

October 2024

Liverpool Law

Liverpool  Law Society

THE MAGAZINE FOR THE LEGAL SECTOR IN
MERSEYSIDE AND THE NORTH WEST

Leading the Way: Overcoming Challenges and Embracing Diversity in Law at September's EDI Event

Report on page 18





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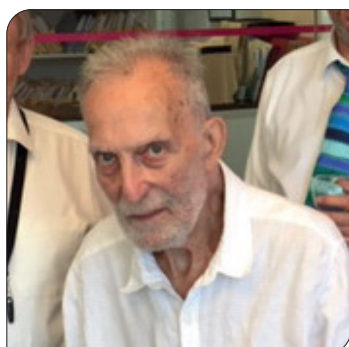
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October 2024

CONTENTS



- 4 The latest from the Editor, Jennifer Powell
- 4 Welcome to new members
- 5 From the President
- 6 LLS Meetings & events
- 6 Consultation Papers
- 8 Leaders in Law: Julie Simms
- 10 Paul Crowley & Co Strengthens Private Landlord Litigation Department
- 10 Your local Law Society: AGM
- 11 Six students complete internship with Weightmans through Everton in the Community partnership
- 12 DWF has been appointed by the North West Legal Consortium (NWLC) to its new solicitors framework panel
- 13 Fletchers Group breaks Guinness World Record for most people performing upper-body rehabilitation stretches
- 14 Leading Liverpool law firm welcomes three experienced solicitors
- 15 DWF announces investment in its Liverpool office
- 16 Key partner hire further strengthens Brabners' regeneration focus
- 17 Pro Bono Week 2024!
- 18 Diversity event 19th Sept
- 20 ADLA
- 22 Where your donations go: Making a real difference for solicitors and their dependants
- 23 Liverpool BID marks two decades since pilot launch
- 24 Council Member's Report
- 25 Shape the future of your local Law Society
- 26 Honouring the life of Paul Crowley
- 27 The Judges' Service
- 27 Sub-Committees' Social
- 28 Should You Qualify as a Solicitor Advocate?
- 30 Law Society National Council
- 32 Transforming NHS Legal Services: The Launch of the Liverpool NHS Legal Collaborative
- 33 Southport's response to the recent atrocities
- 34 "AI'll be back": Skynet or Digital Freedom – use of Artificial Intelligence by Law Firms
- 36 Philip Canter 1937 to 2024
- 38 Private Child Conference 2024
- 39 Residential Property Conference 2024
- 40 Merseyside Law Centre
- 42 Regulation Update
- 44 Charity Spotlight: Freedom From Torture
- 46 Forthcoming Courses
- 49 Word Count Guidelines
- 50 The legal cashiering edit
- 53 X-Press celebrates milestone
- 54 How to Choose the Best Legal Practice Management Software for Your Firm
- 56 The Recovery of Inquest Costs
- 58 Social Media Highlights

DEADLINES

Tues, 22.10.24

Tues, 26.11.24



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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.

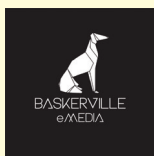
All members' contributions to Liverpool Law are warmly welcomed. Please send your article (and photo captions where possible) or request for further information, or assistance to the editor at editor@liverpoollawsociety.org.uk

Word count information is on [page 49](#).

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Editorial Committee Dates 2024

Meetings start at 01.00 pm on a Tuesday, except where noted.

14.10.24
19.11.24

Welcome to the October edition of Liverpool Law



I was deflated after writing last months column, and rightly so, following the atrocity in Southport and other parts of the City. As promised we have an article from Jeremy Myers and Emma Palmer following a community event they attended on behalf of LLS. It is lovely to see the united front from our legal community and beyond.

I was also able to attend an EDI event at Liverpool John Moores University. Here the speakers discussed the discriminatory and racist abuse some of them had received during their careers and sadly still now, in 2024. This simply shouldn't be happening and excused as part of the job, it isn't. I was glad to hear that the wonderful speakers, and future of our legal profession, are calling this out when seen/heard and leading by example. Long may this continue.

One of the speakers at the event was **Nina Ferris**, Past President and until now Council Member. Nina has now stepped down as Council member after two terms and I wanted to extend our thanks from LLS and me personally for all of her work and dedication. Nina was a great support to me when I was finding my feet with the magazine and also when I was new to Motherhood, watching her flourish with children of a young age too was, and is, such an inspiration. I wish Nina all the best of luck and also to our new Council member **Jeremy Myers** who I have no doubt will do a wonderful job.

Continuing the positivity we have an unbelievable article this month- a Guinness World Record no less! Many congratulations to Fletchers Group on breaking the World Record for the most people performing upper body rehabilitation stretches. What a fantastic achievement, not only the record, but also putting a positive spin and raising awareness of the importance of such exercises. It looks like such a fun event- including **Mr Motivator** himself!

Finally we have our own legal awards shortlist, many congratulations to all those shortlisted. I hope to see as many of you as possible at the dinner. It is a great night to showcase our wonderful legal talent. There is still time to buy your tickets before they sell out, so please do get in touch.

Many thanks

Jennifer Powell, Editor
Weightmans
editor@liverpoollawsociety.org.uk

Welcome to new members

We would like to give a warm welcome to our new members who were approved for membership at September's General Committee meeting. There were 20 individuals from the following organisations:

• Bond Turner • CG Professional Limited • Cobleys Solicitors • Haygarth Jones
• Hill Dickinson • Husband Forwood Morgan • Levins Solicitors • Liverpool John Moores University • O'Connors • Shop Direct Home Shopping • Weightmans

Liverpool Law Society's membership now exceeds 2,400 individuals from 195 law firms, barristers' chambers, and other organisations with legal professionals in the Liverpool City Region and beyond.

From the President

The latest from the President, Gaynor Williams

September started with a busy week of events, and the events have come in thick and fast. On 3 September 2024 Sarah Poblete, Alum Ulah and Jeremy Myers accompanied me to St Johns Building Chambers in Manchester, for the Joint V meeting with our friends from Manchester, Leeds, Bristol and Birmingham Law Societies. The Joint V meetings are always productive and informative, and we were grateful to Aileen Armstrong, Executive Director Strategy and Innovation at SRA for coming along and updating the Joint V about the SRA's plans, budgets, and the consumer protection review.

There were lots of items on the agenda including the increase in the individual and firm payments to the contribution fund, the SRA's budget and business plan, the Law Society's Bicentenary and the structure of our different committees. At the time of writing my column, we are waiting for the LSB to release the review relating to SRA's handling of Axiom Ince collapse, and this is something that the Joint V will consider when it is published.

On 12 September 2024 Leigh Day held their Liverpool launch party at Municipal Hotel in the city centre, to celebrate the expansion of their team in Liverpool. Thank you to **Leanne Devine** for the kind invitation, we were very well looked after with lots of food and drink, and it was good to see lots of local lawyers from other firms supporting Leigh Day. They are a welcome addition to Liverpool, and it is good news that they have a legal aid contract.

On 22 September 2024 I was honoured to be invited to a dinner with the Law Society, the chair of the Bar Council, the Attorney General, Solicitor General and members of the Ministerial Ministry of Justice

team. It was a very enjoyable evening in good company, and it gave me an opportunity to meet **Richard Atkinson**, Vice President of the Law Society, who is taking over from **Nick Emmerson** in October 2024.

The following day, Monday 23 September 2024, I attended the Legal Lunch at the Labour party conference organised by the Law Society. This was a very well attended event and I was pleased that we had representation from our members including DWF, Brabners, Excello Law, Hill Dickinson, Jackson Lees, St Johns Building Chambers, MSB and Weightmans. Speeches were given by the Solicitor General, **Sarah Sackman**, who spoke about upholding the rule of law and the importance of our legal system. **Heidi Alexander MP** and Minister for Courts and Legal Services, who spoke about the importance of legal services, and **Richard Atkinson**, who spoke about legal aid and the need for increased funding in the justice system. I followed the speeches with an update about the legal aid deserts and the dire situation in Liverpool City Region, and I echoed Richard's request for an increase in legal aid funding. The Attorney General, **Richard Hermer** closed the speeches by thanking everyone for attending. It was good to see lawyers and politicians networking together and I hope that this encourages more connections and discussions between lawyers and politicians and that some funding is made available for legal aid and the courts.

I hope some of our members managed to attend some of the events that took place at The Labour Party Conference, it was very busy and good for our city to host over 20,000 visitors to the conference.

In next month's edition we will hear all about the Liverpool Legal Walk



on 1st October 2024. I am attending the opening of the Legal year in London so I will not be there to join the walkers, however I know that there will be a friendly, community spirit and lots of funds raised for the Access to Justice Foundation. Thank you to everyone who took part, and to **Sarah Poblete** and the team at LLS, and Past President **Steve Cornforth**, for organising it.

Just to repeat, as I have done so the last few months, the Annual Dinner and Legal Awards takes place on 14 November 2024 at Rum Warehouse, Titanic Hotel, Liverpool. **Lady Hale** will be visiting our city and speaking on the evening, and I am looking forward to it.

Our annual AGM is scheduled for 28 November 2024 at the Racquet Club, Liverpool city centre. Please see the article on [page 25](#) about how you can apply to become a Director of the Society.

Gaynor Williams
President

president@liverpoollawsociety.org.uk

LLS Meetings & events – Oct/Nov 2024

Start Time	Meeting/Event
08/10/2024 12:30	General Committee
10/10/2024 17:30	Conkerton Memorial Lecture
11/10/2024 13:00	MP & LLS directors' Meeting
13/10/2024 10:30	Annual Legal Service at Liverpool Cathedral
14/10/2024 13:00	Editorial Sub-Committee
17/10/2024 13:00	Non-Contentious Business Sub-Committee
22/10/2024 09:00	November issue of Liverpool Law deadline
29/10/2024 12:30	Finance & Policy Sub-Committee
31/10/2024 13:00	Education & Charities Sub-Committee
04/11/2024 09:00	Pro Bono Week (UK 4-8 Nov)
07/11/2024 13:00	Access to Justice Sub-Committee

Liverpool Law Society has a number of committees covering specialist areas of law which meet regularly throughout the year allowing members of Liverpool Law Society to discuss common issues, respond to consultation papers and contribute ideas towards the Society's comprehensive legal training programme

Our committees are: Access to Justice; Civil Litigation; Criminal Practice; Employment Law; Equality, Diversity & Inclusion; Editorial; Family Business; In-House Lawyers; Non-Contentious Business and Regulatory committees, which are open to members of Liverpool Law Society. To enquire about your membership status and/or being co-opted onto one of the above committees, please email committees@liverpoollawsociety.org.uk

Consultation Papers

Papers referred to committees:

The following sub-committee of Liverpool Law Society is considering responding to this consultation paper. If any member would like to send in a comment for consideration by the relevant committee, please do so to committees@liverpoollawsociety.org.uk

Committee	Consultation Paper title	Closing date
Criminal Practice	Law Commission consultation on contempt of court	08.11.24



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Leaders in Law: Julie Simms



1. Briefly describe your role as Managing Partner and the main duties of this position.

I was appointed managing partner of DWF's Liverpool office in January of this year, taking over the senior leadership position from **Graham Dagnall**. The role of an OMP at DWF includes shaping the culture in the location positively and consistently through DWF's purpose and values. We are responsible for championing success for DWF in our location by engaging the local leadership team and colleagues with business development and client engagement activities to achieve growth objectives. We are asked to be ambassadors for DWF in the local market and an advocate for Sustainability and ESG. The area of the OMP role that I am most passionate about is supporting the development of our next generation – inspiring, engaging with and learning from those who will be the future of DWF.

2. What are the positive and negative aspects of the role?

The role provides a unique opportunity to shape the strategic direction of the Liverpool office, influence the firm's broader vision, and leave a lasting impact on the business' culture, operations and performance. It's incredibly rewarding

to work alongside our talented professionals and clients, driving success and having the chance to give back to our communities in Liverpool, particularly through DWF's ESG initiatives, which allows us to create a more inclusive and supportive environment.

3. What changes to the running of the firm have you implemented because of Covid?

In response to Covid, like many others, we quickly shifted to a more flexible working model, ensuring everyone had the right tools and support to work from home effectively. We continue to focus on the wellbeing of our teams through an increase of wellbeing initiatives and provide mental health resources to help people manage the pressures of blending work and home life. From a client perspective, as many firms did, we adapted to virtual meetings and events, maintaining strong relationships through alternative means. Whilst virtual meetings continue, and we have invested significantly in technology and AI for all at DWF we are also seeing a return to more face-to-face meetings since the beginning of this year. Overall, we've built and retained a more flexible and resilient way of working.

4. As a result of Covid, what are your new agile working policies and why?

At DWF, we are focused on helping colleagues to achieve the right balance. We have been committed to agile working since before Covid and remain so, but we also see benefits in colleagues spending time with each other in person, learning from each other and collaborating on projects together. We ask the majority of our teams to spend at least 50% of their time working from an office. We

are in the process of reviewing and refreshing our offices to ensure they are well-suited to this modern way of working. This includes the current redevelopment of our Liverpool office to offer greater flexibility and choice for different work styles.

5. What do you see as your biggest challenges?

One of the biggest challenges is managing and adapting to the diverse expectations of a cross-generational and inter-generational workforce. Our team spans a spectrum of generations, each with different working styles, expectations, and approaches. Balancing these differences to get the best out of everyone can be complex, especially in a business like ours where we sell time, often adhering to more traditional working models. The challenge lies in creating a flexible and inclusive environment that meets modern expectations while maintaining the efficiency and profitability required by our traditional business model. Finding that balance between adapting to new ways of working and preserving what works best for our clients and business is key.

6. What aspects of the firm are you most proud of?

I'm most proud of the business' deep commitment to diversity, inclusion and our people's wellbeing. We've achieved Gold Standard in TIDE with the Employers Network for Equality & Inclusion and we support flexible working with Working Families. As long-time members of Business in the Community, we champion inclusive growth and fair practices and are dedicated to gender equality, aiming for women to hold at least 40% of senior leadership roles within the business. We advocate for LGBTQ+ equality and our firmwide network, 'Out Front' provides help and support

to our colleagues. Our Clear Assured re-accreditation and Disability Confident Leader status highlights our commitment to accessible recruitment and the support of disabled talent, exemplified through our work with RIDI.

We prioritise social mobility with initiatives like our award-winning 5 STAR Futures programme which helps young people unlock their potential through mentoring and skills development and the DWF Foundation; an independent charity founded by DWF here in Liverpool, which has the sole aim of giving back to our communities by providing funds, resources, and mentoring support to help individuals and communities thrive. It's also a top priority of ours to attract and retain diverse talent across the business, and we're taking real steps to break down barriers, from open conversations about race to a reverse mentoring programme that helps our leaders understand and support the experiences of all colleagues.

7. What are your immediate short-term goals?

One of my immediate priorities is the redevelopment of our Liverpool office which is the second largest office of DWF with over 570 people based at 5 St. Paul's Square. This investment aims to create a modern, flexible workspace that supports the way we work today, with hybrid working being such an important part of our approach. The new design will offer adaptable spaces for different work styles, from collaborative areas to private meeting rooms, ensuring our team has everything they need to perform at their best. It's an exciting time for our office, and I'm confident that these changes will enhance the working environment for our colleagues, the client experience and our ability to grow as a business in the region and support and give back to our local community too.

8. Where do you see the firm ten years from now?

In ten years, I see DWF continuing to grow as a leader in the legal and professional services sector, but with even greater emphasis on innovation and adaptability. The legal landscape is evolving rapidly, and we're positioning ourselves to be at the forefront of that change—whether it's through embracing new technologies, offering more flexible services to clients, or expanding our global reach. Diversity, inclusion, and wellbeing will remain central to our culture. We'll continue to foster a supportive and collaborative environment where our people can thrive and bring their best to the table. I also see us strengthening our commitment to social responsibility, making an even bigger impact on the environment and communities we serve.

9. What legacy, as Managing Partner, would you like to leave the firm?

As DWF's Liverpool Office Managing Partner, I aspire to leave a legacy that reflects my commitment to being a strong female role model, championing diversity and inclusion, and empowering other women to reach their full potential within our firm. I envision a workplace where every individual feels valued and respected, regardless of their background, and where diverse perspectives are not only welcomed but celebrated. By fostering an inclusive culture and providing mentorship and support, I aim to support an environment where women can thrive, break barriers, and achieve their career aspirations. My goal is to pave the way for future generations of female leaders, ensuring that our firm remains a beacon of equality and opportunity for all.



