

LiverpoolLaw

March 2021

Liverpool  Law Society

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



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This month's front cover was taken by Zok Yoksel on Unsplash

DEADLINES 2021

24th March

21st April

26th May

24th June

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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

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Welcome to the March 2021 edition of Liverpool Law

Jennifer Powell
editor@liverpoollawsociety.org.uk

The end is in sight!!! I know the road map is conditional and we need to proceed with caution but the sun is finally shining and we have at least an idea of when we can start moving forward.

The schools re-open from 8 March, which should hopefully give some well needed relief to parents, and businesses have an idea of when they can re-open and allow us back in. I don't know about you but I am loving seeing events being advertised and pencilling things back into my social diary with friends. I love my husband and daughter dearly but I can't wait to see some different faces and I think they feel the same!

This has been tough, there are no two ways about it, but we have made it through and we need to stay positive on this last leg of the course.

The change in weather makes things feel more optimistic. It was hard keeping up moral when we were also getting miserable weather, no one wanted to venture outside in the cold and rain. But now nature is telling us it is a new season and with it comes bright, colourful and warm change, evident by our beautiful front page.

This month we can see how the BID company are working hard with our local businesses to get things back on track once re-opened with nominated leads for each sector. Our MJLD committee are even hopeful their ball can go ahead in the flesh in July- wouldn't that be amazing. Time to get out of our comfies and get glammed up- roll on 12 April when the hairdressers are back in action I say!

Morecrofts are also developing a green team to see how we can be kind to our environment. Pre COVID this was a focus but I think we have all gained a new appreciation for nature since a daily walk to the park has been the highlight of our day. I wish the team all the best of luck and look forward to seeing what innovative ideas they come up with.

As always we welcome your contributions to the magazine, it is your articles that fill the pages. All members are invited to contribute, if you need some help or guidance with this please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Jennifer Powell
Editor
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:

09/03/2021 12:30	General Committee 2020-2021
11/03/2021 16:30	Liverpool Civil Court Update by HHJ Wood QC
15/03/2021 12:30	Finance & Policy Sub-Committee 2020-2021
16/03/2021 11:00	Editorial Sub-Committee 2020-2021
18/03/2021 13:00	Future Planning Sub-Committee 2020-2021
19/03/2021 13:00	Directors meeting with MPs, Lords and PCC
24/03/2021 13:00	EDI Sub-Committee 2020-2021
25/03/2021 13:00	Civil Litigation Sub-Committee 2020-2021
25/03/2021 16:00	Criminal Practice Sub-Committee 2020-2021
01/04/2021 13:00	Access to Justice Sub-Committee 2020-2021
06/04/2021 13:00	Editorial Sub-Committee 2020-2021
13/04/2021 12:30	General Committee 2020-2021

Editorial Committee Dates

All meetings start at 1pm

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

Meeting with Councillors

On 22 January, LLS held its first meeting of the year with Local Authority representatives. Despite our hopes in Summer 2020, this was once again a remote session. Joanne Francis chaired on behalf of LLS and there was a strong representation from the region with Councillor Jane Corbett (Liverpool), Councillor Steve Williams (Wirral), Councillor Peter Lloyd Jones (Halton) and Jan Bakewell representing St Helens as their Director of Legal and HR.

Chris Topping opened proceedings on behalf of LLS's Access to Justice Committee reporting on the worrying rise of benefit and debt enquiries into the Vauxhall Law Centre together with issues being faced by individuals in relation to the opening of bank accounts, PIP payments and paperwork. In better news, Merseyside Law Centre have a new trainee having started them under the Justice First Fellowship Scheme where housing and asylum work is keeping everyone busy. Updates were presented in relation to the Access to Advice Project and referral network creation, aimed at linking professionals together and funded by Liverpool City Council with the hope that the same would be rolled out across the broader Liverpool city region.

Chair of Family Business Committee, Emma Palmer then reported on the difficulties faced this year with significant levels of Domestic Abuse referrals during lockdown. Whilst digital communication has allowed various industries to continue during the pandemic, there are difficulties for vulnerable users who do not have digital devices or trouble using the same. In addition, it can prove difficult to offer emotional support to

clients over the phone compared to face to face. Further, funding concerns remain across whole spectrum from legal aid to courts to local authorities.

Sarah Mansfield reported on behalf of LLS' Civil Litigation Committee on homelessness issues in both social housing and private sector. There are serious issues in urban settings where many are employed in retail sector. There appears to be a trend in that fewer people are paying rent with some doing part-payment and a minority of no payment of rent. At the time of the meeting, evictions could not commence under S.21 until 21st February but this may indicate problems to come later in 2021. Other issues include: cladding since Grenfell where there are major funding problems with tenants often being asked to contribute material sums.

Finally, I gave a brief legislative update during a session dominated by Brexit and Covid instruments. In addition to Royal Assent of the Internal Markets Bill to effect withdrawal from the European Union, there were 3 non-domestic rating bills going through Parliament together with the Covert human intelligence Bill.

Hopefully our next session will be face to face and LLS Members are invited to contact the office with any suggestions for agenda items ahead of that event.

Paddy Dwyer
Parliamentary Liaison Officer



Paddy Dwyer

***NEW* 25 Cases for the Magistrates Court Advocate**

Thursday 29th April, 9.30am - 12.30pm
With Clive Smith

For the busy magistrates' court practitioner, keeping up with developments in case law is not easy. With both Court of Appeal and Divisional Court cases having an impact, this course is intended as a whistle-stop tour of recent cases which provides practical guidance to the magistrates' court lawyer.

Topics covered include:

- Section 142 – the latest guidance on when and how to use it
- Restraining orders on acquittal – can the court really do that?
- The latest test for dishonesty – where are we now?
- Partial DNA profiles – what's sufficient to raise a case to answer?
- Admissibility of the PET form – when can it be referred to?
- Bad character – what constitutes "unusual behaviour" which makes previous convictions admissible?

[Click here to find out more information](#)

News from the Sub-Committees

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Sub-Committee update – Allyship, salutations and more

At the January meeting, the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion sub-committee had at the forefront of our discussions putting on an event centred around allyship. Allyship being such a prevalent issue now more than ever. May 2021 marks one year since the death of George Floyd, and in the hopes of helping to advance the agenda of the Black Lives Matter movement across the legal industry, together with raising awareness of other minorities in promoting equality for all subjugated groups, the sub-committee wish to hold an inclusive event for members of all backgrounds.

The event will be a discussion on 'how to be a good ally', and we would welcome any volunteers who would wish to speak at this. The aim of the event is to highlight the importance of being vocal about support for others, so that we all know what we can do collectively to bring the legal sector forward in its furtherance of equality and inclusivity. More information will be given once a date and details of the event have been confirmed. The sub-committee hopes that we will get a significant number of attendees for such an event. Anyone interested in speaking at the event is asked to contact the chair of the committee: Nina.Sahu@hilldickinson.com

As many might have heard, another hot topic at the moment is the somewhat antiquated use of 'Dear Sirs' in correspondence. This was also discussed this month in the subcommittee meeting. In a sector that is striving for gender inclusivity, it is the opinion of the subcommittee members that effort needs to be made to move forward from using this as a salutation. Members are encouraged to tailor the salutation to the individual the email or letter is being sent to. Although granted the details of the individual are not always available, thought needs to be given to the recipient and what salutation is most appropriate. Assumptions of someone's gender is not practical and can reveal certain unconscious biases. Members are encouraged to use alternative forms of address such as 'Dear Colleagues', 'Dear Practitioners' or 'Dear Lawyers' and we are pleased that the by the directors of Liverpool Law Society support this initiative. In addition, the subcommittee is looking to produce a guide on top tips for best practice in recruitment. This will give guidance to local firms on what they should be doing to ensure inclusivity via their recruitment process. Further updates on this will come from follow up meetings.

Finally, we discussed other events to increase diversity in the legal profession such as the Liverpool Law Society Pathways to the Legal Profession and a recent initiative by Liverpool University: UP. UP is an initiative created to encourage Liverpool university students from disadvantaged backgrounds to obtain work experience. We encourage all firms to become involved in this, and the details can be found on the Liverpool Law Society website. Pathways to the Legal Profession is an event that has been held annually since its origins in 2015. This year it is to be held online in May. The initiative involves year 12 pupils at schools across the region and is run by the Liverpool Law Society Education and Charities Committee and is kindly sponsored by Weightmans. The event looks at different routes in to law, and is usually well subscribed. If you are aware of any schools that



Rachel Kelly-Brandreth

would like to be involved in this, it isn't too late for them to subscribe via the website.

Rachel Kelly-Brandreth
Associate Solicitor
Hill Dickinson LLP
EDI Committee Member

2021 Commercial Property Conference

Wednesday 21st April, 9.30am-3.15pm (inc breaks)
Attend from any location at any time. You must pre-book to receive access to the recording.
Angela Hesketh will be chairing this must-attend training event with sessions from:

Commercial Leases in 2021: Bill Chandler, Hill Dickinson

HM Land Registry Update: Leanne Wright, Land Registry

SDLT Half-hour Masterclass: Bill Chandler

Commercial Properties, a Focus on Flood Risk 2021: getting the analysis right

Stephanie Kerr, Landmark Information Group

Commonhold and Mixed Use Developments

Ian Quayle, IQ Training

Impending changes to VAT on commercial property transactions: Jenni Christy, Grant Thornton

Tips & Traps on Commercial Reports on Title
Ian Quayle

[Click here to book](#)

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INFORMATION



Lindsey Knowles

Employment Law Sub Committee

The Employment Law Sub Committee met virtually on 2nd February 2021 for our first meeting this year. It continues to be a busy time for employment law practitioners in the region and I am most grateful to those who took the time to join us and contribute.

This time we were treated to members of St John's Buildings Employment Team joining us and Kevin McNerney leading a practical session on pleading whistleblowing claims from both the claimant and respondent perspective. Kevin set out in his usual engaging style the key considerations when dealing with whistleblowing cases; whichever party you are representing and shared many tips to give you the best opportunity of success. Kevin also highlighted the recent important judgment in the case of *Irwell Insurance Co Ltd v Watson and ors* [2021] EWCA Civ 67 where the Court of Appeal decided that Employment Tribunals can hear claims against the insurer of an insolvent employer. Many employers take out insurance policies to cover their liability in the event that a claim is brought by an employee or former employee. If the employer becomes insolvent, this case has established that the employee can bring a claim against their employer's insurer. This judgment will be welcomed by claimants and is significant for employment practices liability (EPL) insurers. It does bring some benefits for insurers, in that as a party to the proceedings they will have greater control, they will have the opportunity to scrutinise the claim and submit a proper defence contesting liability and quantum of the original claim rather than simply being given a judgment to pay.

I would like to express my thanks to Kevin for providing such an interesting and useful session. Kevin has kindly agreed to come back and talk to us at the next meeting on the Supreme Court judgement in *Uber* which was issued on Friday 18th February and also the hotly anticipated judgement in the *Mencap* sleep-ins case.

The final business for the meeting was to put together a group to consider and respond to the government consultation on measures to reform post-termination non-compete clauses in contracts of employment. A summary of the committees' response will be set out in the next issue of *Liverpool Law*. If any Liverpool Law Society members would like to join the Employment Law Sub Committee to benefit from these great sessions, have your say in consultations and benefit from the professional networking opportunities the committee provides, you would be very welcome. Please email me on Lindsey.Knowles@brabners.com to express your interest. Our next meeting is due to take place at 1pm on 4th May 2021.

Lindsey Knowles
Chair
Brabners LLP

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

Criminal Practice
Proceeds of Crime Act 2002: changes to bodies granted accredited financial investigatory powers
19th March

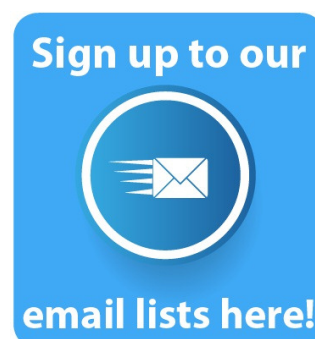
Backlog in the Courts

On 16th February 2021, the Society's Public Relations Officer, Millie Hayden, sent a statement to reporter Kieran Williams at *Liverpool Echo* about the effect of the backlog and volume of cases in the Crown, Magistrate, and Family courts on our city, clients, and members.

Enewsletter 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.

Sign up here



Race around the World - raising funds for Access to Justice

Members of Liverpool Law Society and the Merseyside Junior Lawyers division took part in a competition during January to see who could rack up the most miles by walking or running. To take part, members paid an entry fee which went to the organisations' chosen charities and they were then asked to start recording their miles via Strava Group. Members of Liverpool Law Society were competing to raise funds for Access to Justice in support of the 'go the extra mile for justice' campaign.

Merseyside Junior Lawyers Division racked up an impressive 192.68 miles which led to their victory! We would like to thank everyone who took part in this challenge during what was a very gloomy January. A special shoutout goes to the top runners Chris Topping and Adrian Davies.



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 and the Society will be in touch with you.

Post Brexit new residence rules for UK citizens in Spain.

Good news for property investors. Not that good for those used to spend more than 3 months in Spain...

From January 2021, UK citizens with properties in Spain, as non-EU citizens, have seen their rights to stay in Spain limited.

□ Those with a residence permit in Spain, cannot longer spend more than six months in a year outside Spain.

□ Those without a residence permit in Spain i.e. UK residents used to spending holidays or limited periods of time in Spain, will only be able to stay there a maximum of 90 days per each 180 days period.

The only residence permit for Spain that does not require you to live in Spain more than six months a year and has no limited period in the country either, is the Golden Visa:

Those buying property in Spain worth 500,000 Euro can obtain a residence permit, without limitation periods of residence in nor out, which also gives a working permit.

