role they played in the decision in Orient Express, commenting that they “*invoke whatever ways by which we may “gracefully and good naturedly” surrender “former views to a better considered position.”*”

## The way forward

We note the following comment from the judgment:

*“It is hoped that this determination will facilitate prompt settlement of many of the claims and achieve very considerable savings in the time and cost of resolving individual claims.”*

No doubt the decision goes some way to providing certainty on the nature and scope of cover provided under the sample policies analysed in the test case. It also provides clarity on the application of trends clauses and puts to bed issues relating to the decision in Orient Express. That certainty is welcomed.

However, throughout these proceedings, it has been acknowledged that there is a need to consider the specific wording in question, the facts relating to the claim under it, and to apply the law to those facts. No two claims are the same and it will therefore be necessary to consider and apply the Supreme Court’s decision to each matter - that will produce discrepancies and/or distinctions. Further, not all policy wordings mirror the sample considered by the court. Differences in policy wordings produce different outcomes, and there will remain scope for much debate – as claims are reviewed on a case by case basis issues will emerge that simply have not been addressed in these proceedings. It is safe to say that this judgment does not (and was not intended to) provide all the answers to policy coverage for all COVID-19 BI claims and that there will likely be more debate on the subject to come.

Pamela Freeland, Principal Associate  
and Sarah Irwin, Solicitor, Weightmans LLP

## Contract and Commercial Update

Friday 12th March, 1.30pm - 4.30pm

This course will cover developments in contract and commercial law over the last year. It will concentrate on issues practitioners are likely to face in the ‘real world’.

### Chris Beanland will cover:

- The Law Society’s updated guide on virtual and electronic execution of documents
- *Umish Ltd v Gill* [2020] EWHC 1513 on virtual execution of a guarantee
- Can an agreement executed as a defective deed still be valid as a simple contract? *Signature Living Hotels Ltd v Sulyok* [2020] EWHC 257
- How are damages assessed for loss of chance in a procurement process? *FPMcCann Ltd v Dept for Regional Development* [2020] NIQB 51

& much more!

Find out more and book [here](#)

## \*NEW\* Witness Statements: A Crucial Guide

Monday 8th March, 12.30pm - 2pm  
With Professor Dominic Regan

Despite the prevailing rules having been in place since 1992 not a month goes by without a Court exploding because lawyers breach them.

Professor Dominic Regan will look at the rules, the problems and how best to resolve them.

### Topics covered include:

- What you must include
- What doesn’t belong in them
- The booby trap in CPR 32.10
- Will late statements be admitted?
- What is the worst that can happen if one defaults
- The April 2021 reforms
- How to protect yourself against the dubious witness
- Privilege and statements



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# A PSED breach can be remedied - Taylor v Slough Borough Council [2020] EWHC 3520

The High Court have recently dismissed an appeal brought by a Tenant, Ms Taylor ("the tenant") in relation to Slough Borough Council's ("the Council") breach of the Public Sector Equality Duty ("PSED"), whereby they initially failed to have regard to the PSED in possession proceedings and attempted to remedy this by later performance of that duty.

## Background

The tenant was a secure tenant, diagnosed with bi-polar disorder in 2011 and had a history of drug and alcohol misuse. The Council were made aware of her disorder in 2012.

In 2018, a disclosure order was made at the Magistrates court following allegations of antisocial behaviour connected to drug use and supply from the Property. The Magistrates court made a Closure Order for three months on 2 January 2018, which prohibited access to the premises for a specified period. A notice seeking possession was served on the tenant by the council on the same day. This relied on the absolute ground for possession contained in s.84A of the Housing Act 1985.

In March 2018, the Council's Housing Officer carried out an Equality Act assessment in respect of Tenant and wrongly assessed that she had no disability. The Council accepted that they had known about the Tenants disability since 2012. The Housing Officer was not made aware of the disability until June 2018 and treated the Tenant as having a protected characteristic thereafter, giving due regard to the PSED in making further case management decisions.

S. 149 of the Equality Act 2010 provides that a public authority must act in accordance with the PSED. This requires in the exercise of the Councils functions they must have due regard eliminating discrimination, advancing equality of opportunity and fostering good relations between different people when carrying out their activities.

Initially, at trial HHJ Clarke gave judgement in favour of the Council and made a possession order, although there had been an initial breach of the PSED by the Council in failing to consider the Tenant's disability. HHJ Clarke agreed that the Council had complied with the PSED after becoming aware of the Tenant's disability and done everything they could in an attempt to remedy the breach. Ultimately, it was decided that the possession proceedings were an appropriate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

## The Appeal

The Tenant appealed the decision on the grounds that HHJ Clarke was wrong to find that there has been no breach of PSED by the Council and the breach could not be 'cured' by subsequent compliance. However, the Tenant's appeal was dismissed by the High Court.

The Court held that although the Council had initially been in breach of the PSED, the Court of Appeal had approved previous appeals whereby the Council has 'cured' the initial breach by subsequent compliance. As a result, it was found that the compliance which followed the initial breach was sufficient to remedy the breach and prove that the Council has complied with the PSED.



**Michael Boland**

This highlights that even if there is an initial breach made by a Landlord, as long as the PSED is complied with at a later stage and the Landlord is able to show that they have taken the necessary steps to remedy the breach, the court will be likely to consider the subsequent compliance as a 'cure' to the initial breach.

**Michael Boland**  
MSB Solicitors

## SRA Accounts Rules – High Level

Thursday 25th March, 10am - 1pm

Ian Johnson will cover:

**This course is designed for anybody who needs an understanding of the SRA Accounts Rules, but does not directly oversee day to day compliance – for example partners and fee earners.**

**The course will include an overview of the 2019 SRA Accounts Rules, the underlying principles and the various guidance that has been released to support the understanding and application of the rules.**

**It will also explore the common breaches of the rules, why they occur and how everybody in the firm can play their part in helping avoid these breaches and support the COFA in their role.**

**Finally, we will consider the current SRA hot topics that all team members should be aware of, including provision of prohibited banking facilities and dealing with residual balances.**

[\*\*CLICK HERE TO BOOK\*\*](#)

# Six Promotions at Bermans

Bermans is delighted to announce that it has promoted 6 individuals to more senior roles at the firm.

Andrew Henderson joined Bermans in 1985 and has developed an expertise in asset finance litigation. He has been made a Partner and joins Alex Chapman, David Gledhill and Jonathan Berkson as partners in the specialist Asset Based Lending team that is ranked in the Legal 500 London Asset Finance Lending rankings.

He deals with matters such as fraud, freezing orders, title claims, delivery up claims, guarantee/indemnity claims, shortfalls and general debt recovery for a wide range of asset based lenders. Also becoming a Partner and completing the journey from trainee solicitor to Partner is Mike Smeaton in the Litigation and Dispute Resolution team. Mike joined Bermans in 2008 and specialises in shareholder and partnership matters, warranty and covenant claims, property litigation and complex, high-value contractual disputes.

He has recently developed a legal 'health check' that allows business owners to identify the aspects of their business that may need attention, especially with the pressures brought by coronavirus including,

company structure, property documents, contracts with suppliers and customers, staff and policies.

Four other promotions to Senior Associate have also been confirmed for Alissa Marsh in the Asset Based Lending team and Gareth Farrelly and David Keenan in the growing specialist Sports team.

Alissa joined the asset based lending team in January 2017. Since joining, she has specialised in invoice finance, asset finance and general corporate finance. Her recent deals include advising a financial institution on the £40m sale of its client and acting for a corporate client in respect of its financial facilities amounting to over £5.5m. Alissa has also assisted the firm's asset based lending clients in navigating the pandemic; providing support for CBILS facilities and advising on forbearance considerations.

The final promotion, they all took effect from 1 January 2021, is the promotion of Melanie Morris to Senior Associate. Melanie joined Bermans as a trainee in 2015 and qualified as a Solicitor in 2017 into the Property Department. During this time, she has developed

her own client base and has become an integral member of the team. Melanie deals with a wide range of property matters, including all types of property finance, commercial property acquisitions and sales, residential and commercial developments and acquisitions and redevelopment of buy-to-let properties. Melanie also provides property advisory support for transactions conducted by our Corporate team.

Bermans Senior Partner, Fergal O'Cleirigh, comments "We have always prided ourselves on our staff retention record. We look to provide our young lawyers with clear career paths and opportunities for advancement as demonstrated by the achievements of Mike and Melanie. Andrew is a stalwart of our business and we are delighted to recognise his commitment and loyalty. Alissa has been with us since 2017 and has made an important contribution in the niche asset/invoice finance teams which have been specialisms since the 1980's. Although Gareth and David have both only relatively recently joined the business, they fit in well to our culture and ethos and they will look to build their team in 2021 and beyond."



**Andrew Henderson**



**Fergal O'Cleirigh**



**Michael Smeaton**

## TRAINING SEAT EXCHANGE

Liverpool Law Society has a Trainee Seat Exchange service. The purpose is to assist member firms and member in-house legal departments interchange trainees. The aim is to provide more training contracts on Merseyside and beyond by facilitating an exchange between firms and in-house departments who may otherwise find it difficult to offer their trainees the requisite number of seats in both contentious and non-contentious work.

The Training Seat Exchange, which is open only to members of Liverpool Law Society, is a free, online service. Details of what seat a member firm can offer and what seat they are seeking appears. The exchange must be discussed and agreed between each member firm on an individual basis.

If you would like to appear on the list, please complete our online form at [www.liverpoollawsociety.org.uk/training-seat-exchange-form](http://www.liverpoollawsociety.org.uk/training-seat-exchange-form) and the Society will be in touch with you.



# MSB bolsters Family Law team

MSB Solicitors has grown its Family law team in response to increased client demand.

One of Cheshire's best divorce and children Lawyers, Pippa Tudor, who completed her training at MSB, has joined the firm as Associate Solicitor. As part of the team, she will be specialising in divorce and complex financial disputes, including issues such as marital breakdown and cohabitee separation, as well as children issues that arise from relationship breakdowns.

Pippa is also member of Resolution, where she is accredited with particular specialism in complex financial remedies and domestic abuse.

Adding to the team is Dan Pierce, who joins MSB as a Legal Executive. Having previously worked at Paul Crowley Solicitors, Dan is a children practitioner who brings to the team a wealth of experience in cases with social services involvement.

MSB's award winning Family team has built a strong reputation in the Liverpool City Region and last year acquired PMC Family Law, to further strengthen the firm's offer. The team has had a successful year, receiving industry recognition including its inclusion in The Times Best Law Firms, the Legal 500 and being ranked Tier 1 by Chambers and Partners.

Emma Palmer, Partner and Head of Family at MSB, said: "Our Family team has been growing over a number of years and this year, we have seen the needs of our communities change as a result of the Coronavirus pandemic, with an increase in a



**Dan Pierce and Pippa Tudor**

number of issues such as domestic abuse, divorce and childcare issues. This increase in demand, not only in volume but in complexity of cases, has led to us finding new ways of adapting to ensure we can continue to serve the needs of the Liverpool City Region.