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Paul Crowley & Co Strengthens Private Landlord Litigation Department



Emma Stirzaker

Paul Crowley & Co is delighted to announce the appointment of Emma Stirzaker as a Paralegal to their private landlord legal services team. Emma's pre-litigation experience combined with her strong commitment to providing exceptional legal service, will significantly enhance the team's ability to support private landlords in maintaining compliance and protecting their interests.

Julie Jones from the Liverpool law firm says "We believe in focusing on talent and are excited to have Emma on board. Our growth ethos is a core part of our talent acquisition and retention strategy, demonstrating the role each team member plays in driving growth and how they will benefit from it. Whether you are dealing with tenant evictions, tenancy agreements, or property disputes, our team is equipped to offer comprehensive legal advice and representation."

Emma's appointment underscores our dedication to delivering high quality legal services. Her knowledge and experience will further strengthen the team's ability to navigate the complexities of property law."

Your local Law Society: AGM

The Society's Annual General Meeting will be held at 12.30pm for 1.00pm on Thursday, 28th November 2024 at The Racquet Club, Chapel Street, Liverpool city centre. It will finish by 1:45pm.

The AGM is an important opportunity for us to conduct our formal business but also to reflect on the past year and look forward to the future.

We will be recapping the work of the Society over the last year and outlining what we have achieved and where the challenges lie in the future.

Please feel free to attend the AGM if you are not standing for election. It would be good to meet you and I am sure that you would find it worthwhile to have a chat with a few of the officers and staff team plus some of members attending.

Members will receive an email in mid-October about the AGM with an RSVP link.

Gaynor Williams
President of Liverpool Law Society

Six students complete internship with Weightmans through Everton in the Community partnership



Six students have completed paid internships with national law firm, Weightmans, through its partnership with charity, Everton in the Community.

Six students have completed paid internships with national law firm, Weightmans, through its partnership with charity, Everton in the Community.

As part of the firm's Internship into Law programme, for a second consecutive year candidates from schools across the Liverpool region spent time in the Old

Hall Street headquarters, shadowing lawyers on real cases and gaining a practical understanding of law.

Since launching in January 2023, more than 100 young people from across Everton in the Community's Secondary Education Pathways programme have competed for a place in the initiative, with a total of 15 participants securing themselves an internship with the law firm to date.

From this year's cohort, six participants out of an original group of 50 were

accepted after four rounds of competitive interviews, including presentations, application questions and a final group assessment.

Immie, who was one of the six interns, said: *"I never thought that succeeding in the internship programme was a possibility for me, but now it's a reality and that's just amazing. Everton in the Community and Weightmans have helped me realise that I'm capable of pursuing a career in law, without their support I wouldn't have even considered it. The programme has opened up so many doors for me, it's inspired me to keep going and follow my dreams."*

Helen Taylor, HR director at Weightmans, said:

"We are very proud to see our partnership with Everton in the Community continue to grow into its second year. We both share the same ambitions to inspire our region's young people and provide them with opportunities that will hopefully shape their future careers."

"This year's cohort were a joy to watch – talented, enthusiastic and eager to learn from our people during their time with us. I'm in no doubt that some, if not all, will be the legal stars of tomorrow, and the hope is that we see them again through our apprenticeship routes in the future."

Carly Wheeler, secondary education manager at Everton in the Community, said:

"We're delighted to have been able to work alongside Weightmans again on this distinguished programme. Many of our participants have experienced a life-changing opportunity that they wouldn't have otherwise had access to, and the process has been invaluable for them all. Some of our young people have even attributed the internship to helping them realise that they'd like to pursue a career in law."

DWF has been appointed by the North West Legal Consortium (NWLC) to its new solicitors framework panel.



Colin Murray

DWF, the global provider of integrated legal and business services, is one of 15 law firms involved in the framework, which covers the period from 1 August 2024 to 31 July 2028. Those selected may receive instructions for legal work from members.

Representing more than 40 public organisations – including councils, combined authorities, waste disposal authorities, social housing agencies, emergency services, transport bodies, and police and crime commissioner offices – the consortium facilitates collaboration in the procurement and commissioning of legal services.

Following a detailed procurement exercise, NWLC awarded contracts to up to six firms in each of [five lots \(except for projects, procurement, commercial and construction where they appointed 10 firms\)](#).

DWF's work on the panel will be led by Manchester-based Partner and Head of Local Government, **Colin Murray**, a leading public procurement adviser.

DWF was appointed to four lots – for (1) civil litigation, prosecutions and regulatory; (2) property, planning and environment; (3) corporate governance, ethical standards and information law; and (4) projects, procurement and commercial, which will be led by Simon Belfield, Julie Simms, Michael Gilmartin and Ciaran Wells, respectively.

Jonathan Branton, DWF's Head of the Public Sector said, *"This appointment underpins our ever growing national public sector practice, and further builds on our Central Government appointments across the country. DWF's Public Sector practice has advised on major projects around the country and continues to go from strength to strength. This appointment allows us to extend our reach further still in the key region of the North West."*

Speaking on the re-appointment, **Colin Murray** said, *"This re-appointment is tremendous for DWF, solidifying our position as one of the top Public Sector teams in the country. DWF has a large presence in the North West, and we are delighted to be able to help authorities access locally sourced legal advice from our*

leading team of experts."

Sefton Metropolitan Borough Council is the lead contracting authority for NWLC, whose [members](#) are located across the Cheshire, Cumbria, Greater Manchester, Lancashire, Merseyside and North Wales local authority areas.

Members include the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority, Transport for Greater Manchester, Lancashire County Council, Cheshire Fire and Rescue, Lake District National Park Authority, Liverpool City Council, and the Office for the Police and Crime Commissioner for North Wales.

DWF's Public Sector team has advised on several major projects in the North West, including advising Greater Manchester Combined Authority, Liverpool City Council, Manchester City Council, and Blackpool Borough Council on multiple high profile projects. The business was also recently re-appointed to the North East Procurement Organisation legal services panel, where it will provide similar services to its more than 900 associate members.

Fletchers Group breaks Guinness World Record for most people performing upper-body rehabilitation stretches



Personal injury and clinical negligence specialist Fletchers Group has broken a Guinness World Record for the most people doing a particular sequence of upper body stretches, in an attempt led by 90's TV-legend Mr Motivator. These stretches often form a key part of the rehab and ongoing care routines for people suffering a wide range of muscular or spinal injuries.

Colleagues came together from across the Group's various offices - Manchester, Liverpool, Southport, Leeds, Bolton and Cambridge - to the Albert Hall in Manchester for an afternoon of marking milestones, to celebrate one of its most successful years to date.

As part of these celebrations, the firm enlisted the help of exercise guru and fitness legend, **Mr Motivator**, along with his team of 'Motivators' to lead the five-minute stretch routine, which consisted of a number of upper body postural exercises aimed at improving blood flow, circulation and range of movement, imperative for recovery after injury.

The stretch routine, which was

successfully performed by 647 colleagues, was chosen by Fletchers and Mr Motivator to highlight the importance of rehabilitation, and rehabilitative exercise.

Fletchers secures millions of pounds in settlements for its clients each year; and this ensures that all financial future needs are met; from ongoing medical care to rehabilitation and other therapies.

The achievement underscored Fletchers ongoing mission to help people who have suffered serious injuries move forward with their lives.

An official Guinness World Records adjudicator was on-hand to do the official count, which was announced at the end of the conference with the presentation of a certificate of achievement handed to the Group's Chief Marketing Officer and Blume's CEO, **Alex Kenny**, to formally recognise the win.

Alex said: "Our annual conference was created to celebrate all the fantastic things we've achieved over the last year - and what better way to mark it than to attempt our very own Guinness World Record."

"We chose a record that was personal to us and what we do. Our world record reflects the fact that our practice goes beyond legal advice; we use our expertise and professional connections, from case managers, independent medical experts, through to the many charities we work with, to ensure individuals have the right support to rebuild their life."



Leading Liverpool law firm welcomes three experienced solicitors



Jane Bedford



Carla Duprey



Kirsty Parkes

Bond Turner, a leading specialist law firm based in Liverpool, is pleased to welcome three new, highly praised solicitors

This September, Carla Duprey and Kirsty Parkes are joining the experienced Clinical Negligence department, and Jane Bedford will be taking on the role of building a new team dedicated to cycling law specifically.

Collectively they bring more than 25 years' experience in the legal profession.

Jane Bedford is a specialist cycling solicitor working within the Serious Injury team, she brings over 10 years' experience in this niche area of law.

Jane will build and head up a new dedicated Cycling Team to represent all the firm's cycling clients.

Carla Duprey brings over 12 years' experience as a Clinical Negligence Solicitor.

A career highlight for Carla is settling a claim for £27.4 million, which is among the highest settlements in the UK to date.

She was also recognised as a key lawyer in the field of Clinical Negligence by the 2023 edition of The Legal 500.

Kirsty Parkes has been qualified as a solicitor for 6 years and has gained valuable experience working on a wide variety of Clinical Negligence matters, including high value cases predominantly involving spinal injuries, brain injuries, birth injuries and many more.

One of Kirsty's career highlights is settling a case involving a delay in diagnosis of cervical cancer for £456,000.

"We feel extremely fortunate to acquire such high calibre employees," said Sara Stanger, Director and Head of Clinical Negligence and Serious Injury Claims at [Bond Turner](#).

"Each of these solicitors are highly recognised in their own fields and will be valuable assets in their teams.

"Carla has a keen eye for detail and is focused on achieving the best possible outcome for her clients.

"Kirsty is known to go the extra mile for

her clients to provide the best possible experience.

"As a lifelong cyclist, Jane's experience gives her a valuable shared perspective with her clients. Jane is a club cyclist, commutes by bicycle and is active in her local cycling and walking campaign group; working towards improving the experience of those walking and cycling in Greater Manchester."



(From left to right) Carla Duprey, Jane Bedford and Kirsty Parkes

DWF announces investment in its Liverpool office



Julie Simms

DWF, the global provider of integrated legal and business services, has announced plans to invest in the redevelopment of its office in Liverpool, the city in which the business was founded in 1977.

Last year, the global legal business signed a new 10-year lease at 5 St. Paul's Square in Liverpool, which is home to around 570 DWF colleagues making it one of the firm's largest offices.

The redevelopment will transform its fifth floor workspace to support DWF's approach to hybrid working. It will include traditional desk settings complemented by activity-based work areas, offering flexibility and choice for different work styles.

Versatile and adaptable breakout spaces and meeting rooms will facilitate multiple purposes, from casual lunches and informal meetings to touch down workspaces for collaboration, ensuring colleagues have the appropriate environment for various activities.

A new client suite will include seven flexible meeting spaces, equipped with Microsoft Teams technology to enhance client interactions and internal collaborations. All lighting will be replaced with energy-efficient LED systems, reducing the office's

environmental footprint while enhancing the workspace's ambience.

Julie Simms, managing partner for DWF in Liverpool, said: "We are excited to redevelop our Liverpool office, reinforcing our commitment to the city and investment in the region. By creating a modern, flexible, and comfortable working environment, we are enhancing our team's experience and equipping them with the best resources to deliver exceptional service to our clients. Upgraded social spaces, a cutting-edge client suite, and state-of-the-art IT infrastructure will be a game-changer, significantly improve efficiency, connectivity, and make the office a more enjoyable place to work. It is a really exciting time for DWF in Liverpool and we look forward to the new opportunities this will create for our local talent and the growth of our business."

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Key partner hire further strengthens Brabners' regeneration focus



Robert Arnison and Nik White

Purpose-led independent law firm Brabners has strengthened its award-winning real estate team with the appointment of partner Robert Arnison.

Robert will bring additional senior expertise to the firm's almost 120-strong real estate team, which continues to support major national regeneration projects.

Working with colleagues across Brabners' offices in Manchester, Liverpool, Lancashire and Leeds, he will further boost the firm's relationships with major developers and local authorities that are delivering regeneration and place-led development across the UK.

Robert previously spent more than 20 years at global law firm DLA Piper, where he was a senior figure in the firm's Manchester-based development team, collaborating closely with other offices across the firm including internationally. He also served as office training partner, supporting the

development of colleagues across a range of disciplines.

Robert has extensive experience in all aspects of commercial real estate with a particular focus on development, regeneration, infrastructure projects and development finance. He has worked with private and public sector clients, involving innovative investment and funding to deliver important schemes.

He joins Brabners' real estate team as it continues to advise on a range of major regeneration projects supporting regional prosperity. These include Oldham Borough Council's £550m town centre masterplan, strategic regeneration partnerships led by Salford and Manchester City Councils, Eden Project Morecambe and ongoing investment across Liverpool's iconic waterfront. Robert becomes part of a team that was named Legal Team of the Year at last year's Property Week Property Awards and contributed significantly to the firm growing revenues to £55.6million (+18%) in its last financial year.

Nik White, managing partner at Brabners, said: "Robert is extremely talented and experienced, and will prove a valuable addition to our growing real estate practice, helping them continue to make the difference to our clients."

"His vast experience will complement the team's existing strengths as they continue to influence ambitious infrastructure schemes that are at the heart of regeneration in towns and cities across the North."

Robert Arnison, partner in the real estate team at Brabners, added: "Brabners' real estate team is widely recognised in our industry as one of the most impressive in the country. The calibre of projects it has worked on in recent years can only be described as transformative."

"It's a pleasure to be joining the firm, not only as it enters a new growth cycle but as it continues to create positive, lasting change in local communities."

Be part of Pro Bono Week 2024!

**PRO
BONO
WEEK**
probonoweb.org.uk

Pro Bono Week takes place across the UK this year from 4 to 8 November 2024. Through events and comms it is an opportunity to recognise, showcase and discuss the voluntary contribution of the legal profession in giving free legal help to those in need.

For the latest updates follow @ProBonoWeekUK on [LinkedIn](#) or [X \(Twitter\)](#).

Arrange an event

Pro Bono Week is a great time to arrange an event to promote or discuss pro bono. Many events are external occasions organised in partnership with others, while others are internal events for colleagues at an organisation. The overall theme for 2024 is “the Power of Pro

Bono”, with some additional subtopics:

- Barred from justice: powerful, everyday stories
- Embedding pro bono in your organisation and career
- How technology can enhance access to justice

If you organise an event whether internal or external please do [let us know!](#) For help planning an event visit [probonoweb.org.uk/event-plans](#)

Share content on social media

Pro Bono Week is a perfect time to post on social media or your website about your commitment to pro bono, or to thank your volunteers, or to showcase a particular pro bono lawyer or project.

#ProBonoWeek

For a toolkit & resources such as #IDoProBono posters visit [probonoweb.org.uk/media-resources](#)

Attend events in Pro Bono Week

Events you can attend are continually added to the calendar at [probonoweb.org.uk/events](#)

These include the hybrid [launch event](#) in London & Edinburgh, including with Lady Justice Simler of the Supreme Court and the Attorney General of England & Wales Lord Hermer KC.

Sign up to do pro bono

For lawyers or organisations not yet involved in a pro bono scheme, Pro Bono Week is an opportunity to sign up, see [probonoweb.org.uk/volunteering](#)

And finally, raise dough!

Get baking with the [Great Legal Bake](#) and raise money for local advice charities.



Pro Bono Week returns 4th to 8th November 2024

Pro Bono Week is an opportunity to celebrate and discuss the important contribution that the legal profession makes in providing free legal help to those in need.

This year's theme is “The Power of Pro Bono”. LJMU Legal Advice Centre is hosting an event on the 7th November 5.30- 7.00 pm to showcase the work of the clinic, and our partner organisations sharing everyday stories about the impact of lawyers and law students who give their time to protect the rights of those most disadvantaged in society.

It is an opportunity to thank our volunteers and supporting partners, the local judiciary and counsel and for you to meet our wonderful students.

Join us at our clinic premises on 15-19 Hardman Street, L1 9AS.

Julie O'Hare

EDI committee holds diversity in the law event



Nina Sahu, Nina Ferris, DJ Sheren Guirguis, John Owens and Nama Zaroug

On Thursday 19th September, the Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Committee with the support of Merseyside Women Lawyers' Division and Liverpool John Moores University, played host to a number of professionals across the Liverpool legal sector who were all there to hear from a panel on Empowering Diversity and their Path to Leadership in Law & the Judiciary. The panel consisted of: Nina Ferris (Partner and Head of Commercial Dispute Resolution at Hill Dickinson), DJ Sheren Guirguis (Family District Judge at Liverpool County Court), John Owens (Partner at MSB Solicitors) and Nama Zarroug (Solicitor and founding Director at Astraea Linksills) with Nina Sahu (Legal Director at Hill Dickinson and Chair of the Liverpool Law Society EDI Committee) chairing the event.