Claudia Font
Partner, Solicitor & Spanish Lawyer, gunnercooke llp
Claudia.font@gunnercooke.com

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](#)

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**



Manchester Law Society
Instituted 1838 Incorporated 1871

Green light for Morecrofts' new eco team

Morecrofts Solicitors has launched a new staff-led initiative aimed at maximising the firm's environmental sustainability.

The Green Team is chaired by trainee solicitor Rebecca Dobbs with support from a panel of colleagues from all areas of the firm, which has offices across the Liverpool city region.

Its goal is to reduce the firm's carbon footprint through a series of practical measures and changes to its processes. This includes a commitment to become a paper-light business and encouraging colleagues and suppliers to adopt new habits around everyday issues such as reducing food waste, expanding recycling points at all offices and cycling to work.

There will also be a calendar of Green Team events for all staff throughout the year, which will comprise a broad series of educational sessions and practical exercises to further develop a collective culture of sustainability across the firm.

Rebecca said: "The Green Team is about harnessing the collective power of people who are passionate about protecting our planet and want to be part of the change.

"Our key approach is engagement through education and employee initiatives to cultivate environmentally responsible behaviour throughout our network, while assessing all aspects of our operations with the aim of reducing their impact on the environment.

"We are developing a range of practical steps, from reusable drinks cups for staff and visitors and a wider range of recycling points, to paper-free filing and energy efficiency installations. We also hope to extend those principles into our supply chain in the coming months and years to ensure that Morecrofts leaves only a positive legacy for our planet."

Managing partner Alison Lobb added: "The Green Team is an excellent initiative that has quickly garnered the support of the entire Morecrofts team. We have always been a business that is deeply integrated into the community, so it is only right that we continue to look for ways to reduce any negative impact on the wider world and play our full part in protecting the environment for all.

"It's particularly inspiring that the group has been formed by a younger generation of Morecrofts staff who share a genuine commitment to making our business even more sustainable."



Alison Lobb

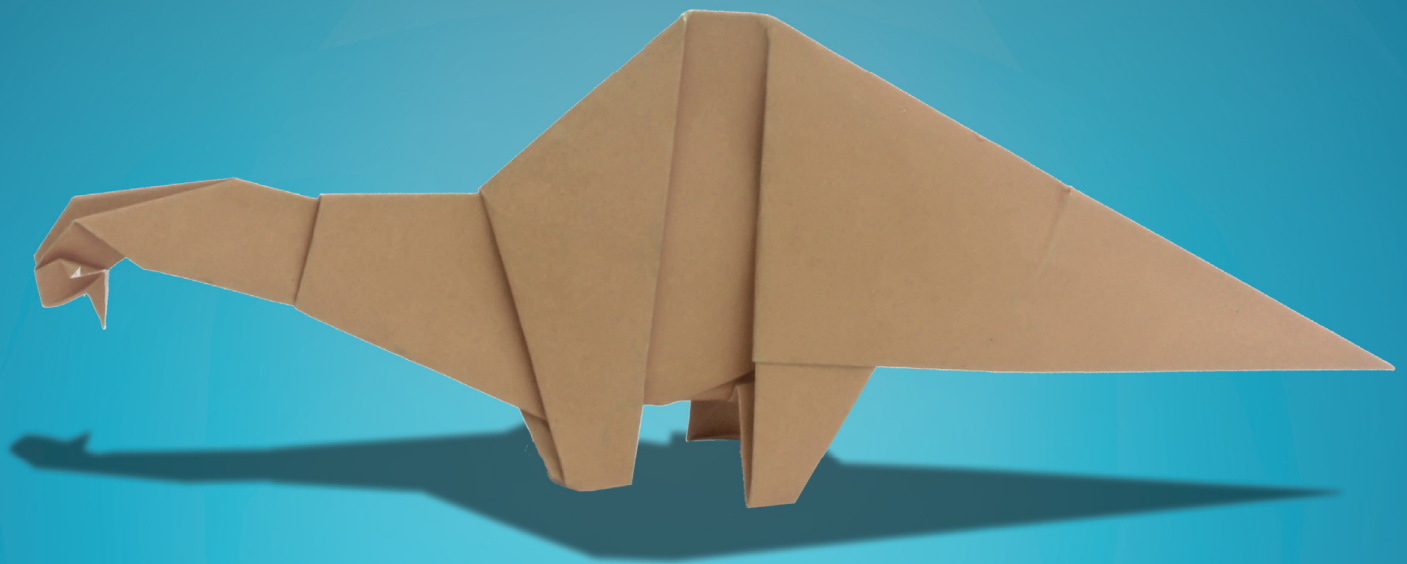


Rebecca Dobbs



The Green Team

Paper-based conveyancing is extinct.



It's time for conveyancing to evolve.

The era of paper-based conveyancing is extinct, and the new age is digital. Onboard clients electronically with eCOS, integrate LMS for automation of priority searches and AP1 registration, digitally sign HMLR deeds, and accelerate and automate creation of your report on titles with Property Report. InfoTrack is the only platform that enables a completely digital conveyancing process, end-to-end. Give us a call or email us. But, please, don't write a letter.

InfoTrack: the home of digital conveyancing.



Join the digital conveyancing movement with InfoTrack. Call us on 0207 186 8090 or visit www.infotrack.co.uk/nopaper



Liverpool Law Society

Anti Money Laundering Update

with Sue Mawdsley

Attend live or view the recording

This course provides an update on the practical requirements of the updated The Money Laundering, Terrorist Financing and Transfer of Funds (Information on the Payer) Regulations 2017 and LSAG Guidance. It also focusses on what we have seen of SRA approach to supervision.

Topics covered include:

- Firmwide risk assessments
- Client/matter risk assessments
- Policies, controls & Procedures
- Training
- Reporting to management
- Independent audit
- SRA engagement
- Any developments on Reporting

For more information [click here](#)

Liverpool Law Society

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

Core Competencies: B

[CLICK HERE TO BOOK](#)

Liverpool Law Society

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 & 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:

- Recent case law on the Landlord and Tenant Act 1954
- Frustration and Leases
- Leasehold minimum energy performance standard
- The Electronic Communications Code: Recent case law
- Recent case law on business rates and empty properties
- Service Charge liability and recent cases
- The Coronavirus Act 2020 as amended and its impact on commercial leases
- Corporate Insolvency and Governance Act 2020 and its impact on commercial leases

& much more...

Core Competencies: B

[Click here](#) to book

Liverpool Law Society

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](#)

One year on: Learning from lockdown

As we approach one year since the country was plunged into a national lockdown and we look forward to the roadmap back to normality, many of us will be looking back on the last 12 months to see what we can learn from this unusual and, hopefully, once-in-a-lifetime experience.

Dottie Fairbrother, HR Business Partner & Head of People Management at Liverpool-based Hampson Hughes, discusses how the team have adapted ways of working and how the pandemic has shaped the industry as a whole...

“When we entered the first national lockdown, we all entered a brand new way of working – whether you were already used to working from home or not, this was completely different and we all had to adapt quickly.

“At Hampson Hughes, the whole team was asked to work at home, with a ‘lockdown skeleton team’ assembled to make sure things like banking and posting were taken care of. This meant around 5% of our staff were in the office for a short period each day, helping to keep everything moving and, importantly, maintain our service levels to clients.

“In the months when we were out of lockdown, we implemented a phased return and ensured that those coming into the office were comfortable in doing so, creating a real blend of at-home and office working.

“Pre-pandemic, we could have never envisaged doing this successfully – due to the nature of our work, face-to-face teamwork has always been the way we’ve done things. But this has taught us that, as long as everyone is willing to get stuck in and look for solutions, we can still achieve results for each other and our clients.

“We’re regularly attending court hearings and settling claims via Zoom now and have managed to still build that all-important rapport with clients via video call, when required.

“In a practical sense, we did have a flexible working system in place already but, as we went into lockdown, we stepped up our efforts and ensured every single member had a laptop. This was crucial from a client data protection perspective.

“As we’ve all seen and, indeed, experienced, the pandemic has had a significant impact on mental health. From home-schooling to caring for vulnerable relatives, to social isolation, it’s been a tough time for everyone. So, it was important to us that we did all we could to try to support our team’s mental health and well-being as we’ve navigated this strange time.

“Mental health has been a key focus for some time, so we had previously trained up four mental health first aiders, but they really came into their own once the lockdown set in, with responsibilities including making sure staff were taking regular breaks and getting out for fresh air. We all noticed quite early on that, without the traditional working day structure, it’s very easy to plough through your to-do list and forget to take time away from your work station.

“As restrictions begin to ease and we return to some kind of normality, this idea of flexibility is one of the learnings that’s of



Dottie Fairbrother

utmost importance to me – while we all can’t wait to get back to ‘normal’, I want to ensure that it is in fact a ‘new normal’, in that we all keep the sense of appreciation for each other and our own wellbeing that we’ve learned during the last year.

“The increased sense of flexibility is something else that we are keen to keep long after lockdown. As such, we’ll be encouraging staff to work from home two days per week – in our industry, this has rarely been seen as the norm and, sometimes, the legal sector has been viewed as ‘old fashioned’.

“There’s still some way to go for the industry to catch up with others, especially in terms of digitalisation, but this period has certainly forced us all to move forward.

“That being said, there’s clearly no substitute for being face-to-face and we’ve all realised how much we appreciate being in one room together, especially for bouncing ideas off one another and enjoying the general office atmosphere – collaborative working encourages fantastic results and boosts morale, so it’s key that we maintain this. I do see this as another positive to take away, as many of us now feel ready to return to the office with a fresh outlook.

“Another key highlight is a flurry of promotions and new appointments. Starting a new role in the middle of a pandemic is certainly a little different but, thankfully, we’ve seen staff starting Training Contracts, one team member accepting a permanent role with us and even managed to offer our apprentice a dual role.

“In total, we recruited six new team members throughout the last 12 months, a feat that we’re extremely proud of given the circumstances and we’re now looking forward to further growth as we emerge from lockdown.”



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.

Volunteers Needed



Vauxhall Community Law & Information Centre relies on volunteers for our very existence. We value and support our volunteers in many different ways. Volunteers are embedded in our organisation, all of our Board members are volunteers, most of our staff started their involvement with the Law Centre as volunteers. We are using this page to thank our

existing and previous volunteers and also to encourage people reading this article to consider volunteering with us. Lets see what some of our volunteers say:

Joy Elson



"I have witnessed the growth of the Law Centre during my time as a volunteer and have been inspired by the commitment shown by all staff to supporting the local community. As a law student keen to gain some practical experience and insight into the social welfare sector, I have helped on the Bereavement support service as

well as undertaking general admin. This role has left me with a real understanding of how to effectively listen and engage with the local community in order to make a difference."

Jane Connolly



"I am really grateful to have had the opportunity to volunteer at Vauxhall Law centre last year, it was such an incredible experience. Everyone in the team was so friendly and welcoming and it was amazing to witness the incredible work they do every day and how dedicated they all are towards helping people. Every day was different and I got to work on a range of different tasks,

attend tribunals with the case works, attend seminars and talks and sit in on client interviews. It was great experience as a student getting to go to the law centre every week and getting valuable legal work experience while witnessing how important law centres are.

I would highly recommend anyone who is considering volunteering in a law centre to pursue it. It was one of the highlights of University for me getting to volunteer at Vauxhall law centre!"

Daniel Scrase



"Joining a team so passionate about community justice has been inspiring. The thirst for change and improvement has been encouraging and I feel I can genuinely make a difference. I've been helping on the Bereavement Support and Advice Service as I have experience working for a bereavement charity. I've also been helping improve volunteer recruitment and retention, and the support I've received from other people in the team has been fantastic."

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 Legal (especially Employment Law), Finance, and IT skills to support us but we appreciate all offers of help. We are planning to open our face to face advice services as soon as it is safe to do so.



Vauxhall Law Centre, assisted by Gaynor Williams and Sarah Mansfield, supported an online meeting with Students representatives from Liverpool University, Liverpool John Moores University and Liverpool Hope University on 2nd March 2021. Members of Liverpool Law Society attended to see if we can offer any support to the students in their campaign.

If you or your organisation can help us, please contact us at 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.



News from Merseyside Law Centre

Fighting for equality through social justice to combat poverty & homelessness



Our staff took part in the LAPG Annual Legal Aid Conference in February, giving everyone the opportunity to attend digital workshops around sustainability and adapting to the new normal.

We continue to make an impact for welfare benefit clients and, in February 2021, MLC represented a woman at a Disability Benefits tribunal.

The woman applied for the mobility component of the benefit PIP in January 2019 as a serious respiratory problem in combination with muscle wastage in one of her legs limit her ability to walk. Her application was refused by the DWP and, due to a huge backlog of PIP appeals and the COVID crisis, she had to wait for over two years to have her case heard by a Judge.

When the case finally came before the tribunal Judge and independent Doctor they advised that the medical evidence submitted in support of our client was so strong that they were able to award her the benefit without the need for further questioning.

Due to poor decision making by the DWP, our client had to endure over two years of hardship. The only silver lining is that she will now receive a lump sum for two years' backdated payments!

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

Twitter: @MerseyLawCentre

Facebook: Merseyside Law Centre

Website: www.merseysidelawcentre.co.uk

Tel: 0151-709-0504

Flood Risk: Safeguarding your Client's Financial Future

Winter is getting wetter each year. Whether rain or snowmelt, it has to find its way into rivers, ditches and waterlogged soil regardless of the property in its way.

As Tim Champney, Managing Director, Future Climate Info explains, the financial impacts of no or expensive insurance cover, together with stricter lender requirements to protect against the capital, should be enough cause for conveyancers to take flood risk due diligence in the property transaction seriously.



1 in 6 properties are at flood risk in England. In the UK as a whole, Government estimates put the number of dwellings at risk of river and coastal flooding at around 2 million, with a further eighty thousand properties in towns and cities at risk from surface flooding that overwhelms drains from sudden localised heavy rain.