"Both Pippa and Dan bring with them a huge amount of experience to help bolster our team, ensuring we can continue to deliver the very best services to our clients, whatever their needs."

## Carpenters Group are delighted to announce two key appointments made to the company to kick-start 2021

Carpenters Group, have appointed Eloise Sochanik as its new Corporate Social Responsibility and Diversity Lead and Emma Rittenberg as its new PR, Communications & Brand Executive.

Eloise has 13 years experience in corporate responsibility and sustainability and joins Carpenters Group from Horwich Farrelly in Manchester. She says "I am thrilled to be joining Carpenters Group and whilst we are in the midst of a such a challenging time, it has been amazing to see the company stepping up with a real commitment to helping those who need it the most, and strengthening their capacity to deliver meaningful and lasting change."

Emma has worked in marketing roles for over 3 years, most recently as Digital Marketing Lead at One Knowsley, so brings a wealth of experience and knowledge around PR and Marketing. She says: "I'm delighted to be part of the Carpenters team! Everyone has been so welcoming and supportive. Carpenters Group have a fantastic reputation in the insurance and legal sector and I can't wait to get stuck in and bring my abilities to the role."

For more information about Carpenters Group please visit: [www.carpentersgroup.co.uk](http://www.carpentersgroup.co.uk)

### Twenty good habits when dealing with New Build Transaction

Tuesday 16th March, 2pm - 4pm via zoom

This is an intermediate webinar aimed at residential conveyancers at all levels that deal with new build purchases.

Extensive notes will be provided and there will be an opportunity for questions

[Ian Quayle will cover:](#)

- Contracts – key clauses in new build contracts
- Buildmark and Warranties – what to look out for
- Consumer protection and the Consumer Code for Home Builders
- Dealing with defects and the Defective Premises Act
- Lender requirements
- Best practice and easements and covenants

**[CLICK HERE TO BOOK](#)**

## Bell Lamb & Joynson Solicitors mark the new year with website launch

Bell Lamb & Joynson Solicitors has marked the start of 2021 by unveiling a new-look website that features enhanced usability, navigation and a contemporary aesthetic.

The website debut comes as the firm enters its 200th year in business, and has been designed to capture a digital-driven era that the team have been working towards and implementing over the last several years.

It follows a series of technology innovations introduced by the firm, including its own conveyancing app alongside state-of-the-art software to simplify and speed up legal processes across all departments to enable a better client and employee experience. The firm also underwent a rebrand in 2019 which saw it adopt a more modern identity.

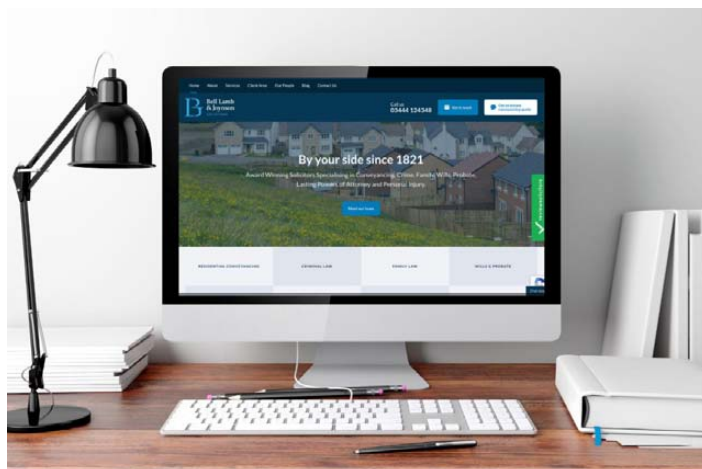
Managing Partner at Bell Lamb & Joynson Solicitors Mike Leeman said: “As we enter our 200th year in business, we thought that the time was right to invest significantly into our website to ensure that it is in line with our overall brand, which centres around our forward-thinking approach and attitude to digital ways of working. We pride ourselves on using technology to enhance our client relationships, making legal matters accessible and as straightforward as possible and our website now represents that. It’s also about complementing the work that our team do, and using our new website as a tool to showcase their knowledge and their achievements to help raise their profiles as legal professionals.

“We’ve been continually upgrading and introducing digital systems over the course of the past five years and our new website launch combines all of those elements into a platform that provides an exemplary user experience while offering unique functions such as instant access to online quotes and live chat, for example.”

The website was created by Bristol based agency Conscious Solutions, a leading provider of branding for law firms across the UK. Updates include a newly designed home page with improvements to the searchability of services, easier access to online services for existing clients, staff listings and contact information to name a few.

Mike added: “We’ve always had a vested interest in using legal technology to its full potential here at Bell Lamb & Joynson Solicitors and we understand the importance of progressing with the times. Although we work in an area that’s often considered traditional, we like to think that we offer something different that is accessible to people of all generations from across England and Wales. It was important to us that the website design captured that and conveyed both our progressive nature and our expertise as a firm spanning 200 years in business.

“It’s a fantastic way to start the new year - especially such a significant one for the firm - and comes at a time that is poignant for the legal industry. Recent global events have forced a shift in this sector and with digital ways of working becoming more prevalent there was no better time for us to unveil our upgraded online look. We can’t wait for further developments along the course of the next 12 months, particularly as we follow a record year for the firm in terms of case instructions and recruitment in 2020, welcoming 12 new members of staff in that time.”



## O’Connors expand Corporate Team as growth continues

Legal and business advisers, O’Connors, has appointed corporate solicitor Kerry Brooks to support its regional and national expansion plans following a strong 2020 performance.

Kerry joins from niche dental and medical law firm Goodman Grant, where she specialised in M&A transactions, particularly for dental practices.


John Spofforth, Head of Corporate for O’Connors said, “I am really delighted that Kerry has chosen to join us. Her regulated sector M&A experience aligns perfectly with the work we do for regulated legal, insurance and investment fund businesses throughout the UK and beyond. Her positivity and problem-solving attitude is precisely what our clients tell us they value most and I have every confidence she will make a huge contribution to our business.”

Kerry said, “O’Connors feels very different to other law firms I come across. It is clear there is a genuine collegiate approach and a focus on client service that is both refreshing and exciting for someone like me. The team works amazingly hard to get projects and transactions over the line for clients but everyone seems willing to help each other out to ensure we get a home life too. I am already working on a few of the firm’s key projects and looking forward to expanding my dental M&A activity.”



**Kerry Brooks**





# How are you, really?

Life in the law can be tough.  
Call our confidential helpline.  
We're here to listen.

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**LawCare**  
*Supporting the Legal Community*

[www.lawcare.org.uk](http://www.lawcare.org.uk)

# What would make your Valentine's Day perfect?

With Valentine's Day on the horizon, but the country still in lockdown, we asked our members what would make the perfect day?



**Darren White**  
Maxwell Hodge Solicitors

For me, Valentine's Day isn't about grand gestures and fancy meals out, but spending time with those I love. My perfect Valentine's Day is spending time with my wife and children at home, cooking a family meal and watching old family home videos.



*Photo by David Köhler on Unsplash*

**Joshua Murphy**  
Repairs Team Manager, CEL Solicitors

6 years ago, me and my partner Sarah took a Valentine's trip to Rome for a long weekend. The city was full of history and culture. Around every turn was something new and beautiful to look at. We had guided tours around the Roman Forum, Coliseum and Vatican City. Soaking up the rich history as much as we could.

After a long day of walking and very tired legs, we finished the night off with pizza, wine, tiramisu and fantastic conversation, reminiscing over the wonders we had experienced throughout the day.

I would like to relive this day, as to me, it was perfect.



**Carol Hopwood**  
Head of Serious and Catastrophic Injury,  
Carpenters Group

Dream - A lie in followed by delivery of a Fortnum and Mason breakfast hamper. A bracing walk along our lovely coastal path at Crosby with a hot chocolate out of the flask sitting watching the tide come in. Home to beautiful flowers and then out to The Art School in Liverpool.

Reality - the dog will jump on me to be let outside. I'll force down a nasty green smoothie. We'll go for a walk in the pouring rain. I will get a delivery of lovely flowers (husband is a keeper) and a reheat of leftovers from the slow cooker will be our night out. Oh and perhaps several Gin and Tonics!  
#lockdownlove



**David Richards**  
Trainee Solicitor, CEL Solicitors

My perfect Valentine's Day would be spent with my wife Beth, relaxing on a sunny beach in a tropical location. Due to being in Lockdown, travelling abroad won't be possible, so Beth and I have decided to spend some time together at home, cooking our favourite dish, seafood paella!





**Mark Bratherton**  
Head of Technical and Defence  
Litigation, Carpenters Group

A vaccination, Everton on the telly, and a pint of Erdinger. Who said romance was dead in my house.



**Tom Hurley**  
Trainee Solicitor, CEL Solicitors

For me, my perfect Valentine's Day would be spent in the Lake District with my girlfriend. There's nothing better than waking up in the countryside and going on a long winter's day walk through the scenic hills and surrounding towns.

Unfortunately, not currently possible due to lockdown, but this would be followed with a few drinks in a local pub near a log fire before heading out to a for a meal, preferably for tapas and some nice wine.

Here's to a hopeful Valentine's Day 2022!



**Jemma Castell**  
Trainee Solicitor, CEL Solicitors

For me, since being a teenager Valentine's Day has always been a day my friends and I spent together doing something fun. We send each other silly cards and do things like go to the cinema or have a cocktail night. Last year we even went to a Galentine's Yoga class.

This will be the first year in around 10 years that I haven't seen my best friend on Valentine's Day. Given the past year and the current lockdown, my perfect day would be to be able to see my best friend and continue our Galentine's tradition.

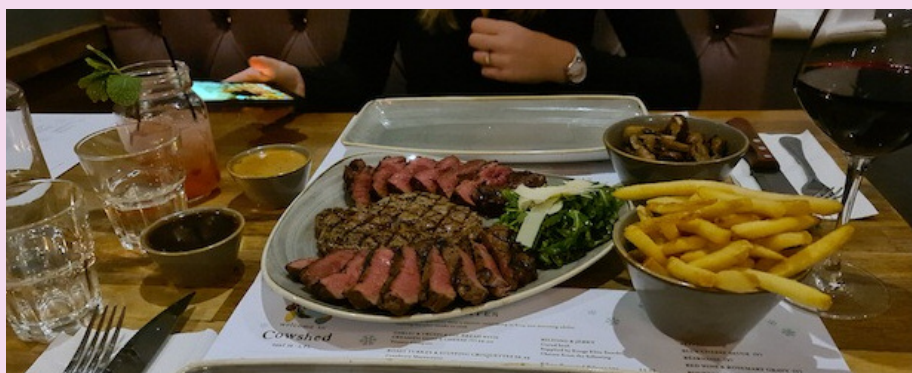


**Jamie Mitchell**  
Trainee Solicitor, CEL Solicitors

If we were not in a national lockdown, my ideal Valentine's Day would be an evening meal with my fiancé at our favourite restaurant, Cowshed, located on Seel Street in the Liverpool City Centre.

They do some of the best steaks in the City!

Unfortunately, this will not be the case this year. I think we will just order a takeaway and put a good film on this year instead!