Each member of the panel was refreshingly open and honest about how they achieved success and the challenges they faced along the way, whether it be prejudice, racism, sexism or even self-imposed limitations

on what they thought they could achieve. By sharing their insights and experience, the panel were able to offer advice to the audience on what they believe helped them to overcome these limitations and embrace leadership.

Nina Ferris opened the discussion by describing an experience at school in which she was informed she would be best suited to being a bilingual secretary according to a quiz designed to match you with an occupation. Luckily, Nina chose to study law instead. Nina challenged barriers to her progression by highlighting the value in non-billable work that had been overlooked and which now forms part of the appraisal process at Hill Dickinson. She advised the audience to surround themselves with likeminded people who are also willing to challenge barriers and to act like a leader in order to be seen as one.

After a work experience placement in the Court environment, DJ Guirguis was inspired to pursue a career in advocacy and recounted how the barriers she faced in pursuing this goal

were largely down to her own self-limiting beliefs. She acknowledged how it can be extremely difficult to put yourself forward for opportunities, but it can be a little easier with the right support. DJ Guirguis found this support in her husband who was going through a similar application process at the time and found they could both be a support to one another. Whilst it doesn't have to be a spouse or even a relative, she expressed how important and helpful it was to have someone to talk to who can relate to what you are experiencing.

In his days as a junior employee, John Owens would often hear what he described as a 'lads banter' around the office. At the time, despite comments being made that were often misogynistic and homophobic, this 'banter' was not challenged because it was seen as acceptable by those in leadership positions at the time. Now as a partner with numerous employees looking to him, John leads by example and does not allow such behaviour at work and, whilst thankfully he hasn't experienced it at MSB, he is confident that it would be called out should it occur.



As the founder of her own firm, **Nama Zarroug** reiterated the significance of being able to not only change the rules but to make them. As a leader you have to stand up for what is right, and Nama explained how she is guided by accountability. Whilst not always easy, it is important that the decisions made by leaders should be justifiable to their employees and colleagues. When you are a leader, you have a responsibility to those who are junior to you to set a good example.

Each member of the panel was able to share their experiences with a refreshing sense of humour and openness without trivialising their experiences or minimising the work they put in to achieve success. One of the main takeaways from all the panel members was the value that having a mentor, and a support network can provide and that it is never too late to start building your network. Conversations around embracing and encouraging diversity are increasingly important in today's society, especially following the recent riots in the city, and Thursday's panel provided a refreshing insight into the benefits of embracing diversity in leadership and the importance of visibility.



Georgia Garland
Trainee Solicitor,
Hill Dickinson

ADILA

Annual Dinner featuring Legal Awards

Liverpool Law Society is delighted by the number of nominations received for the 2024 Legal Awards from individuals, teams and firms across the membership. The competition has been fierce, the independent judging panel have met and the shortlist has been decided.

Legal Awards 2024 Shortlist

Outstanding Team Award (Non-Contentious)
sponsored by Landmark Information

- CEL Solicitors
- Hill Dickinson
- In-House Legal Solutions

Outstanding Team Award (Dispute Resolution & Litigation)

- Bell Lamb & Joynson
- Fletchers Solicitors
- Hill Dickinson
- Weightmans

Outstanding Team Award (Family)
sponsored by Document Direct

- JMW Solicitors
- Maria Fogg Family Law
- MSB Solicitors

Equality Diversity & Inclusion Award
sponsored by LJMU

- Brabners
- DWF Law
- Fletchers Solicitors
- Morecrofts Solicitors
- Weightmans

Legal Awards 2024 Shortlist

Rising Star Award
sponsored by University of Law

- Kenn Chin, In-House Legal Solutions
- Jack Hudson, Donoghue Solicitors
- Nathan Jones, DWF Law
- Joshua Whittam, Fletchers Solicitors
- Emily Whiteley, Fletchers Solicitors
- Antonia Williamson, Freeths

Outstanding Lawyer Award
sponsored by Miller Insurance

- Pamela Chesterman, Irwin Mitchell
- Louise Myers, CG Professional
- Sara Stanger, Bond Turner
- Paul Walsh, Hill Dickinson

Law Firm Award (1-49 employees)
sponsored by Clio

- Leigh Day
- Maria Fogg Family Law
- O'Connors
- Provenio Litigation

Law Firm Award (50+ employees)

- Fletchers Solicitors
- Jackson Lees Group
- Morecrofts Solicitors
- Weightmans

The awards ceremony will be taking place at the Society's Annual Dinner which is taking place on Thursday, 14th November 2024.

[Bookings can be made here](#)

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ADILA

Annual Dinner featuring Legal Awards

Annual Dinner 2024

Join President **Gaynor Williams** at the region's premier event for the legal sector.

Hear from guest speaker
**The Rt Hon the Baroness Hale
of Richmond DBE**



The Legal Awards ceremony will take place after Dinner.
There will be a collection and a separate raffle for the guest speaker's
chosen charity, Freedom from Torture (Reg no. 1000340)

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Where your donations go: Making a real difference for solicitors and their dependants



At [The Solicitors' Charity](#), small change makes a big change to the lives of solicitors and their dependants during challenging times. Whether it's one-off contributions or donating your firm's unclaimed balances, your support is making a tangible difference to the wellbeing of others in the solicitors' profession.

It's important for the charity to carry on the work it has been doing since 1858, providing physical, professional, emotional, and financial wellbeing support to those who need it most.

Here's how your contributions make a meaningful difference:

Solicitors facing mental health challenges often need professional support to help manage the pressures of the job. Your donations enable us to fund specialist mental health services, including therapy sessions with qualified psychotherapists. These services, such as those provided by [Onebright Mental Health](#) and [Lawsight](#), include initial assessments (costing £100 to £130) and ongoing therapy sessions (ranging from £65 to £130 per session). In total, a full course of treatment can cost between £1,000 and £1,500, and your contributions

ensure that no solicitor is left without the help they need during difficult times.

Physical rehabilitation is equally important, and thanks to your support, we can provide access to expert Occupational Therapy (OT) services. Occupational Therapists work with people of all ages, helping them to carry out the activities that they need or want to do to lead healthy and fulfilling lives. Whether solicitors need assessments for, or advice about living with physical conditions caused by illness, injury or frailty, your donations help fund these sessions, which typically cost from £150 through [The OT Practice](#). Financial pressures can affect anyone, and through your generosity, we provide solicitors with access to Independent Financial Advisers (IFAs). These advisers offer expert guidance on key issues, such as retirement planning, managing financial difficulties, or exploring options including equity release. These essential services, which typically cost between £2,000 and £2,500, provide a critical lifeline during times of financial uncertainty. Your donations also fund expert welfare and benefits checks, ensuring that solicitors and their families receive the financial

help they're entitled to, as well as money management and debt advice. Providers like [Pennysmart](#) and [Advice Works](#) offer this type of service, with costs ranging from £250 to £360 per session. This vital assistance prevents financial challenges from escalating, offer a much-needed safety net as well as practical help with budgeting.

For solicitors facing career transitions or seeking new opportunities, your support pays for career coaching services through providers like [Renovo](#). These personalised coaching sessions, costing around £600 per person, give solicitors the guidance and confidence they need to take the next step in their professional lives. This tailored support helps solicitors adapt to changing industry demands, ensuring they can continue to thrive.

There are many ways to support The Solicitors' Charity. You can make a one-off donation, set up regular contributions, or donate your firm's unclaimed balances to the charity. However you choose to give, you're helping to make a positive difference to the lives of those who need it most. Thank you for your continued generosity because together, we are building a supportive community for solicitors, ensuring they have access to the care they need, when they need it most.

Play your part: <https://thesolicitorscharity.org/support-our-work/>

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Liverpool BID marks two decades since pilot launch



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



Julie Johnson



What were you doing two decades ago?

Where do you see yourself in 20 years? This month, October 2024, marks 20 years since the anniversary of the first business improvement district pilot, with £1bn invested in local services and events to improve towns and cities for communities and business. Liverpool, a city that always has its eye firmly on the future, was one of the first cities to have a BID, created as part of a pilot programme.

20 BIDS were formed with the original pilot in 2003 and then brought into law with the UK regulations act the following year. Using a model from Canada, Business Improvement Districts allowed for businesses to have access to additional services, like street cleaning, improving the environment and public realm, or events and activity to increase footfall and animation.

The number of BIDs has now grown to over 340, with BIDs appearing in all four nations of the UK. A business improvement district is a defined area of a town or city where a levy is charged

on all eligible business rate payers. BID levies are voted for via a ballot which takes place every five years.

Currently, BIDs invest £152m in local economies across the country, helping to support investment in towns and cities at a time when public sector funding has been impacted by budget cuts across a range of departments.

Over two decades, the role of BIDs in the UK has evolved. The BID model has evolved to create Accommodation BIDs, driven by the hotel and serviced accommodation sector. The tax to fund the Elizabeth Line led to the emergence of property owner BIDs.

In Liverpool, what began as the City central BID has grown into two BID Areas, Retail & Leisure and Culture & Commerce, alongside an Accommodation BID.

BID services day to day include street cleaning, removing graffiti, security, connecting businesses and networking. But BIDs increasingly create spectacle and organise events and projects enhancing the lives of those living in

local communities.

Two decades is an incredible milestone, and it allows us to think about both our legacy and what comes next. BIDs were established to create a ground-breaking relationship between the public sector and the private sector. They exist to have a structure for investment that helps to create the right environment for city centre businesses, no matter their sector or industry, to thrive.

Liverpool has changed a great deal in that period. There have been ups and downs, but one of the things that works well in this city is partnership. We have shown that through partnership, strategic investment and always focusing on the public realm and the environment for business, we can get through. The challenges on the public purse aren't going anywhere and we are confident in our ability to continue to support hospitality, retail, professional services, culture, commercial business and more, creating important connections throughout the city to make it stronger. Bring on the next 20 years!

Council Member's Report September 2024



Nina Ferris

Council has continued to be busy over the summer months and in preparation for the AGM in early October.

TA6 update

Many members will have been following the discussion regarding the SGM relating to a vote of no confidence in the President and CEO over the introduction of revised conveyancing forms which took place in July. As was reported, the use of the forms has been delayed whilst

further consultation takes place. The next stages of the consultation for those who responded will take place in October with deep dive online webinars being released which explore the key areas of concern including in liability and digitisation. More information is available [here](#).

In house ethics

We have heard through LLS own in house committee that there can be tension between professional ethics and the commercial imperative of working for one client. TLS is providing more support for In house lawyers to hopefully prompt a broader conversation about ethical practice in house to develop a vibrant community within the profession as a whole. Further resources on ethics can be found [here](#).

Bicentenary

The Bicentenary year starts in October 2024 and the programme of events has been launched including an extended presidential tour, a look back at the 200 year contribution of solicitors to society through digital and in person exhibitions and a calendar of events in all regions of England and Wales. The link to the

Bicentenary programme is [here](#).

Legal Heroes

Finally, the latest round of legal heroes were celebrated. These include solicitors who through a particular piece of work have made a demonstrative lasting and tangible difference to the lives of others, their local community or society or have brought distinction to the legal profession. The latest winners' stories can be found here: [Legal Heroes 2024 winners | The Law Society](#). The winners were judged from 470 entries and their stories are a great way to show the unsung work that solicitors do for their communities and society.

AGM

The AGM report in October will be my last as I stand down from Council after 2 terms. Your new council member from October will be **Jeremy Myers**, who you will recognise as a past president who I am sure will do a tremendous job.

If you do have any queries in the meantime, please do get in touch.

Nina Ferris

Nina.ferris@hildickinson.com



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We would like to have a committee of Directors which is as representative as possible of the wide membership the Society encompasses. Our membership is broad, taken from all branches of the legal profession. Please note only full* members of the Society are eligible for election to the General Committee.

2024 AGM

The Society's Annual General Meeting will be held from **1.00pm – 2.00pm on Thursday, 28th November 2024** at **The Racquet Club**, Liverpool city centre.

By standing for election at this year's AGM in November, you would become a director and member of the Society's General Committee. The General Committee consists of up to 27 directors, who each serve a three-year term. The nominee must be a member of the Society, be nominated by three members of the Society and is elected to serve a three-year term.

Every year, nine members of the General Committee retire by rotation at the AGM: up to five of those due to retire may be nominated by the Committee for re-

election, and the others are not eligible for re-election until the next AGM.

How to stand for election

Members of the Society will receive an email in mid-October with details on how to nominate a full member of the Society to become a director. The nomination form must be completed and returned to the Society by **1.00pm on Monday 21st October 2024**. Elections will then take place at the AGM in November.

Please do consider attending the AGM even if you are not standing for election. It would be good to meet you and I am sure that you would find it worthwhile to have a chat with a few of the officers and staff team plus some of members attending.

If you would like further information about the Society and the work of the General Committee and sub-committees please visit <http://www.liverpoollawsociety.org.uk/about-the-society/committees> or email committees@liverpoollawsociety.org.uk and we will get back to you.

Gaynor Williams
President

**Full member*

The following persons practising or working in the Area (Area means the City of Liverpool, the Metropolitan Boroughs of Wirral, Knowsley, St. Helens and Sefton; and Widnes and Neston in the County of Cheshire;) (with the exception of the persons referred to in Article 27.1.2

who are not required to be practising or working in the Area but shall have been so practising or working immediately prior to his or her retirement) shall be eligible to be Full Members of the Society:

27.1.1 *any solicitor who holds a current practising certificate;*

27.1.2 *any solicitor on the Roll who has retired from practice;*

27.1.3 *any barrister;*

27.1.4 *any Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Legal Executives;*

27.1.5 *any registered foreign or European lawyer who is regulated by an Approved Regulator;*

27.1.6 *any person holding a judicial appointment or teaching law;*

27.1.7 *any trainee solicitor;*

27.1.8 *any patent attorney;*

27.1.9 *any licensed conveyancer;*

27.1.10 *any notary public;*

27.1.11 *any trade mark attorney;*

27.1.12 *pupil barristers; and*

27.1.13 *subject to Article 29, any person who is in a senior position at an organisation providing legal services which is subject to supervision by an Approved Regulator and who is approved by the Committee.*

Honouring the life of Paul Crowley



Paul Crowley

Family and friends from Paul Crowley & Co solicitors gathered in Sefton Park to honour Paul on the second anniversary of his passing. Known for his dedication, kindness, and professional excellence, Paul was a highly respected figure in the Liverpool legal community.

The event was more than just a meeting in the park; it was a celebration of a man who left an indelible mark on everyone he met. His influence extended beyond his professional achievements, as he was admired for his generosity, loyalty, and the personal

connections he made with colleagues and clients alike.

Sefton Park proved the perfect backdrop to honour Paul's memory. Paul liked to keep fit, and outside of work, it was a place he would often go for a run. His competitive spirit shone through in his leisure activities, whether running marathons, cycling, or working out in the gym. Paul was always focused intently, striving to gain that extra advantage. Taking part was not enough; his dedication to staying ahead was a testament to his energetic and driven nature. Like in business, he was determined to win.

Paul Crowley was more than just a solicitor; his commitment to his clients was unparalleled, often going above and beyond to ensure their needs were met. His legal acumen was matched only by his compassion, making him a trusted advisor and confidant to many. His ability to balance professional rigor with personal warmth set him apart in the legal field.

In addition to his professional life, Paul was deeply involved in various charitable activities. He believed in giving back to the community that had supported him throughout his career. Whether it was

through pro bono work, fundraising for local causes, or simply offering his time and expertise, Paul's contributions were numerous and impactful. His philanthropic efforts were a testament to his belief in the power of community and the importance of helping others.

Throughout the day, stories about Paul created a sense of shared remembrance—a mix of emotions, tears, laughter, and meaningful conversations. Colleagues reminisced about his dedication and passion for his work, while family members spoke of his kindness and the joy he brought into their lives. Anyone who had the privilege of knowing Paul would attest to his generosity, loyalty, and caring nature. He was not only a cherished friend too many but also a professional mentor to numerous individuals.