And it is getting worse. There is a clear long term trend for the north and west of the UK becoming wetter and this is reflected in more serious flood events in these river catchments, **such as those we reported on with the River Don last year.** With every 1 degree centigrade rise in temperature it is estimated that a 6-7% increase in moisture and rainfall will occur on average.

These trends and the impact of recent events have redrawn the flood risk maps of our country. The Environment Agency (EA) revised their **climate change allowances** in 2016 so that Local Authorities can plan their strategic flood risk assessments for new housing applications, especially in flood zones 2 and 3, which have the highest risk.

New Builds continue on Flood Plains

Planning policy is clear that housing should be located in the areas least at risk of flooding and, when development in a risk area is absolutely necessary, "sufficient measures should be taken to make sure

homes are safe, resilient and protected from flooding".

Measures to mitigate flood risk, such as Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) should be considered as part of the development application. Yet, 1 in 10 of all new homes – more than 84,000 - in England since 2013 have been built on land in zones 2 and 3.

Data from the ministry of housing, communities and local government (MHCLG) shows that the number of new houses built on land at the highest risk of flooding has risen from 9,500 in 2013 to 20,000 in 2017-18, following a peak of nearly 24,000 the previous year.

Local Authorities are under pressure to meet the Government's target 300K new build homes per year to meet housing demand and there exists a clear tension between supplying local need and matching it to suitable sites.

It is only when we get a repeat of a chain of storms, **like we saw with Dennis, Ciara and Jorge last year,** will we see if this redraws the flood risk map for these properties.

Insurance Safety Net...for Some.

In 2016, the government and the insurance industry launched **Flood Re** – designed to act as a reinsurer covering part of the enhanced flood risk and ensure affected homeowners can obtain affordable insurance. However, the deal only applies to homes built prior to 2009, which creates understandably significant concern for homebuyers looking at properties built after this.

There have been calls for the Government to change policy, so that homes built more recently than 2009 are covered by Flood Re, and that more information is provided automatically so that homebuyers know what they are walking into every time. The Government has promised a further £4bn in flood defence expenditure over the next five years and there is more welcome focus now on natural flood management to slow the flow of upland streams so they do not impact on the houses downstream.

Lending and Insurance: the Catch-22

Lenders adopt a mixed approach to flood risk. Any valuation is based on whether a property would be readily saleable in the event that it has to be taken into possession and sold.

All lenders require borrowers to have suitable buildings insurance with flood cover as a condition of their mortgage, according to UK Finance, and this is irrespective of whether an area is considered high risk.

If the property is in **flood zone 2 or 3** but not within the Flood Re area then it can be prohibitively expensive. A buyer can find themselves quickly in a Catch 22 situation where they are unable to insure a property and the lender won't release the funds due to the buyer not having valid home insurance with a flood risk element attached.

Insurers will make premium calculations in a variety of ways – some will do it at part postcode, others whole, some property specific. So it becomes a bit of a lottery without clear expert, independent guidance to support both the application for insurance and then to secure the loan.

If more frequent cases of flooding in certain areas were to render property uninsurable and un-mortgageable, then whole swathes of property could become blighted, or you only attract those cash buyers willing to accept the risk for the right property.

Get the Detail for the Right Flood Due Diligence

The Law Society published revised **guidance for conveyancers on flood risk** to protect their clients. There is a clear duty of care to provide the clearest understanding of what types of flooding have occurred in the area and how this could impact on the insurability and lending on your client's site or property.

Future Climate Info combines the best in class data and expertise to forensically analyse how flooding has and could shape your client's future asset. The **FCI Premium Residential Report** includes a JBA Floodability rating at a 5m resolution, together with an insurability rating to give the clearest understanding of property-specific flood risk for your client.

Where a flood risk is highlighted for your client, an **FCI Flood Appraisal** can be obtained, which provides an independent expert insight at a property-specific level.

For more information on our flood risk assessments in our environmental reports, contact us on 01732 755 180 or email info@futureclimateinfo.com



In Too Deep?



FCI Flood Appraisal

Helping your Client better define the real flood risk

Flooding can have a direct impact on a property and its occupants, as well as on the property's insurability, mortgagability, saleability and value. Understanding the risk is key to giving you or your client the confidence needed to make that important purchase or investment decision.

An independent, property specific analysis of flood risk, combining complementary data and flood mapping with expert independent insight from qualified flood consultants, Ashfield Solutions Group.

Available now from just £150 + VAT

- Property specific assessment, by an expert flood consultant
- Property, location and planning research
- Flood extents, defences and history
- Advice on development constraints & operational risks
- Property resilience or resistance measure recommendations
- Statement of insurability
- Compliant with the Law Society Flood Risk Practice Note



For more information or to order, please speak to your reseller or contact us directly on:

T: 01732 755 180 | E: consultancy@futureclimateinfo.com | futureclimateinfo.com/fci-flood-appraisal

Soaps & Solicitors : A conversation with Coronation Street writer Jan McVerry on Coercive Control

Siobhan McCallum of MSB Solicitors talks to Liverpool writer Jan McVerry

Over the past two years, Coronation Street has aired its first Coercive Control storyline and received a wave of acclaim for its impact on awareness of domestic abuse, and more specifically coercive control. The story of Yasmeen and Geoff is text book. Although not every case ends with three people on a roof and the perpetrator falling to his death, we do know from the facts of Sally Challen's case that victims of coercive control can end up killing their abusers.

Is there a point in lawyers indulging in a fantasy world that has perhaps historically been guilty of perpetuating legal myths and mistruths? Actually, to snub this storyline would be a massive oversight of a pivotal moment in a national conversation about domestic abuse and violence against women.

If we look at Corrie through a feminist lens, the storylines have often intersected with women, abuse and the Justice System; the financial abuse of Rita Sullivan by her husband, the relentless violence against Shelley Unwin by Charlie Stubbs and who can forget Home Secretary Jack Straw's intervention in the 'Free Deidre' campaign?!

The writing has become increasingly sophisticated in its approach to reflecting social issues on screen. A client recently told me that she had only approached us for help because she had recognised parallels between own and Yasmeen's situation. The impact is real.

I sat down (by zoom) with Liverpool writer responsible for the script, Jan McVerry, to find out more about the impact of the storyline and how it came to fruition.

Siobhan : Jan, this storyline has had a huge public reaction, how did it come about?

Jan : With an issue story, we usually start with a character and then build around them, but occasionally there will be an issue we want to tackle and sometimes an existing character can fit.

We were really interested in doing something about coercive control. Initially we wanted to do it with a younger character / later teens relationship but it wasn't quite right for those existing characters. We needed a set of really well embedded characters, not just for a linear run of a story but looking at how it can impact the other characters and what the ripple effect would be. Because Yasmeen and Geoff were both embedded characters, we knew it would have an impact. They were both in their 60s – it wasn't going to be a sexy headline – but we wanted to make it as interesting and authentic as possible.

It helped that Geoff was an interesting character. He is the Father of Tim who is a loveable, comic character; a joker, a magician, likeable and funny. Geoff had a hospital radio show, he's deemed to be a good man. But his private face was more sinister. Yasmeen was feisty, very intelligent. She was a rebel – her first husband wasn't from the same caste and her family didn't approve.



Jan McVerry

It's a democratic process, we deconstruct ideas and whether it's going to work. I had written a lot about rape on the show. With that, I got into the area of male dominance and control. I once heard a story through the CAB of a husband dominating his wife by having her clean the house daily. He would get a paper clip and hide it around the house. Her job for the day was to find the paper clip. It's always stuck with me – it seemed so cruel and sadistic.

I pitched it together with my colleague Jonathan Harvey who had read a long piece in the Guardian about Sally Challen. We knew we couldn't hope to replicate that level of decades old control so we needed to create it within two years. We all write individual episodes each and Jonathan and I became the main architects of the story.

Siobhan: Did the writing have to be reactive to the rise in domestic violence during lockdown?

Jan : The difficulty we have for the responsiveness to real life is that we're not always that nimble in terms of being able to edit stuff. We're working months in advance and we're also up against other soaps and if they've got there first.



Siobhan McCallum

Siobhan : It's almost like fate that it's landed at the right time. There's been a real partnership between Corrie and Women's Aid for this storyline. What was your consultation process like?

Jan : We initially worked with a Manchester Abuse Charity called Choices. Women's Aid then worked on it with us right the way through. It brought publicity for us and them. The Corrie characters even did a video raising awareness. Because of the advice and the ideas they were giving us, we were able to expand the storyline to include financial abuse, taking control of passwords on bank accounts etc. Because the character of Yasmeen wasn't confident in those areas, she became more and more isolated. Having to ask Geoff for pocket money when they were actually living in her house. Geoff died on the 9th of December but the abuse endures. The financial repercussions carry on and he is still controlling her beyond the grave.

We do also have legal advisers consulting. Our research team go out and secure the advice from specialists. From a legal point of view, we are trying to tell a story that feels real and credible and they advise us of something that could possibly work. It's occasionally stretching the boundaries – it's about accommodating something that could work.

With Women's aid, we would go back to them on a monthly basis. As a soap we want to tell the most hardened, pity inducing story we can possibly tell -but tell it responsibly.

Mel B also actually consulted for us at one point!

Siobhan : Corrie have partnered with women's aid before. I'll never forget the Charlie Stubbs abuse of Shelley storyline. The semantics around abuse have changed , but 16 years later, do you think the public reaction has changed?

Jan : I suppose this feels like a slightly fresher angle. That sounds really cynical! The sort of abuse Charlie engaged in we'd seen and heard a million times before. It was a classic story we could feel empathy for Shelley for by witnessing physical abuse. The aspect of coercive control in this case felt like people were being alerted to something new. Then of course now we live in a social media age and the resulting awareness and how we spread it has changed.. Things like press 5 if you've called 999 and can't speak. We've come a long way in the help available.

Siobhan :What has been the impact for you as a writer?

Jan : I know people will say we are just cynically jumping on the bandwagon but we do care about the messages we are sending out. What I want is for it to be a red flag system, so viewers can start to be able to tick these little instances off and understand the continuum of behaviour. I do feel proud, sometimes you write stuff and think it's tomorrow's fish and chip paper! We really did emotionally invest in this, especially because they weren't our young, hot, sexy characters that were going to be on the front covers. I feel really validated by that and we've made the story count.

Siobhan: How important is it that soaps continue to reflect social issues?

Jan : I feel like it's our bread and butter. I'm not saying I want all of our stories to be about issues, but I do feel there's an extra urgency to the stories that you can see in the community. We have another story coming up which is a county lines type story. I'm hopeful that that is going to do a similar thing to what this story has done, to allow parents at an early stage to look at the behaviours in their kids. It's about not just telling the stories because it gives us content, but maybe changing the viewers opinion and giving them a bit more empathy.

Siobhan McCallum
Trainee Solicitor (Family) at MSB



Actors Shelley King and Ian Bartholomew play Yasmeen Nazir and Geoffe Metcalfe

Jessica Hampson: Why I #ChooseToChallenge the 'norm

As law firm CEL Solicitors, which specialises in civil litigation, celebrates its fourth anniversary on International Women's Day (8 March), its owner and director, Jessica Hampson, discusses why it's important to choose to challenge gender biases and champion equality in the workplace...

After a slightly non-conventional route into law (I completed the Period of Recognised Training rather than a traditional Training Contract) and witnessing first-hand the various biases that are right under our noses in some of the region's most well-respected law firms, I was passionate about disrupting the legal industry for the better, by creating a "People before Profits" law firm. Profits are important but they are not at the heart of our business model, people are.

Some may say opening a law firm in Liverpool before I turned 30 was brave and ambitious, while others may say (and they did!) that I was taking a huge risk and was nowhere near experienced enough to be taking on such a challenge. However, while I knew that it would be an uphill battle to begin with, I was determined to create a business that hired based on ability and merit, instead of gender, ethnicity or background, putting people before profits. I had my first child in the first year of the business, just add to the challenge! I want to set an example to my daughter, Gigi, that women belong in the boardroom.

From a recent staff survey, we know that more than 90% of staff feel the firm embodies their values, while the same number believe they can be themselves here – for me, this is crucial.

Since launching in 2017, we've gone from strength to strength, growing from a team of just me and the dog to 65 people. We'd initially set up to specialise in housing disrepair and have gone on to become experts in civil litigation, mainly consumer rights such as data breach, Japanese knotweed, financial mis-selling claims, land boundary disputes, fraud prevention claims and business interruption insurance.

We are proud to now have six trainee solicitors and this year has seen us have our first newly qualified solicitor. I am extremely proud to continually offer these opportunities. Not only does the team fight for the best outcomes for clients but we have created a culture that is open, welcoming, encouraging and, most importantly, fun!

The last year has been challenging for everyone but we've done our very best to maintain good work morale, keeping each other going whether that's been in person or via Zoom.



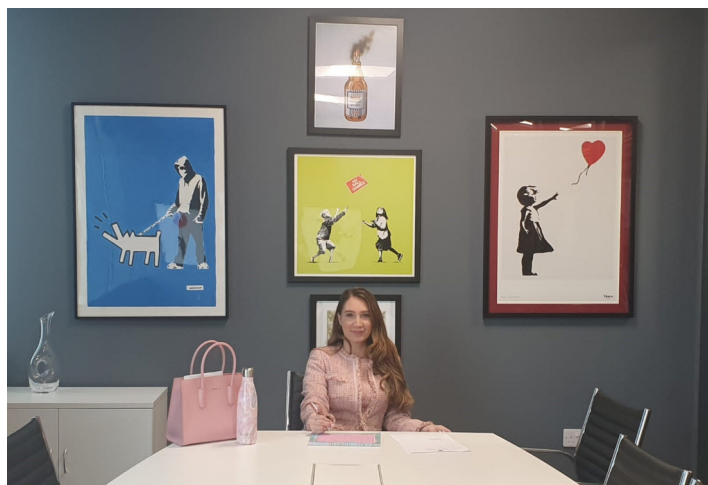
Mental health is clearly a top priority for many businesses, now more so than ever before, and we've implemented a variety of initiatives to make sure that everyone is looked after and that their wellbeing comes first. For instance, I block out time each month to have one-to-ones wellness checks with each member of the team, checking in on how they're doing, both at work and at home. We have also hired a staff performance coach who has had 20 years of military experience to support our staff from a confidence and mental health perspective.