**Elaine Wilson**  
Legal Administration Assistant  
Hill Dickinson LLP

Due to our current circumstances a walk in the park with a hot drink is about as good as it is going to get!

## MSB Trainees in Lockdown – Covid-19

The Social Housing and Regeneration department at MSB Solicitors has been incredibly busy since Lockdown 1.0 in March 2020, having adapted working methods within the first few days so that we could continue to offer the same level of service to our clients.

In adapting to working from home, our department Trainee Solicitors have this to say:-

### **Beth McKeown**

I am a Trainee Solicitor in the Housing and Regeneration Team, mainly focusing on Housing Disrepair.

During lockdown, I have continued to develop my understanding of Housing Disrepair, as well as dealing with the ever-changing government guidance relating to COVID-19. Guidelines have affected Disrepair matters and more generally, access to Properties for Social Housing Providers. We have continued to advise our clients on this and how to get repair works done as safely as possible. I have also had the opportunity to shadow a Solicitor on numerous Access Injunctions in Court and hope to start participating in hearings soon.

Despite remote working, Solicitors in the department have continued to encourage my development and training, pushing me to gain experience across the department, providing helpful feedback along the way.

### **Michael Boland**

I am a Trainee Solicitor in the Housing and Regeneration Team, currently covering Anti-Social Behaviour.

During lockdown I have been working mostly at home and in the office on limited occasions. The Housing and Regeneration Team have provided a flexible and successful working pattern tailored to trainees. I have assisted solicitors and been provided with support fulfilling daily tasks sent to me.

Additionally, I have been able to expand my knowledge and legal skills as the team have allowed me to draft court documents and witness statements, and I have been provided with prompt and efficient feedback to further develop my skills.

### **Gary Knox-Hammell**

I am an Trainee Solicitor in the Housing and Regeneration team at MSB, mainly working in the Market Rents department assisting Landlords and Property Agents to seek possession of their properties by way of accelerated possession, or due to breach of tenancy, e.g. rent arrears or anti-social behaviour.

It has been a very challenging time for Housing Lawyers, Landlords and Tenants since the beginning of the Pandemic. The law has changed significantly in relation to seeking possession of a property and of course all possession claims were stayed for a significant period. Despite the challenges, I have worked within the parameters of the law to ensure we act in the best interest of our clients by updating and giving advice as and when needed. In addition I have also taken the opportunity to complete my PSC course amongst other training required for the role.

Working from home initially was difficult due to not having the resources you would normally have at work, however with support from my supervisor Phillip Coburn, regular team



**Beth McKeown**



**Michael Boland**



**Gary Knox-Hammell**

meetings and daily updates from the heads of department, this has helped to support me greatly with remote working. It has also been good for engagement within the team by keeping the momentum going.

Working from home has enabled me to be adaptable, flexible, disciplined and in fact boosted my confidence in decision making.



# Council Member's Report

## Council Member Sarah Lapsley



I am sorry that it has been a while since I wrote a piece for this magazine. Lockdown has given me more time in theory and yet I feel like I get through less: or is that my imagination and these are just strange times indeed?

I sincerely hope that you are coping with the strains and stresses that the current situation brings and that from a health perspective, you and your loved ones are safe and well.

Council last met in December 2020 and since then, you were all invited to vote in a TLS ballot, to determine whether there should be reform to the constituency of Council and a limit to the term that Council members should serve.

12,207 of the 200,446 eligible members voted, overwhelmingly in favour of the changes.

The President noted that the change to the geographical constituencies "recognises the importance of geographical links between our members and their Council representatives but also strives rightly to make Council more representative of the modern diverse profession".

The length of term that Council members may now serve is a maximum of 12 years.

Although the numbers that took part in the ballot are disappointing, there is much optimism for the future on account of the enormous amounts of work that TLS is putting into member

engagement and member experience.

There have been and will be significant changes that will surely transform the way in which TLS interacts with its members going forward. Such changes are most welcome and will result, it is hoped, in members feeling greater satisfaction with their professional body and engaging more actively in TLS. This increased engagement will hopefully mean that more members access the vast wealth of information and support available on TLS website, utilising material such as the "Reset, Resilience and Recovery" campaign, containing revised guidance on recovery from the impacts of Covid-19.

The implementation of the foundation phase of the member experience programme is complete including the launch of Law Society Connect, (a forum where small firm members can collaborate on common issues and challenges that they face), BETA, MyLS BETA and MyLS lite.

The second phase with focus on delivery and a more personalised and relevant experience for individual members including learning and development, accreditations, membership of Law Society communities and bespoke events, will soon be implemented.

The topic of equality and diversity remains high on TLS agenda and Council heard from Sally Brett, head of Diversity and Inclusion, on the

results of new research commissioned by the Lawyers with Disabilities Division regarding the impact of Covid-19 on the working lives of disabled lawyers.

Although working from home has generally helped disabled solicitors, use of technology and procedures along with a need for more tailored support, appear to be the key issues along with a concern that when life returns to normal, disabled lawyers may then be overlooked as workers return to the office environment. Council was also referred to the recent Fiona Woolf lecture on "The Challenges of intersectionality – why are there so few black women lawyers in senior leadership roles in the legal profession and what can we do to change this".

A recording of this lecture and subsequent discussion can be viewed on TLS website. It is well worth watching. TLS own research into the career experience of BAME solicitors working in the profession has concluded that retention rates for BAME solicitors are lower in larger city firms and many leave to join smaller firms that are more inclusive, as well as going in-house. Many BAME solicitors feel that they have to work harder than their white counterparts and do not feel as comfortable in their work. They experience slower career development and there is a significant ethnic pay gap that still exists.

I am aware that I have not really touched upon two of the most significant and current issues of the day: the impact

of Covid-19 on access to justice and the United Kingdom's exit from the European Union. I do feel that these two significant issues are being comprehensively covered elsewhere including on TLS website, where you can find ample information and guidance.

TLS continues to contribute to current Government inquiries concerning judicial review and the outcome of the Competition and Markets Authority report in 2016. As part of the ongoing review of Criminal Legal Aid, the Government has announced an independent assessment of the long-term sustainability of the criminal legal aid market. TLS will continue in its strenuous efforts to influence policy, in the best interest of its members.

If you have any queries or perhaps wish to put a question to Council for consideration at the next meeting, please do not hesitate to contact me or your co-representative, Nina Ferris.

**Sarah Lapsley**  
slapsley@excellolaw.co.uk



## Conversion To Family Law & Practice Certificate

with Safda Mahmood

on Tuesday 23rd February, 10am - 4pm (breaks included)

**The course will be particularly relevant for people who are new to the area, or moving to family law from other disciplines, whether contentious or non – contentious. It will provide you with the essentials of being able to represent a client from the point of instruction, through to outcome.**

*The areas to be covered are:*

- Essential Skills and Managing Client Expectations
- Marital Breakdown – Divorce, Dissolution and (Judicial) Separation
- Funding Family Law Cases and Drafting Essential Documents
- Financial Orders and other forms of Financial Remedy
- Assisting Unmarried Parties and Remedies available
- Orders for Personal Protection (Non – Molestation and Occupation Orders)



& much more

**Core Competencies: B & C**

For more information or to book, [click here](#)



## Conveyancing and the family home

Tuesday 23rd March, 1.30pm - 4.45pm

Conveyancing with the family home involves many difficulties. This course aims to highlight the difficulties and their solutions. The course is useful for both conveyancers and family practitioners.

**Richard Snape will cover:**

- Obtaining instructions from all clients
- The various declarations of trust available
- Gifts from parents to children
- Potential undue influence and conflicts of interest between the parties
- Overriding interests and consent forms
- Problems in relation to severance
- SDLT and Land Transaction Tax and family breakdown

**[CLICK HERE TO BOOK](#)**



## Corporate Member Training Offer

*Helping your staff to remain competent*

**Save up to 30% on training costs**

**\*\*\*offer includes conferences as well as seminars\*\*\***

Purchase 10 course credits in advance for only £800 + vat\*.

Purchase 25 course credits for only £1,800 + vat\*.

**Then simply book ANY of your staff, including all support staff, on a wide range of LLS events, assigning credits as required - easy!**

Any training event up to 3 hours in duration is 1 credit, anything over 3 hours up to one day is 2 credits, including our full day conferences.

For an application form, please contact: [training@liverpoollawsociety.org.uk](mailto:training@liverpoollawsociety.org.uk)

Terms:

- The credits may be used by the Liverpool Law Society corporate member firm for any of their staff
- The Credit bundle is non-refundable
- Offer excludes the Children Panel Qualification 3 day course & limited events when specified
- Any supporting materials will only be issued to those who have booked on courses which they have unavoidably been unable to attend
- The Society retains the right to cancel or alter the date of courses
- Subject to our usual [terms & conditions](#)
- Those who book events but do not attend and don't provide notice of cancellation will have the appropriate credit allocation applied.

**To see more information, [Click here](#)**



## 2021 Costs Conference

Wednesday 10th March. 9.30am-3pm (inc breaks)

**Providing a round-up key developments in law & practice and an opportunity to hear directly from some first class speakers.**

**Regional Costs Judge Jenkinson** will be chairing this must-attend training event with sessions from:

**David Pilling**, Liverpool Civil Law—Solicitor and own client costs: beyond Herbert and Belsner

**Matthew Waszak**, Temple Garden Chambers  
Guideline Hourly Rates Update

**Kerry Underwood**, Underwoods  
Costs Round Up – Including Part 36

**Edward Stansfield**, Simpson Millar  
DBAs and the impact of Zuberi v Lexlaw

**Gordon Exall**, Kings Chambers  
Conduct and costs

**[Click here to book your place](#)**



# Top 10 compliance mistakes and how to avoid them

By Julian Bryan, Managing Director, Quill

Compliance should be neither an afterthought nor a burden – it should be a natural consequence of running your law firm and managing your accounts well. The SRA will tell you that anti-money laundering and mishandling client money are the two most common mistakes law firms make. So how do you avoid the SRA's intervention?

Here are 10 compliance mistakes law firms most often fall foul of:

## 1. Not paying attention to the latest SRA Accounts Rules:

The SRA regularly updates its rules, and it's up to you to be aware of these changes and understand how it impacts your accounts function. The best thing to do is follow the SRA news and adopt a compliance-centric approach to your business in order to avoid serious SRA Accounts Rules breaches.

## 2. Incorrectly operating a client account:

Ensure your client account includes the required level of information and that you don't provide banking facilities to clients or third parties. It's essential that your staff are aware of the relevant money laundering regulations and what constitutes provision of banking facilities.

On the same point, don't suffer lack of understanding about how to operate without a separate client account, should you choose this route. SRA's Rule 2.2 is all-or-nothing. It gives you the choice of exemption from having a client account (across the whole practice, not on a client-by-client basis). Whilst this may sound like an easier option (and cheaper as you don't need accountants' reports), it could create more work by asking clients to pay third parties directly and subsequently making sure these payments have been made.

Alternatively, another option permitted by the SRA is Third Party Managed Accounts which can provide client onboarding checks, card processing and outsourced client account services within one solution. You must decide what makes the most sense for your business.