Paul's leadership style was characterised by integrity, dedication, and empathy. He led by example, demonstrating a strong work ethic and a genuine concern for the well-being of his colleagues. His approachability and willingness to listen made him a respected figure within the firm.

At the end of the day, as the sun set over Sefton Park amidst the greenery and serenity of the park, the group took a moment of silence to reflect on the many lives Paul touched and his ability to inspire those around him. It was a poignant reminder of the impact one person can have on so many. The stories shared, painted a picture of a man who lived life to the fullest, always striving to make a positive difference in the world. The event concluded with a heartfelt toast to Paul, celebrating his life and the enduring legacy he left behind.

Paul's legacy of excellence continues to live on through the immensely talented solicitors and staff employed at Paul Crowley & Co Solicitors, ensuring the legal service provided to the people of Liverpool will remain second to none.

Leslie Priestley



The Judges' Service - A Service of Dedication and Thanksgiving at the beginning of the Legal Year



Liverpool Cathedral, Sunday 13th October 2024 at 10:30 am

At his Coronation, His Majesty The King made a promise to God to serve his people and ensure that justice was delivered in the Kingdom. Each year, people who deliver this justice attend a Cathedral service to recognise, as the King did, that God is the ultimate authority and is a merciful judge. This is a Christian Service but those of other faiths or no faith are warmly welcomed.

The tradition of holding a service to mark the beginning of the legal year dates back to medieval times when judges used to gather in Westminster Abbey. They prayed for guidance that they would judge everyone fairly and according to the Law. That service in London is still held to this day. Other cities that are visited

by High Court Judges now hold such services and Liverpool has done so for hundreds of years.

The service is arranged by the High Sheriff of Merseyside. The office of High Sheriff is the oldest secular office in the country and dates back over a thousand years. The King appoints a High Sheriff for the county each year. The High Sheriff is a representative of the Monarch and supports the Judges of the High Court when they sit in the County. Other duties include support for royal visits, events with the armed forces and with voluntary and youth organisations.

At the Service, all Judges and Magistrates are reminded of the solemn oath that each took upon their appointment to

"well and truly serve our Sovereign King, Charles III and to do right to all manner of people after the laws and usages of this realm without fear or favour, affection or ill will".

Effective public service and the well-being of the county is the responsibility of civic leaders as well as the judiciary. The Lord Mayor of Liverpool and Mayors from the Boroughs attend the service as civic representatives together with others from the Police, the Emergency Services, Civic, Professional, Youth and Voluntary organisations.

The High Sheriff of Merseyside, Prof. John Mohin, OBE, DL looks forward to welcoming you to this year's Service at 10:30 on Sunday, 13th October.

Sub-Committees' Social

FAO: ALL Sub-Committee members & the General Committee

Due to the popularity of the Sub-Committees Socials which some of you were unable to attend this year, there will be another informal, in-person get-together for all LLS sub-committees and their members. This will take place in the upstairs function space at the City Wine Bar, 21 Old Hall St, Liverpool L3 9BS on Thursday 21st November from 5.30pm onwards.

It is a chance for us all to come together, to meet one another in a relaxed atmosphere. For new members on committees, it is an opportunity to meet fellow committee members.

Haley Farrell, chair of the Society's Family Business Sub-Committee, is once again organising the event. So that she has an idea of the number of attendees, please register your attendance to committees@liverpoollawsociety.org.uk

We hope that many of you can make it. Please note that this social event is not funded, there will be a cash bar available.

Should You Qualify as a Solicitor Advocate?



Kevin Donoghue

The SRA says that there are currently 167,648 practising solicitors, but it is estimated that only about 7,000 of us are Solicitor Advocates. Given the time and cost involved, it is reasonable to ask if it is worth it. As someone who recently qualified, here is some first-hand knowledge to help you decide if becoming a Solicitor Advocate is for you.

What is a Solicitor Advocate?

As most readers will know, solicitors earn rights of audience in all courts when they are admitted or registered. But they cannot exercise those rights in the 'higher courts' (including the High Court, Court of Appeal, and Supreme Court) until they have undergone additional assessment and earned their higher rights of audience.

The higher rights Solicitor Advocates enjoy give them a hybrid solicitor/ barrister role, which elevates them above other lawyers.

Who Can Apply?

Only qualified solicitors can seek Solicitor Advocate status. This is because the Solicitors Regulation Authority:

- sets and maintains the competency standards
- authorises assessment organisations
- approves, or rejects, applications from prospective Solicitor Advocates to obtain higher rights of audience in the civil or criminal courts.

Where Do You Start?

In my case, the process began with a search for 'higher rights of audience' on the SRA's website. From there, I researched eligible assessment organisations before choosing BPP Law School, partly because it has a Manchester base. (There are others who meet the SRA's standards, including Kaplan Altior, Nottingham Law School, and University of Law.)

What is Involved in the Higher Rights Assessment?

The SRA requires that:

The assessment will test all parts of the standards for either the criminal or civil award. This will include procedure, evidence and ethics and an advocacy assessment by way of a case study or simulation.

The assessment was a multi-step process which required attendance over four days, with two days focused on law and evidence, and two on advocacy. The course was led by a practising barrister, who also acted as the 'judge' during the training exercises.

I sat a two-hour written exam on law and evidence. Then, came the advocacy assessment. It involved drafting a skeleton argument in support of an injunction application. I presented my arguments in favour of the application orally before preparing for, and acting as advocate in, a mock trial. I cross-examined a witness and presented closing arguments based on my knowledge of the case and what was revealed during the trial.

After receiving confirmation from the course provider that I had passed the written and oral assessment, I applied to the Solicitors Regulation Authority for formal confirmation that I hold higher rights.

Advantages to Qualification

Gaining higher rights presents the exciting possibility of representing clients in high value and complex matters in the High Court and above, jury trials, and cases which have been appealed from the lower courts. It 'levels the playing field' when appearing opposite counsel, which is especially helpful in matters before the High Court in specialist areas of law, e.g. civil rights.

For some Solicitor Advocates, there is the possibility of becoming King's Counsel and/ or serving at high levels in the judiciary for those skilled and fortunate enough to be appointed.

And, importantly, some clients experience difficulties when discussing incident circumstances. The use of an in-house Solicitor Advocate instead of counsel means that the same lawyer can represent them from start to finish. This can be a great comfort, save time, and help with legal costs.

Disadvantages to Seeking Higher Rights

But higher rights are not for everyone. Many solicitors do not want, or need, them, preferring to practice exclusively in the lower courts, or avoid advocacy altogether.

It is also a time-intensive exercise. At BPP, the assessments are offered at set times during the year, so I had to plan around work and family commitments. As a director of a very busy law firm, husband, father of three young boys, and coach of a 'Donoghue Solicitors FC' junior football team, this was an important consideration. I enrolled for June's intake, partly because it was outside of the football season, so I did not have to miss football games involving my junior team or Liverpool FC.

The pressure was ramped up by the fact that failure at any point in the assessment process meant forfeiting BPP's £1,600 assessment fee and starting again.

There were other expenses too, including:

- travel and incidental expenses for the two in-person assessment days
- The SRA's approval fee which was £75
- the purchase of my custom wig, gown, shirts and tabs came to about £750.

(I bought my wig and clothing etc from Stanley Ley. Other vendors are available.)

Is it worth it?

For me, the answer is a resounding, "yes" for three reasons:

1. I learned so much during the studying and assessments, including how to frame my written and spoken responses to satisfy the criteria. I have found it of huge help in my daily work. It also reminded me of the ethical considerations that solicitors must address and navigate day-to-day. Overall, I feel that I have become a better lawyer, which is immensely satisfying.
2. I hope to inspire my colleagues and children by showing them that education is an ongoing process. Inspiring the next generation is important to me, and them.
3. I look forward to representing my clients in the higher courts soon. As luck would have it, one of my long-standing client's cases will be heard in the Court of Appeal in October. As someone who left school at 18, chose not to attend university, and qualified as a lawyer (via the long route working full-time), taking my place alongside King's Counsel will be a moment to savour.

Kevin Donoghue,

Solicitor Advocate

and director of [Donoghue Solicitors](https://www.donoghuesolicitors.co.uk/).

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Law Society National Council



Jeremy Myers

You will have had the opportunity to read Nina Ferris's incisive reports about the work of the national Council of The Law Society (TLS) in her seven years of membership. The heartfelt appreciation noted at the September Liverpool Law Society (LLS) Committee meeting spoke volumes.

Nina's decision not to stand for a further

term on Council meant that there was a vacancy to represent Liverpool. Whilst I was fortunate to be elected unopposed, in preparation for a contest, I prepared the requisite personal statement. The extract which I would like to share with you – so as not to go on at length – is the summary of my personal guidelines for the role, in italics below.

It is not possible to anticipate all of the types of issue which might face the Council in the coming term. That is the reason why I have developed the following set of principles which I hope would guide me if I am elected.

1. To recall that TLS and LLS should reflect the interests of our clients when advocating the views and concerns of the profession.
2. To represent LLS's members concerns to TLS and ideally to resolve any outstanding issues.
3. To keep communications open and continuous between TLS and LLS

and to keep each informed about the other's activities.

4. To strive for overheads and administration at a streamlined minimum in TLS.
5. To help to foster an efficient and effective arms-length working relationship between TLS and the Solicitors' Regulation Authority and the Solicitors Disciplinary Tribunal.
6. To promote pro bono work and use of legal skills for charitable purposes.
7. There is such a wide variety of people and practices and organisations within LLS. To me it is a microcosm of practice in our Jurisdiction. I hope that my role can to ensure that there is a two-way street between Chancery Lane and LLS. We should keep that street buzzing.

I am very much looking forward to speaking to and for LLS members and to working with you. Please keep in touch.

Jeremy Myers



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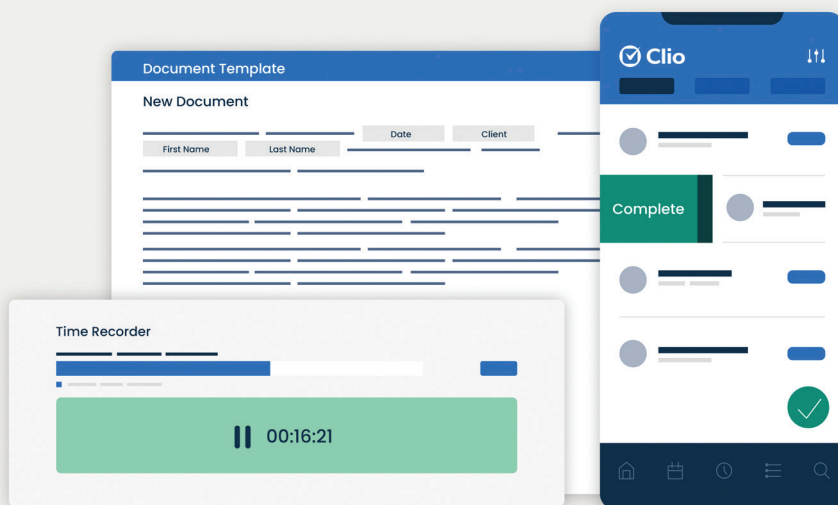
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Transforming NHS Legal Services: The Launch of the Liverpool NHS Legal Collaborative



On 19 September 2024, three key NHS Trusts in Liverpool – Liverpool University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (LUHFT), Liverpool Women's NHS Foundation Trust (LWH), and Liverpool Heart & Chest Hospital NHS Foundation Trust (LHCH) – officially launched the Liverpool NHS Legal Collaborative (LLC). Backed by NHS England, this ambitious initiative is designed to transform how legal services are delivered across the Trusts. Focusing on efficiency, resilience, and collaboration, the LLC is poised to deliver high-quality legal support, streamline processes, and create opportunities for professional growth.

A Unified Legal Hub for Enhanced Support

The centrepiece of the LLC is the creation of a Central Legal Hub, based at LUHFT, which will serve as a single point of contact for all legal matters across the three Trusts. This centralised approach allows legal teams to work more cohesively, eliminating duplicated efforts and enabling quicker decision-making.

The LLC will initially focus on Healthcare Law, ensuring that the most urgent legal needs within the Trusts are addressed efficiently. As the collaborative progresses other services will fall under its remit.

Through this new model, legal services will become more integrated, allowing the Trusts to respond to complex legal issues with greater agility. It will also create a more robust system that ensures consistent legal guidance across all member Trusts, improving overall service delivery.

A Response to National Priorities

The formation of the LLC aligns with NHS England's Corporate Services Transformation Programme, which encourages NHS organisations to collaborate in back-office functions, including legal services. This collaboration is part of a wider effort to make services more cost-effective, improve their consistency, increase the use of shared knowledge and resources and creating more learning opportunities for the team members.

The Liverpool Clinical Services Review also identified that greater collaboration between acute and specialist Trusts in Liverpool would strengthen corporate services. The review highlighted legal services in particular could benefit from a more integrated approach.

In response, the LLC was developed to foster collaboration in legal services. By consolidating tasks and making use of shared expertise, the LLC is ensuring that legal support is both cost-effective and capable of handling the growing complexity of NHS legal needs.

Driving Digital Transformation

One of the central principles of the LLC approach is knowledge management and information sharing. To support its mission of improving service delivery, the LLC has partnered with NHS England to roll out the National Legal Services System (NLSS). This cutting-edge platform will digitise legal workflows across the Trusts, helping teams manage cases more efficiently.

The LLC was accepted as one of a small number of 'Early Adopters' of the NLSS. Shereen Murphy, LUHFT Principal Employment Solicitor and Project Lead in respect of the NLSS for the LLC, contributed by ensuring that the system meets the specific needs of NHS legal teams from an Employment Law perspective.

Through the NLSS, legal professionals across the Trusts will be able to collaborate and share knowledge more effectively, ensuring swift and informed decision-making. This system represents the future of legal services in NHS Trusts, combining technology with legal expertise to streamline workflows and boost efficiency.

Professional Development

For legal professionals, joining the LLC presents an exciting opportunity to engage in rewarding and varied work. Working in-house within the NHS will allow legal professionals to see the long-term impact of their advice on improving

healthcare services and patient outcomes, offering a sense of purpose and fulfilment that is unique to the public sector.

Additionally, in-house roles offer the chance to be involved in strategic decision-making, providing legal insight that shapes the future of NHS operations. With the potential for better work-life balance and more predictable working hours, in-house positions also offer stability alongside professional growth.

As the LLC develops, other areas of law will be brought under its remit. This phased approach will allow the LLC to gradually expand its capabilities, offering comprehensive legal support to its member Trusts as their needs grow. As this growth takes place, there will be exciting opportunities for other legal professionals to join the LLC.

A core element of the LLC's mission is to invest in the next generation of legal talent. The LLC is committed to offering SRA-authorised training opportunities

and CILEx pathways, ensuring that aspiring legal professionals have clear, structured routes to qualification within the NHS. The LLC has already begun investing in junior staff, with two paralegals about to start their training contracts.

Looking to the Future

Daniel Scheffer, Director of Corporate Affairs including Company Secretary, commented: *"While the LLC is focused on improving service delivery, its core principles of efficiency, resilience, and collaboration remain central to its long-term success. As the LLC continues to grow, it is expected to serve as a model for other NHS Trusts. With ongoing plans for expansion, the Collaborative is creating a system that will have a lasting positive impact on patient care and the wider NHS community."*

Nida Yaseen Shaikh

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Southport's response to the recent atrocities



The horrendous killing of three Southport girls - plus the rioting in the town on the following day - caused shock and despair throughout Britain and the wider world. It stunned the residents of Southport who came together to help clean up the area after the riots and rebuild the community.

It was in this context that Liverpool

Law Society received an invitation from the Board of Deputies of British Jews to attend a Interfaith-Faith Event on 02 September in Southport and we attended to represent the Society.

The event started with a Walk of Faith from the Mosque - which was attacked in the riots, to the Synagogue. There were participants from the Christian and Jewish and Moslem clergy, plus congregants and community leaders. **Emma** was interviewed by Radio Merseyside and then could be spotted in the photo of the Walk's throng on the BBC website's Merseyside area page.

The Reception which followed in the Synagogue's Hall was a chance to chat over refreshments and further form community links. There was civic

representation by way of Merseyside's Lord Lieutenant, **Mark Blundell**, and Sefton's Mayor, **June Burns**. Short collaborative and inspirational speeches were led by **Phil Rosenberg**, national President of the Board of Deputies plus local faith leaders.