When it comes to challenging what's been the 'norm' in the legal sector for a long time, we've placed massive importance on standing out from the crowd and making a conscious effort to disrupt.

Our new office at 20 Chapel Street is just one example of this – we took the entire 12th floor to create a space with mental health and staff well-being at the forefront. This includes an amphitheatre for presentations, two think swings, two bars and our chill-out zone complete with bean bags and mood lighting. Everything was built to inspire creativity – plus team building, personal development such as our library in the amphitheatre and our weekly 'book club' or a work/life balance with our bar/gym.

It was essential that we built an office that the team looked forward to coming into and, now after further expansion, we're taking space on the sixth floor of the building, which is incredibly exciting. We asked the staff what they would like to see and, as a result, our initial designs include a shark tank, putting green and a collection of artwork.

So, as we move into yet another new chapter, I'm determined that we keep challenging convention. I believe people with passion can change the world through law. We are only at the start of our journey to do so.



International Women's Day virtual event

Monday 8th March



WOMEN WHO CHALLENGE: THE LEGAL SECTOR

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY EVENT

**MONDAY 8TH MARCH
7PM - 8.30PM, ZOOM**
WWW.SUPPORTTHROUGH COURT.ORG/EVENTS



The event will be held in the evening of March 8th on Zoom, titled Women Who Challenge: The Legal Sector. This is to compliment the theme of International Women's Day which is #ChooseToChallenge, where we will showcase some fantastic women in the legal sector who are breaking barriers and advocating for women. The event will be a panel discussion with speakers sharing their experiences within the sector and what challenges they have had to overcome.

Hosted by Kay Burley, Sky News presenter and broadcaster, our speakers include Christina Blacklaws, former President of the Law Society, Dame Bobbie Cheema-Grubb, the first Asian woman to serve as a High Court Judge in the UK and Adeola Fadipe, a Pupil Barrister who founded an organisation to help diverse candidates access the Bar.

Tickets are just £15 general admission and discounted to £8 for students and Support Through Court volunteers. All funds raised from this event will go directly to funding the work of Support Through Court. Further information and the link to register for the event is: www.supportthroughcourt.org/events/social-events/women-who-challenge-the-legal-sector

Lockdown Life, Furloughed Families, Domestic Disputes and Divorces

How the current pandemic restrictions are leading more couples to the family courts

As the Liverpool City Region enters week five of a national lockdown and approaching its first anniversary of the original lockdown, the long lazy summer days have been replaced with the darker days and winter chills and the economic and emotional impact of 2020 lockdowns have been a brutal reality check for many couples. Covid-19 Lockdown regulations proved to be very challenging for many families during the initial 2020 lockdown periods, but for couples who had already separated or were contemplating separation or divorce the latest pandemic restriction have acted like a pressure cooker on many relationships as tensions rise and finances fall, whilst stress and anxiety levels reach an all-time high. The novelty of extended couple and family time has most definitely run its course for many and the harsh realities of the consequences of the pandemic are resonating a lot more this time around. The festive season has always increased pressures on couples and families but decreasing bank balances and rising tensions as well as the pressures of Christmas have certainly had a negative impact on many couples struggling to maintain a domestic status quo.

Sara Perischine, Family Law expert at Astraea Legal has given us an insight into what the New Year/New Lockdown legislation has meant for many families and estranged couples.

Disagreements with regard to adherence of lockdown rules

Disruption between separated families following disagreements with regard to adherence to the lockdown rules have proved even more problematic during this latest lockdown. Whilst the rules confirm that children of separated parents can spend time in both households, some parents are refusing to allow this if they feel that the other household is either not taking the rules seriously, or is taking the rules seriously but is still inadvertently putting their family at risk, e.g. if one parent is staying at home but the other is a key/front line worker this can cause tension between those co-parenting. We have also noted an increase in tensions where one parent has moved on with another partner but is not cohabiting with them – other parents suggests that they are breaking the rules by continuing to see them – this results in that parent moving the new partner in which in turn causes even further tension between the separated parents! Catch 22!

Sara advises - Separated parents should take a sensible approach to disagreements of this nature. They should consider the their own specific circumstances. For example, where one household has a vulnerable person living there, it may not be wise for children to move between houses. However, parent must not use lockdown as an excuse to withhold contact without good reason as this causes unnecessary hostility and will inevitably have an impact on the welfare of any child involved. If a parent has serious and warranted concerns for withholding contact, they may unilaterally vary a court Order. However, if that decision is challenged, a court will want to see that the parent acted reasonably in light of their individual situation. They should also consider making up for lost time with the other parent.



Sara Perischine

Financial pressures

Financial pressures following redundancies, furlough, less business for the self-employed etc., is putting pressure on couples and children alike leading to more separations and applications for divorce. Where families are separated, we are seeing increased enquires concerning child maintenance orders as some parents are no longer in a position to adhere to them as a result of a drop in their income and in some cases unemployment. Those who were furloughed in summer may now have been made redundant or face further job uncertainty adding increased tension to an already fractured relationship.

Sara advises - Financial issues can create a “pressure cooker” environment at the best times, let alone during a pandemic. Whilst one parent is feeling the impact of reduced pay or job losses, not paying maintenance or assisting financially with the upbringing of the child will inevitably impact on the other parent who may be experiencing similar difficulties. Separated parents should work together to try to find a middle ground where possible, perhaps agreeing a temporary reduction in maintenance until their financial position improves, or deferred payments.

Increase in Domestic Violence

Sadly, as has been widely reported, the lockdowns have been

responsible for an increase in domestic violence and whilst this was noted throughout the first lockdown, there is a fear that this lockdown will see cases increase further. Whilst we live in hope that this is the last lockdown, some are finding it hard to see the light at the end of the tunnel. Those who may have had been furloughed in the summer months enjoying the benefits that the summer months bring, may now face further uncertainty through the bleak, dark, cold winter when it is harder to enjoy recreational time. This inevitably leads to more pressure and hostility which sadly results in a higher risk of domestic incidents.

Sara advises - The UN has described the worldwide increase in domestic abuse as a "shadow pandemic" alongside Covid-19. Anyone who is a victim of domestic violence is still able to seek help throughout the lockdown. The police are at hand to assist and refuges and helplines remain operational. Most solicitors also remain operational and can assist with an immediate injunction. For those suffering financially, legal aid is still available in some circumstances where domestic violence is an issue. The government website also offers further advice. There is a 'codeword scheme' available for those experiencing abuse. You can attend a participating pharmacy (those with and 'Ask for Ani' logo on display) and ask for an 'ANI' which stands for Action Needed immediately and is pronounced like the name Annie. They can offer a private space, provide a telephone and talk you through what support you might need from police or other domestic abuse services.

Divorce and Separations

Separations and divorces are definitely on the rise yet again with coupled up families struggling to balance mental health and

anxiety issues and financial pressures. Latterly the pressures of home schooling and trying to juggle increased parenting requirements along with family and domestic responsibilities is quite literally forcing many to breaking point. Whilst working from home was a novelty for many during the lockdowns of 2020, many people have found that they need the structure and escapism of a working life and are struggling to work from home. The change in the seasons and the fact that many children are missing school and friends appears to be at the root of challenging behaviour which is invariably putting enormous pressure on parents, many of whom are quite literally at the end of their lockdown tether.

Sara advises - This lockdown has proven to be more difficult for many families. The pressures of juggling all of the above and not really knowing when it will end means that we are seeing more couples seeing no way out and turning on each other. Divorces have been on the rise for some time and the family courts are feeling the pressure of disputes involving children, finances and domestic violence issues. The bleak reality that there is no clear end date to the current situation is exacerbating domestic situations and many did not expect the situation to run for so long and are at the end of their tether.

Sara Perischine concludes "Sometimes early intervention can save a situation and get a couple back on the right track, but if a relationship has irretrievably broken down it is my job to ensure that we come to an acceptable resolution for our clients by removing the emotion and dealing with the facts of the situation. Contacting a family lawyer is not always the end of the road for couples, sometimes it is the start of a new beginning".

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](#)

Conveyancing Quality Scheme: Demonstrating compliance & surviving the assessment

On Wednesday 28th April, 1.30pm-4.30pm

With Tracy Thompson

This seminar is specifically designed for firms who are both CQS accredited, and those firms who are currently working towards attaining accreditation.

It will provide guidance to interpret the requirements of the standard whilst gaining practical experience of how to develop and implement those requirements.

The session will look at:

- Changes to the CQS scheme
- Key requirements of the Core Practice Management Standard (CPMS)
- Implementing the required policies and procedures of CQS within your practice
- Key areas of The Law Society Conveyancing Protocol (6th Edition) & much more!

Competencies: A, B & C

[Click here for more information](#)

The Brexit data bridge and what you need to know

Countdown to expiry of the EU/UK Data Bridge and navigating the new rules on Data Breach notification.

UK-EEA Data Transfers and Brexit: The Brexit Deal only provided a short term reprieve for dataflows and urgent preparations should commence now to ensure your business is not interrupted over the next few months.

As you will be aware, the Brexit transition period ended on 31 December 2020. The threatened data transfer 'cliff-edge' did not fully materialise – although it was only a temporary reprieve, not a permanent solution. As the ICO recommends, UK businesses who transfer personal data to and from the EEA should take stock now and complete their preparations prior to the end of April 2021.

The Bridge

To a certain degree, the UK regained autonomy of data protection laws from 1 January 2021. This has entailed that certain European data protection laws have been converted into UK law – for example, the 'UK GDPR' (which largely reflects the EU GDPR) sits alongside the Data Protection Act 2018 and governs the protection of personal data.

In practice, many of the principles, rights and obligations have not been altered, however there are major implications for your business and cross-border UK-EEA dataflows.

From the end of the Brexit transition period, the UK became a 'third country' for the purposes of the transfer of personal data from the EEA. This entailed that the free flow of personal data between the UK and the EEA would be subject to additional regulatory restrictions and safeguards, requiring in many cases, additional contractual documentation (for example EU Standard Contractual Clauses) between the parties to continue dataflows which are essential (and often routine) to the relevant businesses. Such restrictions would be in place until a finding of adequacy by the European Commission – which may take some time.

The UK Government has confirmed that it considers that the continuance of personal data transfers from the UK to the EEA are potentially lawful without additional safeguards. However, the converse is not the case – transfers of personal data from the EEA to the UK would be subject to additional restrictions and safeguard requirements.

Thankfully, as part of the EU-UK Trade and Cooperation Agreement, the EU has delayed such data transfer restrictions for a period of 4 months from the end of the Brexit transition period (with an ability to extend for a further 2 months) (the "Bridge") while the UK seeks an adequacy decision from the EU. The Bridge was negotiated to permit the free flow of personal data from the EEA to the UK during the period the Bridge is in force.

If adequacy is not determined or the UK unilaterally amends its data protection legislation during this period, the Bridge will cease and the dataflow restrictions will come into force. There is no time like the present to commence your preparations (which the ICO recommends are finalised prior to the end of April 2021) and we are here to help.



Sean Crotty



Ed Lewis

Data breach notifications

Similarly, whilst business will have taken steps to implement appropriate organisational and technical measures to protect against the risk of any incident involving a breach or compromise of personal data – such as a cyber-attack, systems failure or even just human error – even the best defences can be overcome, so it is important also to understand the regulatory impact on cross-border processing now that the Brexit transition period has ended.

If your business is established in the UK but processes data of individuals, such as its customers, who live in the European Economic Area ("EEA"), there are new rules on which data protection authorities you need to deal with. That's because the one-stop-shop regime and lead authority arrangements which apply between EU member states no longer apply to the UK since the end of Brexit transition period.

In the event of a compromise or breach of customer data, UK businesses need to be clear about the supervisory authorities to whom notification should be made, the possibility that they may be required to make notifications to multiple supervisory authorities in the UK and across the EU/EEA and the prospect also that they may be exposed to the risk of multiple sanctions (including fines) imposed by each one.

The following guidance, based on five examples, is not exhaustive but is likely to capture the majority of UK businesses. It explains to which supervisory authority or authorities notification should be made in the event of a breach or compromise of customer data and by whom sanctions (including fines) may be imposed:

Business A: has its HQ and only premises here in the UK. All its customers are UK residents and all data affecting those customers is processed here in the UK.

A breach or compromise of Business A's customer data should be notified to the UK's Information Commissioner ("ICO"), and would be investigated pursuant to UK data protection law. Business A may be sanctioned or fined only by the ICO.

Business B: has its HQ here in the UK but also further premises in one EEA member state, e.g. Belgium. Its sales are to customers in the UK and Belgium. All customer data is processed here in the UK.

A breach or compromise of Business B's UK and Belgian customer data should be notified to the UK's Information Commissioner ("ICO") and Belgium's equivalent called "the Data Protection Authority". The ICO's investigation would be

carried out pursuant to UK data protection law, whereas the Data Protection Authority would investigate under EU GDPR. Business B may be sanctioned or fined by both the ICO and the Data Protection Authority.

Business C: has its HQ here in the UK but also further premises in one EEA member state, e.g. Spain. Its sales are to customers in the UK and Spain but also via its online store to customers in other EEA member states, e.g. Austria, Portugal and the Netherlands. All customer data is processed here in the UK.

A breach or compromise of Business C's UK customer data should be notified to the ICO and would be investigated pursuant to UK data protection law.

Meanwhile, EU GDPR treats Business C as cross-border processing in respect of its Spanish, Austrian, Portuguese and Dutch customer data. Since Business C's only European premises are in Spain, in the event of a breach affecting all its European customer data the Spanish supervisory authority, Agencia Española de Protección de Datos (the "AEPD"), would be the lead EU supervisory authority to whom notification should be made.