## 3. Not maintaining a clear breach register:

You and your employees must be suitably trained to spot suspected breaches, and you must document how discovered breaches will be rectified and keep a register of this information.

## 4. Not having a payment of interest policy:

Your policy of interest should clearly state how money held in your client account will be handled, including when it becomes due and the rates you'll use.

## 5. Not thoroughly checking your residual and suspense balances:

Analyse which of these monies you currently hold, determine if you should be holding them, return to the proper recipients where possible, and log what you've done if these people can't be located.

## 6. Not defining 'promptly':

This word is dotted throughout the revised SRA Accounts Rules. What 'promptly' means to one person is different to another. Choose suitable timeframes for your firm and clarify in your office policies.

## 7. Not setting realistic service level agreements (SLAs):

There's no point in setting impossible-to-meet timescales. For example, if you're a rural practice with no easy access to a local bank or building society, don't set tight timings regarding paying in cheques. Instead, be honest and upfront about what's feasible for your unique circumstances and incorporate that into your contracts and policies.

## 8. Not supporting your COFA:

Your accounting system should allow you to produce a tri-balance comparison of your client bank, cashbook and client ledger balances. By checking and signing a report of this nature, your COFA can meet his / her SRA obligations and you'll have the visibility you need to make sure compliance measures are being met.

## 9. Purchasing the wrong legal accounts software:

Ask for recommendations from trusted peers of what works best for them. Be sure to probe any potential software provider about how they handle system enhancements to address ever-changing rules. Your supplier should be rolling out new and enhanced functionalities which allow you to streamline compliance procedures and ensure you're constantly protected.

## 10. Not collaborating and communicating effectively:

Compliance is not a one-person task. It's the duty of everyone in your organisation from your cashiers and compliance officers to senior leaders and solicitors. Seek input from all stakeholders when reviewing compliance-related policy documents and roll out updated documentation with appropriate training company-wide. Keep your accountant informed always so audits can be done quickly and efficiently.

## Summary:

Hopefully our tips will help you fulfil your regulatory compliance responsibilities with ease. This excerpt is taken from our '15-Step Guide to Starting Your Own Law Firm'. To download our guide in its entirety, and learn how to keep client money safe and avoid money laundering scams, please visit [www.quill.co.uk/Legalpracticemanagementforstartups](http://www.quill.co.uk/Legalpracticemanagementforstartups).

*Julian Bryan is the Managing Director of Quill, which helps law firms streamline, and run their practice better and compliantly by providing simple and easy-to-use legal accounting and case management software, as well as outsourced legal cashiering services. Julian is an advocate for quality software standards and served as the Chair of the Legal Software Suppliers Association from 2016 to 2019. He can be reached at [j.bryan@quill.co.uk](mailto:j.bryan@quill.co.uk).*

## 15-Step Guide to Starting Your Own Law Firm

A step-by-step guide to everything you need to know to launch your own law firm in 2021.



Learn more: [www.quill.co.uk/Legalpracticemanagementforstartups](http://www.quill.co.uk/Legalpracticemanagementforstartups)



**QUILL**  
accountable to you



Almost a year of COVID19 has left its mark and huge pressures have been placed on businesses, families, individuals and charities. At Liverpool and Merseyside Samaritans we have been doing all we can to provide emotional support to all who need it. We are keeping open for as many hours of the night and day as we can. Social distancing restrictions mean that we can only have two Samaritans on duty at a time but to compensate we are doing our best to operate additional shifts.

We are now able to train new volunteers remotely and the mixture of online training with tutorials and practice calls are proving to be a success and 12 new Samaritans have just started training with us in 2021. The initial course lasts 10 weeks and then the new volunteers start shifts in the branch, initially with a mentor followed by a period as a probationer during which additional training takes place.

As I have said before, Samaritans offer our support to the Liverpool Law Society and all their families, staff and clients. If you know someone who is struggling our number is 111 123 and we can be contacted by email at [jo@samaritans.org](mailto:jo@samaritans.org). All calls and emails are completely confidential.

Providing our service comes at a price and we have to finance our Branch by the grants and the generosity of the public on Merseyside. If everyone connected with the legal profession on Merseyside could donate the equivalent of the cost of a coffee every week that would make an enormous difference to the finances of Liverpool and Merseyside Samaritans! Donations can be made at <http://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/charities/samaritans17>

Samaritans is open 24 hours a day 365 days a year. Our free phone number is 116 123 and our email address is [jo@samaritans.org](mailto:jo@samaritans.org)

**Tony Summers**  
Trustee  
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25 Clarence Street, Liverpool L3 5TN

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## Dealing with poor performance in the workplace: a guide to best practice

Wednesday 24th March, 10am - 12pm

This course is aimed at employment law specialists at all levels, as well as litigators and other practitioners whose practice includes employment law.

A hard-working, engaged and well-motivated workforce is key to the success of any organisation which employs people. If an employee is under-performing, this can often be very harmful to morale, commercially damaging, and is likely to result in a substantial drain on management time and resources.

Emma Tegerdine will cover:

- Causes of poor performance
- Stress-related issues
- Disability-related issues
- Age discrimination
- Why employers should be proactive about performance issues
- Conducting investigations
- Performance review meetings
- Sanctions

[Click here to book](#)

## Directors' Duties

Friday 12th February 2021, 12.30pm-1.30pm

This hour long course provides practitioners with a reminder of the basics in relation to directors' duties.

The course will concentrate on how the duties apply in 'real life' and will provide practical examples as well as relevant recent case law.

Chris Beanland will cover:

- My job title is 'director'. Does this mean the law classifies me as a director?
- The duties in the Companies Act 2006
- Can a breach of duty be excused or ratified by either the board or shareholders?
- Can we include a provision in the articles that excuses breaches of duty?
- How are breaches of duty enforced?
- Has a court got the power to relieve a director for breach of duty?

Core Competencies: B

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# Let the Light in

## LawCare offers some advice on beating the winter and lockdown blues

So many of us, in the depths of winter and lockdown, are now getting most of our light artificially from screens and desk-lamps. We are missing all the ways in which we used to be outside without even thinking about it - the commute, the school run, travelling to meetings, and our running errands. We're missing the kicking of dry leaves or the squelching of wet ones, the raising of umbrellas, or the view of sunrise, sunset from train /car windows. The shorter days of light drain us of energy, meaning some of us will suffer from seasonal lethargy, Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD) and depression.

Over the next few months it's more important than ever to let the light in and get outside as much as possible. Bright morning light can advance our circadian rhythms and suppresses melatonin – having an antidepressant effect. Being outside has a therapeutic effect, sunlight helps the body produce the immune-boosting Vitamin D, and also helps us breathe more deeply, get more oxygen into our lungs and chase away the stress hormones of adrenaline and cortisol. We may wake up a bit grumpy, feeling the winter blues but as the day progresses we can begin to feel happier, especially if we have been outside.

Humans have always known the importance of light to wellbeing. The light we get from the sun, our best known star in the sky is crucial to survival. Celtic people believed they came out of darkness into light and in a sense we all do as we are born into this world. Florence Nightingale instinctively knew that her patients needed light, air and a view - science now confirms that patients get better quicker if these are available to them. In 2013 a bookkeeper Oscar Kittilsen came up with the idea of erecting large, rotatable mirrors on the northern side of the valley in Gaustatoppen, Norway what are called "solspeilet", sun mirrors. Until then the residents spent half the year in the dark. Just like sunflowers he wanted to direct light to the people.

We spend so much time indoors these days, especially now we are all in lockdown, so here are our tips to help you get out as much as you can this winter.

### Top tips for letting the light in

Make sure you have appropriate outdoor clothes – if you're warm and waterproof you're ready for any weather!

Take a lunch break and get into the light whatever the weather. It doesn't have to be an hour, or even at lunch time if that doesn't suit your working pattern, but try to get out in daylight hours wherever possible. You will always feel better for going outside.

Open your curtains and window in the morning even for just a few minutes to let a blast of cold air in.

Try and work near a window if you can, move your



*Photo by Chan Hoi on Unsplash*

desk if necessary or hotdesk round the house.

If you have a garden or balcony go outside a few times a day for a few deep breaths of fresh air.

Take work calls/meetings outside where possible, if there's no reason you can't be walking and talking.

Make a plan to get out every weekend – you can still visit parks, gardens, countryside and beaches even in lockdown. Just don't travel too far from home.

Get a SAD light which replicates daylight and can boost your mood.

Put fairy lights up, light candles, practice the Danish tradition of hygge at home to get through the long winter months. When darkness is illuminated by a few little flickering lights it seems more bearable.

Take a Vitamin D supplement. Experts recommend everyone does in winter and this winter it's even more important.

As the Celts believe, out of darkness and death comes light and life. We will come into the light once again.

***If you are finding things difficult LawCare is here to listen. We provide emotional support to all legal professionals, support staff and their families. You can call our confidential helpline on 0800 279 6888, email us at [support@lawcare.org.uk](mailto:support@lawcare.org.uk) or access webchat and other resources at [www.lawcare.org.uk](http://www.lawcare.org.uk)***

## Wellbeing in Law firms during the pandemic- how can we replace the corridor conversation?

**The opportunity for a trainee to ask for feedback and reassurance; a chance to clear the air after a challenging meeting ; a place to start that difficult conversation and a semi – private space to check on a colleague who is going through a hard time. Hybrid working has stripped us of many of the informal opportunities and corridor conversations that allow us to connect, give and receive support and address issues which can have a significant impact on our emotional and mental wellbeing.**

Despite the challenges it is highly impressive how many law firms have risen to the challenge of supporting and enhancing staff wellbeing during the pandemic. Many already had well established foundations prior to Covid – such as training programmes for managers and staff in Mental Health First Aid and setting up Wellbeing Hubs. These have been underpinned by value statements to encourage a culture in which staff feel able to raise issues and contribute to initiatives to improve the agility, resilience and wellbeing of themselves and their colleagues.

Others firms are chartering new territory or are under pressure to improve, at speed, their approach to staff wellbeing. Even those fore-runners are encouragingly aware that this is an area which is ever changing and their will need to keep striving to ensure they better understand and respond to triggers and needs of individuals.

We can view wellbeing through the lens of ESG and a mandatory requirement to report on this but there are multiple benefits that go beyond just meeting a statutory requirement. Beyond the obvious advantage of a healthy workforce in terms of productivity , there are many “ soft benefits “ which have been key to how companies have managed the challenges of the pandemic. Not only does the reputation of a socially responsible company draw business, it also attracts high quality staff from a wide and diverse capability and experience pool. The workforce tends to be more stable, innovative, agile and loyal. These serve as good foundations to maintain the resilience of a company at times of crisis.

Key to the wellbeing initiatives companies should be introducing or enhancing is a focus on culture, collaboration and strategy.

### Culture

Now is the time for firms to engage with staff at all levels to understand what has been learnt during the pandemic about behaviours and strategies which have impacted on wellbeing, psychological safety and belonging. What has worked and what hasn't worked? What has been the impact of managers and HR advisors not knowing the answers to circumstances which have not previously presented? Has this caused anxiety or has it provided an opportunity for more collaboration and ownership of solutions within a staff group? Has this seen an increase in a sense of permission to present divergent or dissenting views? How has all of this impacted in the confidence staff have in your firm's culture? Is there more trust and engagement which will support openness and validation of mental wellbeing issues?