The event finished with an opportunity for visitors to be shown around the Synagogue. They were able to learn a little about its features and explore what is a fabulous building.

The event was a timely reminder that happily there are very many people of goodwill and open minds in our society and we were delighted to be a part of it.

Jeremy Myers and Emma Palmer

"AI'll be back": Skynet or Digital Freedom – use of Artificial Intelligence by Law Firms



Artificial Intelligence (AI) is revolutionising various industries, and the legal sector is no exception. UK-based law firms are increasingly adopting AI products to enhance their operational efficiency and improve service quality.

AI can process vast amounts of legal data to identify patterns and insights that would be impossible for humans to discern within a reasonable timeframe. This capability allows law firms to offer more strategic advice based on data-driven insights. Additionally, AI can automate mundane tasks, freeing up solicitors to focus on more complex legal work at a higher price-point. This shift can lead to significant cost savings and increased profitability for law firms.

The key opportunities associated with AI in law firms include improved data analysis, automation of routine tasks, and enhanced decision-making capabilities.

Some obvious use cases include:

- **e-discovery** - using AI to sift through large volumes of electronic data to identify relevant information for legal cases. This not only speeds

up the discovery process but also enhances accuracy and reduces costs;

- **Legal Research** - AI algorithms can analyse legal documents and case law to provide lawyers with relevant precedents and legal arguments;
- **Document Automation** - using AI to generate legal documents by inputting specific data into pre-programmed templates ensuring consistency and saving time;
- **Contract Analysis** - AI tools can review and identify key provisions, risks, and inconsistencies in contractual documents - a crucial part of due diligence and risk management;
- **Litigation Prediction** - AI can predict litigation outcomes based on historical data, helping lawyers to better advise their clients on the likelihood of success in court;
- **Compliance Monitoring** - AI can track changes in legislation and regulations to ensure that the firm's practices remain compliant. This is particularly important in the rapidly evolving legal landscape; and
- **Chatbots** - AI-powered chatbots are also being employed to handle routine client inquiries, thus improving client service and freeing up human resources for more complex inquiries.

This all sounds overwhelmingly positive so why wouldn't firms take the leap? Well, the integration of AI into legal practices also presents several risks that must be carefully managed.

Some of the key risks areas are as follows:

- **Confidentiality** - this is a cornerstone of legal practice, and there is a risk that AI systems could inadvertently disclose sensitive information. Law firms must ensure that AI products are designed with robust security measures to protect client data which requires engagement from information security and compliance specialists;

- **Data Protection** - with the UKGDPR and other data privacy frameworks setting stringent requirements for data handling, law firms must ensure that AI systems comply with UKGDPR and other relevant data protection laws to avoid hefty fines and reputational damage as well as potentially exposing clients to these risks;
- **Intellectual property rights** - law firms must navigate the complexities of IP licensing and ownership, ensuring that products which they use do not infringe the intellectual property rights of others or misuse IP that has been licensed to the firm. Additionally, the use of AI raises questions about the ownership of the outputs generated by AI systems, such as legal documents or contracts.
- **Liability** - there is also a question of, where tools are used as the principle means of servicing client needs or else are made directly available for use by clients, who should be liable for any mistakes or errors in the functionality or output of AI products. Generally, licensors will disclaim and exclude liability for output from AI products or systems meaning that the human element in law firms is a crucial element of ensuring that client service levels are maintained. This quality assurance piece is a skill in itself which isn't generally 'taught' in law firms where there is pressure on time and resource. Failure to properly evaluate and refine output could leave law firms 'holding the grenade' in terms of exposure to clients. Alignment with existing insurances is also a key task for firms looking to leverage these solutions in such a potentially 'exposed' way.


Another key concern from a people perspective is the impact and challenges that may be presented in relation to the development of junior fee-earners. One example is the potential reduction in

routine work available for junior staff, which traditionally forms a substantial part of their training and professional development. As AI systems become more adept at handling tasks such as legal research, document review, and drafting, junior fee-earners may find fewer opportunities to hone these foundational skills. Additionally, there is a risk that reliance on AI could lead to a skills gap if junior fee-earners do not receive adequate training to work alongside these technologies effectively and fully understand how to deploy them properly. Law firms must balance the efficiency gains from AI with the need to ensure comprehensive training and professional growth for their junior members.

The Law Society of England and Wales (**Law Society**) and the Solicitors Regulation Authority (**SRA**) have issued guidance to help law firms navigate these challenges. The SRA's report on the pros and cons of AI in law firms outlines the opportunities and risks presented by AI and provides recommendations for firms to consider before adopting AI technologies – this is likely to be key in how the SRA evaluate conduct issues stemming from use of AI. Similarly, the Law Society's guidance on generative AI discusses the potential and pitfalls of AI in the legal profession and offers resources to address data-related considerations.

In conclusion, while AI offers significant opportunities for UK-based law firms to improve their operations and services, it is imperative to address the associated risks diligently. Law firms must stay informed about the latest developments in AI and adhere to the guidance provided by regulatory bodies to ensure that their use of AI is both beneficial and compliant with legal and ethical standards. By doing so, they can harness the power of AI to drive innovation and success in the legal sector.

Thomas Prince
Partner,
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Philip Canter 1937 to 2024



Andrew Holroyd, Philip, Elkan Abrahamson and Andrew Gillespie

Philip Canter died on the 19th September 2024, a distinguished and long serving member of the Liverpool legal profession. I and many others owe him a great debt of gratitude.

It was in 1961 that **Howard Jackson** and Philip set up their law firm trading as Jackson & Canter. They were legal pioneers, the first local law firm to set up offices near to where clients lived rather than expecting clients to come to the centre of Liverpool to see them. They also cut out the formality of being legal professionals, set on a pedestal, a cut above their clients.

Their office in Rialto Buildings in Liverpool 8 became a place where the

black community came to fight their corner against, the sometimes oppressive and racial prejudiced Merseyside Police force. Their principal weapon was Philip Canter, a tall, soft-spoken individual with a droll sense of humour and relaxed air who had an utter determination that the marginalised, should have a chance of achieving justice in a system heavily weighted against them.

Black youths were likely to be charged with the offence of SPL, Suspected Person Loitering. All the police had to prove was that they had observed a suspect loitering in the vicinity of a motor vehicle and behaviour which made them suspicious that an offence might be committed. In the subsequent trial, the

Police Officer would ask the Magistrates if they 'could refer to their note book' whence they would trot out a speel which was remarkably similar whatever the circumstances and whoever the officer, a fact which Philip used forcibly and relentlessly in his cross examination. This often resulted in an acquittal.

It took the Toxteth uprising in which our office was burned down and the subsequent Police and Criminal Evidence Act to gradually change the culture of the local Force; but the Liverpool Black community faced injustice for many years and probably still do so today. Philip was instrumental in helping to bring about an improvement in this situation. I joined Philip in 1975 and worked with him until 1986 when he emigrated to Israel where he stayed for 7 years. He quickly qualified as an Israeli lawyer which was a remarkable achievement at that stage of his career. When he returned from Israel, he continued his criminal justice career in Liverpool working first for Deacon Goldrein Green and then for Gregory Abrams Doherty and continued working in the Magistrates Courts until his late seventies.

Philip was a dedicated family man, married to **Anita** who escaped from Denmark before Nazi occupation. They were a lovely couple, interested in the arts and books. Philip was also interested in sport in particular, golf. They were life-long socialists and supporters of the Labour Party.

Philip's Jewish faith was an integral part of the person and family man he was and at his funeral, **Rabbi Abel**, himself a lawyer, talked about how in Philip, faith and dedication to Justice were totally interconnected. Philip was certainly an inspiration to me at the start of my legal career and others who worked with him. The firm he helped to found, still carries the same ethos and imperative of making a positive difference through the practice of law that he so ably exemplified.

Andrew Holroyd

CONKERTON MEMORIAL LECTURE 10.10.24

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Private Child Conference 2024



Katie of Our Family Wizard

On 11 September 2024, Liverpool Law Society held its annual Private Child Conference at Taylor Wessing LLP situated on the Albert Dock and home to some of the most remarkable views.

It is always a highly informative day and this year was no different.

Liverpool Law Society cater to everyone by holding hybrid conferences therefore delegates had the option of attending either virtually or in person.

The conference was chaired by **District Judge O'Neill** who gave a warm welcome to all delegates before starting the day by discussing Private Law initiatives in the local area. This included Young Persons Hearings, Single/Limited issues Section 7 reports and Neutral Evaluation Hearings. It is understood there is a collaborative approach to these initiatives by the judiciary and CAFCASS and in keeping with this approach, District Judge O'Neill was also joined by **Gemma Baker**, Assistant Service Manager of CAFCASS. Gemma is heavily involved in two out of three of the local initiatives and was therefore able to offer her firsthand experience regarding Young Persons Hearings and Single/Limited issues Section 7 reports.



James of LexTox

Kirsty Leedham, Solicitor at Weightmans thereafter offered her insight into cases concerning internal relocation within the UK and the Court's evolving approach to internal relocation. Kirsty also provided helpful tips on how best to approach these cases in practice due to her experience in dealing with cases of this nature.

Richard Thomas of Lextox, one of the two conference sponsors said a quick hello and encouraged everyone to have a chat with him during the break and collect a goody bag full of free merchandise. Lextox provide drug, alcohol and DNA testing services for family law cases and child care proceedings and are trusted by more than 17,000 family law solicitors and local authorities across the UK to deliver a responsive service and reliable results.

After a comfort break where refreshments were kindly served for in-person delegates, **Katie Deans** of Our Family Wizard, the second conference sponsor gave a summary of the use of the co-parenting app which was designed to help reduce conflict between parents after separation. Our Family Wizard is becoming increasingly popular in Private Children cases and use of the app is encouraged by the

Courts. Katie explained that the app not only has useful tools and features for parents but also for professionals.

The Lundy Model of Child Participation and Direct Child Consultation was then considered by **Helen Pittard**, Mediator and Solicitor of 174 Law. Helen explained how the Lundy Model is a framework which aims to ensure that children have the space to express their views, their voice is enabled, they have an audience for their views and their views will have influence. Helen also explained the process of Child Inclusive Mediation and offered her firsthand experience, reiterating the importance of hearing the voice of the child.

In-person delegates thereafter indulged in a delicious buffet lunch and were provided with time to network with fellow attendees, speakers and sponsors.

Margaret Parr, Family Law Barrister of 7 Harrington Street Chambers was up next and gave an incredibly insightful talk on Domestic Abuse in Private Children Proceedings which covered whether and when it is appropriate to direct a finding of fact hearing, the proper procedural approach to pleading allegations, participation directions and the impact of findings on proceedings.

The day was completed by **Tom Hynes**, Family Law Barrister of Oriel Chambers who provided details of the top 10 cases of the last 12 months and important things to note from those cases to assist in practice which was particularly useful.

District Judge O'Neill summarised the day before providing thanks to all those involved.

A special thank you to **Jo Downey** for organising yet another fantastic conference!

Hannah Barlow
Solicitor
McAlister Family Law

Residential Property Conference 2024



Sam, Joe & James

On 18th September we held our annual Residential Property Conference which was very kindly chaired by Laura

Cartwright, Parter at Bell, Lamb & Joynson. It was a hybrid event so we had a small number of delegates in the room and others joined virtually.

The day began with a session on Current Contentious Conveyancing Issues by **Siobhan Beattie** of DTM Legal. This was followed an update from HM Land Registry, delivered by **Keith Lloyd** and **Pam White**. **Sam Jordan** from one of our kind sponsors InfoTrack then talked about Digital Solutions for Digital Conveyancing Journeys.

Everyone enjoyed a refreshment break and chance to chat, before **Natalie Moore** of AConveyancing talked about Building an authentic team culture - how to strike the right balance for the company and its employees. Next up was **Luke Parsons** of Landmark Inforation – our second kind sponsors of the day, who covered Climate Change 2024 & beyond.

Sponsors, speakers and delegates alike, then enjoyed a buffer lunch, provided by Simply Barmy, in the lovely surroundings of our hosts Taylor Wessing offices.

There were two afternoon sessions; a hot off the press update on The Renters Reform Bill from **Chris Hall** at Dutton followed by a really interesting session from last year's conference chair; **John Jones** of Jackson Lees, discussing Buying & Selling Property using an LPA or Deputy

Our chairperson **Laura** then brought the event to a close, thanking our sponsors; InfoTrack & Landmark, the wonderful speakers involved and delegates for their support.

Jo Downey
Director of Education & Training,
Liverpool Law Society.



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The latest news from Merseyside Law Centre, providers of free specialist legal advice and assistance for the Liverpool City Region. Access to Justice for all.

New 65 and Overs Advice Service

We are happy to announce our new advice service for those aged 65 and over in Liverpool and Knowsley which will be launching this month. The service will aim to help older people achieve greater financial wellbeing, helping them to remain independent and reduce anxieties over the cost of living. Our service will focus on maximising older people's income by ensuring they receive all financial support they are entitled to as well as linking them to advice on debt and housing.

Our dedicated caseworker will work with people aged 65 and over to assess their financial circumstances and whether they are entitled to benefits such as Pension Credit, Attendance Allowance or Carers Allowance. From there, they will be able to help them apply for the support they are entitled to. The caseworker will help clients facing financial hardship link to other support also such as utility bills assistance, help with housing issues and support for those facing homelessness. Funded by Independent Age for 3 years, this service aims to help this group access the advice they need in a way that is suitable and accessible for them. We want to reach the older people in our communities who may often fall through the cracks due to various reasons including a lack of mobility, lack of resources or those facing language barriers. A significant number of older people in Liverpool and Knowsley are unaware of the benefit of seeking free legal help or traditionally do not ask for help. We know that over 2 million pensioners are living in poverty (a statistic that is rising) and that millions of older people are not claiming benefits for which they could be eligible for which means this service is greatly needed and will make a hugely positive impact on this group in our community.

Working with Our MPs

We have met with two of our local MPs this month, **Ian Byrne** and **Kim Johnson**, to discuss ways in which we can work together to provide the best services as possible for our communities. Both Kim and Ian are passionate about access to justice and appreciate the work Law Centres do greatly. There are collaborative plans in the pipeline with Ian for a project that will focus on providing holistic advice services in the most deprived parts of Liverpool that we will hopefully roll out this year. We look forward to continuing these strong relationships with our local MPs to ensure the most vulnerable people in our society receive the help they need.



Liz Reed, our new CEO, Director Janet Coe and Ian Byrne MP

Challenging Unfair PIP Decisions.

Through our Welfare Benefits work, we often encounter cases where unfair decisions are made by the DWP. These decisions can be very damaging to an individual's life, causing extreme stress and difficulty with affording to live.

We recently helped a client who was receiving Child Disability Living Allowance due to several mental health issues alongside related physical health issues. On turning 16 this benefit stopped which meant he would need to start a new application for PIP to continue his support. On applying for PIP initially, his claim was denied and was denied once more after his parents challenged the decision, requesting a mandatory reconsideration. On reviewing the case when the client came to us for help, we saw the decision made by the DWP was unfair. Even though qualifying for PIP is generally more difficult than for DLA, we saw the merit in his appeal.

We wanted to ensure that our client was receiving the benefits he was entitled to and vitally needed due to his numerous, serious health issues so we lodged a new appeal and a new claim for PIP. We were able to gather more medical evidence and paperwork than were submitted previously by the client's parents which painted more of a detailed picture of the client's difficulties. The DWP reversed their decision upon receiving our new claim and appeal and our client was ultimately awarded enhanced rate PIP and awarded back pay for payments missed. This result was life changing for the client and his family, alleviating the stress and worry caused by the initial decision made by the DWP.

This case illustrates the importance of the work we do, providing

access to justice. PIP appeals can be confusing and complicated for people not used to the process. Without access to specialist advice, vital information can be unintentionally omitted, and appeals can be denied which can often result in very negative outcomes for clients.

Volunteer & Donation Opportunities

Volunteers are the backbone of Merseyside Law Centre. We are looking for like-minded individuals and organisations to get involved with the valuable work we do in the Merseyside City Region.

We would also love to hear from you if you are an organisation that would like to get involved or contribute to our work. We would really like to hear from fellow legal professionals who may be able to contribute their expertise or legal firms who may want to financially support the work we do.

Whatever your skills or experience, please do not hesitate to get in touch if you want to make a difference to the lives of people in your community and have a passion for social justice.