The ICO's investigation would be carried out pursuant to UK data protection law, whereas the AEPD's investigation would be under EU GDPR. Business C may be sanctioned or fined by both the ICO and the AEPD.

Business D: has its HQ here in the UK but also further premises in two EEA member states, e.g. Austria and Sweden. It has customers who are resident in all three countries. All customer data is processed here in the UK.

A breach or compromise of Business D's UK customer data should be notified to the ICO and would be investigated pursuant to UK data protection law.

Meanwhile, EU GDPR treats Business D as cross-border processing in respect of its Austrian and Swedish customer data. Since Business D has European premises in both Austria and Sweden, in the event of a breach affecting all its European customer data EU guidelines on how to select the correct lead supervisory authority would apply. In this instance those guidelines provide that the larger customer base determines the outcome. Assuming that were in Austria, then the Austrian supervisory authority, Datenschutz Behörde (the "DSB"), would be the lead EU supervisory authority to whom notification should be made.

The ICO's investigation would be carried out pursuant to UK data protection law, whereas the DSB's investigation would be under EU GDPR. Business D may be sanctioned or fined by both the ICO and the DSB.

Business E: has its HQ and only premises here in the UK. All its sales activity is conducted via an online store. Its customers are resident in the UK and across the EEA. All customer data is processed here in the UK.

A breach or compromise of Business E's UK customer data should be notified to the ICO and would be investigated pursuant to UK data protection law.

In the absence of any European premises, Business E is not treated by EU GDPR as carrying on any cross-border processing. Its data processing activities are therefore subject

to UK data protection law and supervision by the ICO. Nevertheless, all Business E's sales and marketing activities to EEA customers will be subject to EU GDPR. As a result, a breach affecting all Business E's European customer data may be investigated by any of the EEA member state supervisory authorities whose residents are amongst the affected customers.

The ICO's investigation would be carried out pursuant to UK data protection law, whereas the investigation by each EEA member state supervisory authority would be under EU GDPR. Business D may be sanctioned or fined by the ICO and each EEA member state supervisory authority whose residents are amongst the affected customers.

What should you do now?

As the ICO recommends, businesses should prepare for the worst case scenario and have measures in place prior to the end of April 2021. Such measures include:

1. Taking stock

You should understand your businesses international data flows and identify international dataflows (including those between the EEA and the UK). This is a key step in your preparations;

2. Determine and consider your contractual and regulatory requirement

You should work with your clients, suppliers and any other data importers to put in place alternative transfer mechanisms, if required, to safeguard against dataflow interruption at the end of the Bridge. For example, amendments may be required to your contracts, together with the incorporation of EU Standard Contractual Clauses, or exceptions may be applied to permit the dataflow to lawfully continue;

3. Distinguish between relevant datasets

You should determine which personal data was obtained prior to, and after, 1 January 2021. Importantly, personal data acquired prior to 1 January 2021 will remain subject to the EU GDPR (as it stood on 31 December 2020), however personal data acquired from 1 January 2021 will be subject to UK data protection laws.

4. Review incident response plans and how your business would handle a data breach

Preparation is key to a fast, efficient and effective response and recovery if the worst were to happen. Now is the time to reflect on the adequacy of current plans (if any) and options for managing and mitigating the impact of a data breach. Consider in particular whether your business may have changed since its last review – e.g. has the IT estate grown, has its customer base diversified or supply chain partners changed – and whether it needs help to identify possible weaknesses and/or the need for new or enhanced protective measures.

Sean Crotty and Ed Lewis
Weightmans LLP

This article first appeared on the Weightman's website
<https://www.weightmans.com/insights/brexit/the-brexit-data-bridge-and-what-you-need-to-know/>

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



The Car Dealers you can trust

As a family business established for 30 years, we understand that selling a car can sometimes be a difficult decision taken at a difficult time. We take pride in offering a personal service and fair valuation.

With our reliable reputation in this field, we are regularly contacted to value cars in probate. If your client is coping with the loss of a loved one and has the responsibility of dealing with their estate, we can offer them trusted, sensible advice and the professional service they need at this difficult time. Should they wish to proceed, we will collect the vehicle swiftly and FREE of charge.

**Contact Bill on 0151 648 5488 to
discuss how best we can assist you**

**9 Mill Hill Road, Irby, Wirral CH61 4UB
www.irbymotor.co.uk**



The
Legal
Education
Foundation

JUSTICE FIRST FELLOWSHIP SCHEME

*Supporting the next generation of social welfare lawyers
to provide justice in communities*

The Legal Education Foundation (LEF) is a grant making trust and was established to help people better understand and use the law. In 2013 the LEF established its Justice First Fellowship scheme in response to concerns that Law Centres and legal aid firms that took on trainees in the past are no longer able to do so as a result of cuts to legal aid and other public spending. The Justice First Fellowship' scheme funds a number of training contracts across the country. It also supports Fellows to develop the wider skills and networks needed to make a successful transition into sustainable employment after qualification.



SUPPORTING THE JFF IN MERSEYSIDE

Building a Merseyside consortium

Legal aid and other public funding cuts have had implications both for those wishing to pursue a career in social welfare law and for those who need legal advice and representation in those areas. Liverpool Law Society are supporting the Regional Consortium Model to help partially fund Fellowship training contracts and give something positive to those in need of social welfare law expertise in our city. ***Can you help?***

In order to fully fund the Fellowship in Liverpool we need to raise an additional £25,000 (£12,500 per year for the two years of the training contract). We are asking whether organisations would be willing to pledge a sum of £2,500 per year for two years, alongside some of the other largest firms in the city, to cover the outstanding costs of hosting the trainee at Merseyside Law Centre.

Sponsoring a Justice First Fellowship is not just about helping promising lawyers to train in their chosen field. Through supporting a Fellow's work, sponsorship directly helps the hundreds of people that Fellows serve in the course of their training. The Society's thanks go out to local firms **Brabners** and **Weightmans** for funding and supporting the initiative, and to **Merseyside Law Centre** for all the fantastic work they do.

For more information or If you would like to support this initiative please contact sarahpoblete@liverpoollawsociety.org.uk

Jackson Lees announces key appointment to launch new Corporate and Commercial offering

Jackson Lees is widening out its offering with the launch of a new corporate and commercial department.

The firm has appointed Charlotte Mills, a highly experienced and well-regarded corporate and commercial expert, to head up the new department.

With over 15 years' corporate experience, Charlotte trained in the South East and then spent seven years working for a Lancashire based firm before making the move to Manchester where she has practised since 2013.

Charlotte's focus for the new department centres on developing and nurturing outstanding client relationships and working collaboratively with both business owners and their wider professional adviser network.

The department will be primarily focused on supporting SME business owners across the North West as they look to manage change in their companies. Jackson Lees is committed to offering an accessible and friendly service for clients that helps them to understand where they stand in relation to legal services without unnecessary formality or confusing legal jargon.

Charlotte and her team will provide clients with a wide range of corporate law support, ranging from general advice and guidance on the rules of running a business, to complex restructures, from starting up a new business, to selling companies when the owners are ready to say farewell.

She will also work closely with the accountancy community to support and assist clients who need help making changes to the ownership structure of their business or who may be altering their finance arrangements such as re-banking or increasing investment in the business.

Charlotte said: "People and relationships are at the heart of a successful legal practice, so it's brilliant to be joining a firm with such a positive culture. The team at Jackson Lees genuinely cares about their people and clients and it's wonderful to have the opportunity to be building a new department within this thriving, forward-looking firm. This is a challenging time for business, so we're looking forward to being able to support our clients and provide the clarity and guidance they need as they navigate this uncertain landscape.

"I have developed a strong network with businesses and the professional advisor network across the North West, with many years' experience working collaboratively with corporate clients as they look to navigate and implement change within their businesses.

"I'm looking forward to building a fully-fledged corporate and commercial department with Jackson Lees, with an approachable, expert team committed to working in partnership with our clients and their professional advisors across Liverpool, Wirral, Manchester and the wider region."

Esther Leach, Managing Director at Jackson Lees Group said: "I am really excited about the launch of the corporate and commercial department as it expands the services Jackson Lees is



Charlotte Mills

able to provide to our clients and means we now have a full service offering. This is a key milestone for the firm and we look forward to working closely with the region's businesses to provide the expert legal guidance they need to fulfil their corporate ambitions.

"Charlotte is a highly experienced, outstanding practitioner who brings real warmth and approachability to this role, coupled with a brilliant and long-standing track record of working closely with business owners to deliver elegant solutions to their legal requirements.

"Charlotte's experience and her commitment to nurturing and developing positive relationships aligns strongly with Jackson Lees Group's core ethos of Making a Positive Difference and she was a natural choice to launch and lead this new department. We are delighted to have her on board and look forward to seeing this department grow and thrive under her leadership."

Hill Dickinson's national corporate team exceeds £2.5bn deal value in record 2020 performance

Hill Dickinson has reported on the successful completion of corporate transactions in 2020 with an aggregate transaction value worth over £2.6 billion.

The transaction value represents an increase of £1 billion on 2019 figures, having advised on more than 150 completed deals in 2020, almost double the number of transactions it completed in 2019.

This performance ranks Hill Dickinson as the second most active legal adviser in the North West in the highly regarded Experian 2020 annual league table, published on 29 January 2021, and the firm's Corporate and Banking team across all UK offices in 20th place nationally.

The 150 completed transactions spanned a wide range of sectors, markets and jurisdictions.

Notable highlights include:

- Successfully overcoming logistical difficulties and executing a number of complex transactions during the peak of the UK lockdown. This included a number of M&A transactions, IPOs and one of the largest secondary fundraisings by an AIM company during the lockdown.
- Continuing to have one of the leading AIM practices in the UK. The firm has maintained its top-5 ranking (ranked #4) for the number of retained AIM clients (36) in the latest AIM Advisers Rankings Guide as at January 2021.
- Ranked by Experian as the second most active adviser in the North West by deal quantum activity for 2020.
- Achieving strong rankings in the latest Chambers and Partners UK 2021 and the Legal 500 2021 independent legal directories, which are based on extensive peer-led interviews and client feedback. The firm maintained its rankings in the Corporate/M&A categories and was ranked for the first time in the ECM and AIM categories.
- Continuing to advise the firm's institutional investor and management team clients on a number of high profile mid-market PE investment deals and buy and build programmes and exits.
- Continued expansion to meet client demand. Recent hires have boosted the Corporate and Banking team to over 70 specialist lawyers across the firm's offices in Liverpool, London, Manchester and Hong Kong.

Significant transactions during the period include

- Advising Johnson Service Group on its £85 million placing on AIM.
- Advising the management team of Fishawack Health on their secondary buyout of LDC backed by new PE investment from Bridgepoint Europe VI, a €5.6 billion mid-market fund;
- Advising Finncap and WG partners as joint brokers on a £19.6 million placing on AIM-listed ANGLE plc.



Craig Scott

- Advising AIM-listed Arc Minerals Ltd on the disposal of Casa Mining for US\$50 million.
- Advising the shareholders of Naimuri Limited, a leading UK software development and data analytics company providing services to the UK intelligence and law enforcement communities, on its sale to QinetiQ for £25 million.
- Advising private equity firm LDC on its investment in Rhino Products, Europe's leading manufacturer of light commercial vehicle accessories.

Commenting on his firm's performance, Craig Scott, national head of Corporate said: "Despite operating in profoundly challenging market conditions, 2020 delivered an extraordinary year for our firm's national Corporate and Banking team with a significant increase in our completed deal volumes at a time when transaction volumes in the market overall significantly reduced.

"Like most businesses, we experienced a hiatus in Quarter 2 when the first lockdown hit as businesses focused on understanding the challenges ahead, but we continued to work alongside our clients to help them adapt and prepare for the reopening of the economy. By Quarter 4, many of our clients had taken actions to strengthen and experienced a quite startling market recovery and appetite for continued investment and strategic expansion, demonstrating the sheer resilience of certain key sectors in the UK and certain overseas markets."

Looking towards 2021, he added: "There is no doubt that trading conditions for many sectors will remain challenging for quite some time as a result of Covid and that logistical and regulatory challenges resulting from the UK's exit from the Common Market will add to that. Despite that, we remain positive that agility, sector expertise and our responsiveness to market conditions will be instrumental in maintaining the good relationships we have with our clients and we look forward to working with them again in the year ahead."

Council Member's Report

Council Member Nina Ferris

In the last month TLS has been active on the following matters:

ID cards for solicitor court users

TLS has assisted criminal law solicitors associations to lobby for solicitor court users to have the same facility as members of the bar. The arrangement will enable solicitors to register with the **professional users access scheme**. All solicitors with a PC can sign up meaning they can access more than 300 HMCTS buildings without needing a routine security search on each visit.

Regulation

The response to the LSB's draft strategy and business plan has called on the oversight regulator to prioritise economic recovery and addressing the crisis in the justice system as part of its key themes for 2021-22. It recommends that the LSB focus on the biggest challenges such as access to justice, a fair and inclusive profession, high quality legal services with strong ethics, and overseeing regulators performance.

The full response can be accessed [here](#).

Diversity and Inclusion

We have joined the #10000BlackInterns initiative and encourage law firms and legal businesses to do the same. The initiative

was founded to help broaden career opportunities for young Black people in the UK and address the underrepresentation of Black talent in many industries. The programme aims to offer paid work experience across over twenty sectors – including the law – and create a sustainable cycle of mentorship and sponsorship for the Black community. The #10000BlackInterns programme will begin in the summer of 2022 and aims to run for the next five years – providing 10,000 internships to young Black people.

Further information is available [here](#).

Housing Mediation Pilot

The pilot aimed to ease the backlog of housing cases heading for court was greeted with caution. Whilst mediation has an important place in dispute resolution, housing is such an essential life requirement that mediation cannot replace the usual routes of access to justice through the courts or take money from schemes that facilitate that access.