### Collaboration

It is widely accepted that we will not return to the practice of all staff coming together in a central office space on a daily basis. The journey towards this position had of course begun prior to Covid but a conservative estimate would suggest it has been fast forwarded by a minimum of 10 years. In the future, a centralised work space

will largely be used where face to face collaboration is required. It will be essential to understand how staff define their need for collaborative space. This will vary from support staff, trainees, fee earners and senior partners and the home situation and responsibilities of each of these people. Access to the right circumstances in which collaboration can take place will be important to the identification and support of potential and developing mental wellbeing issues. Law firms need to support staff who line manage others to have conversations about mental wellbeing, to handle difficult conversations and mediation remotely and to recognise where a face to face meeting is required. They need to consider how they can actively promote diversity remotely. How will opportunities for shared identity, peer support and collective influence be safeguarded and promoted as hybrid working patterns are embedded?

### Strategy

All law firms of all sizes need to ensure they have a robust Wellbeing plan or strategy – this isn't just for the large corporate practices, and it needs to be embedded in all levels of the organisation and be central to all policies and protocols. There needs to be clear definitions and measurements of the outcomes of the strategy. A word of warning too – firms should guard against it becoming an “ add on “ or a tick box exercise in which they seek evidence to reassure themselves they are taking action rather than proactively analysing and understanding the impact their approach is having.

Many organisations have established daily huddles during the pandemic. This is an important initiative in terms of keeping in touch with staff and bringing people together remotely. However I have not found many examples which explicitly address wellbeing as part of the agenda. This is a missed opportunity. Current initiatives such as flexible working; virtual socialisation; practice around working hours, work / life balance and email behaviour all sit within this strategic approach. It should also address health and safety issues. During the pandemic this should include robust risk assessments which takes account of evidence that our ethnicity can influence levels of risks. Expectations regarding face to face collaboration should take account of these assessments. The strategy should be underpinned by an ongoing communication and engagement process which keeps staff updated with developments and encourages and acts on staff feedback and contribution.

We are undoubtedly heading for a new normal in our working lives. Let's not miss the opportunity to ensure that open discussion and a focus on mental wellbeing is a part of that future normality.

**Cheryl Fenton**

**Associate**

**Achill Management**

*Achill Management can offer a variety of support to law firms including advice and support on Mentoring, staff engagement audits and events, as well as consultancy support on developing your wellbeing strategy and implementing it successfully. To find out more contact Amanda Carpenter on [amanda@achillmanagement.com](mailto:amanda@achillmanagement.com)*





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# Liverpool BID Company

**Our regular update from Julie Johnson, partner at Morecrofts Solicitors and chair of Liverpool BID Company's Commercial District BID operating board**

I hope that everyone is coping during Lockdown 3.0. I am finding, even if it's something small, that looking for a bit of joy everyday helps.

How can we see funding for Cities developing in the future?

Much of the conversation over the past 10 months has been focused on change. The Build Back Better ideology comes from a very honest and hopeful place. It's easy to see why. After the hardship we have endured, and continue to do so, we want to hope that some good comes of it. If that change could make a positive difference in our lives we have something to work towards.

At Liverpool BID Company, our work has had a foot in two camps; making the present survivable for business, and improving the city for business when it opens back up again.

The first step has helped to ensure as many firms as possible can continue to operate through lockdowns and restrictions. This has filtered from the high street and into the Commercial District as businesses of all shapes and sizes are impacted by the Coronavirus Pandemic. Liverpool Without Walls, for example, began as an idea for how hospitality businesses could continue to open and maintain a level of viability by increasing their covers and moving into the public realm.

That original idea has gone on to have a wider impact, reimagining how we see our public space, as visitors, as workers, diners and businesses. Pavements, for example, have always simply been seen by many of us as a way to get from A to B. They have rarely been a destination in themselves, but that may change as we look to spend more time outdoors, especially in Spring and Summer.

An idea that begins in making the present viable, goes on to have an impact on the future. How can businesses use the public space around them and be part of how they shape their street, their neighbourhood, their community? This is also part of the work we do at Liverpool BID Company. How business operates in that community is a reminder that we are stronger together.

This takes us back to our opening question, how do we want to pay for our cities? If the present has been about viability, the future needs to be focused on sustainability and growth. Keeping businesses afloat while they cannot open their doors means cities are having to pay to ensure there are few permanent closures.

Yet what comes next? As the Chancellor begins to plan the next Budget in March, many voices will be asking about how the bill will be paid. In many ways this is reductive and it



**Julie Johnson**

removes that idea of building back better, of improving on what we had before.

It is obvious that the traditional way our cities have paid for themselves may not be viable much longer, especially if we consider the vast amount we expect cities to invest in, from destination marketing to street cleaning. These things are vitally important, especially when we consider a place where we want to do business, and to welcome visitors.

Liverpool BID Company is based on a different model, one that asks Levy Payers to contribute, their investment is based on the size of their business. That investment then goes into improving the city around them.

It helps to lift both the environment for their own business, and for those of their community, making it better for everyone.

Could this be a new model to support Liverpool as it moves into recovery in 2021? It's a question we'll be asking and thinking about with our Levy Payers.

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# Monthly Costs Update



**Welcome to our new monthly update in which we discuss recent trends and developments in Costs Law and Practice. If you feel that there are costs related issues of interest, please feel free to contact us!**

The recent Court of Appeal judgment in **Zuberi v Lexlaw Ltd [2021]** EWCA Civ 16 has gone some way to clarifying the rules relating to Damages Based Agreements (DBAs).

It is fair to say that there has been an extremely limited uptake of DBAs as a litigation funding option since the current rules were introduced in 2013. The biggest obstacle is still the application of the indemnity principle which limits costs recoverable from the other side to the sum recoverable under the DBA. So, if your DBA allows a charge of say 30%, then you can charge £3k on a recovery of £10k. If your inter partes costs are say £8k so are stuck with the £3k as that is the limit of the client's liability.

But that is not the only problem with DBAs. A major issue is highlighted by the Zuberi v Lexlaw case. The case itself was about a dispute with a bank. The Solicitors acted on a 12% DBA which included this clause –

*"With the exception of the circumstances set out in clause 6.3 ... you may terminate this Agreement at any time. However, you are liable to pay the Costs and the Expenses incurred up to the date of termination of this Agreement within one month of delivery of our bill to you."*

Mrs Zuberi succeeded but tried to avoid any payment under the DBA on the ground that this clause breached Regulation 4 of the 2013 DBA Regulations which bars the recovery of any charges over and above 'the payment' i.e. the agreed percentage. The cancellation charge was caught by this. She argued that the inclusion of this cancellation clause meant that the entire agreement was unenforceable. This had alarming implications for practitioners. A client could terminate the agreement and argue that there was no entitlement to any charges!

This argument has been firmly rejected by the Court of Appeal. Coulson LJ Observed – "nobody can pretend that these Regulations represent the draftsman's finest hour". It is hard to disagree. In relation to this particular argument the appeal judges

held that Regulation 4 had no impact on cancellation provisions. It regulated the sharing of the proceeds of success but did not in any way bar an unrelated provision about what would happen in the case of cancellation.

This is a significant judgment and will be a comfort to many firms.

However, DBAs in general are likely to remain unpopular under the rules as they stand.

New rules are expected which could make DBAs more attractive to practitioners. In particular they would permit the use of hybrid arrangements. These will enable firms to agree to charge a reduced rate which is payable in any event and then to add a percentage in the case of success. These agreements are currently banned because of the restrictions on Regulation 4. This rule has been widely criticised. It means in effect that the lawyers recover significantly less if they carry the whole risk of the case under a DBA. It will also be possible to recover inter partes costs in addition to the DBA deduction – similar to the position under Conditional Fee Agreements.

It is not immediately clear when these welcome changes will come into force. Watch this space.

**If you require help in relation to any costs issues contact Robert Cook at [robert@cook-legal.co.uk](mailto:robert@cook-legal.co.uk) or Mike Yassin at [mike@cook-legal.co.uk](mailto:mike@cook-legal.co.uk)**

# Regulation Update

## The latest regulation news from Andrea Cohen of Weightmans LLP



**Andrea Cohen**

I hope you are managing in National Lockdown 3. The uncertainty of the length of this period of lockdown, what tiers may be introduced afterwards until the complete roll out of the vaccination programme (or as much of it as necessary to consider it safe to return to some sort of normality) and the extra work/home schooling/health/financial/care er pressures can lead to additional risks, so please take care and ask for assistance if needed.

### **Covid-19 guidance**

Following the publication of the UK government guidance on the lockdown announced on 4 January 2021, the Law Society issued its interpretation of the guidance and how it affects law firms and solicitors (including sole practitioners and freelance solicitors) in England and Wales

<https://www.lawsociety.org.uk/topics/coronavirus/new-national-lockdown-and-what-it-means-for-legal-services>, which includes confirmation that solicitors who need to travel internationally for work or who need to stay in overnight accommodation for work purposes can do so, and can visit clients in their offices or at home (if necessary) provided they follow COVID secure guidance, but where possible, meetings with clients should be virtual. House moves are allowed, although there recently have been discussions as to whether this will continue. Courts remain open but at the time of writing, the Law Society has written to HM Courts & Tribunals Service proposing a two-week pause in non-custody courts work due to concerns about safety.

### **Personal injury claims reforms**

Unsurprisingly, other than in relation to the length, the whiplash reforms are to be delayed by another month, until May, having initially been planned to come into force April 2020 and then postponed to April 2021. Whether this one month delay is sufficient to put in place whatever steps are required to implement the new portal for road traffic accident claims remains to be seen. The Motor Insurers Bureau apparently continues to make 'excellent progress' in creating the portal, which is called the Official Injury Claim Service.

According to APIL, there are a number of queries outstanding, including the need to know 'exactly how the proposed new 'bespoke' court process will replace ADR', 'the outcome of consultation with the Lord Chief Justice about the new whiplash tariffs', and 'clarification about how mixed claims will be handled in the new system'.

### **SRA Transparency Rules**

As we reported in November, compliance with the transparency rules continues to be a concern for the SRA. In his recent report to the Board, Paul Philips confirmed that the majority of firms are adhering to the rules, but from the checks carried out last year, some are not. Engaging with firms that are not compliant has moved on and it's been reported that the first fines have been issued to firms who failed to comply, the highest being £2000 plus £300 costs, for failing to publish mandatory details about costs, service information and complaints

procedure on their websites, and one firm also failed to display the SRA's digital badge. The SRA confirmed that it will be carrying out further exercises throughout 2021 to check individual firms are complying with the rules and warned that firms need to act now. If you need any assistance, please get in touch.