To download our Volunteer Application Pack, please visit www.merseysidelawcentre.co.uk/get-involved and e-mail the completed form to enquiries@merseysidelawcentre.co.uk. With the current cost-of-living crisis, our services are now needed more than ever. If you could consider donating to Merseyside Law Centre, it could make a massive difference to many people's lives in Merseyside. Our donation details are up on our website www.merseysidelawcentre.co.uk/donate.

As always, our current contact details and drop in session details are below so please do pass these onto anyone you think may benefit from or require our services. If you are unable to attend a drop-in session, there is an online enquiry form on our website. www.merseysidelawcentre.co.uk/online-enquiry-form

Twitter: @MerseyLawCentre
Facebook: Merseyside Law Centre
Instagram: @merseysidelawcentre




IMPACT HIGHLIGHTS AUGUST '24

Financial Gains for Clients	£66,663
Work Completed	23,034 minutes
Current number of cases open	317



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www.merseysidelawcentre.co.uk

LET US BE YOUR HELPING HAND

Providing the fifth emergency service for the most vulnerable in society

WHAT WE DO?

We provide free legal advice, assistance and representation for **housing matters**, mainly early legal advice to avoid court action and legal aid matters, across the Liverpool City Region. Also, **welfare benefits, debt, immigration and asylum advice** for residents of Liverpool.

OUR SERVICES

FREE Drop In Sessions

Advice Drop In Every Monday & Thursday 10am-12pm No appointment required. Dovecot Multi Activity Centre, Back Dovecot Place, Liverpool L14 9BA	Housing Advice Drop In Every Wednesday & Friday 11am-1pm No appointment required. Liverpool Civil and Family Court 35 Vernon Street, L2 2BX
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If you are unable to attend a drop in, please fill in the enquiry form on our website. Links below.

www.merseysidelawcentre.co.uk/enquiryform



Debt Advice Drop In

in partnership with Raise Advice
Appointment Only.
Check website on info how to book.

Every Thursday
 1pm-4pm
 Appointment only.

Dovecot Multi Activity Centre,
 Back Dovecot Place,
 Liverpool L14 9BA







FREE HOUSING ADVICE

IMPROVING OUTCOMES THROUGH LEGAL SUPPORT AND HOUSING LOSS PREVENTION ADVICE SERVICE

- ✓ We offer free legal advice and representation if you have received a notice seeking possession of your home from your landlord or mortgage lender.
- ✓ We can provide early advice and assistance and representation if your home might be at risk.
- ✓ We can represent you on the day of your hearing or help you in advance if you contact us before the date of your hearing.
- ✓ We may be able to help you defend the claim against you.
- ✓ We can assist with rent arrears, debt or welfare benefit issues.

Our services are free even if you do not qualify for Legal Aid

HOW TO ACCESS OUR SERVICES

DROP INS- NO APPOINTMENT REQUIRED

Liverpool Civil and Family Court 35 Vernon Street, L2 2BX	Wed & Fri 11am-1pm
Dovecot Multi Activity Centre, L14 9BA	Mon & Thurs 10am-12pm


ONLINE
 Online enquiry form available
www.merseysidelawcentre.co.uk/enquiryform


TELEPHONE
 Call us on:
 0151 709 0504
 (9.30 - 5pm, Mon - Fri)

Regulation Update

October 2024

The latest Regulation news from Andrea Cohen of Weightmans LLP



Andrea Cohen

Due to the unpredictable British weather, the arrival of Autumn has not been quite as shocking as you may expect (as at the date of writing, although you could be reading this in a flood/snowstorm!). Much more reliably, Compli is back once again to bring you our monthly round-up of developments in the world of risk and compliance, an overview of recent disciplinary decisions, and updates from the regulatory sector.

SRA inspections

We are aware from clients and generally on the grapevine, that the SRA is making good on its promise to increase the number of AML visits and desk reviews, utilising its increased staff numbers. The message we are hearing is that the depth and extent of additional queries, further investigations etc. can be dependant on the individual carrying out the visit. We anticipate that once the responses to the recent AML and sanctions questionnaire are analysed, there will be a further surge, possibly to include checks on firms outside scope of MLR in relation to compliance with the sanctions regime. Now is the time to check that your firm-wide risk assessment (FWRA), policies, controls and procedures (PCPs) are up to date, processes are

being followed and recorded, and, if you've not yet had one, arrange an independent AML audit or book your next one. We have seen some large fines reported over the last few months for breaches of MLR, and those are only likely to increase over time, particularly when you consider the direction of travel of the SRA, indicated by the recently closed consultation on its wish for increased fining powers.

If we can help, please get in touch.

Transparency rules

The LSB has approved the CILEx Regulation application for all firms it regulates to be required to publish price and service information for all legal services provided to individuals and small businesses, extending the obligation from just conveyancing, probate and immigration services. The SRA has an option to extend price and service rules to all legal services, but, at present, the rules only apply to limited areas, including conveyancing, some immigration services, unfair or wrongful dismissal claims in employment tribunals and debt recovery claims up to £100,000. Solicitors firms have been fined for breaching the transparency rules, including receiving fixed penalty fines of £750 for first offences and £1,500 for subsequent breaches. Will the SRA follow CILEx Regulation? Watch this space.

Publications/guidance

The SRA and Law Society publish useful information, but a common complaint is that there is often little/no publicity, some are 'buried' and practitioners 'fall across' them, rather than them being apparent and easy to find, not helped by them often not being in chronological order. There have been a number of useful publications released by The Law

Society recently, which you may have missed:

- Protection for solicitors against targeted attacks - this outlines safety precautions to consider if you feel at risk from targeted attacks or threats from third parties [Protection for solicitors against targeted attacks | The Law Society](#)
- Money laundering risks and threats – a list to help understand current and emerging money laundering risks and threats, which can be used to help keep client, matter and practice-wide risk assessments up to date. [Money laundering risks and threats | The Law Society](#)
- Compliance officers - the practice note explains who can be a COLP or COFA, sets out what the roles entail, and the recording and reporting requirements involved. [Compliance officers | The Law Society](#)
- Professional enablers - this sets out how to interpret the definition of professional enablers and what steps can be taken in the fight against economic crime. [Professional enablers | The Law Society](#)
- Conflicts of Interest: [Conflict of interests | The Law Society](#)
- What to do when the law firm you work for is closing down: [What to do when the law firm you work for is closing down | The Law Society](#)
- Suspicious activity reports This guide explains when and how to make a suspicious activity report (SAR), what to include, how to request a defence against money laundering (DAML) and what happens if you fail to report suspicious activity. [Suspicious activity reports | The Law Society](#)

Meanwhile, the SRA has published a number of guides and updates relating to renewal of practising certificates,

helpfully filed under mySRA updates, and not, at the time of writing, on the home page of the website. These include:

- <https://www.sra.org.uk/mysra/updates/bulk-renewal/>
- [SRA | Renewing your own practising certificate or registration \(2024/25\) | Solicitors Regulation Authority](#)
- [SRA | FAQs about practising certificates, registration and renewal | Solicitors Regulation Authority](#)
- [SRA | Apply for bulk renewal and pay your periodic fees | Solicitors Regulation Authority](#)

Increase in compensation fund levies - update

As we reported last month, having confirmed that the contributions paid by individual solicitors and firms to the compensation fund for 2024/25 would increase considerably if approved by the Legal Services Board ("LSB"), the SRA was then informed that the LSB had extended the initial decision period to 3 November 2024. We understand from the SRA that the LSB will make its decision prior to the start of the renewal process, but at the time of writing, we are not aware that the decision has been published.

Dates for your diary

- 1 - 31 October - practising certificates and registration renewals, with confirmation required that solicitors have an up to date understanding of their obligations; have reflected and addressed any learning and development needs and are competent to perform their role. The SRA will monitor this, do spot checks and review it in the event of a complaint/ investigation.
- 5 November – SRA Compliance Officers Conference in

Birmingham (virtual conference 25 – 28 November).

Disciplinary and regulatory decisions

A number of decisions and judgments have been reported since our September publication, including:

Firm fined for MLR breaches

Failure to have a FWRA or PCPs between June 2017 and January 2020, followed by 4 years when they were inadequate and only having compliant documentation in place by April 2024, and failing to carry out client and matter risk assessments between June 2017 and February 2024, led to a regulatory settlement agreement with the SRA of a fine of £3,711, based on the firm's turnover, and costs of £600.

Suspended for 12 months for misleading court and failing to inform client defence struck out

A solicitor, found by the SDT to be 'relatively inexperienced', who no longer has a current practising certificate and is not employed by a solicitors' firm, has been suspended for a year for signing a statement of truth on a witness statement and filing it at court which contained an assertion she knew was misleading, and failing to tell a client, its insurer and her firm that a defence and counterclaim had been struck out for failing to comply with an unless order and an adverse costs order had been made against the insurer. The SDT accepted the agreed outcome and said the suspension was 'required to maintain the public confidence ... and to send a deterrent message to solicitors who found themselves in a similar predicament'.

Struck off for misusing client funds and failing to pay disbursements

A solicitor who failed to inform the SRA for two years that his firm was

in financial difficulties, used monies received for counsel and medical agency fees to pay the firm's running costs, including his and members of his family's salary, breached an undertaking, and moved firms without telling his clients what was happening, has been struck off the roll and ordered to pay almost £40,000 costs. The SDT said there was no mitigation for what was serious, dishonest misconduct.

Fined for making threats in letters

A solicitor was fined £2500 and ordered to pay £30,000 in costs by the SDT for making unjustified legal threats in letters sent to around 250 schools regarding Covid measures, informing recipients they were at risk of criminal/civil liability if they required face masks to be worn in schools, carried out routine lateral flow tests, or facilitated Covid vaccinations for children aged 12-17.

Struck off for being dishonest in job application

A solicitor whose employment was terminated by a previous firm for falsifying emails to show she had sent drafts to witnesses when she hadn't, and then 'falsely represented the reason for her departure' when applying to another firm has been struck off and ordered to pay £5000 costs. The solicitor accepted the actions were 'embarrassing and shameful' and was acting 'simply out of self-preservation'.

How Compli can help...

The Compli Solicitor Regulatory and Professional Discipline Team can provide expertise and advice on risk and compliance, AML, disciplinary assistance etc. If we can help in any way, please get in touch at compli@weightmans.com.

Andrea Cohen
Compli,
Weightmans LLP

Charity Spotlight: Freedom From Torture



Freedom from Torture is a refugee support charity that helps people who have survived torture to heal, feel safe and strong again.

No Government should ever commit or tolerate torture. It is the most terrible abuse of power towards a defenceless person, a violation of their human rights and dignity, to deliberately cause pain, suffering and mental anguish.

Torture is illegal is a fundamental principle of international law, and governments are required not just to refrain from using torture, but to actively prevent it from happening.

And yet in the 21st century, around the world, we see the incidence and acceptance of torture rising, as authoritarian governments seek to suppress popular movements and protest and use torture to silence activists and destroy people.

Here in the UK, of those arriving seeking asylum, an estimated one person in three has experienced torture in their home

country, causing them to flee. People who have survived torture experience on-going trauma for years. Physical pain. Problems with sleeping, concentrating, trusting others, and memory. Flashbacks and panic attacks sparked by sounds, smells, corridors, water, darkness.

That's why we set up our first North West centre in 2003. Since then we have supported hundreds of clients living across Cheshire, Greater Manchester, Lancashire and Merseyside.

At our current clinical centre in Moss Side, our highly qualified, committed clinical psychologists support men, women and children to access a holistic programme of support including our trauma- focused therapies, which are clinically proven to improve their mental health symptoms. We also offer a pain management service, legal and welfare advice and practical support to ensure our clients are not left homeless or destitute.

Led by torture survivors themselves, we

also campaign against torture and for the rights of survivors seeking asylum. In 2022, the UK government's Rwanda scheme was announced – a cruel and unworkable plan to remove people who came to the UK seeking safety.

Survivors of torture we saw in our therapy rooms every day expressed their fear and worry that they might be placed on one of these flights, leading to an increase in flashbacks and nightmares – and even self-harm and thoughts of suicide.

The UK government had looked to private airlines for its scheme. But with the support of thousands of people as part of our 'Stop the Flights' movement, we pressured multiple commercial airlines to rule themselves out of the scheme.

We did this by mobilising caring and compassionate people across the UK, who made hundreds of calls and sent over 30,000 letters to airlines suspected of involvement in the UK government's Rwanda scheme.

Because of this campaign, Freedom from Torture was chosen as the Overall Winner at the 2023 Charity Awards, the longest-running and most prestigious awards scheme in the charity sector.

We are delighted to be nominated by Lady Hale to receive funds from a collection and raffle at Liverpool Law Society's 2024 Annual Dinner featuring Legal Awards, hosted on 14 November 2024 at the Titanic Hotel. All the funds raised will support our North West rehabilitation centre.



Victoria Buckle

Corporate Events and Engagement Manager, Freedom from Torture



Survivors

Forthcoming Courses

To comply with the SRA's [Code of Conduct for Solicitors, RELs and RFLs](#), ALL solicitors must keep their professional knowledge and skills up to date. These courses will help you maintain an up-to-date understanding of relevant law, policy and practice.

**** Training events open to legal professionals nationwide ****

For full details or to book any of the above courses (& more!) please visit:

<https://www.liverpoollawsociety.org.uk/training/>

DATE	EVENT	SPEAKER
05/10/2024	Personal Branding for Black Lawyers	Jannette Brimm
08/10/2024	A Tricky Business: BPR and APR Explained	Rebecca Roscoe
08/10/2024	SRA Accounts Rules Update	Linda Lambert
09/10/2024	Clinical Negligence Conference	Various
11/10/2024	Commerical Property: Essential Update 2024	Hannah MacKinlay
30/10/2024	Acting as a Professional Deputy- the need to knows in practice	Helen Forster
31/10/2024	Secrets to a Successful Graduate Solicitor Apprenticeship Programme: Roundtable with The College of Legal Practice	Peter Liver
4-5/11/2024	Personal Injury Trusts P1 & P2	Helen Forster
06/11/2024	AI and the provision of Legal Services	Various
08/11/2024	Corporate Update	Chris Beanland
13/11/2024	Domestic Abuse Law – Developments & Updates / 4pm Fam Comm	Safda Mahmood
19/11/2024	Tax Doesn't Have to be Taxing: A Masterclass	Rebecca Roscoe
20/11/2024	Conference for Legal Cashiers & Managers	Various
25/11/2024	Alternative financing: crowdfunding platforms	Alan Wilkinson
26/11/2024	Stand & Deliver! Conducting Effective Advocacy in Family & Children Cases	Safda Mahmood
27/11/2024	Property Development: Practical Problems	Hannah MacKinlay
04/12/2024	Personal Injury Conference	Various
11/12/2024	Key Issues In Relation to Easements	Richard Snape

To comply with the [SRA's Code of Conduct for Firms](#), all firms they regulate must make sure that their managers and employees are competent to carry out their role

Liverpool Law Society offer a wide range of educational events to support you whether you're an experienced lawyer, a newly qualified solicitor, paralegal or member of the legal support team.

Attending one of our courses (whether in person or online) can enhance your legal expertise, practical skills and career opportunities.

For full details or to book any of the above courses (and more!) please visit:

<https://www.liverpoollawsociety.org.uk/training/>



2024 Clinical Negligence Conference

Wednesday 9th October | 9.30am – 3.30pm
Hybrid – attend in person or online

Chairperson – HHJ Wood

Supporting your client through an obstetric negligence claim – advice from a Litigation Midwife
Helen Stanley, Leigh Day

Sepsis, strokes and imaging in the Emergency Department
Professor Alan Fletcher, Sheffield Hospital

Obstetric Anal Sphincter Injury (OASI): what is the expected standard of care?
Dr Gillian Fowler, Liverpool Women's NHS Trust Foundation

Understanding the antenatal pathway and pitfalls in care
Dr Kara Dent, KD Medicolegal Services

Raiders of the Lost Years
Helen Neville, Bond Turner and DDJ Northern Circuit

Mediating Clinical Negligence Claims
Elizabeth Francis, Atlantic Chambers

Case Law and General Update
David Pilling, Liverpool Civil Law

[Book Here](#)



Commercial Property: Essential Update with Hannah Mackinlay

'Live online' Friday 11th October, 2pm - 4pm

This year has seen many important changes affecting commercial property, real estate and development lawyers. In addition the new government is proposing many changes across the board, from renter reform to energy and environmental issues.