There is a concern that vulnerable and unrepresented tenants may feel pressured to undertake mediation and may be misrepresented, as mediators are not housing dispute specialists. The Law Society is particularly concerned that the pilot could impact on the sustainability of legal aid, particularly the Housing Possession Court Duty

Scheme (HPCDS), which provides an emergency solicitor on the day to anyone facing eviction proceedings. The £3 million allocated to the pilot would, in TLS view, be more usefully channelled into the HPCDS and early legal advice, to ensure tenants have the access to justice and specialist legal advice that can stop them being evicted.

Criminal Legal Aid

TLS has called for an urgent injection of cash as part of the CLA review to halt the terminal decline in the number of criminal defence firms.

Latest figures from TLS research show more than 750 criminal legal aid firms have either closed their doors or given up practice over the past decade. The President commented: "Legal aid practitioners must be paid properly, and their area of business must be economically sustainable, otherwise the system will collapse. We have consistently called on the government to recognise the consistent failure to increase payments for over 20 years and that an immediate increase is a necessity to provide criminal defence solicitors with the additional funds they so desperately need."

The backlog in the criminal courts – which pre-dates the Covid-19 pandemic but have been exacerbated by it – have also hit defence



solicitors hard with delays in progressing cases starving them of urgently needed funding.

Response to Law Commission report on marriage laws

Marriage laws have not been updated since the 1940's and the Law Commission has put forward several key proposals, including allowing weddings to take place outdoors and in a wider variety of buildings and offering couples greater flexibility over the form their wedding ceremonies will take.

TLS has welcomed proposals to simplify the process and allow couples to give notice online. Many aspects of life have moved online over the past year and the law should support this where possible. It has commented on the need to retain the option of in-person interviews so appropriate checks can be carried out where there are any concerns about fraud, duress or forced marriage cases.

TLS has also urged the Commission as part of its review to consider public legal education on the

'common law' marriage myth and what constitutes a legally valid union. 46% of people in England and Wales believe in 'common law' marriage, one of our most pervasive legal myths. Couples in a 'common law' marriage can be left legally vulnerable and often find the division of finances, debt and property can become complicated if they choose to separate or if one partner dies.

Rise in recommended trainee minimum salary

The minimum salary for trainee solicitors recommended by the Law Society of England and Wales has risen by 1.1 per cent to £20,217 outside London and £22,794 in the capital. Whilst the reality of the Covid-19 pandemic is pay freezes for many, the recommended minimum salary reflects inflation increases trainees face to their cost of living. This underpins TLS commitment to a profession accessible to all, regardless of socio-economic background.

The JLD explains that many junior lawyers leave education with significant levels of debt – particularly where they have had to self-fund their Legal Practice Course – and it is important that they are paid a fair rate so they are able to repay that debt and meet their living costs.

Cancel the cliff edge

Law Society launches SDLT holiday campaign action - The Stamp Duty Land Tax holiday is due to come to an abrupt end on 31 March, creating a cliff edge that could see thousands of transactions collapse at the last minute and home buyers left stranded and out of

pocket. TLS is launching a new campaign to highlight the potential for significant disruption in the property market and call on MPs and the Government to take action to avoid this cliff edge.

We are asking members to take action by writing to their local MP using our quick and easy online tool – please join our action and encourage your colleagues to do the same.

This month also saw the first of TLS Strategic Planning Events for 2021 to review TLS key themes and priorities for the next three years. The current themes are:

- Promoting access to justice
- Upholding the rule of law
- Influencing regulation and money laundering rules
- Supporting the international practice of law
- Promoting a modern diverse and inclusive profession
- Supporting the economic viability of members businesses.

There was a healthy debate about the priority of these themes and what more needs to be done. A follow up event will take place in July so if you have any views on what TLS should be doing under each of those themes, whether there are any other themes or issues that you wish to see prioritised, or if you have any evidence which would assist to develop policy under those themes, please, as ever, contact myself or Sarah.

Nina Ferris
Council Member



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](#)



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

Core Competencies: B

[CLICK HERE TO BOOK](#)

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](#)

Sanctions and Defaults with Professor Dominic Regan

On Monday 19th April, 12.30pm - 2pm

Attend live or watch the recording

Far too many practitioners unwittingly fall into default and then struggle to secure relief. In this talk Professor Regan will, amongst other topics, address:

- The witness statement trap
- Late and incomplete budgets
- DENTON
- Unless Orders
- The timing of applications after OAK
- What evidence is required?
- Can one consent to relief being granted?
- Using Part 36 to mitigate the pain



For more information [click here](#)

Stand & Deliver! Conducting Effective Advocacy in Child Care Cases

with Safda Mahmood

on Wednesday 14th April, 10am - 4pm (breaks included)

Can't make the date/time or need to revisit the training?
No problem! Booking onto this event means you will receive a link to access the recording.

The areas to be covered are:

- Understand good advocacy skills
- Become more confident, despite a 'difficult' opponent
- Effective preparation
- Calling Evidence
- Making good opening and closing speeches/submissions.
- Carry out effective examination-in-chief and cross-examination
- Emergency Protection Order Hearings
- Contested Interim Care Hearings
- Case Management and Issues Resolution Hearings
- Fact Finding Hearings



Core Competencies: B & C
For more information [click here](#)

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](#)

Five Things to do Before the End of the Tax Year

1. Top up your ISA

One of the most tax-efficient ways to invest is through an individual savings account (ISA). The 2020/21 personal ISA allowance is £20,000.

There's no income tax, tax on dividends or capital gains tax (CGT) to pay on any gains from investments held in an ISA. An ISA can hold a wide range of investments, including cash, funds, shares, gilts and bonds.

If you do not use your allowance, you can't carry it over to a new tax year. So, if you've got savings lying around in your current accounts, it may be worthwhile putting as much savings as you can in a tax efficient ISA.

2. Contribute to your Retirement

It may be worthwhile considering topping up your pension to increase your savings for retirement. If you're employed and contribute to a company pension, check how much you've paid in. Many employers will match contributions up to a particular cap, so it's worth taking advantage of this.

The more income tax you pay, the greater the tax relief on pension contributions. If you're a basic rate taxpayer, for every £80 you pay in, the taxman will top it up to £100. If you're a higher or additional rate taxpayer you can claim back up to an additional 20%, or 25% on top of the 20% basic rate tax relief, through your tax return.

The annual allowance for 2020/21 for pension contributions is £40,000 (This may be lower if you earn over £200,000). It's also worth noting that you can bring forward unused allowances from previous three tax years, as long as you were a member of the pension scheme within those years.

3. Save for your Children

If you have children, you can set up a Junior ISA. Children who are not yet 18 can open a Junior ISA (JISA) in their name with a parent as a guardian.

As with an adult ISA, there's no income tax, tax on dividends or capital gains tax (CGT) to pay on any gains from investments held in an ISA. The annual allowance for a JISA in 2020/21 is £9,000.

4. Use your Capital Gains Tax Allowance

Everybody has an annual capital gains tax allowance of £12,000 in the 2020/21 tax year. This means that if you dispose or sell any assets such as property, stocks and shares, you won't be taxed on the profits if they're below £12,000.

You cannot carry over any unused capital gains tax allowance to the next tax year, so if you are planning to sell your assets, it may be worth considering staggering them over two tax years to take advantage of your allowance.



Photo by Josh Appel on Unsplash

5. Reduce your Inheritance Tax

Use your annual exemption allowance of £3,000. This allows you to gift that amount without being liable for inheritance tax in the future.

You can carry over your gifting allowance from a previous tax year if unused, making the maximum amount £6,000. There are other exemptions too, such as no tax on wedding or civil partnership gifts up to £5,000 to your children and £2,500 to your grandchildren.

You can also gift to Charity. You can receive full tax relief on your contributions through Gift Aid. Higher-rate or additional-rate taxpayers can claim back the difference between the rate they pay, and the basic rate on their donations.

For example, you donate £100 to a charity, which is boosted to £125 by using Gift Aid. You pay 40 per cent tax, so you can personally claim back £25 (£125 x 20 per cent) via self-assessment, or by asking HM Revenue & Customs to amend your tax code.

It is also possible to donate from your wages or pension via Payroll Giving.

Andy Griffin
Maxwell Financial Planning Ltd

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

As the UK government publishes its timeline indicating when different sectors might be able to open up this year, at Liverpool BID Company, our mind is on recovery.

The recovery of Liverpool city centre needs to be rooted in its mixed-use economy, ensuring every one of its industries is supported. At Liverpool BID Company, we understand each sector needs to have its own voice.

This month we have unveiled four BID Champions, representing the city's Commercial industry, retail sector and hospitality businesses, to provide a leading role in the vision and planning for recovery.

The BID Champions are:

Corporate Services – Julie Johnson, Business Operations Partner at Morecrofts Solicitors and Chair of Commercial District BID
Hospitality – Natalie Haywood, Managing Director of the LEAF Group

Leisure and Culture – Gillian Miller, CEO of Liverpool's Royal Court and Chair of St George's Quarter CIC

Retail – Jennina O'Neill, Centre Manager at Metquarter and Chair of the Retail & Leisure BID

We will provide a voice for each sector, working with BID Levy Payers in each industry helping to bring their concerns, needs to the fore and lobby on their behalf to local, regional, and national government via Liverpool BID Company.

Whether the reopening stays on track, the timeline provides certainty to businesses, but it also shows the importance of the support needed for different sectors. Hospitality, leisure, and entertainment, for example, need continuing substantial support until they can open their doors. Other sectors still need continuing support with extension of the furlough scheme. We would like to see further support with business rates, the Stamp Duty Land Tax deadline pushed beyond the 31st March 2021, deferment of VAT payments and loan repayments where needed. In Liverpool, any recovery needs to focus on the mixed-use economy that has heralded the city's 30-year renaissance, ability to appeal to retailers, businesses, hospitality sector, thriving cultural and night-time economy. It reflects the importance of empowerment, ensuring the 1,500 BID Levy Payers in the two BIDs (Commercial District and Retail & Leisure BID) have their voices heard and can help to shape the future of the city centre.

Liverpool BID Company, which focuses on improving the city centre as a place to live, work and do business, is placing a strategic focus on recovery. The strength of Liverpool city centre is not at the expense of other areas of the city but is to ensure the jewel in the crown and the engine of the city region economy is able to flourish and rebuild post the coronavirus crisis. There are core actions that need to be addressed as part of Liverpool's recovery. In recent years, three areas of the city centre already have regeneration plans in place: Williamson Square,



Julie Johnson

Cavern Quarter, and the Commercial District, with Baltic Triangle joining last Summer. There needs to be a greater emphasis in giving existing businesses from every sector a greater say in their neighbourhoods and their development, making areas more connected, attractive, and reinforcing the city centre as a place location for business, homes, culture, and tourism. This is our opportunity to build back better, with creative placemaking, enabling opportunities for a more diverse, eco-friendly, socially active, and connected business community in the future.

There needs to be a root and branch review of business rates, for every level of business, to ensure they are both fair and constructive for both cities and business. We need a level playing field.

It is important we work with businesses, especially those exploring more flexible working initiatives for their teams. The modern workplace is going to change, and it is vital the Commercial District is a destination for those wanting the modern office space.

Liverpool's regeneration over the past 30 years is rooted in its mixed-use economy. There is a passion and a commitment for Liverpool to succeed which has always helped it to fare well. The businesses within Liverpool can support its recovery and have a wealth of knowledge and expertise to underpin that. The way we work has changed drastically in the past year and it is important to understand the role of other sectors in supporting business through that change and to empower them to have a place within an exciting, forward thinking, resilient city centre as it evolves.

Twitter - @LpoolBIDcompany

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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!

How many times have we spoken to a client, or an opponent or anyone for that matter, and then moved on to something else? In the busyness, we forget to make a note of what was discussed. This may be a common mistake. But it can also be a very expensive mistake. This was the unfortunate lesson by Solicitor Richard Slade following a recent decision of Cost Judge Howarth.

Murray v Slade

<https://www.bailii.org/ew/cases/EWHC/Costs/2021/B3.html>

The case is summarised in Litigation Futures - <https://www.litigationfutures.com/news/solicitor-was-author-of-own-misfortune-in-failed-costs-claims>
It was noted in the judgment that there had been previous difficulties between the solicitor and the client. Mr Murray had expressed dissatisfaction with a barrister instructed by the solicitor. Mr Slade instructed a fresh barrister but the cost was £15k more. Here is where we get to the fatal conversation! He said that he had contacted Mr Murray to explain this. Mr Murray denied it.

There was no attendance note or letter confirming the conversation. The judge found in favour of the client. He commented -

"I am satisfied that a telephone call did take place between the First Claimant and Mr Slade on 17 May, but I am not satisfied that the record of that telephone call is the one set out in Mr Slade's witness statement. As an experienced litigator I would have expected there to have been an attendance note in relation to this telephone call which was of the utmost importance, varying as it purported to do, the terms of the fixed fee agreement. In cross-examination Mr Slade stated that he made a note in his day book but that day book was not before the Court and not referred to in his witness statement. Furthermore, there was no letter or email to the First Claimant confirming the terms upon which Mr Moreas had been instructed which I would have expected to see, bearing in mind the previous difficulties in the relationship between the First Claimant and Defendant in these and other proceedings."

The call may well have taken place as described by Mr Slade. But his failure to keep a note or to confirm it was fatal to his claim. This was expected of an experienced litigator especially in the light of the previous difficulties. The lesson is simple and clear. If you discuss anything with your client in relation to charges, you must keep a detailed note and in our view also confirm it in writing.

It is a simple discipline but one which has a huge impact on your business.