### **Brexit**

Now that the UK has left the EU, the SRA and Law Society are producing and updating guidance to reflect the position from 1 January 2021 for firms and individuals on the raft of changes to the way many work. Amendments to SRA rules so far include changes to the Qualifying Lawyers Transfer Scheme to permit applicants worldwide to seek exemptions, and bringing the registered European lawyer regime to an end (other than for Swiss lawyers). It is also working with Government departments and the Law Society on the future recognition of EU professional qualifications, as well as qualifications from the rest of the world. The Law Society has produced guidance on matters after the end of the transition period, which can be found at <https://www.lawsociety.org.uk/topics/brexit/>

The Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) worked closely with the ICO to prepare supporting guidance for UK organisations receiving personal data from the EU, and has a campaign on keeping data safe post Brexit as it believes a large number of businesses are unaware of the action they may need to take to adhere to new rules.

### **AML**

As you will recall from a previous column, following the fifth Anti-Money Laundering Directive (January 2020) the definition of 'tax adviser' was widened to include any firm or individual "who by way of business provides material aid, or assistance or advice, in connection with the tax affairs of other persons, whether provided directly or through a third party". The SRA produced guidance on tax advice and AML for firms to help consider whether they fall within the scope of the regulations and if they did, they should have applied to be supervised for money laundering before 10 January 2021.

Those firms that now find themselves within the AML regulations, together with firms already 'covered' need to assess the risk for their business activities that fall within the regulations and carry out an independent audit, as well as complying with other guidance and warning notices on AML, and Legal Sector Affinity Group guidance. Having promised at the November annual COLP and COFA conference that the updated LSAG guidance would be published "imminently", at the date of writing this column, there is no sight of it, or indication of the publication date (although that may have changed by the time you read this). What is known is that the SRA intend to continue its visits to firms, as confirmed in its report 'Anti-Money Laundering (AML) Visits 2019-2020'



<https://www.sra.org.uk/globalassets/documents/sra/research/anti-money-laundering-aml-visits-2019-2020.pdf?version=4ada2c>.

If you need assistance with your firm-wide risk assessment, policies or requirement to conduct an independent audit, please get in touch.

### Legal Ombudsman

The Law Society has said it will not agree to the Office of Legal Complaints business plan and budget for LeO for 2011/22 which includes a 19% rise in spending to meet current demand, deal with the additional impact of Covid-19 and reduce waiting time, with a further rise anticipated in 2022/23, and asked how LeO can ask for more funding at this time when many firms are facing financial difficulties due to the pandemic. Concern was also raised about LeO's performance, with a rise in backlog of unopened cases (estimated at 5000 by the end of the financial year), decline in number of cases closed and high turnover of staff. The Legal Services Board is expected to finalise the budget March/April.

### Disciplinary

#### Dishonesty and exceptional circumstances

In two recent SDT decisions, junior solicitors who were found to be dishonest, fell into the small category of exceptional circumstances where dishonesty did not lead to strike off.

In one, the solicitor had a panic attack after being told she had missed an employment tribunal hearing and tried to destroy evidence that she had been notified about it. She could not find any reference on the electronic file but there was a notification of hearing in the paper file which she put in confidential waste bins in, as she told the SRA, "a moment of sheer panic". She told her supervisor within a short period of time about the

hearing, but not the document, and emailed the ET to apologise, saying they had not been notified of the hearing. The supervisor found the document in the bin later that day. She was dismissed for gross misconduct the following day, the firm notified the SRA, and she self-reported two days later.

The SDT said it could not be sure that the solicitor, who was diagnosed as being on the autism spectrum after the incident, knew what she was doing at the time. It took into account that the dishonest conduct consisted of two misleading accounts which took place within 40 minutes of one another and said "The tribunal was mindful that whilst inevitably a serious matter, the dishonest account was not sustained and could not be described as calculated... this 40 minutes was an aberration from the personal and professional standards and conduct of the respondent." It therefore fell within the "small residual category of cases where there were exceptional circumstances which meant that strike off from the roll was not the appropriate sanction". She was suspended for six months, restrictions were placed on her return to practice and she was ordered to pay £2000 costs.

In the other case, a solicitor who admitted dishonestly amending an email to cover a mistake was suspended for six months after it was accepted by the SDT that her case fell into the 'small residual category' where striking off would be a disproportionate sanction. She had twice mistakenly emailed the wrong recipient who had a similar address to the person she wanted to contact, and after the client raised concerns about how many times this had happened, she amended one of the emails to change the recipient and took a screen shot. The SRA accepted that she acted in a 'moment of panic' in trying unsuccessfully to conceal the error from her client, she was not guilty of a pre-meditated attempt at

deception but made a momentary wrong decision which she self-reported a day later. The tribunal heard that when considering the nature, scope and extent of the dishonesty, 'this was as inept an example as it could be and more akin to the "dog ate my homework" excuse than a calculated plot to conceal dishonesty of a protracted and ongoing nature'. It was submitted she had learned from her mistake and was not a threat to the public or to the honour of the profession. As well as the six-month suspension, she has to pay the SRA's £1,680 costs.

#### Dishonesty – strike off

A solicitor who was dishonest about her disciplinary record when she joined her new firm has been struck off. When she joined the firm she completed a new employee questionnaire and replied 'no' to the question whether she had been the subject of any investigation. The SDT heard that she had been under investigation by the SRA for more than six months and had sent a partial copy of a file to the SRA just two days before completing the questionnaire. The SDT said 'There was an obvious disparity of knowledge between [the solicitor] and her employer with respect to this issue and the situation therefore called for a degree of frankness and candour on her part which was not forthcoming. This was therefore a serious act of dishonesty.' She admitted other breaches, including holding client money outside of the client account and lacking integrity in doing so. Over more than a year, she caused five clients of her firm to make payments on account of costs and disbursements to an unregulated entity of which she was the director and majority shareholder, which were not used to pay those costs and disbursements. She agreed that she should be struck off and to pay just over £7000 costs.

#### Costs award

In a rare decision the SDT

ordered the SRA to pay towards a solicitor's costs after ruling that many of the allegations made against him were brought based on 'errors and misunderstandings', and unnecessarily forcing him into a full hearing for a sanction that could have been dealt with internally by the SRA. While some misconduct was found in relation to a witness statement explaining a mistake with an untrue and misleading assertion, the tribunal finding him careless rather than reckless or dishonest, a number of other allegations were found not to have been properly brought and were based on a series of mistakes. The SDT imposed a £2,000 fine with £5,000 costs and ordered the SRA pay £27,000 towards his costs.

#### Taking advantage and own interest conflict

The SDT has struck off a former partner who had 'clearly taken advantage' of his future daughter-in-law in a property purchase. He had agreed to buy her flat intending to use his pension funds, but failed to complete the purchase to avoid the £28,000 tax liability. He took possession of the property and made a profit from renting it out for four years. He did not discharge the mortgage, which alerted the future daughter-in-law as mortgage payments kept being taken, so he paid her the amount per month, but kept the excess from the rental income.

The tribunal concluded that he acted with 'deliberated and blatant self-interest', took advantage of a family member for financial gain and, instead of showing insight or remorse, he sought to justify his actions as being in her best interests. He denied acting dishonestly but the tribunal found the allegation of dishonesty proved. He was struck off and ordered to pay £11,000 costs.

**Andrea Cohen**  
**Weightmans LLP**

# The SQE and its impact on trainees and the legal industry

Read here to discover what the new route to qualify as a solicitor is and how it will impact aspiring solicitors and law firms.

## The new route to qualification

The introduction of the Solicitors Qualifying Exam is the biggest legal education change for a generation, after the Law Society Finals were replaced with the Legal Practice course in 1993. It is a new national licensing exam which all lawyers, no matter their route into the profession, will have to sit, including law and non-law graduates, legal executives, and foreign lawyers.

The first SQE1 exam will be held on the 8th and 11th of November this year. After a transition period, this will result in the abolition of the GDL, LPC, PSC and the training contract. The new route to qualification is as follows:

1. Undergraduate stage: all aspiring solicitors must have an undergraduate degree or equivalent, in any subject. There is no requirement for a non-law graduate to sit a GDL.
2. SQE stage 1 (SQE1): this is a 360-question multiple choice exam sat over two days, testing knowledge and application of the material contained in what's called "Functioning Legal Knowledge". Broadly, these are subjects that are covered in an existing qualifying law degree and the compulsory stage of the LPC.
3. SQE stage 2 (SQE2): this assesses legal skills and knowledge through practical skills-based assessments, in client interviewing and attendance note, advocacy, case and matter analysis, legal research, legal writing and legal drafting. There is no choice of subject area and all candidates will undertake skills assessments in criminal litigation, dispute resolution, property practice, wills and probate, and business. There will be 16 assessments over five half days.
4. Qualifying work experience (QWE): would-be solicitors will still need to complete at least 2 years of qualifying work experience, but this can be completed at any time before, during, or after completing the examinations, or any combination of these. It can be obtained from up to four organisations and can include pro-bono experience. QWE is not regulated in the same way that the training contract is, and so firms which have historically been unable to provide training contracts will be able to offer QWE. QWE must be signed off by a solicitor, who will confirm that the person has completed a certain amount of time and has had the opportunities to develop the competencies required of a newly qualified solicitor. The sign-off does not certify that they have these competencies – that is the role of SQE2.

5. Finally, the prospective solicitor will have to apply for admission and satisfy the character and suitability requirements of the profession

## Why is the system changing?

One of the SRA's rationales for introducing the SQE is to ensure consistency and standards across the profession; everyone will enter the profession after having taken the same rigorous centralised exams. Currently, LPC providers set and mark their own exams.

Another aim of this new path to qualification is to remove the bottleneck many students experience in the struggle to find a training contract. Aspiring solicitors will be able to achieve QWE outside the rigid training contract structure, perhaps in firms where they would not achieve sufficient "seats" for a training contract to be offered, or in the social justice sector, a placement during a law degree, voluntary work in a charitable organisation, as well as paid paralegal roles.

The SRA were also hoping to entice new and different providers into the legal education market to offer more competition and to provide students with more choice and flexibility. This is already happening with over 230 trainees having started BARBRI's first SQE1 Prep Course on the 18th of January. This is a 40-week preparation course offered online, enabling students to study for the first SQE 1 in November 2021 whilst also working full-time.

## How will this impact students?

SQE exams will be offered twice a year; SQE1 in November and May, with the first SQE2 in April 2022 and then in October. This will enable self-funded students to work, fund the SQE1 Prep course and sit SQE1, then when they have passed to pay for SQE2. A student does not have to pay for the whole preparation course in one go, as they currently do for the LPC. Depending on the Prep Course chosen, the cost of this new route can be much lower than the current GDL and LPC costs.

As the exams are run by Kaplan, all candidates must pay the exam fees of £1,558 for SQE1 and £2,422 for SQE2. Preparation courses will be run separately by providers, who will determine their own costs. BARBRI's SQE1 Prep Course costs £2,999 and the SQE2 Prep Course is also £2,999 for BARBRI alumni, so even with exam fees, that is a substantial saving on the costs of a GDL and LPC.