This 3 hour online update will cover the main points that have changed this year and give you pointers for the coming year, including the following topics:

- Investor issues – BSA, RAAC, charities, ground rents, social housing issues, reform of the 1954 Act
- Residential leasehold reform and new proposals for the PRS sector
- Commonhold to be revived from the dead?
- Commercial lease issues – Dilaps, Green leases, EPC / MEES changes, break clauses, misrep & security of tenure, defeating ground (f)
- Development issues – ESG (conservation covenants, Nutrient Neutrality, Biodiversity Net Gain), knotweed, open space, overage restrictions and the impact of the proposed new SuDS regime.
- New NPPF, Grey Land, Finch and EIAs, new JCT DB24,
- New COLLs 8th edition
- Climate change issues
- Case law developments – covenants, drones, signs and prescriptive easements, adverse possession, Ring doorbells, overage restrictions, etc.
- SDLT and commercial property

[CLICK HERE TO BOOK](#)



Personal Branding for Black Lawyers with Jannette Brimm

Tuesday 15th October, 12pm - 1pm

As we continue to support Black lawyers during Black History Month, Branding Consultant Jannette Brimm, will be sharing her tips & techniques to help Black lawyers develop their Personal Brand to increase their business development opportunities, raise their professional profile and support their continual career growth.

Having a strong Personal Brand provides more:

- Visibility and Recognition
- Mentorship Opportunities
- Networking and Relationship Building
- Career Advancement
- Confidence and Empowerment
- Speaking Opportunities and Thought-Leadership Communication



So please join, online to learn how to brand the authentic you, showcase your strengths, skills and expertise and have a successful, rewarding & fulfilling legal career.

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



Tricky Business: BPR and APR Explained with Rebecca Roscoe


Friday 18th October, 9.30am - 12.45pm

This online course provides a comprehensive understanding of Business Property Relief (BPR) and Agricultural Property Relief (APR), two key components of inheritance tax planning in the UK.

Delegates will explore the criteria, application process, and planning strategies associated with these reliefs to effectively minimize inheritance tax liabilities. Using practical case studies, the course will explore how to apply the reliefs in practice.

[CLICK HERE FOR MORE INFO](#)




Liverpool Law Society

Acting as a Professional Deputy – the need to know in practice

with Helen Forster

‘Live’ online, Wednesday 30th October, 10am - 1pm

This online update will cover the routine practice and procedure for a deputy managing the property and financial affairs of ‘P’. It will provide private client practitioners with practical management tips as well as up to date case law and advice on how to prepare your file for costing & billing.

Covering:

- A reminder of the rules in the Court of Protection, including the new OPG and professional deputy standards
- Day to day management – what should you be looking out for?
- How to prepare your file for costing and billing at the SCCO
- Up to date case law

[CLICK HERE FOR MORE INFO](#)


Liverpool Law Society

NEW Personal Injury Trusts

with Helen Forster

Session 1 – Monday 4th November, 9.30am – 12.30pm
Session 2 – 5th November, 1.30pm – 4.30pm

Personal injury trusts are a niche area full of traps for the unwary. These sessions will explain when and how you should advise your clients to consider the founding of a personal injury trust, how to draft them, the problem areas and practical advice & guidance.

Covering:

- A reminder of personal injury trusts
- What is a personal injury trust?
- When are they required?
- When can they be set up?
- What can a personal injury trust obtain for the compensated person?
- Types of personal injury trust
- Financial advice and investment of personal injury awards
- Personal injury trusts and the Court of Protection – applying for a PI trust for ‘P’
- Acting as professional trustee – Trustee Act duties, special investment related concerns and Solicitors Accounts Rules
- Purchasing property as trustee
- Death and inheritance tax
- Problem areas

These ONLINE sessions are recorded, so if you can’t make the date/time, no problem – booking onto this event means you will receive a link to access a recording of the event at your leisure!

[BOOK HERE](#)


Liverpool Law Society

AI & the Provision of Legal Services

Wednesday 6th November, 12pm - 2.30pm

Venue: Liverpool John Moores University, Student Life Building, 10 Copperas Hill, Liverpool, L3 5AH

This event is aimed at those from SMEs with little or no knowledge of how AI might work within their business. You will hear from some industry experts and have the opportunity to ask questions, observe some live demos & network informally.

Covering:


- What is AI? ~ Edmund Chan, Hill Dickinson
- How it’s already being used within law – Catherine Bamford, BamLegal
- Benefits of adopting for your firm ~ Brian Noon, In-House Legal Solutions
- Data & Regulatory Issues - Josh Bates, O’Connors
- Preparing future lawyers ~ Dr Alison Lui, LJMU

Henry Sturm of Legal Geek will then chair a panel discussion with questions from the audience

In conjunction with  LIVERPOOL JOHN MOORES UNIVERSITY

[BOOK HERE](#)

Sponsored by  oneAdvanced


Liverpool Law Society

Corporate Update 2024

with Chris Beanland

Friday 8th November, 1.45pm - 3.45pm

2024 has been a busy year on the corporate front with both legislative and case-law developments that impact on practitioners. This online course will look at key developments during the last year or so. As ever, the course will adopt a practical approach to provide busy practitioners with the knowledge to deal with the issues raised.

The course will cover:

- The Economic Crime and Corporate Transparency Act 2023 – are you aware of what has changed and what’s coming?
- Re BHS Group Ltd [2024] EWHC 1417 – should alarm bells be ringing for directors in respect of wrongful and ‘misfeasant’ trading?
- Make sure your warranty and indemnity insurance aligns with warranties – Re Project Angel (Bidco) Ltd [2024] EWCA Civ 446
- Good faith and shareholder agreements – Saxon Woods Investments Ltd v Costa [2024] EWHC 387
- Breach of confidence – Motor Organisation Ltd v Spectrum Insurance Services Ltd [2024] EWHC 261
- Are directors’ duties extinguished when a company enters liquidation? – Mitchell v Al Jaber [2024] EWCA Civ 423
- What is the limitation period for an unfair prejudice claim? – THG plc v Zedra Trustco (Jersey) Ltd [2024] EWCA Civ 158

[FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO BOOK, CLICK HERE](#)



Liverpool Law Society

Domestic Abuse Law - Developments & Updates

with Safda Mahmood

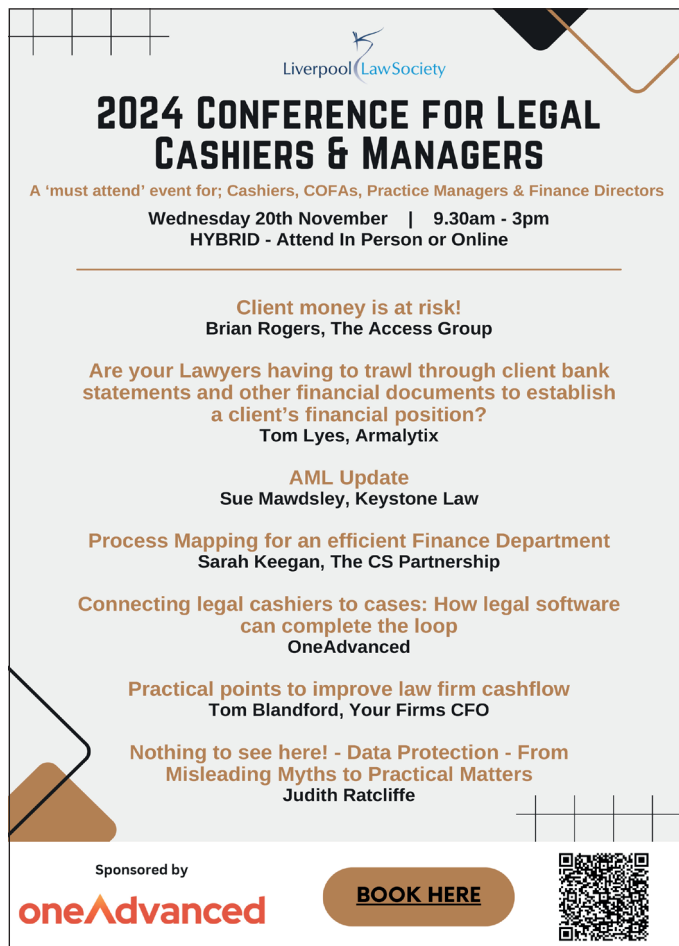
Live online Wednesday 13th November, 10am - 4pm

There has been a vast amount of change to the law surrounding domestic abuse over the last few years. This online course will provide a good round up of the different law & major changes, so as to provide a comprehensive update on domestic violence legislation & case law.

The topics covered will include:

- Domestic Abuse – What protection is available?
- Family Law Act 1996 – Nuts and bolts
- Drafting Orders and Without Notice Orders – What has changed?
- Enforcement – What has changed?
- Law and practice surrounding Forced Marriage Cases
- Changes to Protection from Harassment Cases
- Domestic Abuse Act 2021 – Changes and Update
- Practice Guidance Developments
- Current Developments

Book here



Liverpool Law Society

2024 CONFERENCE FOR LEGAL CASHIERS & MANAGERS

A 'must attend' event for; Cashiers, COFAs, Practice Managers & Finance Directors

Wednesday 20th November | 9.30am - 3pm
HYBRID - Attend In Person or Online

Client money is at risk!
Brian Rogers, The Access Group

Are your Lawyers having to trawl through client bank statements and other financial documents to establish a client's financial position?
Tom Lyes, Armalytix

AML Update
Sue Mawdsley, Keystone Law

Process Mapping for an efficient Finance Department
Sarah Keegan, The CS Partnership

Connecting legal cashiers to cases: How legal software can complete the loop
OneAdvanced


Practical points to improve law firm cashflow
Tom Blandford, Your Firms CFO

Nothing to see here! - Data Protection - From Misleading Myths to Practical Matters
Judith Ratcliffe

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BOOK HERE



Word Count Guidelines: Notes for Contributors

We receive many enquiries about submitting articles for LLS News and one of the questions that comes up every time is 'how long should it be?' While we don't (in theory) restrict the number of pages you can write, there are a few guidelines that you need to follow, like how many words fit on a page, how photographs, affect the word count etc.

With this in mind, the following is a rough approximation of how we calculate word counts for articles:

A full page of text is around 750 words without images, and 400 for a half page. The amount of text space an image takes up depends entirely on how it relates to the text (e.g. a by-line photo will take up less room than something illustrating the main theme of the article). So, we would suggest the following:

Full page with one small* image: 690 words
 Full page with two small* images or one medium** image: 480 words
 Full page with one large*** image: 480 words
 Half page with one small image: 330 words

The word counts do not include the main heading or secondary headings, but do include sub-headings.

* Spanning a single column

** Spanning two columns

*** Spanning three columns

The legal cashiering edit: utilising people, processes and technology for compliance

Legal cashiers perform the most important back-office role in any law practice. The criticality of keeping your accounts pristine and compliant cannot (and should not) be overstated.

Stories proliferate on law firms making grave legal accounting errors and facing the wrath of industry regulators, for example two claims firms being closed down in Liverpool, a solicitor struck off for having client pay money into his personal account, a specialist sports firm fined £36k for accounts misuse, an office manager banned for propping up his business with client money, to name a few headlines from recent weeks alone (source: Legal Futures).

There's an alarmingly common thread running through these news articles, this being legal cashiers or those performing legal cashiering duties making mistakes – accidentally or deliberately. In the vast majority of cases, accounts breaches are entirely intentional. They're entirely avoidable too.

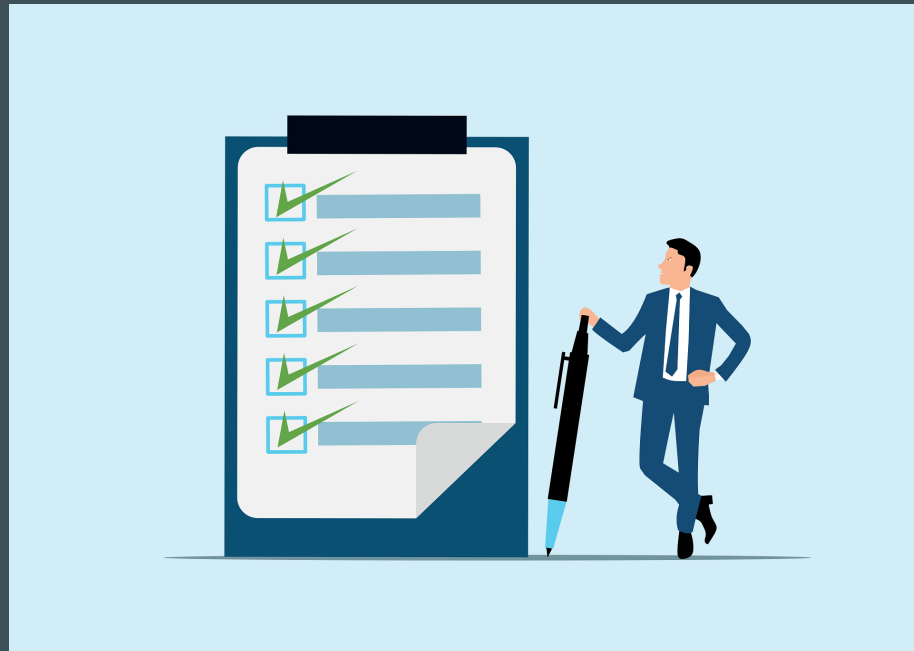
A series of internally directed queries

To improve your practice's accounting procedures and meet regulatory obligations, ask yourself the following questions...

#1: Have I hired the right staff in key accounts-related jobs?

There are several strands to this element – skills, experience, qualifications and trustworthiness.

To clarify, individuals responsible for your business's cashiering should possess essential skillsets spanning double entry bookkeeping, client and office accounts, SRA Accounts Rules (or equivalent guidelines), banking and reconciliations, internal and external reporting, annual audits and inspections, VAT returns, invoicing and credit control, and proficiency with legal accounting software.



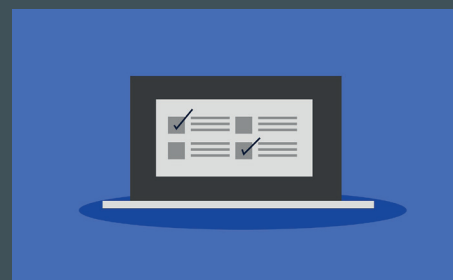
In terms of experience, your recruitment exercises should hone in on candidates who've spent sufficient time bookkeeping in a legal setting, with knowledge of solicitors' accounting rules in various jurisdictions, as well as awareness of wider accounts and anti-money laundering regulations and requirements.

Qualifications to look out for are those pertinent to law, finance and legal cashiering, ideally accreditations from the Institute of Legal Finance & Management (ILFM), Chartered Institute of Legal Executives (CILEX) or similar, however, these certifications can be gained on the job. It's a bespoke career path and people may not arrive in full possession of requisite attributes.

As you're placing your finances in this person's ministrations, seek reliable applicants with a strong track record and first-rate recommendations. Consider the not-insignificant sums of money held in your office and client accounts. These are monies you're mandated to safeguard. The pressing need to appoint someone who's dependable with moral standards and a clean history is absolutely crucial.

#2: Do I have the proper software security permissions?

The fact you'll have software to manage your accounts is a given. Echoing the earlier hint about staff being the weakest link in your financial protection armoury, are you maximising the security functionality in your legal accounting software as an extra deterrent against fraud?



The slightest chink in your application defences is all it takes for a deviant employee to obtain funds from your bank illegally. You'd be surprised (and shocked) by how easy it can be for money to go astray. It doesn't have to be this way.

Review your software features which introduce greater conservation measures.

Continues on page 52



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Continued from page 50

This could be anything from anti-money laundering reports during new client onboarding, to proof of bank details when submitting payment requests, to setting up authorisation levels and cross-referencing checks on particular accounting activities – all of which combine to create boundaries and stop corruption from happening.

#3: Am I investing in ongoing staff training and regular software audits?

Even with the best employees in situ and optimal software configuration in place, make it your mission not to simply sit on your laurels thereafter. It's a constant work in progress necessitating training (of your teams) and tweaks (to your software) for ultimate financial control always.

It's worth noting how third-party trainers and consultants such as Jayva can assist hugely by enabling you to refocus on the human factor, realign processes and harness the power of technology for robust legal accounting outcomes.

At Jayva, we offer services ranging from cashier mentoring and financial health checks, to super user training and workflow design, plus everything in between. Browse

our extensive service options at www.jayvaglobal.com/services.