In a recent blog barrister Gordon Exall has reminded practitioners of the need for care in relation to the cap on the costs of costs budgeting. This cap is set out in CPR 3.15 (5) -

- (5) Save in exceptional circumstances—
(a) the recoverable costs of initially completing Precedent H (the form to be used for a costs budget) shall not exceed the higher of—
(i) £1,000; or
(ii) 1% of the total of the incurred costs (as agreed or allowed on assessment) and the budgeted costs (agreed or approved); and
(b) all other recoverable costs of the budgeting and costs management process shall not exceed 2% of the total of the incurred costs (as agreed or allowed on assessment) and the budgeted (agreed or approved) costs.

Gordon Exall points out that this cap must be applied 'save in exceptional circumstances'. So parties are including a clause in draft orders disapplying the cap as a matter of routine. Anyone seeing such a clause should be aware that this is not sufficient. There must be the circumstances to justify departure from the cap - <https://www.civillitigationbrief.com/2021/02/22/civil-procedure-back-to-basics-89-the-2-cap-on-costs-budgeting-something-to-watch-out-for/>

In other news all of us involved in costs work are dependent on having quick and easy access to the Civil Procedure Rules (CPR). They have always been available via the ministry of Justice site. That is until they were moved to <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/civil-procedure-rules>. Finding the rules is now far more challenging! Try it.

Following many complaints, the MOJ have promised an 'urgent review'. Nobody has explained why it was reviewed in the first place. To put it simply, the rules were easy to find, now they are not. Can't we just go back to how things were before??

If you require help in relation to any costs issues contact Robert Cook at robert@cook-legal.co.uk or Mike Yassin at mike@cook-legal.co.uk

Regulation Update

The latest regulation news from Danielle Best of Weightmans LLP



Danielle Best

I hope you are all coping during this lockdown, which will hopefully have started to be lifted by the time this goes to print. As someone who has been home schooling two primary school children this year, I'm well aware of the increased pressure that people are facing. Whether caused by home schooling, financial pressures, health concerns or otherwise, this is a difficult time for many people. Please take care and ask for assistance if needed.

Anti-money laundering guidance for the legal sector

The updated LSAG Anti-money Laundering guidance in relation to the 5th AML Directive that came into force in January 2020 was finally published on 20 January 2021 (albeit in draft and subject to HM Treasury approval) and runs to 212 pages and the SRA Sectoral Risk Assessment was published on 28 January www.sra.org.uk/new-aml-guidance. Some of the key changes include the introduction of key AML compliance principles, expanded guidance on understanding and evidencing sources of funds and wealth, a new section on technology as well as fully revised and expanded guidance on risk assessments.

If your firm comes within the AML regulations (and more will now do so

following the widening of the definition of 'tax adviser'), you will need to read the documents, review your firm-wide risk assessment and ensure that your AML policies and procedures are up to date. You should also, if you have not yet done so, carry out the independent AML audit required by Regulation 21 MLR 2017. If you need assistance with your firm-wide risk assessment, policies or the requirement to conduct an independent audit, please get in touch.

CLC Risk Agenda

An important read for all property and probate lawyers is the Council for Licensed Conveyancers' (CLC) first Compliance Risk Agenda, which has been published in 2021. It highlights issues that the firms and individuals it regulates need to consider in order to comply with regulations and also offers guidance on issues that CLC staff have encountered during their monitoring and inspection work, ranging from AML guidance to storing files after closure, and sets out steps that practices can take to protect themselves and their clients. It also looks at steps firms can take to ease the Professional Indemnity Insurance round.

Continuing competence

The Legal Services Board (LSB) considers that the

legal profession is out of step with other sectors by having few checks on individuals during their careers and is therefore planning to press on with plans for continuing competence checks. It is planning to set out standards of competence that lawyers should meet throughout their careers and the processes regulators should have in place to identify those failing to meet them, which could include feedback from clients and judges as well as assurance visits and possibly even formal revalidation.

Lawyers unable to recover costs where Conditional Fee Agreement (CFA) improperly terminated

In **Murray & Anor v Richard Slade and Company Ltd**, which concerned an assessment of solicitors' costs, £16,200 claimed by the solicitors pursuant to a CFA was disallowed on the basis that the solicitors had terminated their CFA with the Claimant without good reason.

In 2016, the Claimant had instructed solicitors to act on his behalf in relation to two separate matters; one on a fixed fee basis and the other on a CFA. It was alleged by the Defendant that the Claimant had not complied with an agreement to pay costs in the fixed fee matter and also that the Claimant had requested the return of his files in the CFA matter, which was later

treated by the solicitors as a request to terminate the CFA. It was held that the solicitors were wrong to take this stance and that in refusing to act further, they had terminated the CFA without good cause or on reasonable notice and were not entitled to be paid for the work.

The solicitors were also ordered to pay the Claimant's costs in the sum of £21,000. This case should serve as a warning to those who wish to terminate a CFA, or any other fee arrangement with a client, to only seek to do so in circumstances where they are entitled to do so and to comply with agreed terms and conditions in relation to termination, notice and information to be provided to the client.

Disciplinary decisions

Dishonesty

A legal executive with 30 years' experience who dishonestly attested to witnessing the signature of a transfer document has been struck-off and ordered to pay costs of £300. In 2019, the executive acted for two clients on the sale of their property. The clients signed the transfer document in the absence of the fee earner and it was not until after the sale

had completed that the legal executive realised her clients' signatures had not been witnessed. The legal executive then signed the document indicating that she had witnessed it being signed, and filed it at the Land Registry. She admitted signing the document as a witness and that she had acted dishonestly. It was submitted that this was an isolated incident in her 30 years of practice and that she had exercised poor judgment. The SRA imposed a section 43 order and ordered her to pay £300 in costs.

In another case involving dishonesty, a solicitor who told his prospective employer during two interviews that he was presently employed by another firm and required to serve a month's notice, when he had been dismissed for

gross misconduct six months earlier, was suspended indefinitely and ordered to pay £15,000 in costs.

The solicitor submitted that he had misunderstood that relevant question at the interviews to be concerning notice periods generally and/or when he could start at the firm. The tribunal considered it plausible that the solicitor had forgotten to update his CV prior to his application and as such he was cleared of submitting a misleading and inaccurate CV. However, the misleading statements provided within the two interviews led to a finding that the solicitor had been dishonest and lacking in integrity.

It was noted by the tribunal that the solicitor was suffering from severe mental health issues and a personal

bereavement. Taking these mitigating factors into consideration, the solicitor was spared from being struck-off.

Solicitor rebuked following police caution

The SRA has rebuked a male solicitor who received a caution for assaulting a female following an argument at his home in March 2019. The solicitor admitted that his conduct and subsequent caution represented a failure to act in a way that upholds public trust and confidence in the solicitors' profession.

The SRA took into account points made in mitigation; it was an isolated incident and out of character for the solicitor who co-operated with the police and promptly complied with the terms of his conditional caution. He

had also shown remorse, such that the risk of reoffending was considered to be low. It was noted that the victim did not suffer any injuries.

The SRA considered that a written rebuke was appropriate because the solicitor's conduct was reckless and a public sanction was required to uphold public confidence in the profession. He also agreed to pay £300 in respect of costs of the SRA investigation.

Danielle Best
Weightmans LLP

Liverpool  Law Society

SRA Accounts Rules – The Basics

Thursday 22nd April, 11am-3.30pm

Ian Johnson will cover:

This course is designed for finance staff with the day to day responsibility for compliance with the SRA Accounts Rules and is suitable for those who are new to the rules, as well as those more experienced staff members who need a refresher.

The course will include a detailed walkthrough of the new Accounts Rules, the underlying principles of protecting client money and will also explore all of the relevant guidance that the SRA has released to support understanding and application of the rules.

Ian will also discuss all of the most common breaches of the rules from his experience as a Reporting Accountant, and tips to help avoid them, as well as the SRA client money hot topics including the provision of banking facilities, billing for fees and disbursements, suspense accounts and dealing with residual balances.

For more information [click here](#)

Liverpool  Law Society

SRA Accounts Rules – Advanced

Thursday 29th April, 12pm-4pm

Can't make the date/time? *No problem!* This course will be recorded and available for you to revisit any time you need for a period of 3 months.

Ian Johnson will cover:

This course is designed for experienced finance staff, COFAs, finance partners and managing partners who have overall responsibility for compliance with the SRA Accounts Rules.

The half day course will include a discussion of the 2019 Accounts Rules, the underlying principles of protecting client money and will also explore all of the relevant guidance that the SRA has released to support understanding and application of the rules.

Ian will also explore the current SRA hot topics that all senior team members should be aware of, including provision of prohibited banking facilities, financial stability indicators and third party managed accounts.

For more information [click here](#)



News from Merseyside Junior Lawyers Division

Following the government's recent roadmap to ease lockdown restrictions, the MJLD are hopeful that there is finally some light at the end of the tunnel. Though with a sense of caution, we are delighted to finally have some dates to work towards. The MJLD are keen to push for more events both virtually and (potentially) in person throughout the remaining calendar year which will hopefully provide a platform for members to network and build connections.

January saw the end of 'dry January' for many and also the end of our Race Around the World competition, 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. After a great effort from both teams, we are pleased to announce that MJLD came out as the champions with a total of 192.68 miles. A big well done to everyone who took part and a special thanks to our social representative Adrian Davies (River View Law) who led the organisation of the event. All funds raised are to be donated to Go the Extra Mile for Justice, to provide funds for free legal advice organisations that support vulnerable people throughout the UK.

All committee members have now had their first virtual meetings with their mentees as part of 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. Already the scheme has proved a huge success and the committee can't wait to continue their role as mentors over the next 6 months.

Other events that took place in January include our first Diversity and Inclusion event on Unconscious Bias by Emily Driver. This event was a huge success and we are so grateful for Emily for joining us to discuss such an important topic. Chelsea Kearns (Chair) and Thomas Hampson (Vice Chair) also took part in 'BE INSPIRED: Virtual Employer Law Panel Event with the career's team at LJMU. It was fantastic to see over 100 students virtually engaging with Q and A's about a career in law and the different paths to take.

Looking further ahead, we are keen to start organising more social events this year which hopefully will be able to take place in person from July 2021 onwards, depending on the government's updated guidance. This includes the MJLD ball which is still provisionally pencilled to take place in July 2021 and we have plans in motion to make the ball bigger and better than what was originally planned. We are also arranging virtual events to take place including a virtual quiz and potentially a wine tasting/cocktail making zoom event.

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



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](http://www.liverpoollawsociety.org.uk)



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



[CLICK HERE TO BOOK](http://www.liverpoollawsociety.org.uk)

Mental Health and Working from Home

It's fair to say that the last year has been a strange one. Whilst we have all been advised and ordered to stay away from one another and lock ourselves away in isolation, life in law does not stop and that is especially relevant for those who are in education and those who are attempting to kick start their careers. That is why we at the MJLD are doing our utmost to support students and junior lawyers through these challenging times.

As one of the MJLD's Education Representatives, I am proud to have coordinated the MJLD's mentor scheme, where members of the committee are assisting UOL and LJMU in supporting students through these difficult times. My colleague and fellow committee member Lucy Parr is coordinating our ongoing court shadowing scheme, which provides students with vital experience. We held a virtual event in October with a speaker from Chadwick Knot, which provided attendees with what to expect in applying for jobs from the perspective of a recruiter. We are hoping to hold our next education event in mid to late March which will focus on training contract interviews. If this is of interest, please keep an eye on the social feeds of the MJLD nearer to the time. I also just wanted to say a quick thank you to Erin Watkinson (Brodie Jackson Canter) and Matt Kayoka (Irwin Mitchell) whom are both members of the MJLD Education subcommittee for their hard work and commitment so far this year.

It has been a difficult year for all and one which has meant legal professionals have quickly had to adapt to what is the "new normal". Personally, I have worked from home almost exclusively since the restrictions first came into force in March of last year. I am pleased to work for a firm who have allowed this and this has assisted me in keeping myself and my family safe. However, this has brought its own challenges and being stuck at home for such extended periods of time has taken a toll on my mental health. I have struggled with anxiety and depression over the years and by putting a number of steps in place, I have been able to come out of it a stronger person, but the last year has been a big change. Falling out of my routine, being starved of social interaction and feeling like I am constantly staring at the same four walls has caused some issues to reappear.

This will be common amongst legal professionals who are stuck at home. A recent study of UK SME employers showed that 47% of those asked told them that their mental health had been negatively impacted by working from home. Interestingly, a report published by the National Bureau of Economic Research showed that people are spending 48.5 minutes more at their desk each day, translating as over 4 extra working hours a week. It is understandable that this has happened in light of no longer having to commute, whilst the pressures on chargeable hours and revenue targets are perhaps bigger than ever given the uneasy economic situation.

I want to talk about some of the things I have been doing over the last few months. These things are of course specific to me and may not work for everyone, but if you are struggling, I encourage you to give them a try.

- Stay in touch and check in with your colleagues. It is so easy to fall away and feel disconnected from your team. Whilst Zoom calls aren't for everyone, keeping in touch via text and group chats is a simple way to keep involved and give our brains some of the interaction we need. When I have an issue or need to ask a question to a colleague, I often just give them a call. The chances are that they would appreciate a quick chat and being asked how they are just as much as you would.



Matthew Chorley

- At the time of writing, government restrictions allow one outdoor exercise per day. I ensure I get out of the house for this exercise, whether that be for a run, a bike ride or simply going for a walk in the park.
- Sticking to a routine. I initially found this to be difficult and found myself eating and sleeping at strange times. Now, I do my best to get up and go to bed at the same time, schedule in my exercise, eating at specific times and keeping my work hours to what they should be.
- Try something new. I have recently taken up yoga which I have found to be very beneficial to my mental health. This has given me something to focus on outside of work. My next plan is to learn to play piano.
- Keep your work and personal space separate. I know how tempting it can be to turn your laptop on first thing of a cold morning and to tuck yourself back into bed to keep warm. I find I am able to focus when I stick to my desk, allowing me to be more productive and therefore able to log off on time.