Together with the flexibility QWE offers this should make it quicker and cheaper for students to qualify as solicitors

## How will the SQE affect firms?

As well as changing the approach to qualification for aspiring solicitors, the SQE will affect firms' recruitment and retention processes. The SQE assessments do not fit well into a traditional academic year, and so firms will have to consider how to arrange training and what subjects they want their employees trained in to "fill in the gaps". Firms who sponsor students can use the money they will save on the "basic" qualification training to choose more bespoke training for their



employees, and at what point in their career they want the training to begin.

Firms who currently operate with large numbers of paralegals will have to have discussions with staff to set out clear career structures for them, as many of those paralegal roles will cover the competencies required for QWE. The SRA have stated that refusal to sign off on completed QWE will be a disciplinary matter.

If paralegals self-fund the SQE and qualify as solicitors, firms will have to be clear as to whether there will be newly qualified positions available for those employees and will have to be prepared for staff to move on when they qualify. Which staff qualify and when they do so may become less controlled by firms.

There is a worry that QWE will be seen as 'less' than a traditional training contract and will simply move the bottleneck from its current place at obtaining a training contract, to obtaining a newly qualified position. Aspiring solicitors will need to ensure that they keep good records of the skills and competencies they have developed during their QWE to demonstrate the value of their QWE.

BARBRI are committed to helping to diversify the legal profession and to enable non-traditional students to qualify. We have partnered with FLEX to help students receive quality QWE. I am personally interested in helping map "good" paralegal experience onto equivalent training contract experience and would be delighted to hear from any members of the JLD who have had such experience before obtaining their training contracts. I would like to be able to ensure all newly qualified solicitors have received excellent training and also to be able to reassure solicitors who work in firms which have never been authorised training providers that they can safely sign off on QWE.

Although the SQE produces more options for both aspiring solicitors and firms alike, any period of change is difficult, and with more options it can be difficult to decide which route is best. Currently there are choices: anyone who starts a qualifying law degree this year, or a GDL, will be able to continue and qualify using the LPC and training contract route – theoretically until 2032, although it is expected that the number of LPC places available will start to shrink as more people opt for the SQE.

*If you have further queries on the SQE, either from a student or law firm perspective, please contact me at [Tracy.savage@barbri.com](mailto:Tracy.savage@barbri.com) or go to our website: [barbri-prep.com/SQE](http://barbri-prep.com/SQE)*

*Tracy Savage is a qualified solicitor who taught at the University of Law in Chester for over 20 years before joining BARBRI as Academic Head of UK Programmes.*

## Financial Orders: Law and Practice

Monday 15th March, 10am - 12.45pm

The course will consider the various factors surrounding financial orders (previously known as ancillary relief) and the developments in the case law and statutory provisions. It will be of benefit to those delegates who seek to be aware of the current themes and developments surrounding this area of law.

Safda Mahmood will cover:

- Charman and subsequent Cases
- Short Marriages and High Wealth Cases
- Periodical Payments
- Inheritance and Gifts
- Cohabitation Cases
- Conduct Arguments
- Nuptial Agreements
- Maintenance Pending Suit
- Disclosure
- Bankruptcy and Financial Orders
- Amendments to Family Procedure Rules 2010
- Key aspects surrounding Procedure

Core Competencies: B

[CLICK HERE TO BOOK](#)

## Housing Disrepair Conference

Wednesday 24th February, 9.30am-2.45pm (inc breaks)

Chaired by **District Judge Sarah O' Brien**  
with sessions from:

- 9.30am** DJ Sarah O' Brien —Welcome & introduction
- 9.40am** Nina Patel, Jackson Lees  
Legal Aid & Private Funding
- 10.20am** Matthew Wilson, Weightmans  
The Covid Effect
- 11.15am** Louise Murphy and Tom Stockton, MSB—Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018: an update
- 12pm** David Walter, Surveyor—Surveyors Eye View: With update comments on section 9a & 10
- 1.15pm** Philip Nam, Whitecollar Legal—Preparation of Electronic Bundles for Housing Disrepair
- 2pm** Gary Lewis, Cobden Chambers  
Trial Preparation and Practical Tips for Landlords
- 2.40pm** DJ Sarah O' Brien —Summary & thanks

[Book Now](#)



# News from Merseyside Junior Lawyers Division

This year the MJLD are back to provide a number of events throughout this calendar year which will hopefully provide a platform for members to network and build connections whilst also supporting a healthy work/life balance which is especially important whilst the majority of us continue to adapt to a new way of working at home and therefore may be finding it difficult to switch off from work.

The new year often brings about new years resolutions for many and, more often than not, those resolutions may be health or fitness related. Coupled with the fact that the current climate restricts where we can travel and how we are able to spend our spare time, what better time than to start the year off and get moving with a virtual challenge! Our social representative Adrian Davies (River View Law) has organised a Race Around the World, with MJLD members going head to head against a team from the Liverpool Law Society to see who can rack up the most miles throughout January. Entrants paid made a small entry fee, the funds for which will be donated to Go the Extra Mile for Justice, to provide funds for free legal advice organisations that support vulnerable people throughout the UK. There is no requirement to run and so walking is also an option with all miles covered being recorded through the Strava app. As we approach the halfway point the MJLD appear to be taking the lead with a total of 135.07 miles in comparison to the Liverpool Law Society with a total of 18.73 miles. A big well done to everyone taking part so far, put your best foot forward and clock those miles as you enter the second half of the challenge!

As of January, committee members have volunteered to take part in a mentoring scheme offered by both University of Liverpool and University of Law. The scheme is aimed to assist those currently studying the LPC with job and/ or training contract applications and other support where needed. The scheme also provides students with an insight as to what life really is like as a junior lawyer and what to expect when transitioning from their studies to securing their first legal role. I know from my own experience, had a similar scheme been offered, I would have found the same incredibly useful as I would often think a career in law to be impossible and slightly daunting and it wasn't until I secured my current role and made use of the MJLD did I realise the possibilities the profession has to offer. A number of committee members have already arranged to virtually meet with their mentees to get to know one another and the response so far has been great, it would seem the scheme is already proving to be as beneficial as anticipated.

Looking further ahead, as a social representative myself, I am keen to start organising more social events this year which hopefully will be able to take place in person come May/June, however this will of course be dependent on current restrictions. Being a social representative during a pandemic has proven that we have the ability to adapt to a new technological way of organising events and being creative with what events we hold so as not to become repetitive with the all familiar zoom quizzes.

The biggest social event within the MJLD calendar is undoubtedly the annual charity

ball which unfortunately, due to Covid, was unable to proceed as planned. The ball has provisionally been rescheduled for June and we have plans in motion to make the ball bigger and better than what was originally planned!

To sign up for MJLD membership and for the chance to get involved in the many exciting events we hope to hold this year, please do so using the form available on our website: [www.merseysidejld.com](http://www.merseysidejld.com)

**Laura Moore**  
Social Rep



**Laura Moore**

Liverpool Law Society

## Identifying and solving current care & support problems With Caroline Bielanska

Monday 22nd March, 10am - 12.15pm (inc breaks)

This course is aimed at private client and Court of Protection lawyers who advise lay people or act in a professional capacity, where local authorities are meeting some of the person's care needs and provides practical information for the lawyer to be able to understand the problem and know how to handle it.

### This course will include:

- Poor quality assessments – resulting in limited care provision
- Not understanding why some presenting needs are eligible and others are ineligible
- Providing or arranging limited care and limited choice
- Reducing the available personal budget
- Disputes about choice of care home
- Understanding the financial contribution calculation for care at home

**[CLICK HERE TO BOOK](#)**



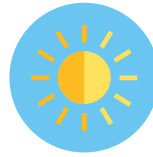
## Look After Yourself

### Top 10 Tips for Good Mental Health and Wellbeing



#### Keep Active

Find a physical activity you enjoy and make it part of your life, you will feel better and boost your self-esteem



#### Take a Break

Use your lunchbreak to get away from your desk. Step outside for just a few minutes, it can re-energise you



#### Sleep is Important

Sleeping well can improve concentration and refresh you



#### Eat Well

A balanced diet rich in nutrients is good for both your mental and physical health



#### Drink in Moderation

Stay within the recommended alcohol limits: heavy drinking affects brain function and can cause disease



#### Keep in Touch

Maintain good relationships with friends, family and your wider community: strong connections can help you to feel happier



#### Share How You Feel

Talk about your feelings, it can help you cope with problems and feel listened to



#### Give Back

It has been proven that giving – time or money – can make you feel valued and give you a sense of purpose



#### Be Mindful

Mindfulness – positive emotions and paying attention to the present – can help you enjoy life more



#### Ask for Help

Asking for help is a sign of strength, and can lead to the right support for you, whatever you're going through

## HELPLINE SUPPORT **0800 279 6888**

365 days a year

9am – 7.30pm weekdays, 10am – 4pm weekends and Bank Holidays

You can find useful information and resources on our website,  
as well as download our factsheets [www.lawcare.org.uk](http://www.lawcare.org.uk)

## Liverpool becomes the first 'Right To Food city' as council votes unanimously to back campaign

Liverpool has become the UK's first 'Right To Food' city after a motion was unanimously passed by Liverpool City Council calling for the 'Right To Food' to be incorporated into the Government's 'National Food Strategy'.

The motion was moved on behalf of the Right To Food campaign which is led by Fans Supporting Foodbanks Liverpool and West Derby MP Ian Byrne, one of the co-founders of Fans Supporting Foodbanks.

Through the campaign, the founders are calling on the Government to enshrine the Right to Food into legislation as a key building block towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, agreed by the UK Government in 2015.

The first three Sustainable Development Goals set out a commitment to 'end poverty in all its forms, everywhere', 'end hunger and achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture', and 'ensure healthy lives and promote wellbeing for all at all ages': in short describing a society where everyone is able to afford healthy and nutritious food – where no one goes to bed hungry.

The campaign highlights the situation in many communities in Liverpool which has seen a huge rise in the number of households accessing emergency food provision, applying for help through Liverpool Citizens Support Scheme and requests for Discretionary Housing Payments. These increases have been exacerbated by the pandemic, but poverty in the city has been on the rise since the austerity measures came into force.

The Right to Food campaign also highlights that:

- From April to October 2020 in Liverpool there were 10,296 Urgent Needs Awards (emergency cash awards to low-income households for essentials such as food and fuel) - an increase of 56% on the same period in 2019/20.
- Department of Work and Pensions data reports that households on Universal Credit in Liverpool increased from 30,700 in February 2020 to 58,500 by October 2020 - a 90.5% increase.
- The Trussell Trust reported a soaring 81% increase in emergency food parcels from foodbanks in its network during the last two weeks of March 2020 compared with the same period in 2019, including a 122% rise in parcels given to children as the coronavirus pandemic continued to unfold.

Ian Byrne told Liverpool Law; 'Liverpool in becoming the UK's first city to declare itself a 'Right To Food' city can hopefully be a catalyst for the systemic changes we need to tackle the evils of food poverty so we are delighted to receive the support from across the legal profession for our campaign to put the 'Right to Food' into legislation for all. A huge thanks must go to Donna Scully, Carpenters, Brabners and both Merseyside Law Centre and Vauxhall Law Centre for their support on this issue.



I look forward to working alongside the profession in Liverpool to aid our communities on this and other issues like the lack of access to Justice."