We're recommended by law firms globally for overcoming accounting challenges and introducing mechanisms to recover from messes in the present day while simultaneously averting issues arising in the future.

A shout out to Jayva's credentials

If you're in any doubt about our team's abilities, we'd like to highlight our respected reputation fuelled by acclaimed competences in the field of legal accounting. These begin at board level with our chief executive officer Nicola Moore-Miller being a chartered accountant by trade and having 20+ years of experience in the law sector, and filter down to our multiple cashing experts and trouble-shooters whose SRA Accounts Rules know-how is truly exceptional.

For clients, this is reassurance that their accounting function is healthy and secure – thanks to Jayva's valuable input from a training and consultancy perspective. Access client stories to learn how businesses the same as yours have used our services for accounts-themed projects at www.jayvaglobal.com/client-testimonials.

www.jayvaglobal.com/client-testimonials.

A final word about cashing and compliance

In conclusion, it's imperative to recognise your accounts team as the integral element of the smooth financial running of your law office, with techniques and systems assuming close second. Employ carefully, compose processes prudently and configure applications thoughtfully – and invest in them continually by tapping into training and consultancy support from the likes of Jayva.

By doing so, you'll never find yourself in the unfortunate situation of a staff member abusing his/her position to steal money and your business subjected to regulatory investigation with ensuing sanctions and punishments, the result of which could force your law firm to shut down forever.

For further guidance on this urgent-and-critical topic, visit our earlier blogs titled 'SRA Accounts Rules compliance: A how-to guide' and 'Master client trust accounting. Avoid violations. Your license is at stake' (amongst others) at www.jayvaglobal.com/news.



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FINDING YOUR VOICE IN TODAY'S DIGITAL LANDSCAPE

X-Press celebrates milestone by giving back to communities

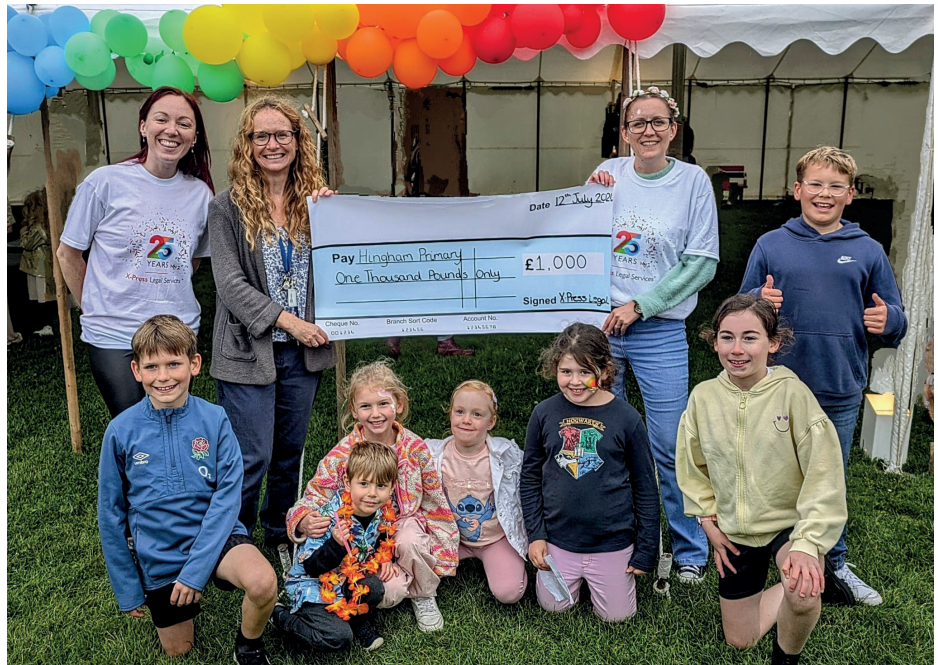


X-Press Legal Services, the largest independent provider of property searches and reports in England and Wales, is marking its milestone 25th anniversary by donating £25,000 to charitable causes.

Leveraging the firm's network of 28 locally owned offices, X-Press initiated the fund to support charities and grassroots organisations throughout 2024. X-Press office owners have embraced the charitable opportunity, taking time to visit and better understand the organisations that have chosen to support. Donations so far include musical instruments for a primary school, sports kits for a youth football team, food for a pet sanctuary, and contributions to food banks.

"We are delighted to be celebrating 25 years of X-Press Legal Services and have enjoyed every minute of devising and delivering products to support hardworking conveyancers," commented managing director, **Lynne Lister**.

"We have always championed charities, but this year, to celebrate our quarter-century and recognise the role that local communities have played in helping us grow, we have gone a step further. Our office owners have really got behind the campaign, engaging in extra fundraising activities and choosing projects where our donations can make real impact. It has been wonderful to see the results of our



X-Press Legal Services Norfolk and Suffolk donate to Hingham Primary School

donations and we hope by the end of the year to have made a lasting impression on countless communities."

The enduring success of the X-Press brand is a testament to the firm's commitment to building long-standing relationships with clients. Its independent local owners are dedicated to exceeding client expectations, becoming trusted and

invaluable property partners, which sets them apart from other search companies. X-Press provides a comprehensive service, including residential and commercial searches, pre- and post-completion services, cyber security, and compliance products. To find out more about X-Press Legal Services, please visit <https://xpresslegal.co.uk>.



X-Press Legal Services Staffordshire and West Midlands donate to Rockspur CIC

How to Choose the Best Legal Practice Management Software for Your Firm

The legal industry is constantly evolving, and law firms must stay agile to maintain their competitive edge. From increased client expectations to adapting to remote work, law firms today face numerous challenges that can significantly impact their operations. One solution that has gained increasing importance is legal practice management software. For law firms in cities like Liverpool, where the legal market is vibrant but competitive, finding the right tools to enhance efficiency and client service is essential.

Denovo, with over 40 years of experience supporting law firms across the UK, is a trusted provider of legal practice management solutions. Their extensive expertise in practice performance makes them an ideal choice for law firms looking to optimise their operations.

The Importance of Legal Practice Management Software

In the past, legal practice management software was often seen as an optional luxury for large firms with extensive resources. However, it's now a necessity for firms of all sizes. The right software solution helps streamline a wide range of essential functions, including:

- Task management
- Document automation
- Billing and invoicing
- Client communication
- Case and matter management
- Time tracking
- Data security

Legal practices must balance the demands of local clients, having a robust software system in place can make all the difference. With competition intensifying, firms that fail to modernise their operations risk falling behind.

Denovo's software provides an all-in-one solution that addresses the specific needs of law firms. From managing client relationships from beginning to end, to automating routine tasks, Denovo ensures your firm operates at peak efficiency,

allowing you to focus on delivering high-quality legal services.

Why Liverpool Law Firms Should Prioritise Efficiency

Regardless of the size of your firm, one thing remains constant: clients expect timely, personalised, and efficient services. For law firms, managing this balance—especially as more clients demand digital solutions—is critical.

Denovo has been helping law firms manage these transitions for decades. Their software is built not just for efficiency but for growth, offering a comprehensive set of tools designed to streamline every aspect of legal practice management.

Identifying Your Firm's Needs

Before selecting any software, it's crucial to assess your firm's unique requirements. A small law firm may prioritise different functionalities compared to a larger practice. Start by identifying the challenges your firm currently faces:

Is document management slowing you down?

Are administrative tasks like billing and invoicing taking too much time?

Is client communication disjointed across multiple platforms?

Understanding these pain points is the first step toward choosing the right solution. Denovo's platform is fully customisable, allowing firms to tailor the system to their specific needs. Whether it's automating routine tasks, managing client relationships, or handling complex case management, Denovo's software provides the flexibility to grow with your firm.

Measuring Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

Success is increasingly defined by measurable outcomes. This is where Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) come

into play. Tracking KPIs helps you assess the effectiveness of your operations and make data-driven decisions that improve profitability.

Some essential KPIs for law firms include:

- New clients acquired
- Client satisfaction rates
- Billable hours per solicitor
- Case resolution time
- Accounts receivable aging

Denovo's platform simplifies the process of tracking these KPIs by providing real-time analytics and reporting. This allows firms to monitor performance, identify areas for improvement, and make informed decisions that drive growth.

Choosing the Right Legal Software: What to Look For

When evaluating legal practice management software, there are several factors to consider:

Comprehensive Functionality

The best software should cover all aspects of your practice, from case management to client communication. Denovo's platform includes everything you need to run your firm efficiently, with tools for document automation, billing, time tracking, and more.

Ease of Use

A powerful system is only as good as its usability. Denovo's software is designed with ease of use in mind, ensuring that both solicitors and support staff can quickly adopt the system without a steep learning curve.

Customisation and Scalability

As your firm grows, your software should be able to grow with it. Denovo's platform is highly customisable, allowing firms to add or remove features as needed. This scalability ensures that your software investment pays off in the long term.

Continued on page 60

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How to Choose the Best Legal Practice Management Software for Your Firm continued...

Cloud-Based Access

With remote work becoming more common, cloud-based access is a must. Denovo's cloud-based system ensures that your team can securely access the platform from anywhere, whether they're in the office, in court, or working remotely.

Data Security

In an age of increasing cyber threats, protecting sensitive client information is paramount. Denovo prioritises data security, offering advanced encryption

and secure access controls to keep your firm's data safe.

The Value of Experience: Why Denovo?

Denovo's extensive knowledge of legal practice performance means they understand the unique challenges that law firms face, particularly in competitive markets like Liverpool.

Denovo's platform is built specifically for law firms, offering a range of features that not only streamline operations but

also drive growth. Whether you're a small practice looking to modernise or a larger firm aiming to enhance efficiency, Denovo has the tools and expertise to help you succeed.

By choosing a provider with Denovo's depth of experience and commitment to innovation, your firm can streamline operations, improve client service, and ultimately drive long-term success.

Book a consultation today or visit www.denovobi.com for more information.

The Recovery of Inquest Costs

Introduction



Kris Kilsby

The recovery of inquest costs on an inter partes basis is a contentious area of costs. The main reason why paying parties seek to challenge inquest costs is that they are technically not costs incurred within the parameters of the claim. Inquests are separate proceedings that would go ahead whether or not there was a claim being brought. Furthermore, the Inquest Court does not have powers to make a costs order, as a result, inquest proceedings are technically non-costs bearing.

However, there is provision within the Senior Courts Act 1981 which states that 'the costs of and incidental to all proceedings in the civil division of the Court of Appeal, the High Court, the Family Court and the County Court shall be in the discretion of the Court' (S.51(1)). Furthermore, S.51(3) of the Senior Courts Act 1981 states that the Court will have full power to determine by whom and to what extent the costs are to be paid.

This is the basis for the potential recovery of inquest costs and the phrase 'costs of and incidental to proceedings' is key.

Costs of and Incidental to the claim and the Gibson Principles

The Senior Courts Act does not provide any further clarification in respect of what are 'costs of and incidental to proceedings'. As such, it was left to judicial comments to formulate a suitable test. The founding test was set out in *Gibson's Settlement Trust* [1981] Ch 179. Whilst this matter related to costs incurred prior to the issuing of proceedings, the three pronged test has since been adopted and applied when

considering the recoverability of Inquest Costs on an inter partes basis.

The three prongs the Court must consider are:

- Whether the work carried out proved of use and service in the inter partes action,
- Whether those costs are of relevance to an issue, and
- That of attributability to the Defendant's conduct.

Roach v Home Office [2009] EWHC 312 (QB)

This is one of the main cases where the application of the Gibson principles were to inquest costs. This was a case which involved the costs associated with attending the Inquest of an individual who was found to have committed suicide in prison. Instructions were made to a solicitor to attend the Inquest. Subsequently, a civil action was brought against the Home Office for failing in their duty of care towards the individual.

At first instance the Court found that the costs of attending the Inquest were of and incidental to the proceedings, but not

completely. Instead, the Court applied a 50% recovery of the Inquest costs through the inter partes action.

The decision was appealed by both parties.

The appeal was heard and there were submissions put forward by both parties. On the one hand, the receiving party challenged the arbitrary nature of the 50% recovery that was arrived at, whilst the paying party challenge the recovery of Inquest Costs in their entirety. Davis J dismissed the paying parties appeal and allowed the receiving parties appeal. Davis J held that it was open to the Costs Judge to apply the Gibson Principles to each individual item and it was not reasonable to have applied a blanket 50% recovery. Furthermore, in this decision, Davis J found that the Home Office could have made an early admission of liability which would have avoided the need for representation at the hearing or at least rendered it not to be of

any use or service for the civil claim.

Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Services v Veevers [2020] EWHC 2550 (Comm)

In another case the main challenge was in respect of the first Gibson principle. In this case the Defendant submitted that they had made an indication to settle any claim that was brought prior to the Inquest. However, this was never made formally, nor was there a formal admission of liability.

This was the killer blow when the Court came to consider the Inquest costs and whether they were 'of and incidental to the proceedings'. If a formal admission had been made then it would not have been necessary to attend the Inquest.

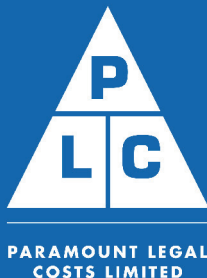
Key things to consider

In conclusion, the recovery of inquest

costs on an inter partes basis will always be fact sensitive. Therefore, it would definitely worthwhile to consider the following key factors as to whether inquest costs will be recoverable on your specific case:

- Has there been an admission of liability?
- Is there evidence that will be obtained as part of the inquest that will assist matters?
- What are the issues to be addressed and how important are they?
- What are the sums at stake and will the costs of attendance be proportionate?

Kris Kilsby is a Costs Lawyer at Paramount Legal Costs and a Council member of the Association of Costs Lawyers. For any further questions or queries about costs and solicitor/own client assessments please get in touch at Kristopher.Kilsby@paramountlegalcosts.co.uk



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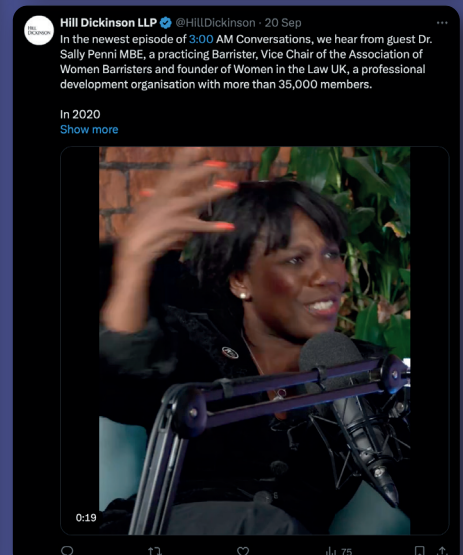
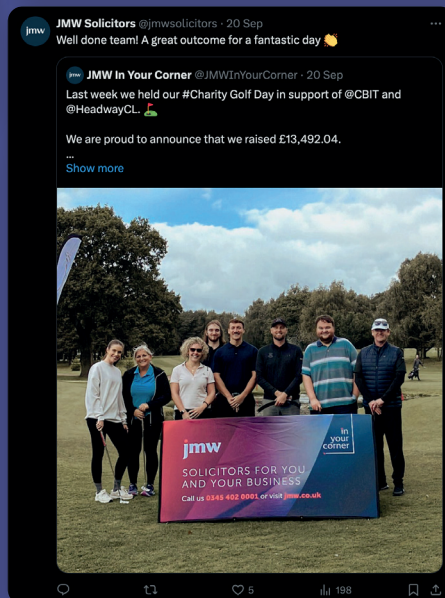
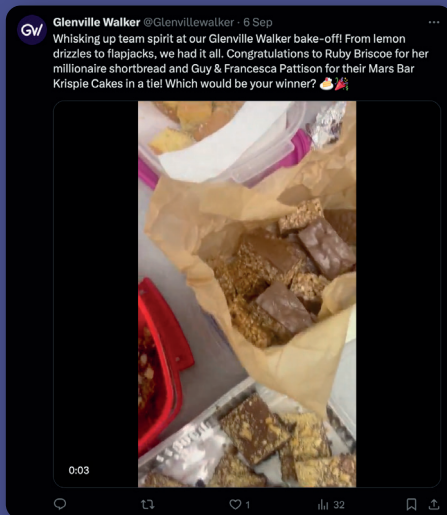


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Social Media Highlights

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



If you have an interesting tweet to share, why not send it to us, clearly labelled 'Social Media Page': editor@liverpoollawsociety.org.uk

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