There is lots of support out there and available if you are still struggling. Your first point of call should be your line manager and they may be able to assist. Many work places have mental health first aiders on hand and there is no shame in asking for support. Externally, there are charities such as LawCare. LawCare specialise in supporting anyone in the legal community experiencing mental health and wellbeing problems. They have lots of information on their website and they also have a helpline and live chat support system, which can be found in the link below.

<https://www.lawcare.org.uk/information-and-support>.

The vaccine rollout is now in full flow and we hope we will start to see the light at the end of the tunnel soon. We are very much looking forward to running attended events when the time comes! If you would like to get involved in anything Merseyside Junior Lawyer Division related, please contact me at matthew.chorley@weightmans.com and I will be happy to assist.

Matthew Chorley (Weightmans LLP)
MJLD Education Representative

Mentors required for the Hive Youth Zone

The Hive Youth Zone are looking for mentors to help volunteer to make a difference to someone's life. Mentors are needed particularly at this challenging time.

What is involved?

The Mentoring Program at The Hive Youth Zone provides mentor support for vulnerable and at-risk children and young people, aged between 8 and 19 years old (up to 25 with additional needs and disabilities). The mentoring program helps the child/young person to increase confidence, build their self-esteem and supports them to make positive choices through 1:1 support, befriending and fun activities.

Mentors must be age 21 years or older and be able to commit to meet with a young person for 1-2 hours per week for 6-12 months' dependent on the commitment you can give.

Experience is not always necessary (we mostly need committed and reliable people) as full training will be given to all mentors prior to being matched with a suitable young person. We match you on your hobbies, personalities, and areas of interest, following a complete DBS check/2 references and completion of our volunteer/safeguarding and mentoring training. You will have access to our mentoring hub which you can access 24 hours a day with suitable resources/training material and signposting guidance.

This opportunity is not only a personally rewarding one, but it is a great way to enhance your skill set, explore new career options and improve employability.

If you are interested in this opportunity, please contact Sandra on sandra.platt@thehiveyouthzone.org for an application form and further information. Alternatively, please ring 07841 017794 for an informal chat with Sandra.



Co-operation Ireland : Mersey Maracycle 2021: 15 May

Dear Readers of Liverpool Law

You may recall in the December 2020 issue of Liverpool Law I informed you of the above event: an inaugural Charity Bikeride in support of the very worthy and deserving charity Cooperation Ireland (Cooperationireland.org).

Sadly, and perhaps to no surprise, Covid has caused us to have to postpone the date from 15 May until some time later in the year.

We are looking at September/October. I will advise you of a date soon, but in the meantime, I hope we can count on your support when the event takes place. Remember, it is an opportunity to make use of all those bikes bought in the Cycling Summer of 2020.

There will still be 2 routes : 100K and 50K, but starting at the same point. I am sure one of them will suit you, and / or your family, friends, neighbours, and other cycling contacts.

I will keep you updated on further news, but in the meantime if you have ANY questions (or indeed ideas), please contact me : details below

I look forward to seeing you/meeting you in September or October.

Kind regards to all.

Charlie Jones
Past President Liverpool Law Society 2008/2009.
07841671732
Charliecraigymor@gmail.com

MENTORS WANTED



Are you aged 21 or over?
Do you want to make a difference to a young person's life?
Can you commit to volunteer 1-2 hours a week for 6-12 months?

- PERSONALLY REWARDING
- ENHANCE YOUR SKILLS SET
- TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES
- EXPLORE NEW CAREER OPTIONS

The mentoring programme helps young people, aged 8 - 19 or up to age 25 with a disability or additional need, to increase confidence, build self-esteem and supports them to make positive life choices.

Mentors will be matched with a young person based on hobbies, personalities and areas of interest. Experience is not always necessary as full training will be provided.

Email Sandra.Platt@thehiveyouthzone.org

Charity Spotlight

The Joseph Lappin Centre

The Joseph Lappin Centre (JLC) is a community hub based Old Swan, providing holistic services within our local community and surrounding neighbourhoods.

Opened in March 2013 and named in honour of a local young man who was tragically killed in 2008, the innocent victim of knife crime, denied the opportunity to achieve his own ambitions. JLC aims to provide opportunities for residents of all ages to reach their potential, fulfil their ambitions and enjoy life. JLC is home to several organisations including-Merseyside Expanding Horizons, Deaf Active, Out of This World Nursery, Priority Youth Team and Slimming World. We also have an onsite café which we are currently refurbishing, with plans to create training opportunities for aspiring chefs and those seeking a career in hospitality, family cookery programmes all whilst still providing a community café for local residents. We are also home to the Duke of Lancaster Detachment-the army cadet section that Joseph was part of for several years. JLC is a regular meeting place for numerous other organisations, all of whom offer help, advice and training, for people at different stages in their lives.

A flavour of the services we deliver include: youth provision, a variety of fitness activities for all ages, 3G Astro pitch, Employment and Business Start- Up advice, Adult Education and Cookery programmes.

This year has been particularly hard as the majority of our income comes from office rental and that generated through room/hall and pitch hire, which has been severely affected by the Covid-19 pandemic.

We have continued to strive to ensure we are able to serve our community at a time when many are facing unemployment, furlough and struggling to feed themselves and their families. Throughout the pandemic we have delivered hampers to doorsteps of those shielding or vulnerable and from September we now offer a social supermarket. This enables residents to register with us and they can visit once a week to select 10 items for £3.50, these include fresh meats, fruit, vegetables, dairy, frozen

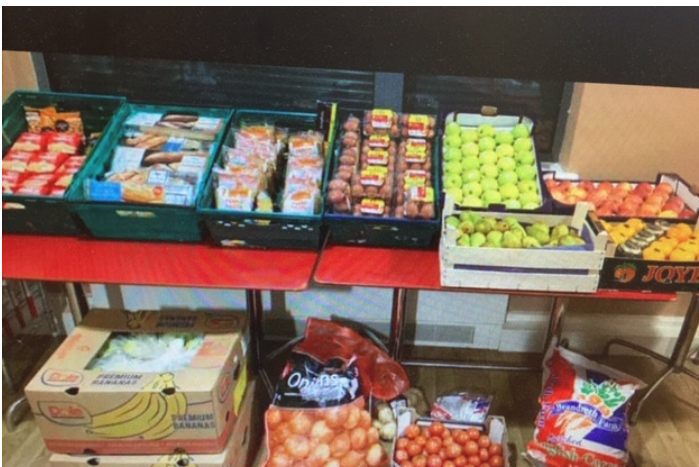


foods, tinned and dried goods plus toiletries, household cleaning products and pet food. This has been possible through various funding pots from local Old Swan ward councillors, Steve Morgan Foundation, The National Lottery and donations of cash and goods. We could not deliver this project without our fantastic team of volunteers who give have given up their time since April and continue to support us. Moving forward we anticipate there will be a long term need for this service and hope that financial support continues to be available to enable us to meet this need. When registering for our Food Club we also capture other information to ascertain if we can help in other ways, for eg. help to secure employment-CV writing, job search, interview techniques- confidence building, training opportunities, social isolation, volunteering. We have recently become a Youth Hub-Achieve@Joseph Lappin, partnering with the Dept of Works & Pensions to provide targeted support to young people aged 16-25 years old. We are also partnering with The Women's Organisation to deliver another ESF employability programme called Directions, aimed at those 18-65 years old.

Although all our cohesion events have been cancelled, we still tried to assist where we can and at Christmas we provided over 70 Christmas Eve boxes (including pyjamas, bubble bath sets, selection boxes, books, hot chocolate cones and reindeer food) to children and teenagers, provided Christmas dinner hampers to struggling residents and as throughout the whole year we worked with Baytree Catering CIC, to provide freshly cooked meals for residents who would otherwise have gone without.

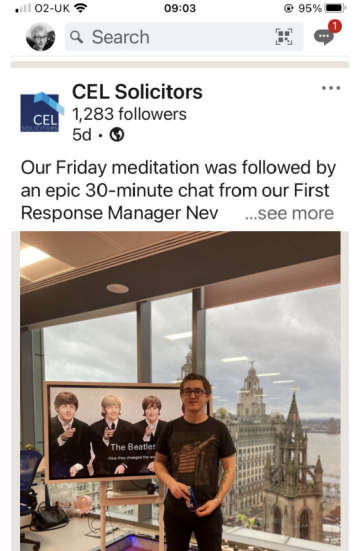
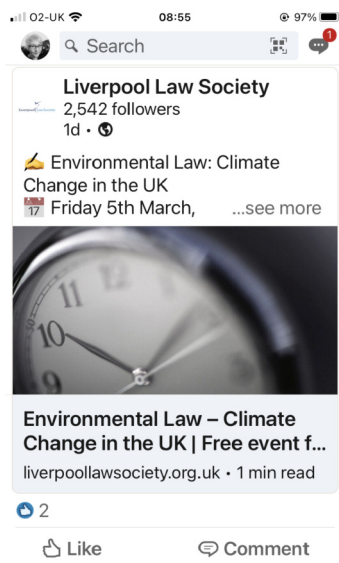
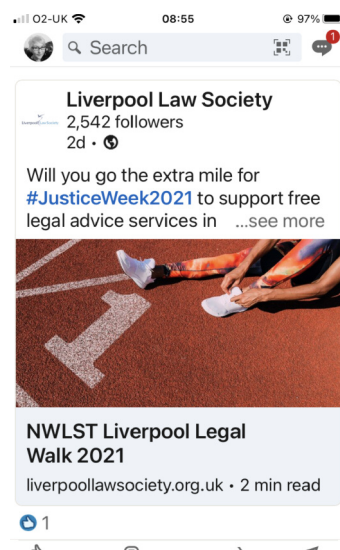
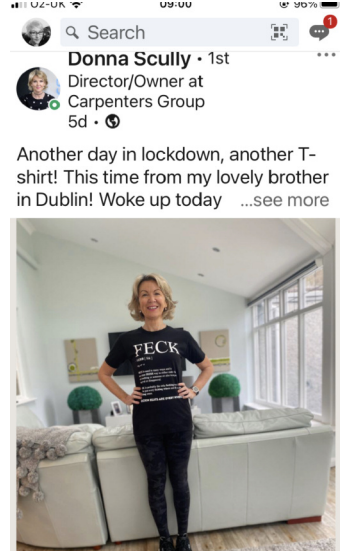
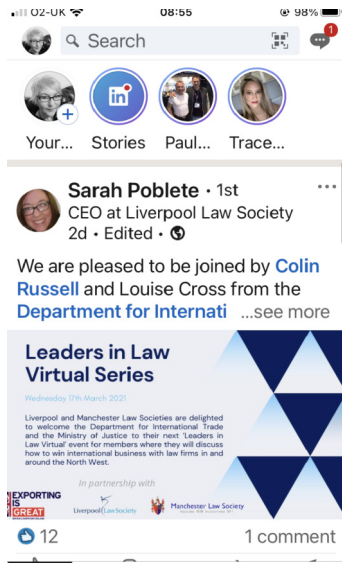
Despite all the challenges we face, we will continue to work with our volunteers, partners and our residents to improve the lives of our local community.

Kate McCormick
JLC Manager
Tel: 07427269616
www.thejosephlappincentre.com/



February 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



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
15-Mar	Cohabitation: Law and Practice	Safda Mahmood
16-Mar	Twenty good habits when dealing with New Build Transaction	Ian Quayle
23-Mar	Commercial Property Update	Richard Snape
23-Mar	Conveyancing and the family home	Richard Snape
24-Mar	Dealing with poor performance in the workplace: a guide to best practice	Emma Tegerdine
24-Mar	Effective management of short-term and long-term sickness absence: how to identify and reduce the risks	Emma Tegerdine
25-Mar	SRA Accounts Rules—High Level	Ian Johnson
14-Apr	Stand and Deliver! Conducting effective advocacy in child care cases	Safda Mahmood
15-Apr	Anti Money Laundering Update with Sue Mawdsley	Sue Mawdsley
19-Apr	Sanctions and Default with Professor Dominic Regan	Professor Dominic Regan
20-Apr	Tax and Trust Update	John Bunker
21-Apr	2021 Commercial Property Conference	Various
22-Apr	SRA Accounts Rules—The Basics	Ian Johnson
27-Apr	Outsourcing Legal Services in Practice	Philip Nam
28-Apr	Conveyancing Quality Scheme: Demonstrating compliance and surviving the assessment	Tracy Thompson
29-Apr	*NEW* 25 Cases for the Magistrates Court Advocate	Clive Smith

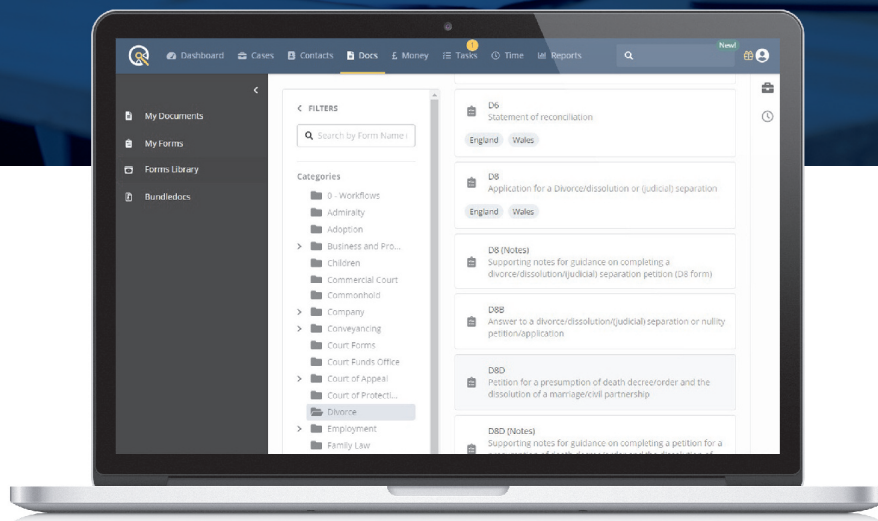
For full details & to book, visit: www.liverpoollawsociety.org.uk



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