Carpenters Law have pledged their support to the campaign. Donna Scully said, "Carpenters Group have a long established commitment to support the hungry through a variety of foodbanks and other charities. The impact of the last year has been unprecedented, with the number of people relying on foodbanks across the Liverpool region and the UK increasing sharply. We have signed up to the Right to Food campaign as we believe that no one should go hungry and we support the right to food to be enshrined in legislation. This step supports the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goal of Zero Hunger, and our corporate responsibility strategy is founded on the UNSDGs and the creation of effective actions and solutions"

**Sign the 'Right to Food' petition to Parliament here:**  
<https://petition.parliament.uk/petitions/562838>

**Learn more about the Right To Food campaign here:**  
<https://www.ianbyrne.org/righttofood-campaign>

**You can write to your MP today to ask them to sign Ian Byrne's Early Day Motion (EDM) #1251 on Food Insecurity / the Right to Food.**



# Charity Spotlight

## New Beginnings, Improving Lives

New Beginnings – Improving Lives CIC was set up in November 2019 by Director and Founder Michelle Roach a former NHS worker with lived in experience of mental health and cancer.

NBIL was primarily set up as a Social prescribing and advocacy service to support and signpost people who were unable to access services or express their views and wishes. This service is our main core project.

In February 2020 we set up a Mens' Mental Health Boxing and Peer support group due to a lack of services in the area to refer Men into. Men's suicide has always been higher than that of women but both are on the increase, rising by 10.9% in 2018. We had services we could readily refer into for women we didn't for Men. We couldn't get funding to start a group despite the need and lack of services across the city we self funded the program. This is an ongoing service and our aim is to continue this great service due to its success and uptake.

In March 2020 due to the Pandemic we opened a Foodbank delivery service. We deliver across the Liverpool City region (excluding Wirral) offering a varied service. Our food package enables the beneficiary to cook a meal with fresh, frozen and tinned foods including toiletries and household cleaning products when available. Our foodbank works by a referral only and we offer additional support through our advocacy service should the service user require the same. We offer precooked food for those service users temporarily placed by the Council in Hotels without cooking facilities and have been able to deliver



over 6000 packages during March-October across Liverpool, Knowsley and Sefton including Hotels, women's refuges and B&B's temporarily housing the homeless. Our initial scheme was to last for 12 weeks, due to the demand we have continued with limited cash. We save £1000s in surplus food each week from Pret a Manger, Co-Op Supermarket, PLS Foundation (Costco) Farmfoods, Tesco and Fareshare Merseyside.

We have housed three Homeless service users in properties during lockdown and have continued with a resettle programme to ensure they keep their tenancy.

You can support New Beginnings, Improving Lives by either financial donations through the **GoFundMe page**

**£10.00**

**Could help us to provide food for 1 family for up to 1 week.**

**£30.00**

**Could help us to provide one session outreach work/support for vulnerable adults who may be homeless.**

**£50.00**

**Could help us to provide therapy for 1 hour for our mental health group.**

Or by donating to their Food Bank

Help us support vulnerable individuals and families through our food bank. Drop off at our new centre at:

**Rhys Jones Centre, Croxteth Hall, 3 Langley Cl, Liverpool L12 0NB**

Food donations – We are always accepting food donations throughout the year please see a list of what we accept on our [website](https://www.liverpoollawsociety.org.uk).



# January Social Media Highlights

Each month we will be bringing you a selection of the latest social media posts by Liverpool Law Society and its members

**LiverpoolLawSociety**  
@LpoolLawSociety


Our Directors are looking forward to welcoming Councillors Peter Lloyd Jones, Jane Corbett, @ClrKemp, Steve Radford, Jan Bakewell and Steve Williams to today's meeting.

On the agenda is access to justice, housing matters, family law issues and more!

11:48 · 22/01/2021 · Twitter Web App

**CEL Solicitors**  
@CelSolicitors


Dave shared his passion for Golf in his Friday talk today. He even brought in his very own putting green. It's safe to say, CEL is a competitive office! 🏌️



Tweet your reply

**Julia Baskerville**  
@JulesBaskervill

Calling members of @LpoolLawSociety "What would make your Valentine's Day perfect?" let us know for the February edition of Liverpool Law. DM or email me if you would like to take part.



Add another Tweet


**Carpenters Group (at)**  
3,640 Tweets

**Tweets** Tweets & replies Media Likes

**Carpenters Group (at)** · 6d ...  
We've produced another series of #blogs by colleagues across multiple divisions, providing a small insight into our evolving working practices and values as we all adjust to a post-COVID19 world

Here is the second in our 2nd series:


[carpentersgroup.co.uk/news/lockdown-...](https://carpentersgroup.co.uk/news/lockdown-...)



**MSB Solicitors**  
8,258 Tweets

**Tweets** Tweets & replies Media Likes


**MSB Solicitors** @MSBSol... · 1d ...  
#Workingmums are being unduly affected by the #pandemic. 1 in 5 have been forced to reduce working hours to manage #childcare responsibilities, despite being able to be #furloughed. Get in touch with our dedicated #employment team to know your rights.



**LiverpoolLawSociety**  
@LpoolLawSociety

Did you know, we offer a Training Season Ticket that enables members to access an unlimited amount of training with us?


For one fixed price, there are no bounds to how many specialist training events you can attend. Find out more on our website



Training Season Ticket | Liverpool Law Society  
[liverpoollawsociety.org.uk](https://liverpoollawsociety.org.uk)


**Merseyside Junior La...** · 2nd  
Junior Lawyers in Merseyside  
1w · 📍

Week Two and we're halfway through our race around the world!! Team MJLD are safely in the lead with ...see more



**Hill Dickinson LLP**  
@HillDickinson

We're pleased to announce that senior associate Nina Sahu has been appointed to chair of Liverpool Law Society's Equality Diversity and Inclusion Committee. @LpoolLawSociety [hilldickinson.com/insights/news/...#diversityandinclusion](https://hilldickinson.com/insights/news/...#diversityandinclusion) #multicultural #womeninlaw




Tweet your reply

**Vauxhall Law Centre**  
839 Tweets

**Tweets** Tweets & replies Media Likes

**Vauxhall Law C...** · 18/01/2021 ...  
#bluemonday2021 Where did that year go?  
If you are struggling with Debt please contact us @VLCLiverpool We can also be contacted at [advice@vauxhalllawcentre.org.uk](https://advice@vauxhalllawcentre.org.uk)  
If you have problems with debt or benefits contact us we are here to help. A problem shared is a problem halved...



Donna Scully (at) and 9 others

**MerseysideLawCentre**  
@MerseyLawCentre

Huge congratulations to our JFF, Tom Lavin, who has just been admitted as a Solicitor! Well done Tom 🎉🎉🎉

16:51 · 12/01/2021 · Twitter Web App


3 Retweets 1 Quote Tweet 44 Likes

**Valerie** @RedVal... · 12/01/2021 ...  
Replying to @MerseyLawCentre  
Congratulations Tom Lavin @TomLavin13 🎉🎉 Well done,

Tweet your reply

**Liverpool Law Society**  
2,508 followers  
2h · 📍

**Law and Social Justice, University of Liverpool** have launched a new employability scheme - th ...see more




**UP Employability Initiative | Liverpool Law Society**  
[liverpoollawsociety.org.uk](https://liverpoollawsociety.org.uk) · 2 min read

**Morecrofts LLP**  
5,116 Tweets  
Business Automation, Solicitor...

**Tweets** Tweets & replies Media Likes

**Morecrofts LLP** @Morec... · 3h ...  
Some of our team have shared how they're looking after their wellbeing during #lockdown and we thought it might help and inspire you too!

If you're struggling and need support, don't suffer in silence @MindCharity has some great resources + advice here 🙌 [mind.org.uk](https://mind.org.uk)





## Training events open to legal professionals nationwide

Attend from anywhere via Zoom software.

Can't make the date/time or need to revisit the training? No problem! Booking onto any of our training seminars & conferences means you will receive a link to access a recording of the event to watch at your leisure!

| DATE   | TITLE  | SPEAKER                    |
|--------|--|----------------------------|
| 10-Feb | End of life care planning                                  | Caroline Bielanska         |
| 12-Feb | Directors' Duties  | Chris Beanland             |
| 23-Feb | Conversion to Family Law & Practice Certificate            | Safda Mahmood              |
| 24-Feb | <b>2021 Housing Disrepair Conference</b>                   | Various                    |
| 05-Mar | Environmental Law—Climate Change in the UK                 | Mark Taylor & Sally Redman |
| 08-Mar | Witness Statements: A Crucial Guide                        | Professor Dominic Regan    |
| 10-Mar | <b>2021 Costs Conference</b>                               | Various                    |
| 11-Mar | Interpreting Company Accounts                              | Ian Johnson                |
| 12-Mar | Contract and Commercial Update                             | Chris Beanland             |
| 15-Mar | Financial Orders: Law and Practice                         | Safda Mahmood              |
| 15-Mar | Cohabitation: Law and Practice                             | Safda Mahmood              |
| 16-Mar | Twenty good habits when dealing with New Build Transaction | Ian Quayle                 |
| 18-Mar | Restructuring and succession for law firms                 | Ian Johnson                |
| 22-Mar | Identifying and solving current care and support problems  | Caroline Bielanska         |
| 23-Mar | Commercial Property Update                                 | Richard Snape              |
| 23-Mar | Conveyancing and the family home                           | Richard Snape              |

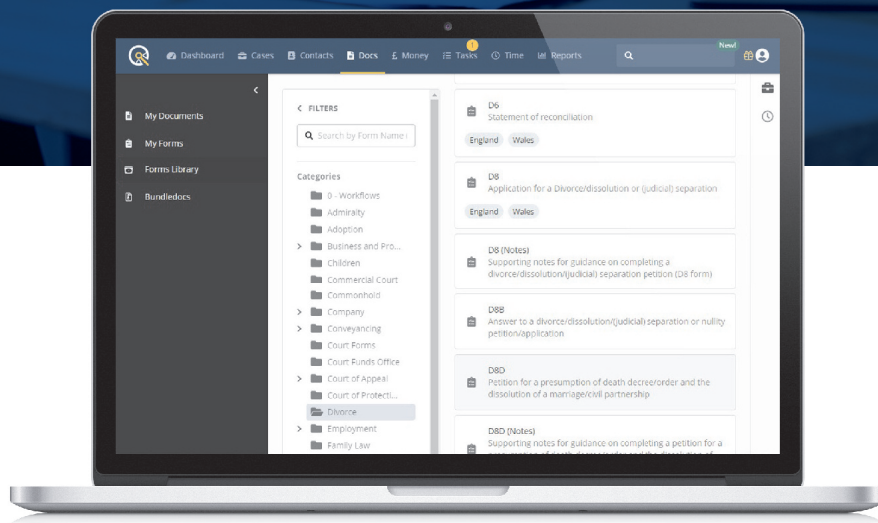
**For full details & to book, visit: [www.liverpoollawsociety.org.uk](http://www.liverpoollawsociety.org.uk)**



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\* Terms and conditions apply. Valid until 31 March 2021.